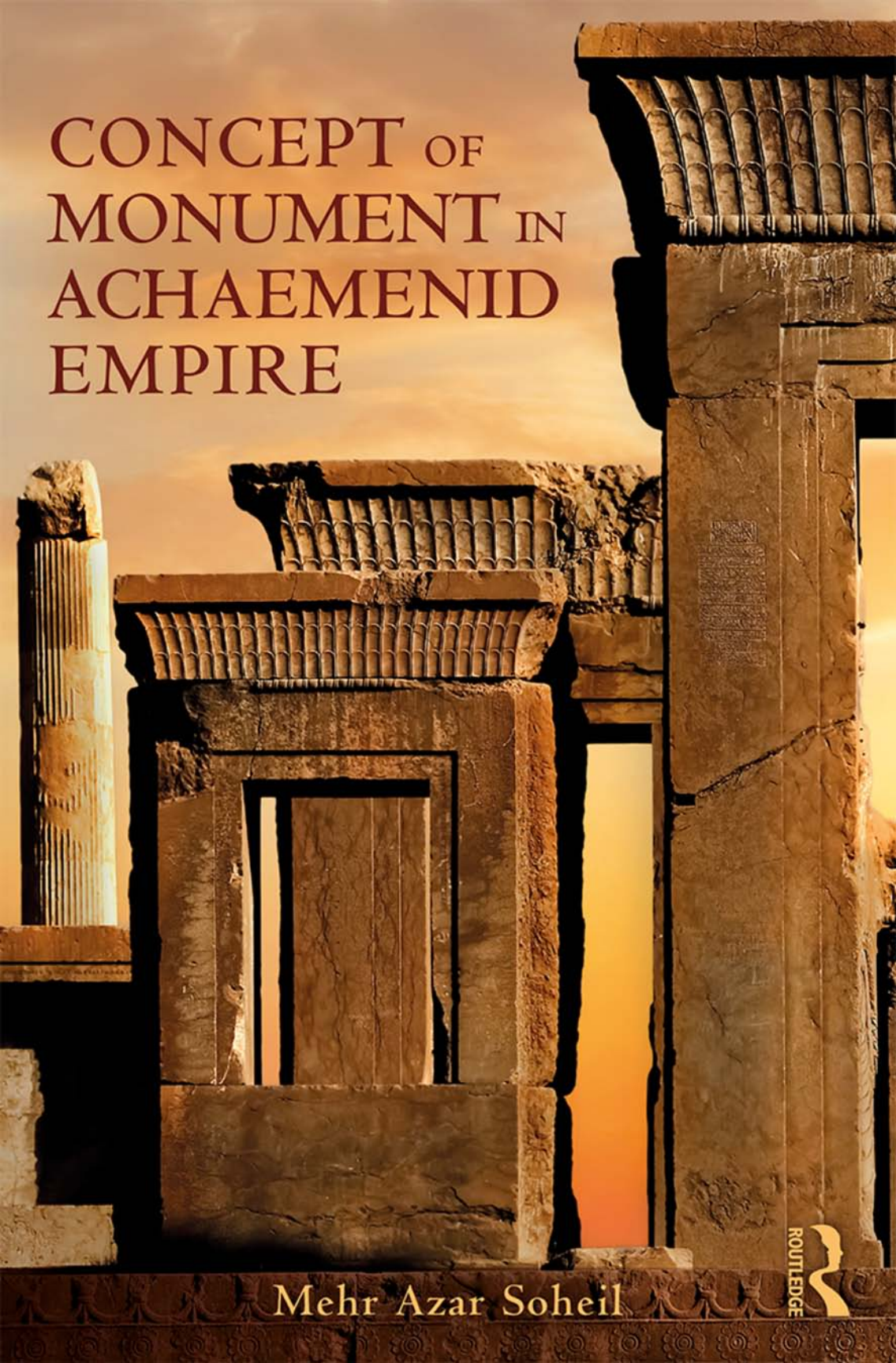
CONCEPT OF MONUMENT IN ACHAEMENID EMPIRE



Mehr Azar Soheil

ROUTLEDGE

"A complete guide to the most extraordinary architectural achievement of the Achaemenid Dynasty: Persepolis, a monument to the glory of the Persian Empire. The book explores the history of the site, its role in the political life of the Empire, its fate through the centuries. An essential reading."

Francesco Bandarin, UNESCO Advisor

"The Achaemenid concept of 'monument' is studied by Soheil in its rich political, symbolic and religious meanings and in concrete cases, where it is revealed to be closer to 'admonition' than 'memory'. The main surviving architectures and inscriptions reveal a picture of great interest helping to better understand a great civilization often presented negatively by ancient Greek authors."

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"A valuable analysis of Achaemenid building projects, this book is innovative in using detailed architectural and epigraphic analysis to argue that certain buildings, at Persepolis in particular, were deliberately created as 'monuments' for transmitting values throughout the Achaemenid Empire. It is a fascinating study of the application of the Western concept of 'monument' to a non-Western imperial tradition."

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"The reader will enjoy a very innovative presentation of the site of Persepolis and find in the volume an informed discussion on the main items for a functional understanding of this masterpiece of the Achaemenid architecture. An extremely useful support for those interested in the culture of Persia during the Achaemenid period as well as for those intending to visit and understand the marvelous country of Iran."

Pierfrancesco Callieri, Professor in Archaeology of Ancient Iran at the University of Bologna


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THE CONCEPT OF MONUMENT IN ACHAEMENID EMPIRE

The aim of this book is to explore the significance of the concept of 'monument' in the context of the Achaemenid Empire (550–330 BC), with particular reference to the Royal Ensemble of Persepolis, founded by Darius I and built together with his son Xerxes. While Persepolis was built as an 'intentional monument,' it had already become an 'historic monument' during the Achaemenid period. It maintained its symbolic significance in the following centuries even after its destruction by Alexander of Macedonia in 330 BC. The purpose of building Persepolis was to establish a symbol and a common reference for the peoples of the Empire with the Achaemenid Dynasty, transmitting significant messages and values such as peace, stability, grandeur and praise for the dynastic figure of the king as the protector of values and fighting falsehood.

While previous research on Achaemenid heritage has mainly been on archeological and art-historical aspects of Persepolis, the present work focuses on the architecture and design of Persepolis. It is supported by studies in the fields of archeology, history and art history, as well as by direct survey of the site. The morphological analysis of Persepolis, including the study of the proportions of the elevations, and the verification of a planning grid for the layout of the entire ensemble demonstrate the univocal will by Darius to plan Persepolis following a precise initial scheme. The study shows how the inscriptions, bas-reliefs and innovative architectural language together express the symbolism, values and political messages of the Achaemenid Dynasty, exhibiting influence from different lands in a new architectural language and in the plan of the entire site.

Mehr Azar Soheil is a conservation architect who graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Tehran University. She has earned her PhD in conservation from the Sapienza University in Rome, where she lives.


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PREFACE

The aim of this work is to verify the significance of the concept of monument in the context of the Achaemenid Empire with particular reference to the royal complex of Persepolis being the most important existent site of the Empire. The research is based on the hypothesis that the concept of 'monument' had, in ancient Persia, a connotation similar to what the corresponding Latin term later had in the Roman imperial period. Accordingly, the purpose of a monument was to transmit a message or reminder of the unity of the empire, which was obviously of political character. Building such a monument had great importance for the Achaemenid kings who employed remarkable resources in its construction. While Persepolis was built as an 'intentional monument,' as defined by Alois Riegl, it had already become a 'historic monument' during the Achaemenid period (6th to 4th centuries). The place maintained its symbolic significance even after its destruction in 330 BC. This symbolism is reflected in the inscriptions, the bas-reliefs and the architecture of Persepolis. It is also understood that, from the start, its construction was carried out following a precise scheme.

Recent scholarship has changed the previous prejudice and preconceptions regarding the Achaemenids based on ancient Greek texts. The new appreciation results from more accurate information obtained from modern archeology, philology, history and history of art, including the study of the Persepolitan clay tablets, Assyrian-Babylonian chronicles and other testimonies in Egypt and Mesopotamia. As a result, various aspects of Persian history are gradually being clarified. Further studies on Achaemenid art indicate that it is not correct to consider this only a collection of borrowed elements from other sources, but it is rather an original art created by the kings and court artists to express the political significance of the Empire using a symbolic and metaphoric language.

Various hypotheses have been made on the significance and functions of Persepolis. The most plausible is the ceremonial function, taking into account the character of its architecture and bas-reliefs that represent processions of the peoples of the Empire offering their characteristic products to the Great King. The Persian Empire had several capital cities, including Babylon, Susa, Pasargadae and Ecbatana, as well as Persepolis. Among these, Persepolis had a particular significance in the heart of the homeland of the Achaemenids, where it was built on virgin ground, as was declared by Darius (522–486) in the Foundation Inscription of Persepolis.

A further aim of this research has been to verify how the Persepolis Terrace was conceived and built, and what values were associated with it. The hypothesis of the existence of a project by Darius for the Terrace has been advanced by various scholars but never verified. The current research has considered each building separately as well as in relation to the site as a whole. This has led to a morphological analysis of the structures, the study of the proportions of elevations and the verification of a planning grid for the layout of the Royal Terrace. Together these elements demonstrate the univocal will of Darius as the 'planner' of Persepolis. This has been supported by studies in the fields of archeology, history and art history, as well as by direct analysis of the site. The aim has been to identify the characteristics and the significance of the components of the royal complex, making it possible to formulate conclusions that sustain the initial thesis. The interpretation of the inscriptions and the artistic and architectural elements has been important in assigning symbolic meanings to Persepolis. This study thus provides a new insight into the Achaemenid approach to the construction process and the work of their predecessors. There is a remarkable coherence in the entire construction, reflected in building morphology, bas-reliefs, proportions, measuring units, architectural details and inscriptions. The most skilled master workers of the Empire contributed to the construction, and materials were brought from different regions. There was a strong political will to show that the empire was built and sustained by its peoples, resulting in a new artistic and architectural expression. The other aspect was associated with historic and artistic values, another fundamental aspect of Achaemenid cultural policy. Later, Persepolis was also associated with mythological and biblical characters.

Fundamental studies have been carried out in the past in the fields of Achaemenid history, art and archeology including those of Herzfeld, Schmidt, Nylander, Trümpelmann, Shahbazi, Tilia, Roaf, Briant, Dalley and Root, among many. Based on their work, it has been possible to further the study, originally a PhD thesis, to draw attention to the morphology of this architecture in which Iranian traditional architecture finds its foundation. The important sources of information have been the Iranian National Library and the Library of the Iran Bastan (National) Museum, in Tehran; the Persepolis Library; the British Library and the Royal Asiatic Society Library in London; the Library of the Institut für Vorderasiatische Archäologie und Altorientalische Sprachen in Bern; La Bibliothèque de l'Institut

d'Études Iraniennes, Le Centre de Documentation, Data Iranica, Université Paris III Sorbonne nouvelle in Paris; as well as Istituto Archeologico Germanico, the American Academy in Rome, the École Française, the Istituto Italiano per Africa e Oriente, IsIAO (ex IsMEO) and the library of the Dipartimento di Lingue Orientali della Facoltà di Lettere of the La Sapienza University, in Rome.

This work will hopefully contribute to furthering Achaemenid studies, especially in the field of Achaemenid architecture. Considering that Persepolis has been inscribed on the World Heritage List of UNESCO, it is fundamental, in addition to documentation, management, monitoring and conservation work, to continue the debate on the values and the significance of Persepolis through didactic activities, courses, seminars, workshops and research projects regarding the site.

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This study was made possible with the sustaining and assistance of many. I would like to thank Giovanni Carbonara for persuading me to initiate this study and guiding its development, Jukka Jokilehto for his support and wisdom in all the phases of the research, Eugenio Galdieri for the orientation of the ideas, Giuseppe Tilia for his practical suggestions and knowledge on the subject and Gaetano Miarelli Mariani for his intellectual stimulation. I am grateful to those who dedicated their time to discuss various aspects of Persian culture and the methodology of my work, in particular: Pierre Lecoq (École du Louvre); Rèmy Boucharlat (Institut français de recherche en Iran, University of Lyon); Kevin J. Cathcart and Loughlin Kealy (University of Dublin); Sir Bernard Feilden (Director Emeritus of ICCROM); Mohammad Bagher Shirazi (Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization); Kian Soheil (Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran); Hassan Rahsaz (Persepolis); Marcello Ranieri (CNR, Italy); Simon Warrack (ICCROM); and Pierfrancesco Callieri (University of Bologna). My special thanks also to Rasool Vatandoust, Mohammad Beheshti and Mohammad Hassan Talebian from the Iranian Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization for facilitating my research work in Iran.

N.B. All the dates are BC unless indicated. All the photos are the author's unless indicated. Translations from French and Italian are by the author. Architectural descriptions are based on Schmidt, *Persepolis I*, 1953, Oriental Institute of Chicago. The study on the direction of the bas-relief figures is based on M.C. Root, *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art: Essays on the Creation of an Iconography of Empire* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979).

1

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

1.1. Persians in the Ancient Near East

The Ancient Near East, particularly Mesopotamia, was among the most fertile areas in the evolution of civilization and home to some of the world's earliest urban settlements, such as the ancient city of Ur, symbol of 'being ancient.' Mesopotamia was stage to numerous kingdoms and empires, including Assyrian, Babylonian, Elamite, Median and Persian. The earliest known reference to the Iranians (Medes and Persians) was detected in the Assyrian cuneiform texts of the 9th century. Those Persians, who lived in the region of the Zagros Mountains in western Iran, were referred to as Parua (*Parsuash/Parsumash*). They were mentioned along with other ethnic groups, each governed by a chieftain or a king. This region was then under the dominion of the Assyrians (Young, 1988:6ff). The kingdom of Media emerged in the 7th century, lasting only a limited time. It was composed of tribal groups with different social and political organizations (Young, 1988:23), including the Persians, who lived in three regions: in the northwest near Lake Urmia, in the Zagros Mountains and in the region of Parsa (Persia), today Fars, in the southwest of Iran. The Medes were more numerous than the Persians. However, being culturally and ethnically more united and coherent than the Medes, the Persians seem to have contributed to the 'Iranization' of the Zagros region. In Parsa they formed the nucleus of the Persian Empire under the Achaemenid Dynasty. Although they have been considered nomadic or semi-nomadic people with no art of their own (Frankfort, 1948:6), nevertheless, they were long in contact with the Medes and the Elamites, who were closely connected with the Mesopotamian cultures. This implies that urban life was not unknown to the Persians.

The role of the Achaemenid Dynasty was crucial in the rise of the Persians to establish an empire. Founded in the 6th century, they ruled over an area that ranged from Egypt and the Mediterranean to India. Among their administrative and political centers, the position of Persepolis was crucial and exceptional: it was where their innovative approach to the concept of the empire and cultural policies found the clearest expression, reflected in their inscriptions, art and architecture. Although these concepts were influenced by the context, nevertheless, the creative contribution of the Achaemenids was prominent in giving their heritage a distinctive identity. Cyrus II founded the **Achaemenid Empire** unifying the Medes and the Persians and conquering Babylon (539); ruling over Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and Egypt; and extending authority to the lands of Central Asia, India and southeast Europe. The Empire lasted for two centuries before falling to Alexander (330). The Achaemenid inheritance had an impact on their successors, the Arsacid Parthians (247 BC–AD 224) and the Sasanids (224–636 AD), as well as in the Hellenistic and Roman world, particularly on cultural and political aspects and systems of communication. In the organizational policy of Cyrus, once you paid your tributes, offered homage to the Great King, remained a loyal subject of the empire and, in some cases, did military service, you could follow your own customs and to a considerable extent pursue your own forms of government and law. In a certain sense the vision was one of a partnership in empire (Young, 1988:43).

While the **Neo-Assyrian Empire** (c. 1000–612) was founded on and maintained by military power, the Achaemenid Empire was mainly based on political agreements and respect for local cultures. The Persians administered their conquests without suffocating the local linguistic and religious culture. The Assyrian tactic for seizing territory was first conquering a weak kingdom, treating it in a way to intimidate others and make them surrender. The main occupation of the Assyrian king was war, first in the form of sporadic attacks, later becoming an annual campaign (Grayson, 1991:219). Nevertheless, Assyrian society was lively and dynamic in cultural aspects, building rich cities and monuments. They filled their libraries with texts copied from Babylonian temple libraries and kept statues of the gods of other lands in their temples for regular worship. Their influence was defused through deportation of prisoners. Some of their deportees were among the highest representatives of society, members of royal families and priests, as well as the best artisans and professional warriors. Many young people chose to serve the kings, learn the culture and make their fortune in the marvelous Assyrian cities. Important personalities were sent to the court as a sign of alliance, such as the Arab princess Tabua, who grew up in the court of Sennacherib and later became the queen of the Arabs (Dalley, 1998:25). Babylonians formed most of the cultured people, and Babylon remained an important center of learning under royal patronage. At the same time, deportation and indoctrination to Assyrian culture continued to be exercised; as declared in the cylinder inscription of **Sargon II** (721–705), he forced populations with different languages to accept a single voice,

sending Assyrians to live with them and to assimilate them to respect god and king (Dalley, 1998:27).

With the fall of Nineveh in 612, the **Neo-Babylonian Empire** (612–539) was established. The Neo-Babylonian Empire was peaceful, of mercantile character, founded on connections between the Red Sea, the Caucasus and the Persian Gulf, and India to Asia Minor. The authorities gave priority to security and to commercial profits, trying to balance free economy and multi-ethnic society (Palanque, 1948:34f). The court of Nebuchadnezzar II (605–562) was renowned for its cosmopolitan character; different peoples were together and spoke Aramaic (Dalley, 1998:30). Nabonidus (555–539), the last Neo-Babylonian king, was a dedicated antiquarian, a scholar of inscriptions and a collector of antiquities. These collections included ancient statues and old inscriptions discovered during the construction and restoration works of old temples. In the last decade of the 6th century, while the Achaemenid Empire was being consolidated, the Greek city-states in Asia Minor were often in mutual conflict. Greek democracy developed in the 5th century during the Achaemenid Empire.

1.2. Achaemenid Dynasty

The Achaemenids (550–330) were Persians from the province of Parsa (Persia, Fars). For several generations, they remained a small kingdom under the Medes. It was **Cyrus II** (559–529) who emerged as a strong ruler founding and extending the Empire, later consolidated by Darius and his son Xerxes. Cyrus II succeeded his father as king of Parsa and Anshan and conquered Media in 550, defeating its king Astyages near Pasargadae. His conquests included Asia Minor and further east as far as India. He defeated Nabonidus, king of Babylonia, in 539, entered Babylon as its liberator and became king with the approval of Marduk, patron god of the city. Nabonidus (555–539) was victim of the hatred of the priests of the sun-god Marduk due to his devotion to the Akkadian moon-god, Sin, since his mother was the priestess of the temple of Sin. This conflict favored Cyrus' victory (Pettinato, 1988:219ff; Dalley, 1998:149). Cyrus established his capital in Pasargadae and constructed and restored temples in Babylonia and in Sardis. Cyrus' son **Cambyses** (529–522) reigned for eight years. His main achievement was conquering Egypt. **Darius** (522–486) reigned for 35 years. He consolidated and restructured the Empire, carried out campaigns in Punjab and Arabia and crossed Hellespont in the Scythian campaign in 514. His major architectural works are in Persepolis and Susa, as well as the inscriptions and bas-relief of Bisotun. In Egypt, he built temples such as the Temple of Hibis and dug a canal to connect a branch of the Nile to the Suez Gulf in 512 (Herodotus, II. 158), recorded in a trilingual inscription discovered between the Amari lakes and the Red Sea (Fausti, 1997:I, 505n, 265). Darius' son **Xerxes** (486–465) reigned for 21 years. He built and completed major construction works in Persepolis. Xerxes' son **Artaxerxes I** (465–425) reigned for 30 years. The building of Persepolis continued during

the reign of their successors: **Xerxes II** (425–424), **Darius II** (424–405), **Artaxerxes II** (404–359), **Artaxerxes III** (359–338), **Arses** (338–336) and **Darius III** (336–330), who reigned for five years before being defeated by Alexander.

1.3. Administration and Cultural Policy

The Achaemenids preferred diplomacy in governing their empire, aiming to create an empire based on collaboration and sustenance of its peoples. Their approach to local cultures and traditions involved respecting linguistic and cultural diversity and religious tolerance. They awarded special privileges to local temples and repaired or reconstructed their buildings. The Empire was governed through a system of twenty satrapies, i.e., regional governorships. The mission of the satraps was to collect tributes and endorse justice, acting as an arbitrator in disputes especially between the city-states of Asia Minor, often in conflict over territory. His authority was limited by chancellors, secretaries and generals, who responded directly to the Achaemenid king. He was also controlled by the king's inspectors, known as the 'King's Eyes,' who visited the satrapies without warning. This system, based on a rigorous and respected administration, allowed the king to keep order in the empire.

Government and economy were facilitated by an extensive network of communication routes in the vast Empire. One of the main routes joined Sardis, Susa and Persepolis and stretched further east; another joined the Caspian to the Persian Gulf. A system of marine transportation reached as far as the Indian Ocean and was connected to the Mediterranean via canal. There was a standardized common system of metrology, currency and administrative language (Aramaic). These measures contributed to the cultural and economic development of the Empire during periods of stability and peace. Imperial absolutism was united with liberalism: local governments relied on capitalistic prosperity, and economic liberalism permitted accumulation of wealth and freedom of exchange. Those deported in previous reigns were allowed to return to their place of origin. The Jews returned to Jerusalem and were assisted in rebuilding their temple and restoring their rigorous theocracy. As a result of such policies, Mesopotamian culture became more cosmopolitan and diffused in other regions (Dalley, 1998:38). The Achaemenid king presented himself as the king in Babylonia and as the pharaoh in Egypt. In the King's Council, next to the Persians, were Babylonians, Jews, Egyptians, Macedonians, Greeks and other peoples. This liberalism was one of the requisites of the Mazdaic religion, worshiped by the Achaemenids, and it was incorporated into the official doctrine of the Empire. The Iranian beliefs demanded respect of ethical values especially regarding **justice**, and the king was a friend of justice and an enemy of falsehood. The Empire had a peaceful and benevolent image, emphasizing peacekeeping as the principal foundation for its expansion and sustenance. For the first time in the history of the Near East, all lands were united in one vast state organism. The Empire was not a simple mosaic of countries that preserved their

own independence in front of a corrupt central power. It was instead a central power strongly ramified that survived for over two centuries (Briant, 1995:125). The central power did not interfere in the specific conditions of the states; instead, it protected and conserved these conditions.

Ethnic and cultural diversity constituted the primary characteristic of each state. Many historians and archeologists have tried to belittle the impact of the central power on local autonomy, but the central and local authorities presented themselves together in all the regions of the Empire, respecting the tradition of each region (Briant, 1987:1ff). The key issue is to understand how local authority and central control could be balanced and react reciprocally to permit and favor the longevity of the Empire. In fact, these two realities were complementary and consolidated each other: the Persian administration regulated land dealings, tributes, etc. The Persian army, however, was always present in the various parts of the Empire ready to intervene when required. The Achaemenid administration had no ideological preference regarding the form of social and political organization of the local authorities. In the Ionian states, for example, after having initially sustained the tyrant kings, the Achaemenids then favored the establishment of democracy (Herodotus, VI. 43). This policy of maintaining order and stability was a key issue in '*Pax Achaemenid*' as Briant (1987:3) sustains.

1.4. Persian Presence in the Empire

There is not enough archeological evidence to give certain proof of Achaemenid rule in specific regions. Persian artifacts have often been attributed to other cultures especially that of the Greeks, with whom the Persians had intense contact and cultural exchange. Classical archeologists have frequently erroneously considered Greek artifacts that were of Persian provenance. However, objects like cylinder seals and sanctuaries of Anahita, the Iranian divinity of waters and fertility, testify to the Persian presence in western Asia Minor. Achaemenid influence is also evident in Bactria in the arts of glyptic, engraving and jewelry (Briant, 1987:9). An example of the Persian influence in Egypt is the statue of Ptah-Hotep, carved according to Egyptian norms but decorated with typical Persian clothes and jewelry. A similar case is the Egyptian statue of Darius wearing a local costume discovered in Susa. Adopting the local vest shows respect for the local culture often more efficient than a crude military action. It also indicates a subtle control over the locals. For an efficient governance, local languages were normally used in local administration, and the language of the conqueror was not imposed as the language of the Empire, its use being strictly limited to the dominant ethno-class circle.

It is important to understand how a politically and culturally homogeneous ethno-class succeeded in maintaining its control on such heterogeneous territories for over two centuries. It seems that the role of education of young Persians was essential, as mentioned by various ancient writers. Strabo (XIV.3. 18) gives a

detailed description of the education system, which consisted of training in use of arms and horse riding but also in speaking the truth, learning mythology, reciting with or without music and learning the deeds of the nobles and gods (Shahbazi, 1990:258). Persian children were taken away from their clan and educated to be loyal to the king. As a result of such education, a 'small Persia' was established in every satrapy, indicating a culturally and politically trustworthy nucleus. The destiny of the Empire was fundamentally linked to the survival and continuation of this dominant ethno-class.

The tradition of exchanging gifts and services constituted, in a subtle manner, all through the Achaemenid history, a motivation of loyalty to the king. Through such exchange, the king transformed the gift donors into his debtors. In the same spirit, Alexander did not consider as friends those who did not ask him anything (Plutarch, *Phocion*, 18). In this system of exchange of gifts and favors, there was a hierarchy established according to the economic and symbolic values of the objects and honors (Briant, 1987:23ff). The nature and solidity of these ties permitted the king to ensure the loyalty of the Persians and assigned to them tasks of important responsibility.

1.5. Religion of the Persians

The most ancient religion of the Iranian people was polytheistic. They venerated divinities in common with the Vedic religion. Mazdaism, the religion of the Achaemenids, also respected the sun, the moon and the waters as 'venerable' subjects. The prophet Zarathustra (Zoroaster for the Greeks), who probably lived in the 7th century, or in the 13th century according to some scholars, founded Zoroastrianism. In the early Achaemenid period, in the 6th century, it seems that Zoroastrianism had already been established (Boyce, 1988:19). Zarathustra may have been in contact with the Achaemenids before the foundation of the dynasty. Although there is no mention of him in the Achaemenid inscriptions, there are constant references to Ahuramazda, the god of the Mazdaists and Zoroastrians (Boyce, 1983).

Since Zoroastrianism could not completely eliminate the preexisting divinities, it kept them as a compromise (Christensen, 1351:50). Zarathustra transmitted his message through a collection of chants (*Gathas*) that refer to the dominion of good over evil. This apparent dualism has been considered a characteristic aspect of Mazdaism. However, Ahuramazda, 'creator of all that exists,' is above all other divinities. In substance, even if the Achaemenids venerated other divinities such as Anahita or Mithra in later periods, the domination of Ahuramazda was such that it assigned to this religion a strong monotheistic character (cf. Mehr, 1991). At the same time, as an expression of respect of other cultures, the Persepolitan tablets indicate rations from the royal granaries distributed not only to gods of Iranian origin, but also to Elamite and Babylonian gods (Sancisi-Weerdenburg, 1995:1045), while the Achaemenids were Mazdaists and Ahuramazda was their supreme god (Herodotus, I. 131; Boyce 1988:23).

In the Persia of the 6th and 5th centuries, Young (1988:99ff) finds traces of the ancient Indo-Iranian faith and the religions of the people prior their Iranization as well as the influence of Zarathustra. He considers Darius and other Achaemenids good disciples of Zarathustra, no matter the lack of Zarathustra's name in the royal inscriptions. It seems, however, that the Achaemenid period was extremely significant for the further development of Zoroastrianism (Kreyenbroek, 2010:108). Although there seems to be difference between Achaemenid and Zoroastrian sepulchers, Boyce (1982:xi) retains that the Achaemenids were Zoroastrian. In Zoroastrian tradition, after having exposed the cadaver to vultures, the remaining bones were put in urns to avoid 'contamination' of the earth, water, fire and air. Therefore, it seems that the Achaemenid sepulchers correspond to the Zoroastrian funeral customs since they are high up in the impermeable rock to avoid contamination. The king's *xvarenah*, 'royal glory,' was so strong to necessitate a particular sepulcher (Calmeyer, 1974:233ff). Another proof of Achaemenids being Zoroastrian is that names with Zoroastrian tradition were used in the Achaemenid family by the end of the 7th century. For example, the name of Darius' father, Hystaspes (Vištâspa in Avestan), is also the name of the supporter of Zarathustra, and the name of Cyrus' daughter, Hutaosa (Atossa in Greek), is also the name of the queen of Kavi Vištâspa (Boyce, 1988:28ff). The bas-reliefs on the tomb façades show iconographic elements that represent the king in reverential gesture in front of an object presumably a fire altar. Fire was considered an intermediate between the terrestrial world and the divine. Thus, there is the terrestrial fire as well as the moon and the winged circle symbolizing celestial associations and dynastic right to power. In Zoroastrian orthodoxy, the fire for praying can be represented by a terrestrial fire while the celestial fires are represented by the sun and the moon. These three 'fires' are shown and repeated on tomb bas-reliefs, confirming continuity in the Zoroastrian faith of the dynasty. The fire altar became the symbol of Zoroastrianism also appearing on Sasanian coins (Boyce, 1988:21).

Some Achaemenid inscriptions may indicate their religion, including Darius' Bisotun Inscription or Xerxes' Daiva Inscription, discovered in the eastern fortification of Persepolis in 1935, where there are mentions of the destruction of a temple where *daivas* were venerated. These were the malign spirits rejected by the Zoroastrians. Boyce (1988:23) considers this inscription a proof of Xerxes being Zoroastrian (Bianchi, 1977:3ff; Gnoli, 1980:77ff), while Wiesehöfer (1996:54) retains that the Daiva Inscription does not refer to a particular case and is a 'timeless' statement like Persepolitan bas-reliefs.

The Bisotun Inscription indicates that Darius prayed in the same places as Cyrus, and the tradition of coronation ceremonies in Pasargadae continued (Boyce, 1988:27). This tradition was probably initiated by Cambyses and successive kings (continued the rituals commemorating Cyrus on his tomb (Plutarch, Artaxerxes, III. 1; Arrian, *Anabasis*, VI. 29, 1). Such continuity of traditions and identification of the members of the Achaemenid dynasty with Zoroastrian characters gave this religion a strong identity. Darius continuously refers to Ahuramazda as the only

god mentioned by name among "all the gods" and is the one "who created man, who created happiness for man" (DNa § 1). In Zoroastrianism, happiness was created by Ahuramazda and pain and sorrow by Angra Mainyu. This apparent dualism highlights the strong antithesis recurring in the inscriptions of Darius between *arta* and *drauga* (Avestic *aša* and *drug*), truth and justice, against falsehood and evil. Boyce (1988:24ff) attributes the lack of the names of Angra Mainyu and Zarathustra in the Achaemenid Inscriptions to the influence of Babylonian and Assyrian Inscriptions since Mesopotamian culture knew no prophet and no evil spirit.

The relationship of the Persians with their divinities was different from that of the Mesopotamians. For the Persians Ahuramazda was good in nature and not capricious, as were the Mesopotamian gods who had to be contented by offerings and dedicating temples. The goodness of god is reflected in Persian mythology. For example, in Yasht 19 of the Avesta, Jamshid (Yima) reigned in a peaceful and healthy world. He enlarged the world three times during almost 1,000 years to make space due to overpopulation. In contrast, the Babylonian version of the legend, *The Epic of Atrahasis* (dating to 1700), gives a different solution to the problem: each time the gods decided to eliminate a part of the population by disasters such as famine, pest or flood (Dalley, 1998:172). The king represented the dynastic and terrestrial power, and, when on the 'right path,' he had the support of the divine. Therefore, he did not seek the favor of gods but relied on their support, implying a concordance of interests. These messages were addressed to the people as conveyed in the Persepolitan or Bisotun Inscription where the king invokes and is sure of Ahuramazda's support in his actions.

1.6. Achaemenid Art and Architecture

Achaemenid art was influenced by the Near-Eastern civilizations, but it did not result from casual eclecticism or from a dominant contribution of foreign artists. Through a creative process the Achaemenids transformed such influences into a new artistic expression, where the impact of the king and his court was decisive and fundamental. This art is, therefore, the result of a complex synthesis of tangible and intangible influences, and the transformations have been deliberate and conscious choices (Root, 1979:4). It introduces, in a new artistic language, the ways of expressing concepts of kingship in art and architecture. This art is a conscious response to the vision of their culture and dynastic policy, reflected in their figurative representations, monuments and messages, through symbolism and metaphors. Among the differences between the Persians and the Mesopotamians was the relationship between the king and the gods. The Mesopotamian texts testify that the kings built and dedicated temples to their gods to receive favors such as driving away diseases and natural disasters or helping win a war. Already in the Epic of Gilgamesh (c. 3rd millennium) there is such dedication, when Gilgamesh addresses the sun-god Shamash that he will go to the country where the cedar is

cut and will **raise a monument** to the gods (Sandars 1995:18). Such dedications are not found in Achaemenid Inscriptions. Darius indicates Ahuramazda's support without requesting favors, being the terrestrial power sustained by Ahuramazda or other local gods. A Persian was responsible for his 'choices' and by choosing the right action helped the gods defeat the forces of evil, while in Mesopotamia man was in 'debt' towards gods and his duty was to pacify them in order to drive away 'chaos.' The Greek gods were also in continuous conflict, even among themselves, and humans tried to content them. Darius was probably influenced by the Egyptian concept of the divine nature of the king. He is represented in the Temple of Hibis in El-Khargeh in Egypt receiving breath of life or power from the Egyptian divinities and, in his turn, giving offerings to them (cf. Winlock, 1941; Root, 1979:127). Darius thus confirms his approval by the Egyptian divinities, while on his tomb façade in Naqsh-i Rustam he is depicted in front of the fire altar with the winged circle (disk) above supposedly the symbol of royal glory and divine protection (**Figure 1.1**).

The principal surviving examples of Achaemenid architecture are the archeological sites of Persepolis, Susa, Pasargadae and Ecbatana, the capitals of the Empire. There are some other sites such as Dahan-i Gholaman in Iran, the Temple of Hibis in Egypt and some remains of a palace of Darius in Babylon. Although

FIGURE 1.1 Naqsh-i Rustam, the so-called Tomb of Xerxes; the upper section of the façade shows the king depicted in front of the fire altar and supported by the peoples of the Empire (2017)

there is mention of Persian kings in classical and biblical texts, Achaemenid sites were only identified by travelers from the 17th century AD onwards. This discovery coincided with the early explorations of the Ancient Near-Eastern civilizations, and it is in this context that the creative and original contribution of Achaemenid art has been discussed. While the regal and imperial identity of this art was acknowledged, its solemnity and eclectic nature was characterized as an integration of elements and influences from other cultures. Further scholarship has recognized that this 'eclectic character' does not reduce its originality. On the contrary, it acquires a particular significance and a clearly political meaning within the multiethnic empire. The result of such integration has been to "consciously create, through a highly sophisticated and sober appreciation of foreign paradigms, something genuinely Achaemenid" (Metzler 1990:145). A good part of Achaemenid artistic production represents the court where the figure of the king is the main focus. The artifacts include sculpture, bas-reliefs and glazed-tiled walls mostly from Persepolis and Susa. There are objects such as vases, dishes in precious metals, jewelry, seals and coins, kept in museums.

Already before 550, the Persians were part of an extended and complex network of historical and cultural relationships of the Near East, and these relationships had a significant impact on the formulation of official Achaemenid art. "The very creation of 'Persian' architecture and art, by the method of amalgamating stylistic contributions of half-a-dozen conquered nations, can only have been intended as a constant reminder of empire" (Lawrence, 1951:112). Various tendencies have been integrated in the architectural whole that possesses its own peculiar harmony. In fact, Darius in his (DPf § 2) Elamite Inscription of the foundation of Persepolis mentions: "I constructed it; . . . solid and excellent and exactly as I had ordered it." Here, he creates a new architectural style and language.

Master builders and workers were employed from various parts of the Empire. Each project was designed, coordinated and rigorously controlled to obtain the holistic result that corresponded to the vision of the king. The bas-reliefs were carved by teams, and the members in each team had their specialization, e.g., working on a particular sculptural element, such as heads, hands, animal figures, etc. Workers were selected partly based on their skills and partly on their provenance in order to represent regions of the Empire. The innovative features in Achaemenid architecture include monumental stairways, generally with two symmetrical ramps. The central courtyard of Mesopotamian architecture becomes the central hypostyle hall. The characteristic of this architecture is based on the repetition of square cells and the strictly rectangular plan of the buildings following orthogonal axes and the north-south orientation (De Angelis d'Ossat, 1982:33ff). The Palace of Darius in Susa was one of Darius' earliest constructions following the Mesopotamian building tradition. In Persepolis, Darius applied new design principles that reflected innovative solutions. In this context, the layout of the imposing audience hall, the Apadana, and the sculptures of its stairways show the originality of the glyptic art associated with architecture.

The column, on which the Achaemenids founded the poetic of their architecture, has a polymorphic character, with a slenderness previously unknown in Mediterranean, Egyptian or Hellenic architecture, its tallness accentuated by the tight flutes, the superposition on tall bases and the composite capitals of overlaid elements, crowned by zoomorphic or anthropomorphic motifs. The vertical thrust of the columns towards the sky and their original articulation contribute to the prodigious effect of the internal spaces of the Persepolitan palaces and form the most typical element of Achaemenid buildings (**Figure 1.2**). The proportions are entirely new and appear as the most audacious and spiritual expression of the trilithic architecture of the Antiquity (De Angelis d'Ossat 1982:33). Thus, for the first time, such audacious hypostyle halls were constructed. The slender columns of the Persians overcame the heavy Egyptian techniques that had always used bifurcate capitals to reduce the enormous spans.

Although Achaemenid architecture had developed some elements from precedent periods, it was a new architecture influenced by the Egyptian monumentality, the Urartian military architecture with its great terraces and the Babylonian design of gardens and architectural details. Other influences perhaps were part of the characteristics common among the Near-Eastern civilizations (Calmeyer, 1994:131) such as use of mudbrick in constructions, crenellations on parapets, vertical indented recessions on exterior walls and traditional motifs of a battle

FIGURE 1.2 Persepolis, the columns of the Apadana (2006)

between lion and bull or a king's combat with supernatural beings. Achaemenid art can be considered as the last expression of a strictly Asiatic genius, heir of Chaldea, Elam, Assyria and Egypt, the sum of their splendor and composing their epitaph. However, Darius wanted to create a composite, uniform and renascent style, strong enough to influence court art even beyond the dynasty. This was achieved by the fusion of various elements that brought forward a new unity of style and artistic expression. In fact, there was a creative process that gave a new artistic identity, overcoming eclecticism.

There are similarities between Achaemenid and Mesopotamian cultures, while at the same time there are fundamental differences, for example in spatial concepts. In Persepolis and Near-Eastern sites, ceremonial and palatial buildings are grouped on a platform separated from the rest of the city. A significant example is **Khorsabad**, built by the Assyrian king Sargon II (721–705). Representing the king held by subject peoples, an Elamite motif of carrying the ruler, generally stresses subjugation and antagonism between the two (Root, 1979:131; Henkelman, 2017:305). However, the Achaemenids gave this image a new significance, since people were no more merely king's subjects but sustained the Empire. The winged circle hovering above the king in the Hundred Column Hall dates from the reign of Artaxerxes I (465–423). This image is similar to the Egyptian semi-naturalistic examples and could be contemporary to winged circles on cylinder seals, suggesting the simultaneity of the stylistic development in monumental glyptic art. It also suggests that the Egyptian influence made itself felt slightly later than the Assyrian influence as in the Gate of Xerxes (Porada 1961:67; Frankfort 1939:208ff) (**Figure 1.3**). It is probable that Egyptian influence in Achaemenid architecture was especially due to the sojourns of Cambyses and Darius in Egypt.

The theme of **king and lion combat** can also be found in Assyrian art. The conquest of supernatural creatures by the Achaemenid king in Persepolitan bas-reliefs demonstrates an intentional assimilation between royal and divine images (Porada 1961:68) (**Figure 1.4**). The similarity of royal ideologies and their icons indicates the importance of such powers next to each other (Dalley 1998:23). The **winged circle**, symbol of kingship and the sun-god, was used by the pharaohs, the Ugaritic kings and the Cypriot governors as well as the Hittite and Assyrian kings. For the Achaemenids this symbol represented kingship conceded by Ahuramazda. Many Achaemenid motifs find their origin in the various cultures of the Near East. However, the Achaemenids succeeded in transforming these motifs so as to sustain their specific scopes, giving them a new meaning.

Achaemenid structures, as shown on the royal tombs, are believed to find their origin in the vernacular houses of Mazandaran in the Caspian and Black Sea regions, and the origin of the **hypostyle** hall may reside in Egyptian architecture but with differences in the proportions of columns in rapport to the more extended and airy spatial quality of the Achaemenid buildings (De Francovich, 1966:217ff). The presence of the hypostyle hall, however, is found in various epochs in Anatolia, Urartu and pre-Achaemenid Iran. In the Median and Persian architecture

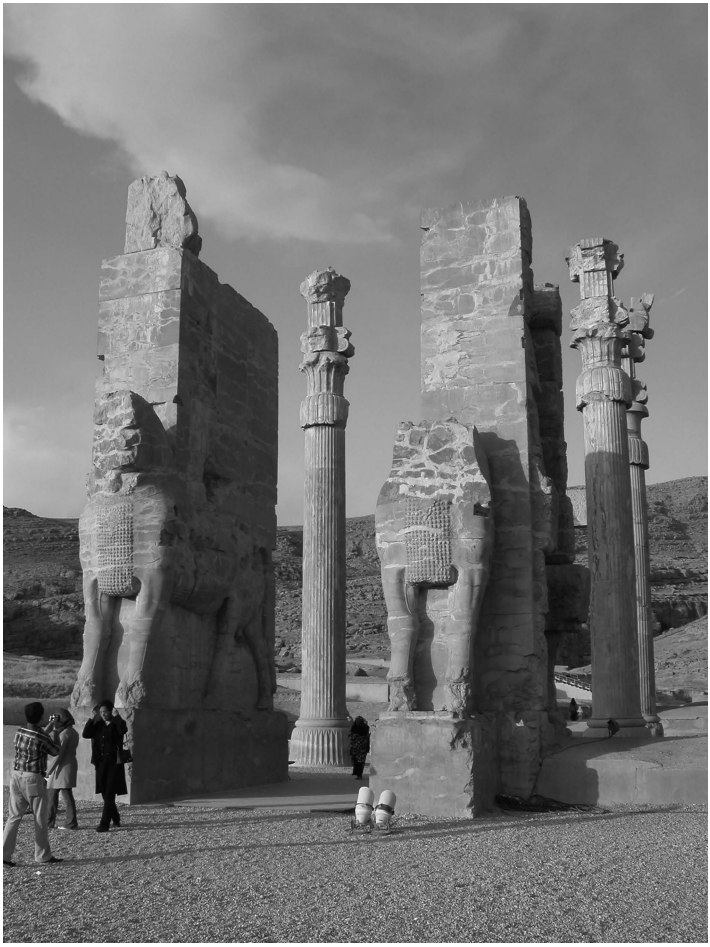

FIGURE 1.3 The Gate of Xerxes, or the Gate of All Lands, the main ceremonial entrance to the Royal Terrace, west view (2006)

of the first millennium, fortified sites with palaces and domestic buildings (Kiani, 1996:2ff), such as Godin Tepe, Baba-Jan and Nush-i Jan, there are hypostyle halls, porticos and tiled walls, which anticipate the Achaemenid buildings (Fletcher, 1987:89). Although these Median examples are much smaller in scale for comparison, their most significant influence may probably be the adaptation of multiple rows of columns into Achaemenid hypostyle halls and architectural concepts (Roaf, 2010:176ff; Tourovetz, 2014: 295). Further discoveries on hypostyle structures have broadened the origin of the use of columns, for example, to southeast Arabia (Gopnik, 2010:196).

The Near East and the West had much interaction in the Achaemenid period. Diplomats, politicians, scientists, physicians, scholars, explorers and visitors, as well as thousands of soldiers and mercenaries, continuously traveled between the

FIGURE 1.4 Palace of Darius, a symbolic image of the king fighting a supernatural being; north jamb of south doorway of the west wall of the central hall (2016)

continents. Traces of Achaemenid remains have been found in Caucasus (Knauss, 2006). Several important Ionian Greek colonies were in the Achaemenid Empire, therefore resulting in interaction between the Greeks and Persians architecture. Nevertheless, the character of Achaemenid architecture is different from Greek architecture. For example, the roof structures at Persepolis were in wood while the Greeks normally used stone; therefore, their structures are more massive. In the Ancient Near East, the symbol of eternity was in the heavy masses of buildings, while the Achaemenids presented the symbol of eternity in the spatial quality of the halls associated with slender columns. Later, through further elaboration in the Sasanian period, these ideas influenced the development of the *ivan* and

other architectural elements that came to be part of Persian architecture of the Islamic period. The Ionian space has been seen closer to the Achaemenid space than the Doric space, considering that the encounter between Persia and Greece was important in universal history. Consequently, Greece and Persia should not be considered only for their contrasts and armed conflicts or as two poles contrasting Europe and Asia, but for the spiritual encounters between these two cultures. Some classical archeologists have given great importance to the Greek influence on Achaemenid art. The Greeks worked directly for the Achaemenid king and in a subordinate position following rigorous rules that did not permit the slightest deviation; thus subjects, location, composition, types and costumes were all prescribed. They worked together with others but had perhaps themselves lived in the Orient for some time and became the 'Ionians resident in Babylonia,' imbued with oriental conceptions (Richter, 1946:30). Therefore, this art was produced for the Achaemenid kings under new conditions creating a new style.

The architecture of Cyrus in **Pasargadae** has been considered a clear example of the Ionian contribution to Achaemenid architecture (cf. Nylander, 1970) (**Figure 1.5**). However, although certain themes originated from Pasargadae and were further developed by Darius in Persepolis, there is also a clear and conscious difference in the character of these two periods. This difference is particularly

FIGURE 1.5 Pasargadae, the 6th-century capital city of Cyrus; column bases of Palace P, showing the Ionian influence (2006)

evident in the sculptural reliefs. The pleats of Greek and Achaemenid garments are different when comparing the free plasticity of the Greek sculpture and the flattened relief of the Achaemenid forms. We know that the Achaemenids employed Ionian stonemasons and reciprocal cultural exchange existed on both sides. Persian influence is found, for example, in the Greek city of Larissa at Hermos, where some palaces reflect the Apadana-Typology and include hypostyle halls opening to a courtyard. The impact of Achaemenid architecture, especially of the hypostyle hall, on Greek architecture has been analyzed by Miller (1997:230ff), who mentions the Odeon of Pericles as a declaration of the imperial ambitions in Athens at this time. The slenderness of Achaemenid columns is seen elsewhere in Greek classical architecture, e.g., the Telesterion of Eleusis. We also know that the royal tent of the Persians had always fascinated the Greeks (Schefold 1968:62). The debate on the influences between Greece and Persia includes comparison between Persepolis and the Acropolis of Athens, particularly between the Parthenon frieze and the Apadana stairway bas-reliefs. Henry Frankfort and Gisela M.A. Richter wrote two articles in 1946 provoking a series of debates on the rapport between Greek and Achaemenid art, especially the archaic Greek art of the 6th and 5th centuries. There is parallelism between the 6th-century Apadana of Persepolis and the 5th-century Parthenon of Acropolis. An analysis of the political situations illustrates the ambitions of Pericles (ca. 497–429), who was attracted by the image of the Persian kings and probably had imperial aspirations for Athens. Recent analysis of the Parthenon frieze somewhat confirms this thesis. The frieze represents the Panathenaea procession, and it has been compared to the gift-offering procession in the bas-reliefs of the Apadana stairways. In a world where the cult of Athena was involved in the service of the Athenians, the Parthenon frieze is a rich monument with a multitude of connotations, being an affirmation of the imperial aspirations of Athens expressed in a metaphor of the procession, where the idea was taken from the Persians and reformulated in the Athenian manner (Root, 1985:103–120). The significance of the Parthenon frieze, however, can be considered in a wider context attributing to the frieze representation of festivity, procession and cavalry not only during the Panathenaea but in Greece in general and without discarding the existence of allusion to the Panathenaea procession (Pollitt, 1997:51–63).

1.7. Achaemenid Building Works

Achaemenid domination was felt in administrative changes in general social and economic conditions and to a lesser extent in religion. It also led to some changes in the material culture, which was most evident in luxury items. Generally speaking, the Achaemenid impact in Mesopotamia was relatively subtle and, one could even say, superficial. It mainly touched the administration and the higher society and did not necessarily modify the way of life in other social classes (Haerinck, 1987:145). Although archeological evidence is often scarce, it does not mean there

is no physical presence of the Persian period in the excavated sites. However, it is not easy to recognize this period because the Persian conquest was not associated with destruction. There is therefore no special archeological layer to show an invasion as was the case with many other conquering armies (Haerinck, 1990:159).

Traditionally, in the Ancient Near East, a new king made important building works. For example, the Assyrians built the new cities of Nineveh and Khorsabad, and the Achaemenids carried out architectural works. They partly rebuilt or restored as their capital the existing cities of Susa, Babylon, Sardis and Ecbatana, while Pasargadae and Persepolis were built anew. Considering that the Achaemenid policy was to respect the local religious traditions, they invested royal resources to build, rebuild or repair temples in Mesopotamia and built new palaces and infrastructures (Young, 1988:43). An important achievement was building roads. The **Royal Road** from Susa to Sardis was more than 2,500 kilometers long with 111 service stations. It normally would have taken approximately 90 days to cover this distance, but the Achaemenid courier could cover it in one week. The roads joining Susa to Persepolis and to Ecbatana were paved (Pope, 1969:11). Among other construction works was the canal dug by Darius in Egypt to connect the Mediterranean to the Red Sea.

The most significant building work undertaken by Cyrus was the construction of Pasargadae as his capital city. Pasargadae was the site of the victory of Cyrus over the Median king Astyages (Strabo, XV.3. 8). It is situated in the Morghab Plain to the north of Persepolis, at an altitude of 1,900 meters. The Pulvar River provided water for the buildings and gardens. The central area of this site has been excavated, displaying an ensemble of palaces integrated within a garden layout. Pasargadae provides an excellent glimpse of the early phase of Achaemenid architecture. The excavated central area contains the remains of twelve separate buildings, including the Tomb of Cyrus, two large palaces, two pavilions, the main gate of the royal garden ensemble and a bridge structure (**Figure 1.6**). There are fragments of bas-reliefs on the remaining doorway jambs. The so-called Zendan is a tower structure, of which the function is not clear, and an area called the Sacred Precinct. It is understood that the Achaemenid city extended much beyond this central area. Excavation has revealed traces of canals that are parts of the first known examples of the Persian garden. The palaces have hypostyle porticos and hypostyle central halls. The composition of black and white stones gives a unique color scheme to this architecture. The columns and their bases are finely detailed, resembling the Greek architecture in Ionia (Nylander, 1970).

At some distance from the palace area there is Tall-i Takht, a fortified terrace structure. Cyrus probably wanted to build a fortified ceremonial complex on the platform of Tall-i Takht (**Figure 1.7**). The project was initiated in stone by Cyrus but was abandoned at his death. Later it was continued in mudbrick by Darius in a different form (Stronach, 1978:11ff, 146ff). The coronation ceremony of the Achaemenid kings took place in Pasargadae, probably in the Sacred Precinct, indicating the continuity of the dynasty. Darius had twofold ambition towards Pasargadae, wanting

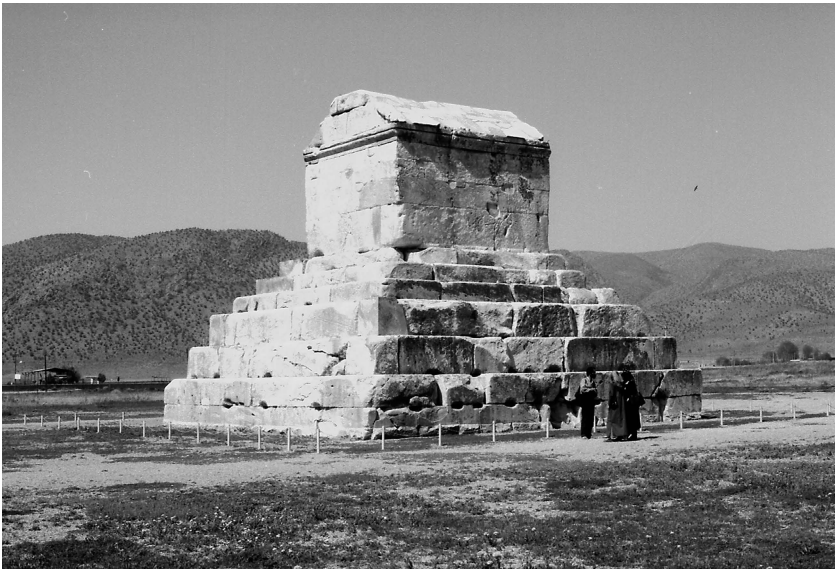

FIGURE 1.6 Pasargadae, Tomb of Cyrus, to which Alexander is said to have paid his respects in the 4th century (1998)

FIGURE 1.7 Pasargadae, Tall-i Takht facing the capital city in the plain (2006)

to distinguish his identity by building his own capital elsewhere, as well as maintaining dynastic continuity with Cyrus. He completed at least one important building in Pasargadae and contributed to the bas-reliefs of the doorjambs (Stronach, 1990:201).

In **Susa**, Darius transformed the northern part of the Elamite city by building an ensemble of palaces and courtyards in the Mesopotamian tradition. He also built an apadana-type grand audience hall in the north of the site dominating the area beneath (**Figure 1.8**). This building was damaged in a fire and was later at least partly rebuilt. It measures 109m × 109m and consists of a central hall measuring 88m × 85m and contains six rows of six columns of circa 20m high including the height of the double bull-headed capitals. On the north, east and west sides of the building there is a portico with two rows of six columns and an entrance. On the south side there are two accesses and a possible portico or hall. Most of the sculpted details and ceramic tiles found in Susa are displayed in the Louvre in Paris. It seems that the tiles were produced in three different types: in relief without glaze, flat and glazed and in relief and glazed. The development of these techniques permitted firing at a higher temperature using material with a different temperature of fusion to obtain a polychrome surface. The Palace of Susa is mentioned in the Old Testament (Esther 1:4–8) in relation to king Xerxes. There is another apadana situated below the hill, on the opposite side of the Chaour River. It is built on a podium 2m high and consists of a central hall measuring 34.6m × 37.5m with eight rows of eight columns. There are three porticos (two rows

FIGURE 1.8 Susa; fragment of a capital (1998)

of eight columns in the east portico, two rows of five columns in the north and south porticoes and two rows of six columns in the west portico). The walls were in mudbrick, rendered with layers of *kah-ghel* (clay and straw mortar) and gypsum. The finds include fragments of gypsum painted red on a blue background, stone fragments with floral carvings, fragments of bas-reliefs representing gift-bearers and stones with the name of Xerxes (Perrot 1349:51). There are traces of public buildings around the terrace, but no signs of residential buildings or streets have been found. As in other cases, the eclectic character of this architecture was a conscious choice and part of the construction program of the Achaemenid king. This is evident in Darius' so-called 'Susa Charter' (DSf) Inscription, where the materials, the building techniques, the workers and their provenances are listed. The Susa Charter resembles the earlier inscription of the Assyrian king, Nebuchadnezzar II (605–562), which lists the workers employed by the gods Shamash and Marduk in the restoration of Etemenanki Ziggurat. However, the tone of the Susa Charter is different. While Nebuchadnezzar II lists his workers according to their type of work and considers them as his subjects, Darius emphasizes the collaboration of the workers to a successful undertaking, implying a difference of approach.

There is relatively little archeological evidence of the Achaemenid presence in **Babylon**, except a small palace on the Kasr Hill in the north of the city. The plan of this palace is not in the Mesopotamian tradition. It measures 35m × 20m and consists of a simple but fairly wide stairway, a portico with a row of four columns and two square lateral towers. From the rectangular hypostyle hall (two rows of four columns with bell-shaped bases) there is access to two smaller side halls. The plan is half-way between the palaces of Pasargadae and Persepolis. It is datable to the early years of the reign of Darius, considering traces of a red floor, typical of this period. It is probable that this palace was built by Darius for his son Xerxes. The building was decorated with siliceous polychrome brick panels (*silicuses glacées*). The bricks were made of a white conglomeration of sand and lime and are different from those of the Neo-Babylonian period which are of fired clay. These bricks were probably imported from Persia since their manufacturing technique and use of colors resemble the bricks used in Susa and Persepolis. The glazed panels that represent the so-called 10,000 Immortals, i.e. the guards of Darius, resemble those in Susa and Persepolis. The bricks had decorations in the form of rosettes. There were bas-reliefs showing human figures in gray-black stone probably imported from Persia (Haerinck, 1987:141ff).

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2

PERSEPOLIS

Description

. . . glittering and pompous,
as it emerged from the hands of Darius and Xerxes,
we can well believe that no more
sumptuous framework of regal magnificence
was ever wrought by man.

(Curzon, 1966:153)

2.1. Territory, Settlements and Choice of Site

The most outstanding architectural work of Darius is undoubtedly **Persepolis**, which was constructed anew in the heart of Parsa, the homeland of the Achaemenids. Its construction started in c. 518, and while most of it was completed during the reigns of Darius and his son Xerxes, some buildings were still incomplete at the time when Alexander set fire to it in 330. Persepolis was particularly related to ceremonies and certain festivities, and its administrative importance was regional. Susa had the main administrative and political functions, Babylon was the 'winter capital' and Ecbatana, which was capital of the Medes, seems to have been the 'summer capital.' Persepolis was founded and kept for symbolic and dynastic reasons in an historically significant site (Herzfeld, 1941:222). It was a symbolic monument representing the key concepts that guided the policies of the Achaemenid Empire, which lasted from the 6th to the 4th centuries. The study of Persepolis helps us understand how these policies are reflected in the literary, architectural and urban solutions adopted in the design and construction of the site and how the royal palaces and tombs were built following an overall plan and precise criteria.

The Persepolis royal complex is located 57km northeast of the city of Shiraz in the heart of Parsa (Persia), the homeland of the Achaemenids, built on the western slopes of the holy Mehr (Rahmat) Mountain dominating the Marvdasht Plain. There are traces of Elamite settlements from 3500 in this plain. According to classical sources including Strabo, Arrian and Quintus Curtius Rufus, the plain was fertile, having a healthy climate, woodlands, fruit gardens, plenty of water and fields for grazing animals. These have been confirmed by Persepolitan clay tablets. The location chosen for the city of Persepolis was close to the existing city of Matezziš, which was historically and politically a significant area. Matezziš was already important during the reign of Cambyses (530–522). It had a cosmopolitan population and was where the Achaemenid elite used to live. It was situated on the main road, connecting Susa to the East across the Elamite settlements in the region, and was a popular destination for travelers arriving from Susa (Sumner, 1986:29). Matezziš was near Persepolis, and most workers who received rations in Matezziš were employed in Persepolis (Hallock, 1977:130).

2.2. The Terrace and Its Construction

The royal ensemble of Persepolis was constructed on a partly natural platform, the so-called Terrace, built by flattening the promontory and using the stone rubble for shaping the platform. The Terrace measures circa 450m × 280m. Its perimeter is 1,175m long, its corners are generally right angles and its height varies from 9 to 18 meters above the level of the Marvdasht Plain to its west. The Terrace wall is built of enormous stone blocks in dry masonry. The structures on the Terrace and those below to the south are orthogonal (**Figure 2.1**). The longitudinal axis is deviated some 19–20 degrees from the north-south orientation. It seems that the sunrise at the summer solstice is in the direction of the transversal axis, and the setting of prominent stars such as Sirius is on the prolongation of the same axis with the deviation of an astronomical order, and there was an eclipse of the sun on June 10 in 521, presumably the date of the beginning of the works on the Terrace. In substance, one of the functions of Persepolis may have been the observation of celestial bodied throughout the year and proclamation of these observations, especially of the sun course, to representatives of the Empire at a fixed time of the year in order to guarantee a uniform time reckoning in all its provinces. The supposition that representatives of various lands would come to Persepolis for the Nowruz festivities corresponds to this hypothesis although it seems that the New Year did not start with the vernal equinox during the Achaemenids, but corresponded to the summer solstice (Lentz-Marburg, 1972:289ff).

Diodorus Siculus (XVII. 71), in the second half of the 1st century, mentions three surrounding walls. Schmidt (1953:62) did not find enough evidence to confirm this statement, but the electromagnetic analyses carried out in the early 2000 have identified traces of walls and structures around the Terrace. Traces of earthen

FIGURE 2.1 Persepolis Royal Terrace, west view (ca. 1998)

(Iranian Cartographic Service)

fortification wall and rectangular bastions have been found on the mountain skirt on the north, east and southeast sides. The distance between the rectangular bastions is sometimes more than 80m. The wall, other than encircling the Terrace, also served to contain the service rooms and dwellings for the guards and attendants. Pope (1957:125–126) retains that although Persepolis was fortified it was not a fortification and that the eventual crenellations did not have a military function, but rather a symbolic significance in association with the concept of sacred mountain. Mountain was considered the first act of creation and a continuous source of fertility and life force in the Ancient East. The same significance could be attributed to other architectural forms, such as small pyramids or ziggurats. Herzfeld (1941:224ff), however, considers Persepolis a solid fortification, claiming to have seen some traces of the two walls in the plain.

There are various hypotheses on the construction date of the Terrace. Darius (522–486) probably founded Persepolis after his return from the Egyptian campaign in 518. Schmidt (1953:39) presumes that the building works had already

started in 520, contemporary with Bisotun, to be completed in circa 513. This assumption is because the Foundation Inscription of Persepolis on the south wall of the Terrace, (DPe), mentions the European Scythes as the last people conquered by Darius probably in the years between 516–511 (**Figure 2.2**). A similar construction work was done by Sargon II (721–705), king of Assyria and founder of Dur-Sharrukin (City of Sargon), or Khorsabad (Albenda, 1986:35ff). It seems that first the west wall of the Terrace was raised, and then the gaps were filled in to provide a flat surface. Therefore, some structures directly lay on the rock. Subsequently, the podiums of the first buildings were built. Parts of the Terrace wall, in the south and west, also function as a retaining wall for the platform. At the same time were dug the underground water canals and the eastern secondary canal for taking away floodwater from the mountain (Schmidt, 1953:40). These canals were excavated in the rock and connected to the vertical gutters inserted inside the walls of the buildings, indicating that there had been an initial general plan for the Terrace and its building in the **original project** of Darius. The south part of the Terrace was completed before the north part, which is still unfinished in some areas. Richard Haines, the architect who excavated in the 1930s, discovered traces of an extension of the Terrace wall some 18m westward in front of the Apadana (Schmidt, 1953:72). Considering level 00.00 at the foot of the Terrace by the Grand Stairway, the main levels of the Terrace, as surveyed by Schmidt in the 1930s, vary from the lowest in the south (+08.45—+09.3m, the Treasury and

FIGURE 2.2 Persepolis south wall, showing the walled-in first entrance of the Royal Terrace on the left, and the Foundation Inscription under a roof in the center (2016)

the Harem Complex) and the highest (+17.9—+18.02m, palaces of Darius and Xerxes) in the southwest. In the mid-level are the Apadana floor (+14.61m) and the Hundred Column Hall (+11.5m). It is interesting to note that there is a multiple of circa 3 meters in the level difference, which is circa 9-12-15-18, i.e., the level of the Treasury and the Harem is circa 9m, the entrance level extending to the Hundred Column Hall circa 12m, the level of Apadana and Central Palace circa 15m, and the level of the palaces of Darius and Xerxes circa 18m, measured from the ground level in front of the Grand Stairway (**Figure 2.3**).

Persepolis was a continuous building site for some two centuries. Large scale construction works required long periods of time due to the amount and complexity of the work and decorations. The following five **phases of construction** and modifications (Tilia, 1978:25ff) are based on the available archeological evidence and research. This takes into account the already completed structures as well as those in the course of construction.

In the **First Phase** during reign of Darius (522–486), the Terrace was constructed starting from the hillside on the east, building the north wall, to the large recession on the west where the Grand Stairway was later added, as well as the two entrances in the south wall. The masonry in the First Phase is mostly irregular with blocks of various dimensions. The characteristics of this period are the solutions for the internal corners, which are often carved in one single block, and blocks interlocked for consolidating the joints. The tools used are edged and pointed including edged hammers and flat chisels, as well as a so-called drafting hammer used for preparatory work and pointed chisels for dressing the edges. Pointed hammers or picks were used for the rough work and points or punches of various size for dressing the wall facing. The iron clamps, now missing, used for keeping the blocks of the upper rows in position, were embedded in lead set in dovetail-shaped hollows. Towards the end of the 6th century, the first phase of the Treasury and the south entrance were completed, while other structures were under construction. The trilingual Foundation Inscriptions of the Apadana (DPh) were written and deposited under its walls already before the Foundation Inscription of the Terrace or, at least, before the part of the text that lists the lands of the Empire (**DPe**).

The **Second Phase** coincides with the later period of Darius or early Xerxes (486–465). In this phase, the Terrace was extended circa 18m to the west along the Apadana front. In this period, the masonry is more regular (Tilia, 1978:25ff). The blocks are in various sizes and shapes but with more square and rectangular blocks. The tools used for working the blocks are still edged and pointed: edged hammers and flat chisels of different sizes as well as drafting hammer for working the joints between the blocks and the inner and outer corners of the wall. The clamps, mostly pillaged, were embedded in lead set in dovetail-shaped hollows. Sometimes there are no holes for the metal clamps in the hollows showing that only lead was used or that the work was not finished. The Central Palace, and the palaces of Darius and Xerxes, were completed in the early 5th century. This

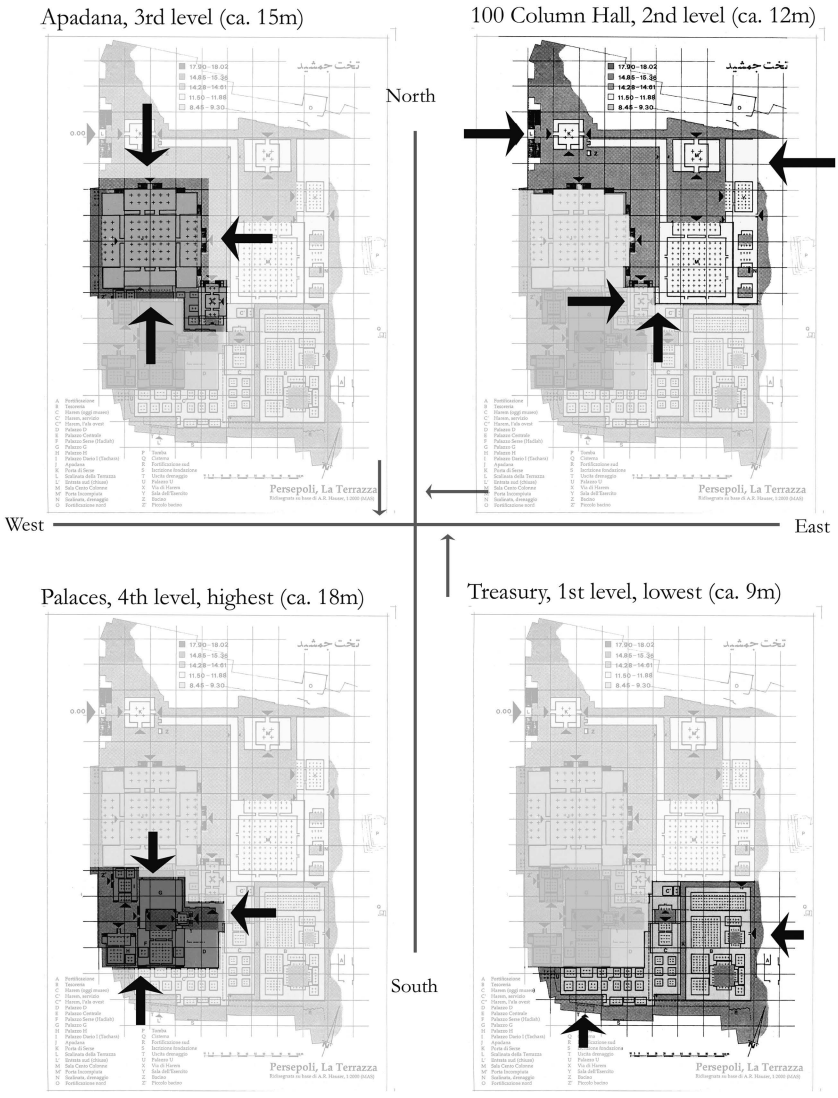

FIGURE 2.3 Main levels of the Terrace: the highest: palace area (below left), and the lowest: Treasury and the so-called Harem (below right); arrows show the main accesses

period also includes the two buildings on the site of Palace H and the second phase of the Treasury, as well as the ongoing constructions of the Apadana and the Gate of Xerxes and the Grand Stairway.

The **Third Phase** covers the middle period of Xerxes, including the construction of the Grand Stairway to become the main entrance and the Gate of Xerxes.

The stairway is not well connected to the original wall of the Terrace, thus causing damage. The blocks, seldom connected with iron clamps, have moved, and humidity has penetrated through the holes to the lower layers, damaging the façade of the stairway. The blocks are irregular, and tools used are edged and pointed as well as toothed. The clamp holes in the parapet block are longer and more rectangular than those in the First and Second phases (Tilia, 1978:26). In this phase, the Apadana, the Gate of Xerxes, the structure to the east and north of the Apadana courtyard, the Palace of Xerxes, the Harem Complex, and the third phase of the Treasury were completed; the entrance south of the wall of the Terrace was blocked. The ongoing construction involved Palace H and the Hundred Column Hall.

The **Fourth Phase** extends from the late Xerxes to Artaxerxes I (465–425) reigns, when the Terrace was extended to the west in the area in front of the Palace of Darius and its courtyard. The blocks of the Terrace wall are of various lengths, but almost all have the same height with regular courses, except the three upper layers, which are irregular, resembling the masonry in front of the Apadana and around the southwestern corner of the Terrace wall. Both edged and toothed tools are used on the contact surfaces between the blocks. The stone dressing on the Terrace edge is different from elsewhere. A pointed tool has been used on the upper part of the Terrace wall and a toothed tool for the borders of *anathyrosis* and edges of the joints (**Figure 2.4**). The original dovetail-shaped hollows in

FIGURE 2.4 Pasargadae, column shafts, showing *anathyrosis* stone carving technique for precision in the joints (1998)

some places are enlarged, implying that the blocks had belonged to a previous construction (Tilia, 1978:26ff). The Hundred Column Hall, its adjacent structures and Palace H were completed in this period. The construction of the north stairway of the Central Palace continued. The audience panels of the Apadana were replaced at this time.

The **Fifth Phase** covers the late Achaemenid or post-Achaemenid periods, when the south entrance near the Foundation Inscription was walled in with large stone blocks, many of which were reused. There are signs of toothed chisels but no iron clamps (Tilia, 1978:27). Artaxerxes III (359–338) built the western stairway of the Palace of Darius and Palace G. Ongoing constructions include the Unfinished Gate. There are changes in some parts of the west and south walls of the Terrace, which are minor in respect to the whole, implying that the general layout of the Terrace and its buildings was conceived in the initial period of its construction.

2.3. Functional Typology

The Terrace forms a complex that seems to have been planned in detail to accommodate various components. It is articulated in two principal sections: the public sector in the northern part and the private sector covering the southern part. The public part includes the ceremonial entrance and the two large audience halls, i.e., the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall. The private part consists of several palaces, the Treasury and other structures (**Figure 2.5**). All these components have been designed according to the same morphological scheme, within which the different components represent different typologies. More in detail, the different components include the following:

Public ceremonial area includes large representative buildings with basreliefs and inscriptions, such as the Grand Stairway, the Gate of Xerxes, the Apadana, the Hundred Column Hall and the Unfinished Gate and their courtyards. The Central Palace, in the center of the Terrace, is a key building connecting both vertically (change in the level of the Terrace) and horizontally the southern and northern parts of the Terrace.

Private ceremonial area including the palaces connected to the courtyard of the Harem Complex. These are smaller but representative spaces with an intimate ceremonial aspect probably for exclusive use.

Administrative, storage and safekeeping area, in the southeast of the Terrace, including the Treasury; the south wing of the Harem Complex consisting of rooms of different dimensions, probably an occasional residence or administrative and services.

Funerary zone, up on the hillside east of the Terrace, includes tombs and their adjacent ceremonial structures.

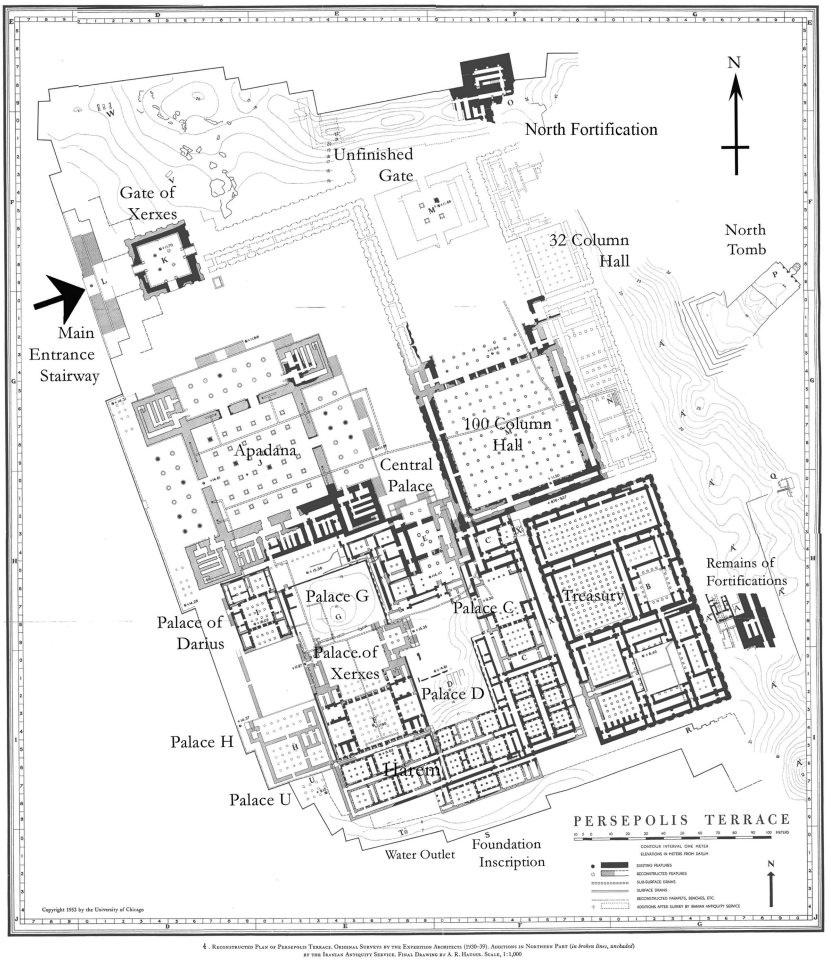

FIGURE 2.5 Persepolis, Royal Terrace (Schmidt, 1953)

(courtesy of Oriental Institute of Chicago)

2.4. Apadana Complex

The **Apadana Complex**, which dominates the view of the Terrace from the plain, can functionally be considered as one group including the Grand Stairway, the Gate of Xerxes, the Apadana, and the Central Palace. It is related to two courtyards in the north and east sides of the Apadana. Schmidt (1953:40) retains that Darius made the project for the Apadana, the Central Palace, and the Palace of Darius, and was the author of the first and second phases of the Treasury. The trilingual inscription on the Foundation Plates of the Apadana (DPh) was written and deposited already before the Foundation Inscription of the Terrace, or, at least, before the part of the text that lists the lands of the Empire (DPe). Trümpelmann (1974:165) is of the same opinion.

Grand Stairway

The **Grand Stairway** (0.0—+11.7m) is located on the northwest side of the Terrace as a later addition to the Terrace wall. It may be contemporary with the Gate of Xerxes considering their close connection. Although they are not bas-reliefs, it seems as if the stairs are carved rather than built. This is because sometimes several steps and the parapet are made of one single block of stone (**Figure 2.6**). The slope of the stairway is gentle, and many travelers, including Curzon (1966:151), climbed these steps on horseback, probably causing damage (**Figure 2.7**). Although Tilia (1978:26) dates the Grand Stairway to the reign of Xerxes (486–465), i.e. to the Third Phase of construction of the Terrace, it is possible that it had already been completed in the second part of the reign of Darius.

The Gate of Xerxes

The **Gate of Xerxes** (+11.7m) is located on the Terrace level facing the Grand Stairway. It consists of a square tetrastyle hall measuring 24.75m on each side, with three entrances on the west, east and south sides. There are no substantial remains of the south entrance, which, facing the north courtyard of the Apadana, was wider and higher than the other two. There are remains of the doorway jambs of the other two entrances that are circa 3.6m thick. The width of the south entrance

FIGURE 2.6 Persepolis, Grand Stairway, showing several steps and parapet carved in a single stone block (2004)

FIGURE 2.7 Persepolis, Grand Stairway and the Gate of Xerxes, northwest view (1997)

is 5.12m and is wider than the other two, implying that it was more important. On either side of the three entrances, as in Apadana entrances, there is a floral-pattern carved on the stone pivot of the door-pin on the floor. Tilia estimates the height of the eastern doorway as 10.05m, while Haines and Schmidt consider it to have been 11.78m (Zander, 1968:52). There are colossal winged bull antae at the eastern and western entrances. These colossal statues certainly amazed visitors, who interpreted them as a combination of various animals. The bulls of the eastern entrance have bearded human heads. No information has been found for the reason for having the human-headed bulls facing the mountain and the bull-headed ones facing the valley. These bulls have four legs instead of five as in the Assyrian sculpture (**Figure 2.8**). The five-legged animals corresponded with the Mesopotamian concept of integrating frontal and lateral bas-relief of the animal in the corner.

There is a trilingual inscription by Xerxes (XPa) incised in four examples on the upper parts of the jambs of the eastern and western doorways of the gate. This inscription confirms the construction by Xerxes: "By the favor of Ahuramazda, this Colonnade of All Lands I built. Much other good (construction) was built within this (city) Persepolis, which I built and which my father built. . . ." (XPa § 3) (Kent, 1950:148). It is most probable that Darius (522–486) started the construction and Xerxes (486–465) completed it, because Xerxes mentions his father in the inscription. Shahbazi (1976:12) proposes the years 480–470 for the

FIGURE 2.8 Persepolis, Gate of Xerxes, southwest view (2017)

completion of this building, considering that the inscriptions were incised at the completion of the works. Inside the Gate, the square hall is provided with a stone slab as a bench inserted in the walls with an equal height and depth of circa 52cm. The bench continued around the hall, and its continuity is interrupted by the three entrances and a stepped stone, slightly higher than the bench situated on the axis of the north wall. It has been suggested that this stone may have served as an altar or perhaps just as a seat for an important person during reception ceremonies, discussing the problems of the provinces—a reason for calling the structure the Gate of All Lands. The function of this structure could have been a gate or a law court with an administrative function for a high-ranking court official, or a space to receive the public. This type of function recurs in the history of Iran. It could have also been a monumental entrance for a ceremonial approach towards the Apadana (Curzon 1966:155ff). In fact, for Shahbazi (1976:16) the Gate was a waiting room.

Until the 1960s only the two western columns of the four columns of the hall were standing, and many fragments were scattered on the ground. These fragments, together with new stone, were used to restore the southeastern column by the Italian team of IsMEO during their 1966–1972 restoration works. Each column, more than 16.5m high, consists of five architectural elements: the bell-shaped column base, the torus, the cylindrical shaft in stone blocks of various sizes with 48 flutings, the floral part and the capital. The capitals are in a composite order with

two kneeling bulls similar in form, but not in dimension, to the capitals of the columns of the north portico and the central hall of the Apadana, the Unfinished Gate and the Hundred Column Hall. The column bases are similar to those of the porticos of the Apadana, but with a different floral design. The main beams of the roof rest on the back of the capital bulls, sustaining the secondary beams.

Apadana Courtyard

The **courtyard** in the north and east of the Apadana is the most representative space of the Terrace due to the presence of the Apadana stairways and the stairway of the Central Palace in the south. Trümpelmann (1974:166) attributes the layout of the courtyard to Darius based on the space concept and its function. Curzon (1966:160ff) admires the ingenuity and the practical wisdom of the architect in the design and functional distribution of the Apadana, although in his visit in 1891 only the northern stairway was visible. He assigns a ceremonial role to the building and compares the audience scene on the stairways to the Panathenaic procession depicted on the frieze of the Parthenon of Athens. Although the significance of the bas-reliefs should be metaphorically understood, these representations could suggest the type of activities that might have taken place in this building. Various elements of the Apadana bas-reliefs were copied and adapted for the façades of other buildings in Persepolis maintaining their significance according to guidelines established by Darius.

In the 1930s, Schmidt cleared out the interior and the area surrounding a stone **water tank** in the north courtyard of the Apadana near the southeast corner of the Gate of Xerxes. This water tank measures 568 × 485 × 200cm (Shahbazi 1976:17), and it has the same orientation as the Terrace. The original level of the terrain around the tank has not yet been determined, but Schmidt (1953:68) presumes that at least for access to the water tank, the ground level around it should have been higher than the floor level of the hall of the Gate of Xerxes, because the border of the tank was 194cm above that level. Furthermore, the external surface of the tank, at least in one area, had been scraped as high as 169cm. This implies that some kind of steps or ramp could have been around the tank (**Figure 2.9**). On the external surface there are fragments of cavetto decorations similar to those of the cornices above the doorways in the buildings. Inside and on the east side of the water tank there are two narrow ramps ascending from the north and south to a small area on the inner edge of the tank. The western part of the tank is 120cm deep and the eastern part is 46cm in the two lowest lateral points of the ramps in the north and south. Such configuration, which is a small copy of a double-ramped stairway, surely had a significance or function, for example for pouring some kind of liquid on the ramps. Ker Porter (1821:I.594) retains that the underground canals filled the water tank, while Schmidt correctly believes it was manually filled. This is confirmed since there are no openings inside the tank and there is no connection with a canal, which runs beneath more or less from

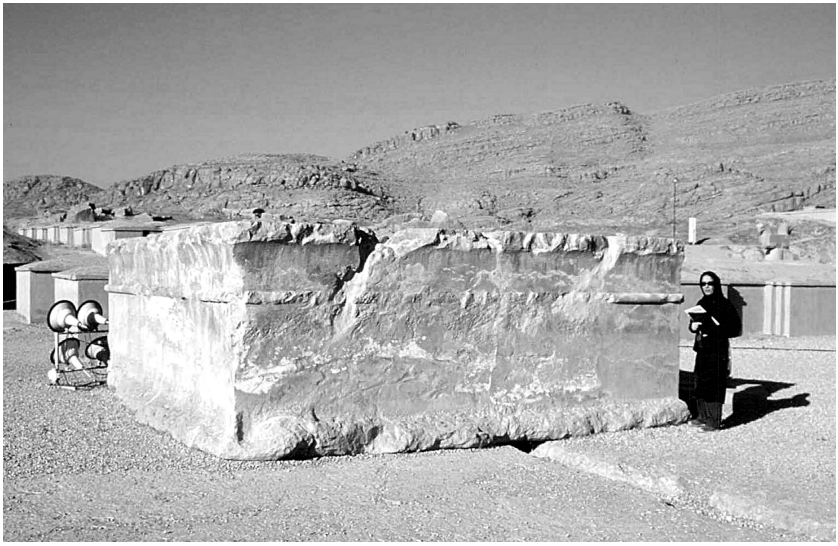

FIGURE 2.9 Persepolis, stone water tank in the northern courtyard of the Apadana (1998)

(Courtesy of Jukka Jokilehto)

north-northwest to south-southeast to join a branch of a canal that runs between the Gate of Xerxes and the Apadana.

Shahbazi (1976:17) proposes various interpretations for the function of this water tank. It may have been a small pond with fountain, connected with underground canals for watering a garden in the courtyard of the Apadana or a tank for providing water for the horses of the guests, according to Tilia, or a container for sacred water used in certain rituals for the purification of royal guests, as suggested by Roaf. Shahbazi, however, does not find any of these hypotheses satisfactory and notes that there are no connections with the canals. Considering the importance of the location of the water tank, i.e., in the courtyard of the Apadana and immediately after the Gate of Xerxes, it seems inappropriate to think that horses would have arrived there. The aim was rather to provide a slow pace during the ceremonies while climbing the stairs. Therefore, the hypothesis of the use of the water for the horses should be discarded. In fact, the traces of the cavetto cornices on the external border of the tank indicate a ceremonial character. It is more probable that sacred water or some special liquid had been kept there for ritual use. This hypothesis is based on the form of the small ramps inside the water tank. Furthermore, the fact that the tank was not connected with the canal underneath could mean that it contained a liquid different from water. Due to the considerable height of the edge of the water tank, there had surely been an architectural solution, such as perimeter steps, to give access to the tank.

The Apadana

The **Apadana** (+14.61 doorway sill of the west entrance) is the tallest and the most imposing of the buildings in Persepolis, still dominating the Marvdasht Plain where the city was once located. Constructed on a podium 2.6m high, it consists of a central square hall; three porticos in the north, east and west sides; a wing for rooms and services to the south; and a square 'tower' on each of its four corners. The west portico faces the Plain. There are two identical ceremonial stairways, one on its north side and the other on the east side. The structural typology of the Apadana is presumably the result of a development in Iranian highlands architecture, where early hypostyle examples are found from the 9th century. The columns of the hall are in a composite order different from those in the east and west porticos but are similar to the columns of the north portico and the Gate of Xerxes. The column bases are composed of two overlaid square stone blocks. The fluted column shafts rest on tori. The height of the columns of the central hall is circa 19m. The central hall was provided with five windows on the north wall and six on the east and west walls while the south wall had five niches. The columns of the east and west porticos are in gray stone, while those in the central hall and in the north portico are in black limestone. The black stone is more used in the constructions of Xerxes and his successors and rarely in earlier buildings. The capitals are composite, and the column bases in the central hall have pedestals, while the column bases in the north portico are bell-shaped, ornate with flower petals, similar to those in the west portico (**Figure 2.10**).

FIGURE 2.10 Persepolis, the Apadana, south view (2005)

The kneeling double-head bull capitals of the north portico columns are similar to those in the central hall and in the Gate of Xerxes, having a decorative part connecting them to the column shaft, while the east portico capitals are only kneeling double-head bulls, and the west portic**o** capitals are kneeling double-head griffons. Both porticos lack the decorative part connecting the capitals to their column shafts. The column bases of all three porticoes are bell-shaped but have different floral decorations. It seems that the north portico of the Apadana had an important ceremonial role and the throne was probably positioned between the two openings in the south wall, on the axis of the hall, as in the central hall of the Apadana of Susa, where traces of the position of the throne were found on the floor (Stronach 1985:441). In Persepolis, a major part of the floor rests directly on the rock; therefore, there was no need to provide a foundation for the throne. In each of the four corners of the Apadana there are structures of similar square plan, the so-called tower, of which only the foundations of the eastern ones still exist. These towers contained rooms for guards and services of various sizes. There are traces of antae statues on either side of the entrances to the guardrooms in the porticoes. The south wing of the Apadana contained some rooms and corridors, giving direct access to the palace area to the south through a portico.

The building is 112m long on each side, and the square central hall measures 60.5 × 60.5m. (As a comparison, the Apadana of Susa measures 109m × 109m, and its central hall is 85 × 88m.) The distance between the column axes is circa 8.6m. The ratio of the diameter of the column to the distance between the columns is one sixth, while in Pasargadae this ratio is slightly over one fourth and in Karnak is one half (Godard 1962:126). The Central Hall consists of 6 × 6 columns with direct access to three porticos, each with 2 × 6 columns, for a total of 72 columns (**Figure 2.11**). Only 14 columns are still standing: 3 in the central hall, one in the north portico, 5 in the east portico and 5 in the west portico. The first column to the north, from the outer row of the columns of the east portico, was restored in the early 1970s. At least 20 of the original 72 columns of the Apadana were still standing at the beginning of the 17th century AD, i.e., 20 in 1619, 19 in 1627, 18 in 1677, 17 in 1694, 15 in 1787 and 13 in 1841 (Shahbazi, 1976:19).

The thickness of the external walls is 5.32m. The east and west walls each have one opening for the entrance, while the north and south walls have two openings. The dimensions of the mudbricks are 33 × 33 × 13cm. Schmidt (1953:72ff) discovered that the floor of the Apadana was covered with a layer of clay mortar, 3–5cm thick, and a greenish-gray finishing plaster similar to the plaster on the walls. In some areas, the floor was directly on the rock, which was the nucleus of the Apadana podium, and the irregularity was flattened with pieces of stone and mortar. Haines, the architect collaborator of Schmidt, had noticed that the greenish-gray layer of the walls continued under the floor, implying that the walls were plastered prior to paving the floor. The doorsills were paved with stone slabs with a lotus design probably covered with carpets (Koch, 1997:37). The **fire** set by Alexander was particularly devastating in the southeast corner of the central

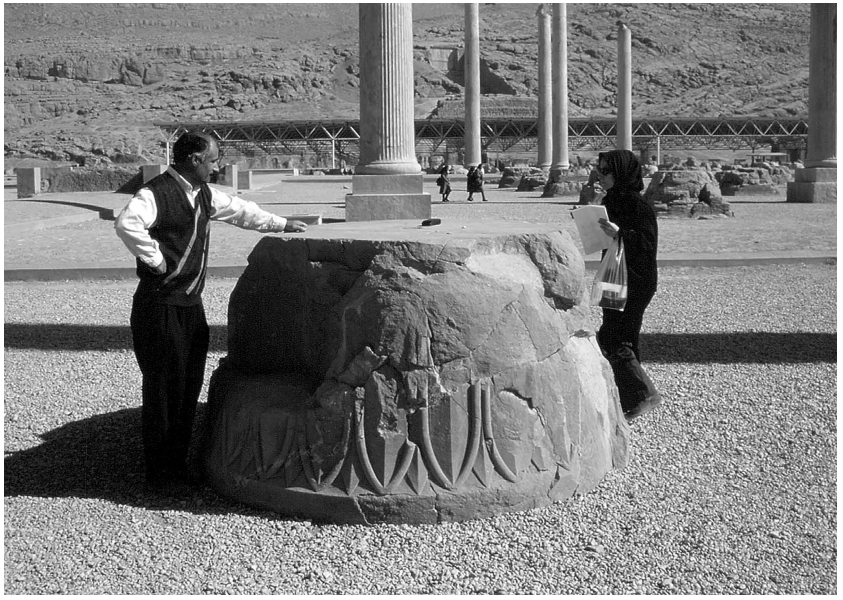

FIGURE 2.11 The Apadana, a column base in the western portico (1998)
(Courtesy of Jukka Jokilehto)

hall considering the burned brick facing and the floor. This was probably due to the presence of combustible material in this area as in some rooms of the Treasury. Tilia (1972:151ff) discovered an original floor paved with fired bricks (32.5 × 32.5 × 6–8cm) on the inner ramp of the eastern stairway in front of the portico. The floor seemed to be original until 12.5m from the last step, while the area to the north seemed to have been redone with irregular fragments of different size and forms. Since the ashes were preserved under these bricks (a layer of ca. 15cm), it is probable that this area of paving dates to a period immediately after the fire, otherwise the ashes would have been lost.

The **construction** of the Apadana was among the first to be initiated in Persepolis. We know from its Foundation Inscription that Darius founded the Apadana before 513, while Xerxes' trilingual inscription (XPg) indicates that he built additions to it. (XPg § 1): "Saith Xerxes, the Great King: By the favor of Ahuramazda, King Darius, my father, built and ordered (to be built) much good (construction). By the favor also of Ahuramazda I added to that construction and built further (buildings) . . ." (Kent, 1950:150). Xerxes, however, does not mention Darius' name in his trilingual inscription (XPb) on the façades of the Apadana stairways, indicating that these were carved and completed after Darius' death in 486. (XPb § 3) in Old Persian: "What has been built by me here, and what has been built by me at a distance (from here), all that by the favor of Ahuramazda I built." This implies that the construction of the Apadana lasted more than 30 years. Xerxes

had a significant role in carrying out and completing the building works. In addition to the inscription, the greenish-gray plaster, on the walls and floor, is also unequivocal proof of the interventions of Xerxes. We know that the pavements of buildings of Darius generally have a brownish-red color.

In 1933, a trilingual foundation inscription was discovered in two stone boxes each buried under the first row of the mud-brick wall in the northeast and southeast corners of the central hall of the Apadana (classified as DPh). Each stone box contained a gold and a silver plate with identical text; four gold and two silver coins were found under the stone box in the northeast corner, while there were four gold and three silver coins in the southeast corner (Schmidt, 1953:110). The Mesopotamian foundation deposits hardly ever included coins. The precious materials of the Apadana foundation deposit and (DPh) text aim to sanctify and protect the king and the Empire (Nimchuk, 2010:150, 224). In (DPh) there is no mention of the European Scythian campaign of Darius in 513, while it is mentioned in the Foundation Inscription of Persepolis (DPe) on the south wall of the Terrace. This implies that the foundations of the Apadana were laid prior to the Scythian campaign, that the construction of the walls above the inscription plates had already started, and that these works had been carried out before the incision of the Foundation Inscription of Persepolis (Schmidt, 1953:70). Moreover, Xerxes' (XPb) Inscription on the Apadana stairways presents him as the builder; therefore, according to the Foundation Inscription of the Apadana the construction of the Apadana can be dated to 514. Stronach (1985:443), however, dates the beginning of the construction to 515 and considers the writing of the Foundation Inscription prior to 513 but its positioning under the southeast corner of the building at the end of the 6th century. This is based on dating the coins deposited with the inscription plates. Fragments of the (XPg) Old Persian inscription of Xerxes, discovered in the east courtyard of the Apadana by Herzfeld and near the northeast tower by Schmidt (1953:71), confirm that Xerxes had completed the works started by Darius. This inscription was on glazed bricks and presumably decorated the east façade of the northeast and southeast corner towers of the Apadana. It was on 35 whole bricks measuring 38 × 9cm each, as well as on 14 half bricks (Shahbazi, 1976:25). Herzfeld made an arbitrary composition of these bricks, measuring 114 × 137cm, and sent it to the Oriental Institute in Chicago.

The name *apadana* is in analogy with a similar building, i.e., the palace of Artaxerxes II, in Susa, for which this word has been used. While in Old Persian the two terms for 'palace,' *hadish* and *tachara*, could have similar meanings, the word *apadana* seems to have been used in a more specific and restricted meaning (Stronach 1985:433). In fact, words referring to 'building' are not very clear in the inscriptions. Old Persian words such as *hadish*, *apadana* and *tachara* are translated as 'palace.' It seems, however, that *hadish* is the general term for 'palace,' and when used in a specific way it means 'seat of the authority.' With *apadana*, both in Persepolis and Susa, it is referred to an open and public space to install tents. It is, however, of Iranian origin and could drive from *a-p-d-a-n* (modern *abdan*),

meaning water reservoir in Old Persian. This word in the Achaemenid archeological context could mean "plane of water" used by the Iranian architects to define flat surfaces (Lecoq, 1997:115). It may also relate to Anahita, the water divinity (Razmjou, 2010:160ff).

The origin of the word *tachara* is not clear. In the trilingual inscription of Artaxerxes II in Susa (A^2Sd) for 'palace' the term *hadish* in the Old Persian version and *tachara* in the Elamite and Babylonian versions is used (Lecoq, 1997:274). *Apadana* has been used in four inscriptions: the first, (D^2Sa), probably of Darius II (424–405), in Old Persian is on the column bases in Susa. It is, however, so mutilated that its belonging to Darius II is not so certain (Lecoq 1997:268). The other three belong to Artaxerxes II (405–359) his son and successor, and are incised on the column bases among which, one trilingual (A^2Sa § 2) is from Susa, and the other two, (A^2Ha § 2) trilingual and (A^2Hb) in Old Persian, are from Hamadan (Ecbatana), although there is not yet any evidence of such a building in Hamadan:

D^2Sa "This palace [*apadana*], of stone in its column(s), Darius the Great King built"
A^2Sa § 2 "This palace [*apadana*] Darius [I] my great-great-grandfather built"
A2Ha § 2 "By the favor of Ahuramazda, Anahita and Mitra, this palace [apadana] I built"
A^2Hb "This palace [*apadana*] of stone in its column(s), Artaxerxes the Great king built"

Nevertheless, the Old Persian term *apadana* is not used in the inscriptions of Darius and Xerxes. Archeologists employ this word to denote a square hypostyle hall with porticos and corner towers. Schmidt (1953:70) notes that *apadana* is found in the inscriptions of Artaxerxes II in Susa and Ecbatana, while the term used for this type of hall on the Persepolitan clay tablets is 'hypostyle hall.' Stronach (1985:443) retains that this word should not be used to describe every hypostyle hall whether it be Mede or Achaemenid and that it should be used only for those buildings with plan and characteristics similar to the Apadana of Susa.

Monumental Stairways

The two **monumental stairways** of the Apadana have significant bas-reliefs for understanding the concept of the Achaemenid Empire and the symbolic significance of Persepolis. The two stairways are similar but mirror-like in reference to the northeast corner tower. This means that, for example, if on the northern stairway the Old Persian version of the (XPb) inscription is carved on the west frame and the other two languages are on the east frame, on the eastern stairway, instead, the Old Persian version of the same inscription is incised on the south frame and the other two versions are on the north frame. The construction was promoted before

Darius' death (Tilia, 1972:302), although it seems that the façades of the stairways had been completed in the early years of Xerxes' reign or, at least, before his Greek campaign circa 480. The northern stairway has unanimously been considered earlier than the eastern stairway. This is based on study of the composition and style of the bas-reliefs. The refined stylistic alignments of the sculptures of the northern stairway suggest the first years of the works of Darius in Persepolis (Root, 1985:108).

The eastern stairway is 81.7m long, and the northern stairway is 81.67m. Each stairway has four ramps connecting the 2.6m high podium to the courtyards. The northern stairway is carved on the rock and has been more exposed to atmospheric agents. The eastern stairway was unearthed in the 1930s and therefore is better preserved. Traces of polychrome were found on the bas-reliefs (Lerner, 1971:19–35). The main theme of the bas-reliefs of the stairways is the representation of 23 delegations of the peoples of the Empire, bringing gifts to the king depicted with his court. The central section of the composition currently consists of panels illustrating eight guards, four on each side facing a central blank inscriptions frame (**Figure 2.12**).

However, in 1936, Schmidt (1939:20ff) discovered two large sculpted panels under the porticos of the northern courtyard of the Treasury. During the IsMEO works, Tilia (1972:191ff; 1978:173ff) found out that the original position of these panels had been the central part of the Apadana stairways. Both panels show the

FIGURE 2.12 The Apadana, northern stairway, central panel, present state (2006)

audience scene of the king addressing his peoples. The king faced west on the northern and south on the eastern stairways. The nobles, horses, chariots and soldiers are carved behind the king on three horizontal rows of 90cm high each, as well as animals and plants with metaphoric significance (**Figure 2.13**). The original panels were unearthed in the southern and eastern porticos of the northern courtyard of the Treasury in Schmidt's excavations (1939:20ff). Both panels are 2.6m high and identical, except one is the mirror image of the other. The southern panel, which is in the Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran, is composed of three stone blocks, while the eastern panel is in a single block and is in situ in the courtyard (**Figure 2.14**). The design of the bas-reliefs dates to the reign of Darius. Normally, in Achaemenid architecture, the central framed area was assigned to Old Persian inscriptions, while the Elamite and Babylonian versions were incised on the lateral frames. This was not the case of the Apadana stairways because in the original layout there was no central frame for inscriptions due to the audience scene. Therefore, there were only two lateral frames for inscriptions.

There have been different hypotheses on the identification of the figures in the audience scenes, whether Darius the king and his son Xerxes or Xerces the king and his firstborn son, crown prince Darius. This latter hypothesis is based on the study of the Achaemenid crowns because Darius' crown has crenellations while Xerxes and later kings wear a taller cylindrical crown. It is known that Xerxes and his son Darius were both assassinated as part of a court complot. It was first believed that Darius, son of Xerxes, was put to death by his brother Artaxerxes I, who accused him of having assassinated their father. Therefore, his portrait was probably no longer welcomed on the Apadana stairways. Consequently, Artaxerxes I ordered the removal and transfer of the panels to the Treasury. We now know that both Xerxes and his son Darius were victims of a court complot and that Artaxerxes I put their assassin to death. Tilia (1972:206) initially dated the replacement to the reign of Artaxerxes III but later (Tilia 1974:129) accepted the date of Artaxerxes I for the replacement of the panels. Root (1985:109) also agrees that the substitution was carried out by Artaxerxes I, presuming that the blank inscription frame may indicate that the change took place later when the king was not much interested in reminding the posteriors about his contribution to the building. Cahill (1985:396), however, does not find such a personal reason enough to carry out the elaborate and costly work of replacing the panels. The real cause of this replacement could have been due to a probable change in the ceremonies from the period of Darius and Xerxes or in the function of Persepolis in general, such as the introduction of funerary function by constructing the royal tombs on the mountain skirt (Tilia 1972:207, 1974:133).

In fact, the choice of the main courtyard of the Treasury for installing the panels may also indicate a more direct connection between the Treasury and the Apadana. In substance, the reason for the substitution of the panels could not have only been Artaxerxes I's dislike for the original panels considering the care taken in their transfer to the Treasury since only some parts of the borders are damaged. Therefore, the panels may have had special significance and were thus kept in a secure place like the Treasury. It is also possible that the Achaemenid kings came

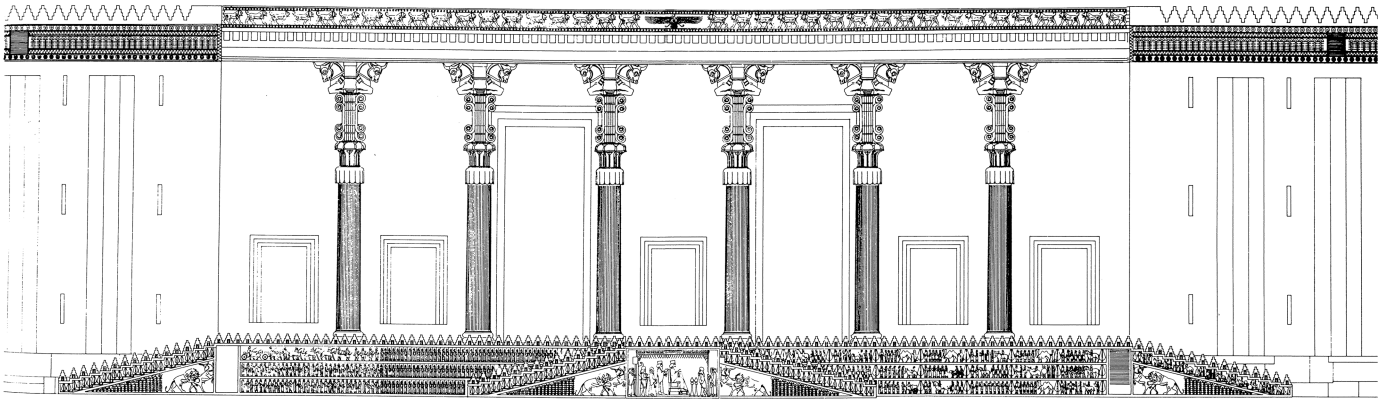

FIGURE 2.13 Apadana northern stairway in its original sculptural composition

(After M.C. Root, The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art: Essays on the Creation of an Iconography of Empire (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1979), fig. 11, with permission of Margaret Cool Root)

FIGURE 2.14 The Treasury, north courtyard, eastern portico, Apadana audience panel after Tilia's restoration (2012)

less frequently to Persepolis. For example, Ctesias, the Greek doctor at the court of Darius II and Artaxerxes II for 20 years, never visited Persepolis. Furthermore, the fact that Artaxerxes II and Artaxerxes III built their tombs in Persepolis and not in Naqsh-i Rustam could indicate a change in the function of Persepolis. The similarity of the bas-reliefs of the actual panels of the Apadana stairways to those of north stairway of the Central Palace and the stairway of the Palace of Artaxerxes I on the site of Palace H further suggests that the replacement may have been carried out by the order of Artaxerxes I. Tilia (1972:191ff), in fact, considers the present stairway panels to be of lower quality.

The Central Palace

The **Central Palace** (+14.4 south portico) is situated to the southeast of the Apadana in the center of the Terrace and for this reason is called the Central Palace. It is built on a podium 2.6m high from the courtyard, like the podium of the Apadana. It has a symmetrical plan in reference to its north-south axis and consists of a tetrastyle square central hall measuring 15.46m on each side (Schmidt, 1953:116) with three entrances (north, south and east sides) and a room on the east and west sides. To the north of the hall, there is a portico flanked by several spaces. This portico is linked to the eastern courtyard of the Apadana by a four-ramped double monumental stairway and through a corridor to the south wing of the Apadana. There is also a portico to the south of the hall with two lateral small porticoes. Both porticoes are provided with a perimeter bench inserted in the wall.

A small single-ramped stairway, in black stone and seven steps, was situated in the center of the south portico, linking it to a courtyard at a higher level (+15.35). This stairway is presently in the Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran, and its bas-reliefs show food-carrying attendants. The small porticoes each had two columns with double-horned feline capitals like those in the east portico of the Apadana (Schmidt, 1953:121). The north portico had bell-shaped column bases, composite capitals with floral elements and double human-headed bulls (Schmidt, 1953:112).

To the west of the palace there is a series of rooms, including one tetrastyle, three bistyles and corridors. The east side of the palace is also in ruins. It is possible to verify that the east entrance of the central hall gave access to the rooms to the north of the Harem Complex of Xerxes (+9.3m) and to the southwest corner of the Hundred Column Hall (+11.5m). Darius had probably designed a large stairway to give access to this part of the Central Palace, of which a fragment still exists. However, this unexpectedly ends up in a space with no exit. It seems that the eastern part of the Central Palace was reconstructed later when, according to Trümpelmann (1974:169), the Gate of Xerxes had substituted the function of this palace as an audience hall.

The bas-reliefs on the doorway jambs of the eastern entrance depict the king on the throne and the crown prince under a baldachin (**Figure 2.15**). The king may represent Darius together with Xerxes or Xerxes with an attendant. Tilia and Farkas agree with Schmidt's hypothesis identifying the king and the crown prince as Darius and Xerxes while von Gall and Calmeyer sustain that these figures are Xerxes and Artaxerxes I. The dais is supported by three horizontal rows of the delegations of 28 lands. The figures face the hall as if they were entering the hall from the eastern doorway to go out through the other two doorways to the southern and northern porticos. Therefore, Trümpelmann (1974:169) retains that the eastern doorway should have been the main entrance. The doorway jambs of the northern and southern entrances show the king with two attendances facing outside (**Figure 2.16**). Above the scene is carved the winged circle with a bust resembling the king in the middle. This is the personification of the Royal Glory (Shahbazi, 1976:61) or of Ahuramazda (Root, 1979:97).

The northern stairway, presumably dating to Artaxerxes I (465–425), has two double ramps with a total of 30 steps on each side (**Figure 2.17**). The comparative examination of the style of the bas-reliefs of this stairway with the Persepolitan bas-reliefs of established date (Nicholls & Roaf, 1977:148ff) and the diversity of the stonework indicate a later date for this stairway, probably substituting a more modest stairway from Darius' period. Therefore, this stairway was built after the stairway of the Apadana since the east wall of the Apadana continues behind the stone wall in the northwest of the Central Palace, indicating that the stairway is not an integral part of the building. It is also built in the gray stone, different from the black stone of the portico, but similar to the stone of the stairway of the Palace of Artaxerxes I on site H.

The clamp beds in the stonework are not double dovetail shape but of the narrow rectangular form of the later type, and the sculptural work of the stairway is different from that of the Apadana. This indicates that the bas-reliefs of

FIGURE 2.15 Central Palace, king on throne entering the Palace, southern jamb of the eastern doorway (2006)

the northern stairway were likely carved after those of the Apadana stairway. Although stylistically different, they resemble the present central scene of the Apadana stairways, which show the guards; therefore, they seem to be contemporary. Furthermore, when comparing the workmanship of the northern stairway of the Central Palace with the works of Artaxerxes III's period, such as the

FIGURE 2.16 Central Palace, south portico, bas-reliefs of the king leaving the Palace on the south (left) and north (middle) doorways (2016)

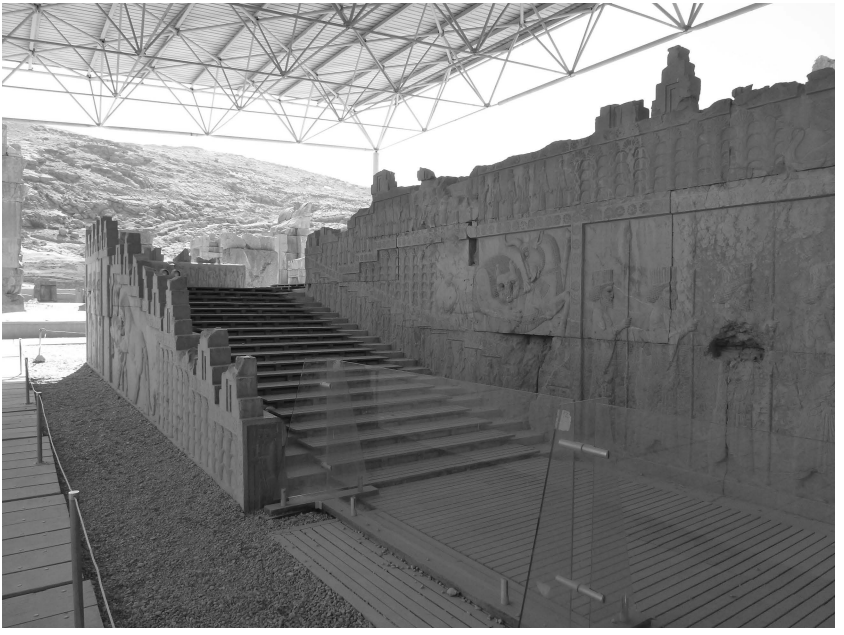

FIGURE 2.17 Central Palace, northern stairway, west view (2016)

western stairway of the Palace of Darius, it seems that this stairway is earlier (Nicholls & Roaf, 1977:150ff). The differences lay in the proportions, imprecisions and flat carving. The only bas-relief with a confident date belongs to the period of Artaxerxes I, in to the Palace of Xerxes-Artaxerxes I on the site of

Palace H (Tilia 1972:265). The orientation of the bas-reliefs of the Central Palace are (**Figure 2.18**):

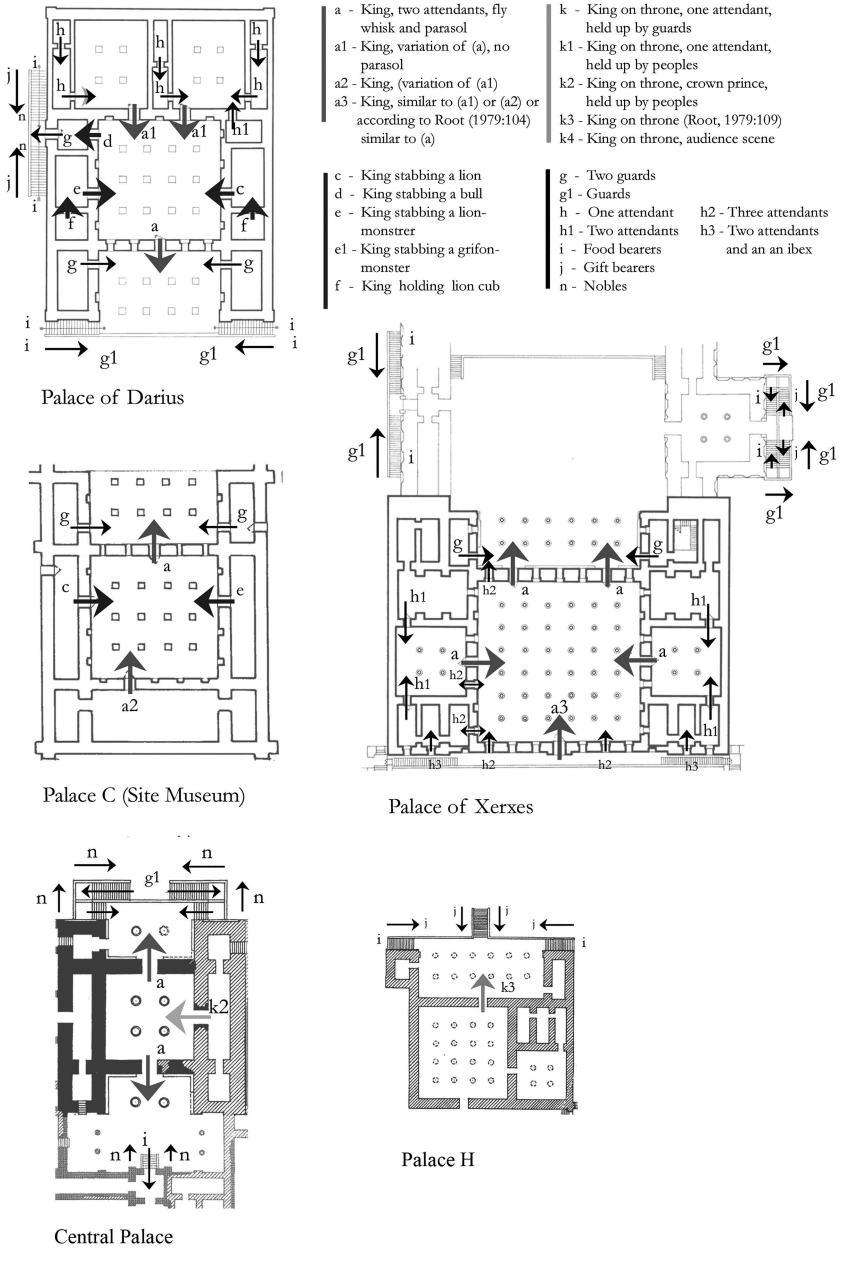

FIGURE 2.18 Persepolis palaces, orientation of bas-relief figures

Northern and southern doorways (**a**): king, two attendants with flywhisk and parasol moving towards porticos; eastern doorway (**k2**): king on throne held by peoples, with crown prince moving towards the hall; northern stairway (**g1** and **n**): nobles and guards climbing stairs; southern stairs (**g1** and **i**): guards and food bearers ascending stairs (the southern stairs are in Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran).

There have been different suggestions on the name and function of the Central Palace, such as a private oratory, a propylaeum, just a palace or a nodal point on the Terrace connected to the Apadana and a passageway for the king joining the ceremonial area in the north to the palace area in the south of the Terrace (Krefter, 1973:160). This is because it has three entrances, contrary to other palaces that have one main entrance. The Central Palace certainly had a ceremonial function due to its central position and the representation of the audience scene on its eastern doorway jambs. The typology of the Central Palace resembles the Gate of Xerxes and the Unfinished Gate; therefore, it is not simply a monumental entrance to the ceremonial area but also a type of antechamber for the king or for a high-ranking official during audience (Trümpelmann 1974:165ff). This palace is thus witness to an old tradition, where the gate was often used for administrative functions of judicial character.

It is possible that Darius, by building the Central Palace next to his palace and the Apadana, had intended to assign to this building certain necessary functions in addition to the function of a monumental crossroads connecting the south part of the Terrace to the north. An architectural element that could confirm this hypothesis is a bench, in the south and north porticos, similar to that of the Gate of Xerxes. Furthermore, the representation of the king on throne with the crown prince and the peoples of the Empire on the eastern doorway jambs indicates a public function for this building.

This building has been considered a monumental gate called the Tripylon because of its three entrances (Herzfeld, 1941:229; Ghirshman, 1957:267; Porada, 1965:152; Trümpelmann, 1974:169), the Gate of the Kings (Krefter, 1971:61ff) and the Council Hall (Schmidt, 1953:107) because of the bas-reliefs depicting nobles on its northern stairway. Curzon (1966:176) is probably the first to call it the Central Palace, followed by Root (1979:97), who specifies that in the Ancient Near East the gate and the courthouse or the audience hall could have had the same functions. It can also be recalled that the existence of the south entrance for the Terrace in its early building phase near the Foundation Inscription implies that the Central Palace could have well served as a provisional gate, a function which was later transferred to the Gate of Xerxes.

The dating of the Central Palace is rather complex since there is no inscription to indicate its builder. It has been dated to the period of Darius due to its close connection to the Apadana (Schmidt, 1953:40, 107) or because it is on the limit of the eastern border of Darius' project for the Terrace (Trümpelmann, 1974:169). Root (1979:100) believes that the Central Palace was designed during the reign of Darius and the bas-reliefs of the doorway jambs were carved towards the end

of his reign and that the Apadana, the Palace of Darius and the Central Palace were conceived as part of a single architectural composition, in which the spatial relationship between these buildings cannot be merely a coincidence. All these data seem to sustain this hypothesis, especially in case of the identification of the king and the crown prince as Darius and Xerxes.

2.5. Hundred Column Hall (+11.5)

The **Hundred Column Hall** is the largest covered hall in Persepolis (**Figure 2.19**). The hundred columns of this building have given it its name, although it has also been called the Throne Hall due to the image of the enthroned king on the doorway jambs of the north and south walls (**Figure 2.20**). Although there are no inscriptions on the bas-reliefs to indicate the date of this building, the (A^1Pb) inscription of Artaxerxes I in Babylonian was found on a stone slab (35 × 35 × 7.5cm) in the southeast corner of the hall testifying: "Of this palace, my father King Xerxes laid the foundations; with the protection of Ahuramazda, I, King Artaxerxes, built it and realized it." This indicates that Xerxes and his son Artaxerxes I (486–465–425) built this Hall.

The building has a symmetrical plan, measuring 68.5 × 68.5m, consisting of a large hypostyle square hall with 10 × 10 columns and a north portico (+11.64m) with 2 × 8 columns. The portico faces a courtyard on the axis of the Unfinished Gate to its north and has two lateral rooms, probably for guards. Two enormous sculptures of guardian bulls constituted the antae of the portico. The bull of the west anta was recomposed and restored in the 1970s (**Figure 2.21**), while the head of the bull of the east anta is in the Museum of the Oriental Institute of Chicago (Tilia,

FIGURE 2.19 The Hundred Column Hall, southwest corner view (2016)

FIGURE 2.20 The Hundred Column Hall, southeastern doorway, king held by the peoples (2004)

1972:50). Each wall of the hall has two doorways; the north wall has seven window openings and two niches, while the other walls have nine niches each. The frames of the windows and niches are in stone, but the walls, being in mudbricks, are lost. The two doorways of the north wall that open to the portico are the only ones in black stone and are higher than the others. There are long and narrow rooms on three sides of the hall; only the rooms on the east side do not intercommunicate and were probably used as deposits. It seems that there is access to the Central Palace and to the north section of the Harem Complex of Xerxes from the rooms in the southwest corner of the Hundred Column Hall. In some Persepolitan buildings, such as the Treasury and this building, the external sides of the walls have vertical indented recessions (**Figure 2.22**), implying that the structures attached to this wall are later additions. The columns of the hall were circa 14m tall, but none are left intact. The column bases are bell-shaped, the shafts have flutings and the capitals are double kneeling bulls. Of the two surviving capitals, one was taken to Chicago in the 1930s. The columns of the portico resembled those in the hall except the bulls of their capitals, which had human heads like those of the north portico of the Central Palace.

Many traces of fire were found on the stone in the portico, and the floor was covered with a layer of burned debris (cf. Schmidt, 1939:93). In many places the stone had changed color and texture due to the fire, and traces of charred remains of palace items and cedar beams were found (Shahbazi, 1976:68). Fragments of the cavetto decoration of the architraves of the north doorways were found in the

FIGURE 2.21 The Hundred Column Hall, north portico, restored western guardian bull (2017)

FIGURE 2.22 The Treasury, west wall, vertical indented recessions, the Hundred Column Hall in the background (2017)

main hall (Tilia, 1972:48). Like other Persepolitan structures, this hall may have had changes in the roof level providing lateral skylights to illuminate interior spaces.

Bas-reliefs: the bas-reliefs on the doorway jambs of this building are (**Figure 2.23**):

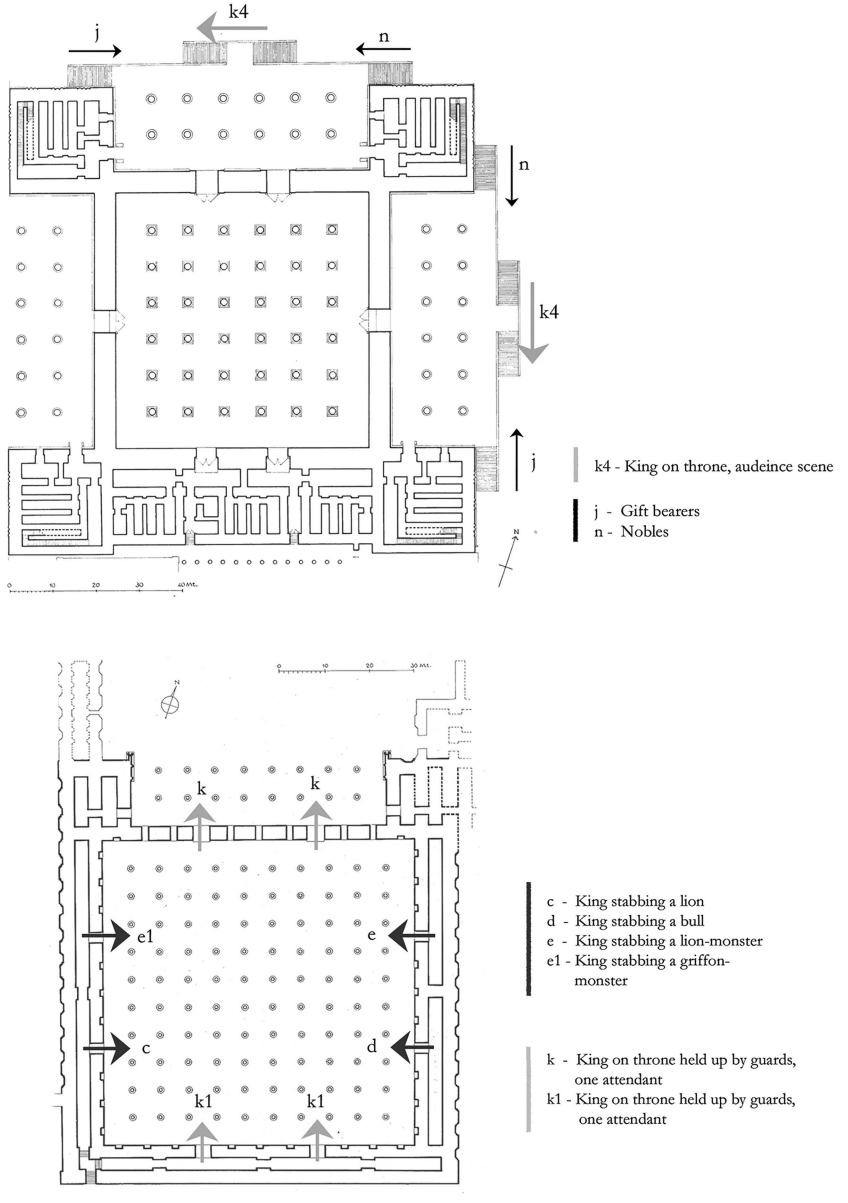

FIGURE 2.23 Persepolis, the Apadana and the Hundred Column Hall, orientation of bas-relief figures

1. **North wall** (k): king on throne under a baldachin, facing an official in bowing position; behind the king an attendant holds a flywhisk. The throne is held by six rows of guards or generals. The figures face towards the portico. The holes on the figure of the king indicate the lost ornaments.
2. **South wall** (k1): king on throne under a baldachin held by 28 delegates from the lands of the empire (14 on each doorway jamb); an attendant holds a flywhisk and a cloth. The winged circle is carved above the baldachin. The figures face towards the hall.
3. **West wall** (c): king stabbing a lion.
4. **West wall** (e1): king stabbing a griffon-monster.
5. **East wall** (d): king stabbing a bull.
6. **East wall** (e): king stabbing a lion-monster.

The function of this building was presumably a throne or an audience hall due to the throne depicted on the bas-reliefs (Curzon, 1966:179; Trümpelmann, 1974:165). However, it was not to compete with the Apadana but functioned as a reunion hall for the military, because there were generals depicted on the jambs of the northern doorways and the adjacent structures to its east, presumably a **military** quarter (Godard, 1962:128; Shahbazi, 1976:71). Schmidt (1953:131) attributes a museum function to this building due to the discovery of some valuable objects, similar to those found in the Treasury, while Root (1979:106) considers it a ceremonial pavilion. However, the exact contents of the Hundred Column Hall cannot be known due to lack of information on the excavations of Farhad Mirza, governor of Fars, in 1877. There are no traces of door-pins or other signs on the floor that could indicate the existence of doors in the hall. It seems that it was directly connected to the portico in the north; therefore, assigning a museum use to this building may raise security problems.

Structures to the east of the Hundred Column Hall: In the excavations carried out by the Iranian General Office of Archaeology after the departure of the Oriental Institute Mission, some structures were unearthed in the east along the Hundred Column Hall and the Unfinished Gate, dating to a later Achaemenid period. These structures consist of a portico with 2 × 8 columns facing the courtyard in the north of the Hundred Column Hall and connected through two openings to a rectangular hypostyle hall with 4 × 8 columns, the so-called Thirty-two Column Hall. Two openings link this hall to two equal rooms in the back to the east. There is a passage between the east room of the portico of the Hundred Column Hall and an access corridor to the rooms in the south of the complex. Krefter made some graphical reconstructions and a model where these structures are roofed. It seems, however, that the hypostyle rooms are courtyards with porticoes. This area may correspond to a second phase of the development of the Hundred Column Hall and the Unfinished Gate. A kind of military function has been attributed to these spaces as well (**Figure 2.24**). They seem to have an isolated character, which may imply a more specific use, somewhat similar to the Treasury in character, such as deposit.

FIGURE 2.24 The Hundred Column Hall in the background and the structures on its eastern side in the foreground, east view (1998)

The **Unfinished Gate** (+11.66m) is called thus due to its being still under construction. It is located in the east of the Gate of Xerxes facing the courtyard on the north side of the Hundred Column Hall. It consists of a square tetrastyle hall similar in plan to the Gate of Xerxes but slightly larger. Access to the hall is from the north and south, and it is flanked by two rectangular rooms on the east and west sides (**Figure 2.25**). There are unfinished zoomorphic antae on the south side. It is one of the last buildings of Persepolis. In one of the Treasury Tablets there is mention of a gate called *Vispazana*, meaning 'gate of all peoples,' and which "leads to the hypostyle hall" (Krefter, 1972:287). This tablet was written during the fifth year of the reign of Artaxerxes I (in 460), and therefore it cannot mean other than the Unfinished Gate.

2.6. Palaces and Other Structures

Palace of Darius, also called Tachara, (+18.02m) is situated in the south of the Apadana near the western edge of the Terrace. Built on a podium 2.4cm high, it is the smallest building on the Terrace (30m × 40m) and is the only palace with its main entrance facing south (Fergusson, 1851:116) (**Figure 2.26**). The plan of Tachara is symmetrical, and a double-ramped monumental stairway links the south courtyard to a portico with 2 × 4 columns, flanked by a guardroom. A central doorway connects the portico to a square hypostyle central hall with 3 × 4 columns and three rooms on either side. There are two smaller square tetrastyle halls and six service rooms to the north of the central hall. These small halls probably had a ceremonial or ritual

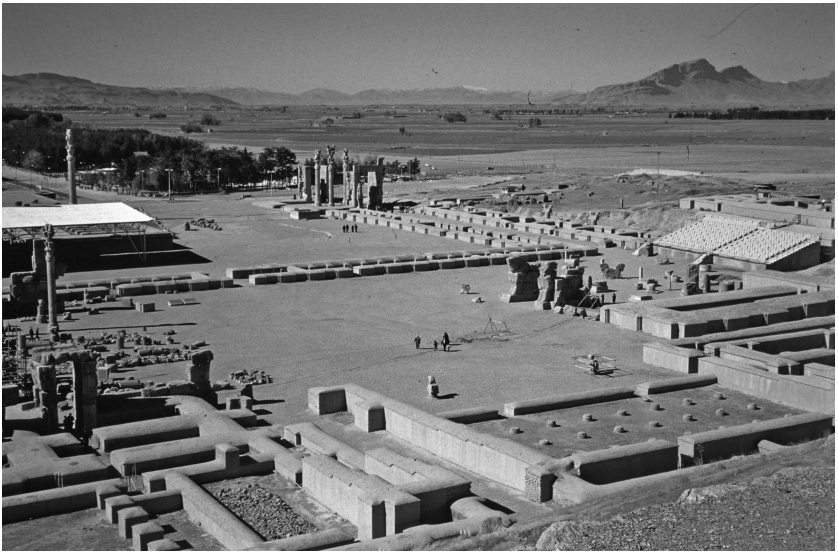

FIGURE 2.25 Persepolis Terrace, northern courtyards, enclosed by the Gate of Xerxes, the Apadana, the Hundred Column Hall, and the Unfinished Gate, southeast view (2005)

FIGURE 2.26 Palace of Darius, southern stairway, southwest view, showing the three assigned frames for inscriptions, one central and two lateral (2016)

function due to their square plan, presence of columns and character of their bas-reliefs. In the central hall, there are four windows on the south wall opening to the portico, two doorways and three niches on the north wall, one doorway and three niches on the east wall and two doorways and two niches on the east wall. The central hall would have been symmetrical if it were not for the doorway of a square room on the west side functioning as an antechamber for the west entrance of the palace.

The Palace of Darius could be considered the prototype of the Perssepolitan palaces, reflecting the principles of Achaemenid art and architecture established by Darius. It is the best-preserved palace of Persepolis, probably due to the high quality of its material, workmanship and construction detail. The niches of the central hall are monolith in dark gray stone, the window had wooden shutters and only four doorways had doors. These are the doorways of the south and west entrances and the two doorways of the north wall (Schmidt, 1953:222). The doorways and niches have moldings on their frames, and their architraves have cavetto moldings in Egyptian style. The columns probably had stone bases with wooden shafts and capitals. Traces of the original red floor, a characteristic of Darius' buildings, have been discovered in the north rooms. The original red floor, whose traces could be observed in some points along the socle of the mud-brick walls, had been completely removed from the central hall probably during previous excavations, and traces of post–Achaemenid period occupation have been discovered in these rooms (Tilia, 1972:52ff). There are various signs on the edge of the podium having specific indications; for example, a line means wall alignment, a circle and a line means axis of a column and a triangle indicates the position of the axis of the doorways (Figs: Roaf, 1978; Zander, 1968). The mud-brick walls of the palace were 52cm thick having 8cm-thick plaster on either face. The stone socles of the walls are 70cm thick leaving a 1cm-thick recess on each face above the socle where the wall begins (Zander 1968:43, 57, 58).

This palace is attributed to Darius because of his numerous inscriptions on its various parts (**Figure 2.27**). Darius' trilingual inscription (DPa) is in one paragraph and in two examples carved on the doorway jambs of the main entrance: "Darius the great King, King of Kings, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian, who built this palace [*tachara*]." He uses the Old Persian term *tachara*, translated as 'palace,' which is the conventionally accepted name for this palace. However, Xerxes in (XPc § 3) "Saith Xerxes the Great King: By the favor of Ahura Mazda this palace [*hadish*] Darius the King built, who was my father. . . ." calls this palace *hadish*, which is equally translated as 'palace.' (XPc) is trilingual, in four paragraphs and in three examples incised on the west, south and east walls of Tachara. Here Ahuramazda's name is exceptionally written in two words (Lecoq, 1997:253). Both inscriptions confirm that Darius was the builder. This palace is evidently among the first buildings of Persepolis to have been completed, even before Darius' death. The (DPc) inscription of Darius repeated 18 times on the frames of the doorways, windows and niches of the central hall testifies: "Stone window made in the house of Darius." Among other inscriptions are those in Pahlavi, dating to the reign of the Sasanid king Shapur II (309–379 AD), and in Kufic belonging to Azad od-Dowleh (10th century AD) on the eastern jamb of the south doorway.

FIGURE 2.27 Palace of Darius, central hall, north wall, south view, various inscription on doorway frames and other parts (2016)

The western stairway of the Palace of Darius bears the (A^3Pa) inscription of Artaxerxes III (359–338), attributing the construction of the stairway or at least its bas-relief to this king, implying that it is a later addition. It seems that during the reign of Artaxerxes III the royal inscriptions were no longer trilingual (Tilia, 1972:62); in fact (A^3Pa) is only in Old Persian and in three paragraphs. In § 3 Artaxerxes III declares: "Saith Artaxerxes the King: This stone staircase was built by me in my time." Tilia (1972:314) considers the bas-reliefs of the stairway copies of those of Artaxerxes I (465–425) on the stairway of Palace H.

There is a debate on the original design of the **western entrance** and the builder of the stairway. The stairway may have been built by Darius and only the inscriptions belong to Artaxerxes III (Krefter, 1971:98; Herzfeld & Sarre, 1910:126), but Root (1979:81) strongly disagrees with this hypothesis. Schmidt (1953:238), however, retains that there had been an original entrance and a stairway designed by Darius' architects and that Artaxerxes III had completed the decorations of the stairway. Curzon (1966:167) believes that this entrance had been foreseen together with the stairway. Tilia (1972:56) retains that the western stairway was not part of the original structure of the palace, that the door above the stairs most probably opened to a different stairway and that the palace in its initial form was closed on the west side. This hypothesis is based on the presence of a line incised on the podium edge for the mud-brick walls all along the western side and

exactly under the stairway landing. Shahbazi (1976:50), instead, attributes both the construction of the stairway and the reorganization of the rooms of the palace to Artaxerxes III, who reigned 170 years after the construction of the palace. There are, however, reasons and archeological evidence to think that a stairway on this site had been foreseen in the original project of Darius. These include the direction of the figures on the doorway jambs of the western entrance facing towards the exterior (**Figure 2.28**), implying that the small room above the stairs was presumably an antechamber. Furthermore, a projecting **stone slab** under the sill and

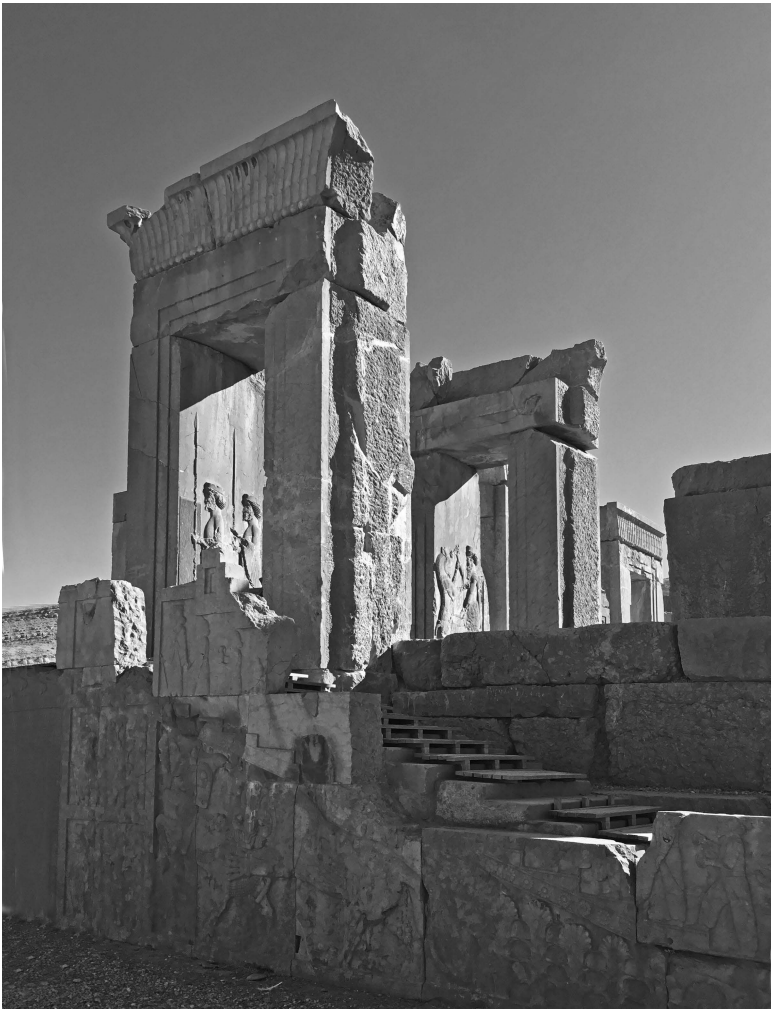

FIGURE 2.28 Palace of Darius, western stairway, figures of the doorway jamb facing toward exterior (2017)

the doorway of the western entrance is a proof of its connection to the stairway (Godard, 1951:63, 65), confirming the existence of the entrance and the stairway in the initial project of Darius. This discovery was made possible by the meticulous mapping of the Palace of Darius carried out by Javad Zakataly, commissioned by the Iranian General Office of Archaeology (Mousavi, 2012:196).

In conclusion, it seems that the Palace of Darius in its original form had a much simpler stairway on the western side, which was later substituted by a more representative stairway. This was most probably due to the important position of the west façade being next to the Apadana on the edge of the Terrace. The Palace of Darius is a good example of unity between architecture, bas-reliefs and inscriptions. A hierarchy of spaces can be observed in the bas-reliefs of the doorway jambs. For example, representation of guards on the doorways of the rooms flanking the portico indicate their use as guardrooms, or depiction of attendants show smaller and more intimate rooms, which are also farther away from the entrance and the portico. Furthermore, the **moldings** of doorway frames are more elaborate on the side facing the main hall (**Figure 2.29**). The doorway jambs of the lateral rooms represent the king fighting a lion, symbolizing the dynastic figure of the king and not a specific king. The combat scene of the king with a lion or with supernatural beings is found on the doorway jambs of the Hundred Column Hall and Palace C of the Harem Complex (today site museum). The king was decorated with gold and precious stones, testified by the holes on the bas-reliefs. Careful observation shows that the figures on doorway jambs are not exactly

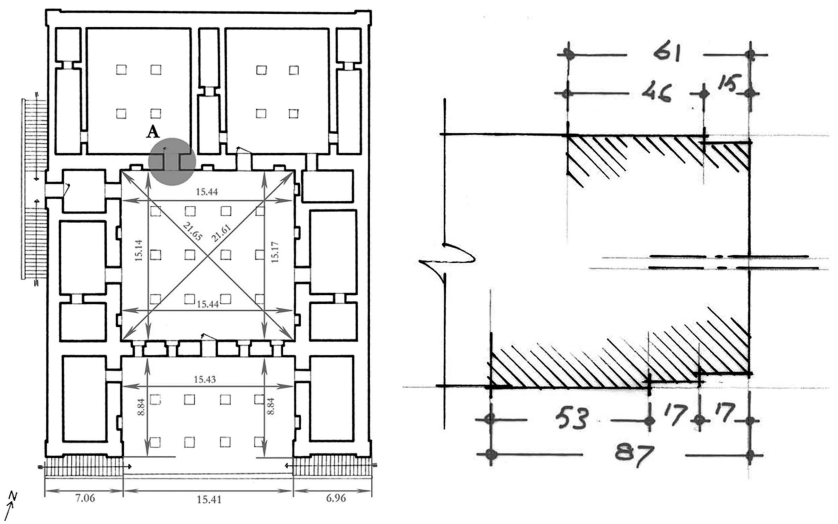

FIGURE 2.29 Palace of Darius, floor plan measurements, and dimensions of the moldings of the western doorway of the north wall of the central hall (right) detail (A)

mirror-like, because one jamb shows the left and the other the right side of the same figure. This principle is followed in almost all doorways. Another general characteristic of the bas-reliefs concerns the direction of the figures, which is always towards the outside, except the eastern doorway of the Central Palace. The bas-reliefs are full of symbolic and metaphoric references:

1. **Doorway of the south entrance** (a): king with a flower and a stick followed by two attendants carrying a flywhisk, a cloth and a parasol, all facing towards the portico. The (DPa) inscription, where Darius declares to have built the palace, is incised on both doorway jambs. The (DPb) trilingual inscription is incised on the robe of the king near (DPa) on the western jamb of the doorway, where it says: "Darius, the Great king, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian." Only the Old Persian and Elamite versions are still in situ. De Bruijn removed its Babylonian version in 1718, which is today in the Cabinet des Médailles de la Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Schmidt 1953:223). The (XPk) text of Xerxes is on the robe of the figure on the eastern jamb. Root dates the inscriptions to 487–486, the year of Darius' death. It seems that when Darius had (DPa) incised the bas-relief was already carved. This is because the inscriptions were incised at the end of the work. Therefore, presumably both inscriptions (DPa: Darius the Great King. . .) and (XPk: Xerxes, son of Darius. . .) were incised during the reign of Darius when Xerxes was already nominated the crown prince. Since the two groups of rooms in the north side are symmetrical, it seems that the palace was initially designed for a ceremonial use involving both the king and the crown prince.
2. **Doorways of the north wall of the central hall** (a1): king with a flower and a stick followed by attendants carrying a flywhisk, a cloth and a bowl, all facing towards the hall. Herzfeld, interested in the Greek graffiti incised on it, removed the back shoe of the royal figure from the western jamb of the east doorway of the north wall of the main hall (Root, 1979:80).
3. **Lateral doorways of the central hall** (c, d, e, f): king stabbing an animal (a lion, a bull or a lion-monster), in one case (f) he holds a cub, all figures facing towards the main hall, except those on the doorway (d) that leads to the west entrance of the palace. They face towards the west, i.e., outside. The bas-reliefs of the western jamb of the west rooms are in the Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran.
4. **Lateral doorways of the portico and west entrance** (g): two guards leading towards the portico and, in the case of the west entrance, leading towards the outside.
5. **Doorways between the service rooms** (h): an attendant and (h1) two attendants carrying various objects; facing towards the small halls.
6. **Southern stairway**: on the main façade are: (g1) the guards, the frames for the (XPc) inscription: ". . . King Darius, my father, built this *hadish*," on either

side of the stairway, (i) the attendants carrying food for a banquette or a ritual (**Figure 2.30**).

7. **Western stairway**: on the external façade are: (n) nobles and a frame for (A^3Pa) inscription, (j) gift-bearers on the parapet and, on internal sides, instead, (i) the attendants carrying food for a banquet or a ritual.

The western stairway consists of a central framed area assigned to the (A^3Pa) inscription, in which Artaxerxes III declares to have built the stairway, flanked by bas-reliefs showing two rows of gift-bearers and the lion-bull combat scenes. The southern stairway has one central and two lateral frames for Xerxes' (XPc) inscription. The central frame is flanked by a row of guards, and on the extreme ends of the stairway there is the lion-bull combat scene. Furthermore, various archeological remains imply the use of water, or some other liquid, in the area surrounding the Palace of Darius. Tilia (1972:56) discovered a small basin on the ground to the north of the west stairway when clearing up this area. It is a rectangular stone slab hollowed out at the top from which a canal carved in various stone blocks leads for circa 2.78m to the west before turning 90 degrees to the south and continuing for 40m parallel to the length of the Palace of Darius. It then turns east, running to the center of the courtyard, where it disappears under the wall to join the canals in the courtyard south of the Palace of Darius. There are traces of a wall on the ground immediately to the north of the western stairway extending in the east-west direction. This implies that the stone slab that led to the canal was

FIGURE 2.30 Palace of Darius, southern stairway, IsMEO's restoration in the 1970s (2017)

located in a separate room or in an open space below the podium of the Palace of Darius and was enclosed by walls on the north and west sides (**Figure 2.31**). It is not known whether this basin had a ceremonial use, which seems most probable. Schmidt (1953:222) retains that it should have been a canal for taking away the rainwater from the roofs. However, in comparison with other drainage canals, this canal is rather small (12–14cm deep and 10–14cm/7–10cm wide). Therefore, it is possible that this basin had been the outlet of a water basin that served for ablutions or for sacrifice (Tilia, 1972:56; Razmjou, 2010:243). All this implies that some activities that were related to the use of water took place in this area.

The plan of the Palace of Darius has been compared with the plan of the Temple of Hibis in El-Khargeh, in Egypt. This temple was built by Darius on the site of an earlier sanctuary. The construction work started in 496. The cavetto cornices, the floral decorations and the offering scenes of this temple show similarities with Persepolitan buildings, implying influence between these two architectures. Curzon (1966:170) assigns a residential character to this palace and refuses any temple-palace function, considering it the private residence of the king. Godard (1962:124) considers it the only residential palace on the Terrace, while Lecoq (1997:102) retains that it could have been a palace for a cult where the king personally participated in the rituals because the depicted figures carry offerings for a ritual ceremony.

FIGURE 2.31 Palace of Darius, northwest corner, traces of walls and water basin, southwest view (2016)

Trümpelmann (1974:165) believes that the Palace of Darius had a residential function and that it was a model for other Persepolitan palaces. The **courtyard** of the Palace of Darius is a space with a high concentration of symbolic elements, such as three monumental stairways, which have inscriptions and bas-reliefs.

Palace of Xerxes, also called Hadish, (+17.9) is similar to the Palace of Darius, although almost double in size. While in the Palace of Darius the portico is in the south and rooms are in the north of the central hall, in the Palace of Xerxes the portico is in the north and the central hall is flanked by the rooms. Most of the Palace of Xerxes and its courtyard directly lie on the rock, with underground water canals. Access to the courtyard level is through two monumental stairways on the east and west. The eastern stairway is four-ramped ascending to a structure, today lost, which was the entrance gate to the courtyard (**Figure 2.32**). This gate consisted of a tetrastyle square hall with four doorways on each wall. The two main doorways were on the east and west walls, and the other two gave access to two small guardrooms on the south and north sides. This structure was a smaller version of the Gate of Xerxes, having also the vertical recessing moldings on the external walls (**Figure 2.33**). The western stairway is double-ramped linking the courtyard of this palace to the courtyard of the Palace of Darius through a small square room, with four doorways one on each side, probably functioning as a gate (**Figure 2.34**).

A trilingual inscription of Xerxes, (XPd), incised four times on the portico and the monumental stairway of this palace, attributes its construction to Xerxes

FIGURE 2.32 Palace of Xerxes, eastern stairway (2016)

FIGURE 2.33 Palace of Xerxes, traces of the foundation of the eastern gate, west view (1998)

FIGURE 2.34 Palace of Xerxes and its western stairway view from the portico of the Palace of Darius to the courtyard; (2016)

in § 3: "Saith Xerxes the Great King: 'by the favor of Ahuramzada this palace [*hadish*] I built,'" using the Old Persian word *hadish* to indicate 'palace' (Lecoq, 1997:253). Xerxes' short **(**XPe) trilingual inscription, repeated 14 times, carved on the robe of the king, on window jambs and frames, also indicates him as the builder: "Xerxes, the Great King, King of Kings, son of King Darius, the Achaemenid" (Lecoq, 1997:102). Darius' inscription (DPb) on the jamb of the east entrance in the north wall implies that the construction of this palace had started when Darius was still alive (Shahbazi, 1985:12). The Palace of Xerxes is symmetrical, consisting of a portico with 2 × 6 columns, a courtyard in the north and a hypostyle square central hall with 6 × 6 columns in the south, measuring 36.5 × 36.5m. The portico is flanked by guardrooms and a stair for access to the roof in the eastern guardroom. A tetrastyle square hall and several rectangular intercommunicating rooms are on either side of the central hall. The east and west walls of the central hall are connected through a doorway and two windows to the tetrastyle halls and with one window to each of the other two rooms. There are two niches on each of the east and west walls. The north wall of the central hall has two doorways and five windows towards the portico, while the south wall has one doorway and six window openings to a balcony, which is almost 36m long. This balcony is 8.6m above the Harem Complex of Xerxes in the south, accessing it by two ramps of stairs from the southwest and southeast corners (**Figure 2.35**).

FIGURE 2.35 Palace of Xerxes, southeast view, showing the two lateral stairs of the southern balcony descending to the Harem area (2016)

Stylistically the bas-reliefs and inscriptions of this palace follow the style of the Palace of Darius (**Figure 2.19**):

Doorway jambs, north wall: (a) king with two attendants; one carrying a flywhisk and a cloth, the other a parasol all facing towards outdoors. There are holes indicating lost decorations. The (XPe) inscription is incised on the folds of the royal robe; the same inscription is found on the door and window frames.

Doorway jambs linking the central hall to the small halls: (a) all figures face the central hall.

Doorway jambs between the central hall and the south balcony: (a3) similar to (a), the figures face the central hall (this bas-relief is a reconstruction hypothesis suggested by Root, 1979:104).

Lateral doorway jambs of portico: (g) two guards facing towards the portico.

Doorway jambs between the small lateral halls and the rooms: (h1) two attendants facing towards the small halls.

Window jambs in the south wall: (h2) the jambs of the two existent windows represent three attendants facing towards the hall.

Window jambs of the central rooms in the corners of the palace on the south wall: (h3) two attendants with an ibex facing towards the interior.

Window jambs in the northeast corner of the north wall of the hall: (h2) three attendants, facing towards the portico, i.e., towards the outdoors.

Window jambs on the west wall of the central hall: (h2) the existent jambs represent three attendants, one faces the central hall and the other two face the small halls.

Eastern stairway: (g1) guards and (XPd) inscription; (i) food bearers.

Western stairway: (g1) guards and inscriptions, (i) food bearers, (j) gift-bearers.

The direction of the figures on the doorway jambs shows that all figures enter the building from the south wall to arrive in the central hall and from the smaller secondary rooms towards the tetrastyle small halls continuing towards the central hall finally going out to the north portico. The direction of the figures on the window jambs of the central hall and the tetrastyle small halls indicates the importance of these halls. A unique particularity of this palace is the representations of attendants with animals such as ibex on the jambs of the niches. No bas-relief of the king and animal combat has been found in this palace, and, contrary to the Palace of Darius, no attendant is depicted alone on the doorway jambs. This may imply that this palace had a somewhat different significance compared to the Palace of Darius or the Palace C of the Harem Complex because the sculptures in other buildings show the king engaged in combat with lions or other monsters but in the Palace of Xerxes servants are depicted carrying objects of luxury for royal use.

On the ante of the portico there is Xerxes' (XPd) inscription, similar to the one in the Palace of Darius. The bas-reliefs motifs are also alike. Curzon (1966:175) proposes a use similar to the Palace of Darius, i.e., a residence for Xerxes where he would carry out his state tasks and ceremonial banquets, while Godard (1962:124) considers this palace a reception hall. This is due to the importance of its iconography, the size of the central hall, the similitude of its stairway to that of the Apadana and the important guardrooms. This hypothesis seems probable since the analysis of the direction of the figures (from south towards north) to the northern part of the Terrace may consolidate its ceremonial use.

Palace G has been dated to the reign of Artaxerxes III (359–338). However, because of its location in the center of the initial Terrace complex that consisted of the Apadana, the Central Palace and the Palace of Darius, it may also have been built in the period of Darius (Trümpelmann, 1974:166). What remains of this Palace is only a podium situated in the south of the Apadana between the Palace of Darius and the Central Palace, facing the Palace of Xerxes (**Figure 2.36**). A narrow passage separates its west wall from the Palace of Darius. The underground canal system of this site is connected to the subterranean drainage system of the palaces of Darius and Xerxes and other buildings. There was once an accumulation of debris on the podium. Herzfeld discovered a small single-ramped stairway in the northwest corner (Tilia, 1972:183ff), and two bovine statues were probably

FIGURE 2.36 Palace G, fragments of stairway, south view (2017)

on either side on this stairway (Schmidt, 1953:274). Herzfeld also found two sculpted stone fragments of a baldachin, reused as parapets on either side of this stairway. One of these fragments is in the Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran, and the other is in the Oriental Institute Museum in Chicago. These fragments belong to the audience panels discovered in the Treasury. Other architectural elements have been found on this site belonging to various structures of the Terrace. These elements were probably moved in the post-Achaemenid interventions, such as using blocks of parapets to cover a drainage canal in the west part of the site (Tilia, 1972:315ff). Barnett (1957:60), however, retains that Palace G was destroyed in antiquity. Haines discovered the foundation blocks of a podium on the south side of the site of Palace G and noted that the V-shaped traces on the floor corresponded to the divisions of the panels that composed the stairway of Artaxerxes III on the site of Palace H in the south of the Palace of Darius. This stairway had been transferred to the site of Palace H in the post-Achaemenid period. The façade of this stairway shows two antithetic rows of soldiers facing a central panel with the (A^3Pa) inscription of Artaxerxes III. The inscriptions consents dating the stairway to the period of Artaxerxes III. On the internal façade of the parapets attendants were represented bringing food and utensils.

The function of Palace G is not so clear. Herzfeld (1941:230) considers it a cult center. Due to its location on the highest part of the Terrace, Trümpelmann (1974:166) thinks it is a sanctuary, while De Francovich (1966:208) believes it had been a garden for the Palace of Xerxes, criticizing the excavations for the loss of archeological testimonies. Tilia (1972:315n) and Schmidt (1953:275) both attribute a domestic and residential function to this palace because its double-ramped stairway is decorated with food bearers. Krefter (1972:284) believes that, since this palace is on the same level of the Palace of Xerxes and shares the same courtyard, these can be considered to form one complex. In Krefter's model of Persepolis, the plan of this palace is similar to the plan of the Palace of Xerxes. The aerial photo of the site, in fact, shows traces of a structure with the typology of the Persepolitan palaces (see **Figure 2.1**).

Palace C and the so-called Harem of Xerxes (+9.3m courtyard) are located on a lower level compared to the palaces of Darius and Xerxes. This complex consists of two perpendicular L-shaped wings. The north-south wing, which is the palatial part, consists of a courtyard with Palace C in the south and Palace C' to its north and the east-west wing includes various rooms. **Palace C** is a symmetrical building, which was reconstructed by Herzfeld and Krefter in the 1930s and is now the site museum of Persepolis (**Figure 2.37**). The north portico of Palace C is flanked by guardrooms and has 2 × 4 columns, an entrance to a square central hypostyle hall in the south with 3 × 4 columns. This hall has one room in its east and west sides and three rooms in its south, with four window openings in the north wall. The east and west walls each have three niches and a doorway to adjacent rooms while the south wall has one doorway and four niches. The other hypostyle rooms of the Harem are of various sizes with their relevant

FIGURE 2.37 The main entrance to the reconstructed Palace C, today the site of the museum of Persepolis (2016)

corridors and service rooms. They are square, quasi square or sometimes rectangular. The Harem Complex is linked through **Palace C'** to the Central Palace and the Hundred Column Hall, both located to the north on a higher level. The connection is provided through stairs, but the situation is rather unclear due to various modifications (see **Figure 2.5**). Traces of the fire have been found in this area (Schmidt, 1953:263).

The name 'harem,' meaning the intimate and private part of a dwelling assigned to family, is given to this complex due to its numerous small rooms and isolated position in a lower level on the southeast edge of the Terrace. A trilingual inscription of Xerxes (XPj) incised on column bases and on numerous fragments dispersed in Palace C and in the Palace of Xerxes attributes the construction of Palace C to Xerxes. (XPj) is in two paragraphs; the second paragraph attests: "Saith Xerxes the King: This palace [*tachara*] I built." This is identical with the trilingual inscription (XPm) repeated on many column bases. The building is dated on the basis of the construction of the first phase of the Treasury and the in-situ discovery of a foundation inscription in the corner of Palace C bearing the (XPf) inscription of Xerxes in Old Persian and in Babylonian. Another reason for attributing this building to Xerxes is due to its similarity and close association to the Palace of Xerxes. Root (1979:103) retains that the building of the Harem took place immediately after the rise of Xerxes to the throne in 486, as mentioned in the (XPf) inscription. The (XPi) inscription in Old Persian and in Elamite on a door knob also indicates Xerxes as the builder: "Door knob of precious stone, made in

the house of Xerxes the King." Lecoq (1997:259) identifies the precious stone as lapis-lazuli. Through a glass plate on the floor of the western part of the portico of Palace C it is possible to see the red floor of an earlier structure from Darius' period (Tilia, 1972:58), mainly from the first and the second phase of the Treasury (Schmidt, 1953:255). This floor is circa 25cm lower than the present floor level.

The bas-reliefs are only in Palace C, with figures resembling those of the Palace of Darius (**Figure 2.19**).

Main entrance doorway: (a) king with two attendants holding a flywhisk and a parasol, all facing towards the portico.

Doorway between the central hall and the south room: (a2) king with two attendants holding a flywhisk (without beard) and a cloth, all facing towards the central hall.

Doorway between the central hall and the lateral rooms: (c) king stabbing a lion; (e) king stabbing a lion-monster holding it by its mane, all facing towards the central hall.

Lateral doorways to the portico: (g) two guards, facing towards the portico.

De Francovich (1961:112ff) retains that the so-called 'Harem' was actually the treasury of Xerxes. This is sustained by Godard (1962:123), since the lack of windows and open spaces makes these rooms unsuitable for living. Trümpelmann (1983:236) believes these rooms were dwellings for nobles or generals, while Wilber (1989:66) considers them as deposits. Based on findings, Schmidt (1953:263) assigns Palace C to the queen, considers Palace C' as service space for the Harem and the east-west wing as apartments. Palace C', besides being considered an area assigned to the guards, has also been considered as the place for the royal wardrobe (Frankfort, 1954:220) because it links the Harem Complex to the more representative buildings such as the Central Palace and the Hundred Column Hall.

Site of Palace D (+14m) is shown as a hill in the illustrations by travelers to Persepolis. It is located on an intermediate level between the Harem and the Palace of Xerxes and measures 40 × 45m. Schmidt (1953:269) made soundings in its northern part and found the remains of an earthen wall that probably divided a hypostyle hall from its lateral rooms and a portico. A fragment of the west wall at a distance of circa 2m from the podium of the Palace of Xerxes and fragments of two bell-shaped column bases of one of the western rooms were still in situ. The center of the site was a hill made of the chipped stones that resulted from building works and with fragments of the stairway of the Artaxerxes III belonging to the façade of Palace H. There were also fragments of the window and tori of the Palace of Xerxes bearing the (XPe) inscription. All these indicated that the debris was accumulated after the destruction of the site. Among the material obtained from the excavation belonging to a demolished building were five fragments of the bell-shaped column bases and various other architectural and ornamental

fragments (Schmidt, 1953:269ff). The column bases belonged to Palace H, and in the post-Achaemenid period these Achaemenid remains of site H were transferred to the site of Palace D where the column bases, being heavy, sank in the cavity of the subterranean galleries (Tilia, 1977:76). Barnett (1957:60) retains that Palace D, like Palace G, had been destroyed in antiquity. The plan of this building was similar to the plan of the Palace of Darius. This means a portico flanked by two guardrooms and a central hypostyle hall with rooms on three sides (see **Figure 2.5**).

Site of Palace H is to the south of the courtyard of the Palace of Darius, in the southeast corner of the Terrace. Previously it was called the Palace of Artaxerxes III, due to three Old Persian inscriptions of this king, (A^3Pa), incised on the façade of the present stairway (**Figure 2.38**). Initially, it was thought that the existing archeological remains, such as the foundation plinths of the column bases and division walls, only belonged to the post-Achaemenid period (Tilia, 1977:74). Schmidt (1953:43), however, believes that Palace H is a composition of fragments from the Palace of Artaxerxes I and the Palace of Artaxerxes III and probably also from other buildings, assembled after the destruction of Persepolis. After clearing up the accumulated earth, many decorated architectural elements and fragments from different Achaemenid periods were discovered, indicating the existence of structures of much earlier dates. Further investigation and excavation

FIGURE 2.38 Site of Palace H, north view, (2006)

in 1973–1974 confirmed that it was possible to establish the existence of the remains of three successive buildings in this area, one earlier, perhaps from the time of Darius; a second one, the Palace of Xerxes and Artaxerxes I; and last the post-Achaemenid construction (Tilia, 1977:75).

In brief, it seems that a **post-Achaemenid** building was built using various stone blocks, even sculpted, taken from site H and other buildings of the Terrace (Schmidt, 1953:279). Two walls were also built reusing stone blocks, one to sustain the infill earth in the east of the site and the other on the west side to enclose the courtyard to the north. The present stairway blocks of the stairway of Artaxerxes III had been transferred from Palace G and incorporated with other blocks. It was also discovered that the architectural elements from this site had been taken to the site of Palace D. The remains of the **Xerxes–Artaxerxes I** structure were discovered after the excavation of the upper part of the mound, uncovering the stone plinths of columns and division walls. Furthermore, it was possible to identify many fragments of a stairway belonging to Artaxerxes I and make a reconstruction proposal for it. Deeper down and directly at the courtyard level were earthen walls and plasterwork of an **Achaemenid building** probably from Darius' period. It was not possible to establish the plan of the building, but judging from the finished plasterwork of the walls and the floor, it was evident that the building was completed prior to being demolished. Thus, the archeological remains on site H are from:

1. The present **post-Achaemenid** building (330–?)
2. An Achaemenid building from the **Xerxes–Artaxerxes I** period (486–465–425)
3. An Achaemenid building probably from the **Darius-Xerxes** period (522–486)

At this point, we can attempt to reconstruct the history of this corner of the Terrace after the destruction of Persepolis. It seems that the fire had been particularly destructive in the Palace of Xerxes, and the buildings to its west had been completely destroyed. After the fire, Persepolis was abandoned for circa 30 years until a local governor, probably a Persian prince, decided to have his residence on the Terrace using the material available on the site (Tilia, 1972:315ff). The Palace of Darius, better preserved, had been occupied in this period (Schmidt, 1953:274), and the west wall of the courtyard was built as an enclosure. Barnett (1957:60) believes that Palace H had been built by a Hellenistic or Parthian governor with the material coming from the Palace of Darius.

Tilia (1972:265ff) verified that there had been a **stairway of Artaxerxes I** on site H before the present stairway of Artaxerxes III, which had been transferred to this site in the post-Achaemenid period. After the removal of the post-Achaemenid wall behind the façade of the stairway of Artaxerxes III, Tilia (1977:75) discovered the foundation of a flight of stairs rising to the west below

the western podium wall of the Palace of Xerxes and another stair foundation some 40m to the west. He also found the substructure of a central flight of stairs leading up from the north probably to the same landing of the other two. All three flights of stairs were 2.4m wide. Many fragments of this stairway were dispersed both on and outside the Terrace (cf. Tilia 1972:265ff, 315n for a detailed study of the fragments). These fragments were in **black stone** and could only belong to the stairway of Artaxerxes I, which was the only stairway in black stone besides the southern stairway of the Central Palace. A fragment of this stairway is in the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh (Tilia, 1972:267 & 271). Furthermore, in the post-Achaemenid wall on the western side of the site of Palace H were found several bull-statue fragments of various sizes in round, finely carved in black stone. A piece of the supporting pillar for the bull's belly was also found buried in the ground in front of the foundations for the left side parapet of the central flight of stairs. All these implied that there had been two bull sculptures on the ground flanking the central flight of the stairway (Tilia, 1977:76).

These discoveries made it possible for Tilia (1972:Figs. 9–11a, 1977:74–75) to draw a tentative reconstruction of the stairway façade. This was possible by matching some 250 plain and relief-decorated stone fragments scattered on the site of Palace H and in its north courtyard with those found in the post-Achaemenid infill in the courtyard in front of the site of Palace H, as well as those in the site museum discovered in the excavations of the Iranian General Office of Archaeology in the 1950s. There are a central and two lateral ramps in Tilia's reconstruction drawing, while there is no central ramp in the conventional Persepolitan stairway design. Therefore, the (A1Pa) inscription of this stairway had been incised in the lateral predisposed framed areas. Tilia's reconstruction drawing assigns the east frame to the Old Persian and the west one to the Babylonian and Elamite versions. This is, however, similar to the Apadana stairways since the central part of this stairway was assigned to the audience scene.

The bas-reliefs and the length of 40m and the width of 2.4m indicates that the stairway of Artaxerxes I had been the second largest stairway of the Terrace after the Apadana stairways. There were **270 gift-bearers** carved in three superimposed rows on its façade and parapet, while the attendants were carved on the internal façade of the parapet. The total number of the figures of this stairway was almost double the 138 figures carved on the Apadana stairway. The number of carved delegates were 30 here while they were 23 on the Apadana stairway (Tilia, 1972:311, 1977:76). Furthermore, comparison between the figures on the Apadana stairways and those on the fragments attributed to the stairway of Artaxerxes I shows that work on this stairway had started not long after the completion of the bas-reliefs on the Apadana and had finished before the middle of the 5th century, i.e., during the first part of the reign of Artaxerxes I (Tilia, 1972:302).

To recapitulate, it is necessary to underline the importance of the architectural and spatial ensemble of this place. The courtyard is enclosed by three monumental stairways, the stairway of the Palace of Darius in the north, the stairway of

the Palace of Xerxes–Artaxerxes I in the south and the stairway leading to the courtyard of the Palace of Xerxes in the east. The importance of this architectural ensemble is reinforced due to the role of water, probably ceremonial, and by its strategic location due to the visual aspect of the Terrace from below. The area had surely maintained its significance more than a century after Artaxerxes I, considering the addition of the western stairway of the Palace of Darius by Artaxerxes III. In substance, we can assume that this part of the Terrace had a ceremonial and representative function, probably for a selected audience.

2.7. The Treasury (+8.45m)

The Treasury is a rectangular structure measuring 77.6 × 133.9m situated in the southeast corner of the Terrace. It is a closed and detached building with two modest entrances, one on the northeast and the other on the east. There are circa 193 rooms, corridors and hypostyle halls and two courtyards (**Figure 2.39**). It seems that room 33 had two floors (Schmidt, 1953:158) (**Figure 2.40**). The perimeter walls were 2.5m thick on average and circa 11m high. This is determined by blocks of wall debris fallen into the eastern street (Schmidt, 1939:17).

Phases of construction (**Figure 2.40**): Schmidt (1953:39ff, 200) identifies three construction phases for the Treasury, retaining that all changes took place during the reign of Darius. The **First Phase** was completed in the years 511 or 507 during the reign of Darius, and it remained in use until 493/492, implying

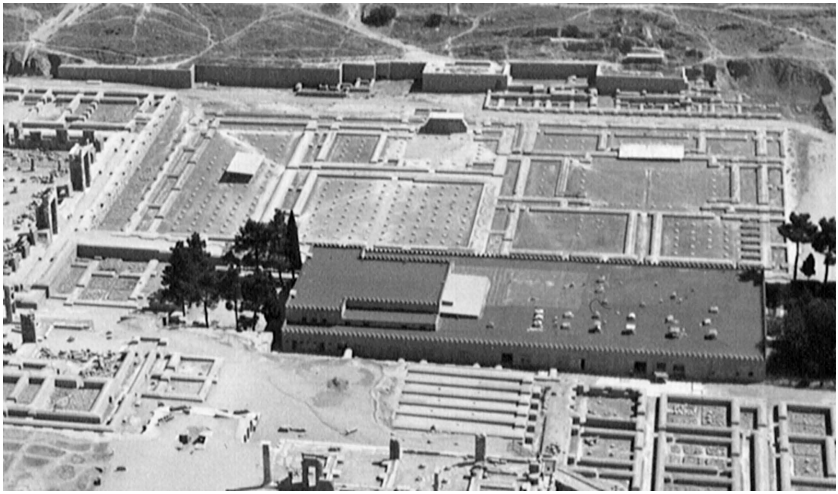

FIGURE 2.39 The Treasury in an aerial view from the west; the site museum and offices in the foreground

(Iranian Cartographic Service) (ca. 1998)

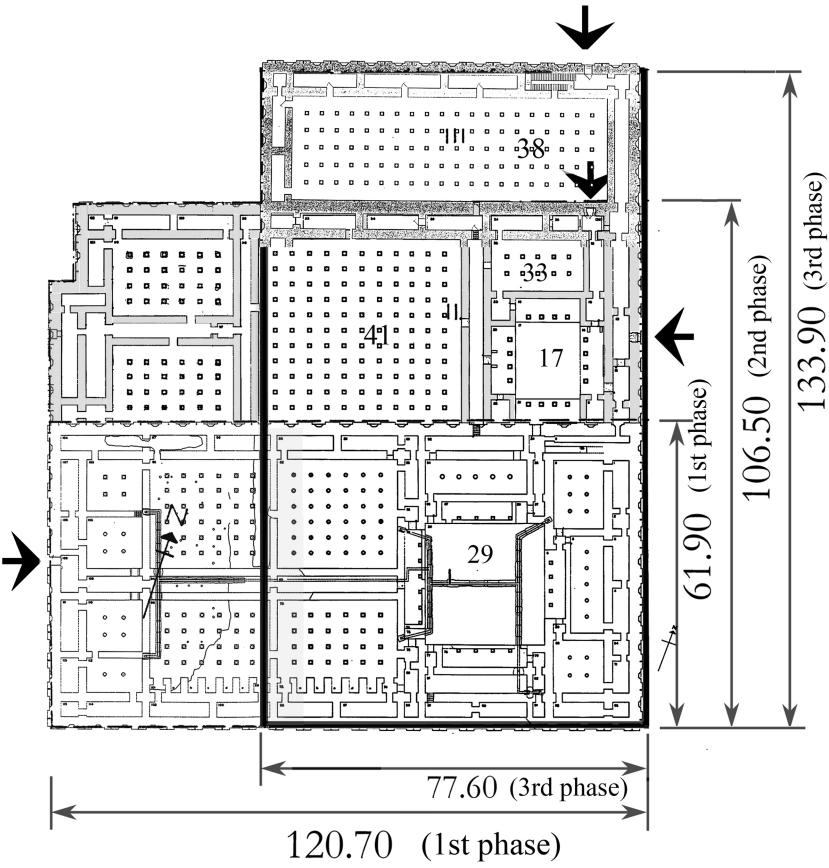

FIGURE 2.40 The three phases of the construction of the Treasury
(drawing based on floor plans, courtesy of the Oriental Institute)

that the Treasury had been among the first buildings of the Terrace. The dimension of the Treasury in this phase was 120.7 × 61.9m. It consisted of the south courtyard, four large hypostyle halls (two halls with 6 × 6 columns and two with 6 × 5 columns) and four small tetrastyle halls with related rooms and corridors. The original entrance, which was later blocked, was on the west side near the south entrance of the Terrace.

The **Second Phase** was built during Darius' reign between 494/493–492/491 and was in use until 486. In this phase, the Treasury was enlarged towards the north measuring 120.7 × 106.5m. The extension included the north courtyard with its four porticos and an adjacent hypostyle room (2 × 5 columns) on the north side. In addition, there were three hypostyle halls, one large (11 × 11 columns) and two smaller (4 × 6 columns each), together with their associated rooms and corridors. The existence of the typical red floor of Darius' period, traces of

which are also found under the Harem, indicates that the first two construction phases of the Treasury were completed during the reign of Darius. The dating of the Second Phase is based on the date when the Fortification Tablets were transferred from the Treasury to the fortification because of building works in 494/493. This transfer was done before building the Second Phase and prior to the demolition of the First Phase. Therefore, the date of the last Fortification Tablets (494/493) determines the cession of administrative activities in the first-phase Treasury, and the date of the first Treasury Tablets (492/491) indicates the completion of the second phase. This is when the administrative activities restarted with the production of tablets.

The **Third Phase** was mainly built by Xerxes and was in use until the fire of Persepolis in 330. Schmidt (1953:42, 411) relates this phase to just before or immediately after Darius' death in 486, when the use of the red floor was still in vogue. This implies that Darius was also involved in the modification of the Treasury and informed of the construction project for the Harem. This phase consists of a major modification, including the addition of a grand rectangular hypostyle hall in the north and demolishing the western part to construct the Harem Complex over it. In fact, the two east-west double walls in the middle of the Treasury coincide with the external walls that once had been the northern limits of the first and second phases.

Description: Square is the dominant form in the **First Phase**, as in the courtyard, in the four large (6 × 6 columns) and in the four small (2 × 2 columns) hypostyle halls. Both large halls in the south are modified by adding structures in their southern part, compromising their square form in their final shape (6 × 4 columns). Later modifications have also caused changes in the original layout; therefore, the halls of the Treasury in their present form are not square. The north courtyard is symmetrical in respect to its two perpendicular axes and is accessed from both northeast and east entrances. This courtyard has four porticos and gives access to the grand rectangular hall (5 × 20 columns) in the extreme north and to the grand hall in the east (9 × 11 columns), which is linked to a smaller hall (5 × 6 columns). The north courtyard is connected to the south courtyard through a corridor. The south courtyard has four porticoes as well and is symmetrical in respect to its east-west axis. It is connected to various spaces in the south part of the complex. The perimeter walls and a major part of the internal walls are double with service spaces in between. The doubling of the walls is mostly for strengthening the structure. The perimeter walls have vertical indented recessions on the exterior similar to the east wall of the Hundred Column Hall (**Figure 2.15**). All walls were built of sun-dried bricks (32–34cm square and 10–13cm thick) and covered with a grayish-green wash applied on plaster. Some doorsills of fired brick (33 × 33 × 7.5cm and 33 × 51 × 8.5cm) and some finely polished stone slabs were found. All the preserved floors of the Treasury have the red wash of Darius' reign. In **Hall 41**, the curved fragments of painted plaster corresponding to the diameter of the flat top of the torus implied that the columns were of wooden

core and encased in plaster (Schmidt, 1939:19). There is also a system of canals for water drainage under the floor. No trace of windows or light sources was found. It seems that the building had been illuminated from the windows near the roof and the courtyards would have provided light for their adjacent rooms.

Both accesses to the Treasury first lead to the **north courtyard** through a tortuous route before leading to other areas. The four porticoes of this courtyard were the most decorated part of the Treasury. The two audience scene panel bas-reliefs of the Apadana stairways were discovered in the south and east porticoes. The east portico panel is in situ, but the other is in the Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran. There are traces of the antae statues on the external side of the northeast and west doorways on the floor of the courtyard (**Figure 2.41**). The inner sides of the doorways leading to the courtyard were framed with a lotus-flower border painted in bright red, blue and white. This is indicated by the traces of these decorations on the lower parts of the adjacent walls (cf. Schmidt, 1939, 1953). The doors were wooden, and those in the courtyard were richly decorated, but the jambs were thin with no decoration. The courtyard floor was paved with a coarse white plaster, while the floor of the porticoes had a red coating (Tilia, 1972:175). The sills were in wood, in fired brick or, rarely, in stone. The roof was supported by more than 300 wooden columns, some covered with a clay plaster with intricate rhombus design in red, white and blue. Strabo (XVI.1. 5) mentions such treatment in Babylon saying that due to scarcity of timber, beams and pillars of palm-wood were used, applying winding ropes of twisted reed round the pillars; and then plastered and painted. The palm is most abundant in Babylonia, in Susa and on the coast of Persis and in Carmania. The column bases are a simple torus, but in some rooms the tori are on square bases. No capital has been found in this building. The height of the roof has been between 7 to 11m. The walls were made in square clay and straw mudbricks measuring 32–34 × 32–34cm and 12–13cm thick, plastered with a 2–5cm thick layer of clay and straw plaster. In some areas several layers were applied with a grayish-green final coat. This plaster was often repeated many times until 1cm thick. The walls were sometimes completed before the floor. This is shown when the wall rendering continues below the floor level (Schmidt 1953:159ff). Traces of **fire** have been found in all the rooms of the Treasury.

There are no bas-reliefs, and little stonework has been found. The Treasury remained untouched until the excavations of the 1930s. The earth layer that had covered it for centuries was thinner in the south; therefore, this area had been more subject to erosion, and hence there were fewer archeological remains. The walls of the Treasury were high when excavated, but the archeologists demolished and lowered the walls due to lack of knowledge in conservation of mud-brick structures (Shahbazi, 1976:65ff). Consequently, important original testimonies of Achaemenid art and architecture were lost. The Treasury was architecturally the most introvert building on the Terrace. It was not monumental, and presumably no public ceremony took place there. It had narrow and tortuous corridors and was destined to keep treasures. Therefore, access to its rooms was rather

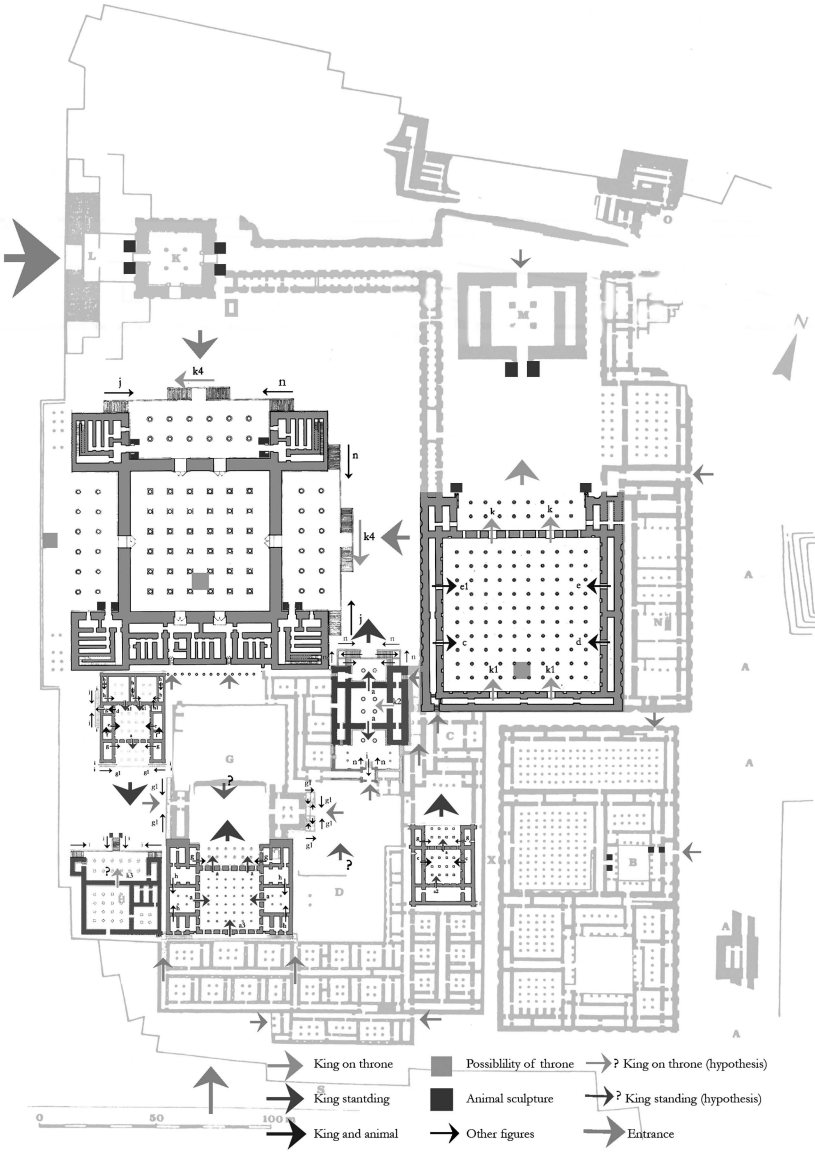

FIGURE 2.41 The orientation of the bas-relief figures in relation to the whole of the Persepolis Terrace

complicated. Cahill (1985:378) retains that the difficulty of access was deliberate because the doors which could have helped the circulation are often walled in. The Treasury Tablets and the major part of the clay labels were discovered in a space on the second floor above room 33, while a substantial number of seals and weights were found in the courtyards. This implies that the halls could have been

used as storage space and the rooms adjacent to the courtyards, having more light, as working and administration spaces. The fact that the audience panels of the Apadana stairways were installed under the porticoes may imply an exhibition function to the north courtyard.

Greek classical sources mention other important treasuries in the capital cities of the Persian Empire such as in Pasargadae, Susa, Babylon and Ecbatana, but there are not enough archeological finds. However, the Treasury of Persepolis is the only Achaemenid treasury discovered so far. Strabo (XV.3. 6), for example, writes that the treasuries were filled with wealth for long periods when the Persians were collecting tributes from Asia. Quintus Curtius, writing in 41–54 AD, mentions the riches deposited in Persepolis both in the lower city and in the 'citadel':

> into it [Persepolis] the barbarians had heaped the wealth of all Persia; gold and silver had been amassed, a vast amount of clothing, furniture designed not for use but for **luxurious display** . . . [the Macedonian soldiers] rent the royal robes . . . they broke with mattocks vases of priceless art . . . each one carried the broken limbs of the statues as he had torn them off.
>
> *(Quintus Curtius, V.6. 3–5)*

The classical authors also mention the great antiquity of these treasures, implying that the riches deposited in Persepolis not only had an economical value but also cultural and historical significance. The Persepolis Treasury survived, almost untouched, until the 1930s. The objects found in the Treasury, although sacked by Alexander's soldiers, are the richest and the most varied existing Achaemenid collection. These include cuneiform clay tablets that provide precious information on the economic and administrative activities in Persepolis and the province of Parsa, as well as objects of various provenances such as Egypt, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor. Some Persepolitan material was lost due to the sinking of the American ship containing archeological finds from Persepolis in the Second World War.

The Treasury certainly had an administrative and a storage function, and it was probably partially used as a museum, although the presence of the clay tablets may indicate that these belonged to an archive deposited there and not related to the building (Razmjou, 2010:242). The installation of the audience panels of the Apadana stairways in the Treasury could have been an idea of Artaxerxes I to create a museum. The 'museum' at Susa which contained the stela of Naramsin (ca. 2200) and the Code of Hammurabi (18th cent.), and other symbolic booties, could have been the conceptual prototype of the Treasury at Persepolis (Root, 1979:27). The Persians could have adopted the Assyrian practice of providing a storage for the war booties and gifts received during ceremonies (Farkas, 1974:47). This is because the excavations of Oates (1962:20ff) in Shalmaneser's Fort in Nimrud have shown the arsenal and the storage of the Assyrian court, which could have had a function similar to the Persepolis Treasury. It is also possible that the northern courtyard of the Treasury and its large adjacent square hall

were built by Darius as a temporary audience hall while waiting for the completion of the Apadana (Ghirshman, 1957:277; 1964:207), although it is strange that the audience panels were installed in the courtyard where they were little exposed. Obviously, this hypothesis is precedent to the discovery of the original position of these panels. Considering the type of the discovered objects and judging by the plan of the building, it seems that the intention was not to display the objects, but rather to provide a safe place to keep them. That is probably why both entrances are modest and the corridors are tortuous, making accessibility difficult. However, the porticos of the northern courtyard where the audience panels were installed provided some exhibition space. Part of the Treasury was later used as a deposit for arms.

In the **final phase**, some of the rooms in these courtyard complexes were used as storage, especially room 33, which contained arms, furniture and administrative tools such as weights and seals. The deposited objects could have arrived when the room was no longer used for administration. The north courtyard with its adjacent spaces and room 33 and related rooms must have served as the administrative center and control of goods coming in to and going out of the Treasury (Cahill, 1985:378). Therefore, the main function of the Treasury was not only to keep but also to safeguard the **significant** objects, even those with no economic value. Some were spoils of war and not only tributes or gifts. In fact, before the reign of Darius the subject people did not pay tributes but gave gifts, and later those who were not subject to taxation regularly brought gifts to the king (Herodotus, III. 89–97). The value of the gifts was not only materialistic but **symbolic** in relation to an alliance or submission to protection by the Achaemenids. Gifts were probably presented in a **ceremonial context**; therefore, some objects pertain to this category, resembling those depicted on the Apadana stairways and implying a connection between the two buildings.

Persepolitan Clay Tablets: These tablets are in Elamite and refer to the Treasury, giving instructions to the treasurer regarding administrative issues. They also give evidence for the dating of its three different construction phases. They are divided in two groups. The first group, the "Treasury Tablets," discovered in the Treasury, are fewer in number and mainly deal with the cash payments of the workers employed in building works in Persepolis. The second group, the "Fortification Tablets," found in the fortification in the north of the Terrace, are some 30,000 tablets, dealing with issues such as rations of the workers, transfer of materials, accounting and administrative transactions. These were originally in the Treasury but were taken to the Fortification in 492. The Fortification Tablets are different from the Treasury Tablets in form, in number and in contents, being smaller, more numerous and dealing with the transfer of food and other products, which were never deposited in the Treasury, to places outside Persepolis. On the contrary, the Treasury Tablets concern the extraordinary payments in silver as supplement to the regular pay of the workers in the Persepolitan area. The Treasury Tablets indicate that the building activities were more intensive during the

19–20th year of Xerxes' reign and until the fifth year of the reign of Artaxerxes I, i.e., 460. After this date the tablets were discontinued, probably due to ending activities, or transfer of the archive to elsewhere or substituting clay tablets with papyrus and change of writing from Elamite to Aramaic.

The Treasury Tablets indicate that the Treasury administrative function was in the scale of the province of Parsa, and its economic function was not regular but only in the moments of great need, such as the grain shortage in 467/466. Therefore, wealth entered the Treasury, but left only in particular circumstances and only in the province of Parsa. Considering the character and provenance of the discovered objects, almost all were of foreign provenance and, although rare and precious, were not objects that could have been economically redistributed. They had a **symbolic value**, and nearly all the datable objects belong to an earlier Achaemenid period prior to circa 436, and almost no object from the last century of the Empire (Cahill, 1985:380ff). Among the few objects of value that were left after the plunder of Alexander, the most precious are those that had a memory value for the dynasty or were war booties. Gifts were the materialization of the imperial power and, therefore, were safeguarded in the Treasury, not only for their economic value, but mainly for their symbolic or commemorative value. There were objects with symbolic and **political values** related to the established power. Some objects could have had a strictly **historical value**, having belonged to earlier kings or been associated to specific events. Some objects came from the Temple of Esagila in Babylon, as verified by Babylonian cylinder seals (Dandamayev, 1993:43; Porada, 1961:70). The absence of gifts from the late 5th and 4th centuries in the Treasury excavations could indicate a change in the function in that period (Cahill, 1985:388), because there is no evidence on payments in silver after 458, which is probably when the audience panels were transferred to the northern courtyard, and the function of the Treasury was probably changed. It is also probable that in this period the north-entrance corridors were filled with utensils and arms and other entrances were blocked (**Figure 2.40**). These changes indicate a general reduction of activity and construction work at Persepolis after the reign of Artaxerxes I, including the replacement of the audience panels of the Apadana stairways and introducing a funerary function.

2.8. Royal Tombs

"Among the royal sepulchers that I have seen in many parts of the world, few of the fabrics reared by man, and none of those in which nature is made to play the principal part, are more impressive than these" (Curzon, 1966:142).

There are four Achaemenid royal tombs in Naqsh-i Rustam and three in Persepolis (**Figure 2.42**). The only tomb that can be attributed with certainty is Tomb I, in Naqsh-i Rustam, which belongs to Darius, as testified by his epitaph. All other attributions hypothetically assign Tomb II to Xerxes, Tomb III to Artaxerxes I and Tomb IV to Darius II. The Persepolitan tombs are Tomb V

FIGURE 2.42 Naqsh-i Rustam, Achaemenid Royal Tombs, Tomb of Darius on the right (2016)

(South Tomb), Tomb VI (North Tomb) and Tomb VII (Unfinished Tomb). Curzon (1966:142–143) retains that the Achaemenid tombs were influenced by the rupestrian royal tombs in Thebes in Egypt. Cutting tombs in the rock could have been derived from the Median rock tombs in western Zagros and in Kurdistan. A prototype of the Achaemenid tombs is the tomb of Cyaxeres, which also has a palatial façade.

In Persepolis, the North and South Tombs are visible from the Terrace, while the Unfinished Tomb, attributed to Darius III, is some 500m away behind the mountain to the southeast of the Terrace (Figure 2.44) (). Schmidt (1970:99) attributes the South Tomb to Artaxerxes II (404–359) and the North Tomb to Artaxerxes III (359–338), because Artaxerxes III was more involved in the construction of Persepolis and therefore the North Tomb, being nearer to the Terrace and only 130m to the east of the Hundred Column Hall, should be his. It seems that Artaxerxes II, like his father Darius II (424–405), did not carry out much building work in Persepolis, although he reigned for 45 years. Therefore, the South Tomb, more distant, should belong to Artaxerxes II. Another justification is by François Vallat, underlying that the inscription containing the throne holders' names on the South Tomb is trilingual and has the same linguistic errors in its Elamite and Babylonian versions as those in other inscriptions of Artaxerxes II, and since in the reign of Artaxerxes III inscriptions were

only in Old Persian, therefore the South Tomb cannot belong to Artaxerxes III (Tilia, 1972:62). On the façade of Tomb VII (Unfinished Tomb) only a section of the upper part and two guards on the lateral walls are carved, showing that it has the same design scheme as the other two Persepolitan tombs. Schmidt (1970:107) assigns it to Darius III (336–330) without giving the reason, while Curzon (1966:183) attributes it to Arses (338–336), son of Artaxerxes III, or to Darius III.

Ctesias, the Greek physician at the court of Artaxerxes II from 401 to 384, mentions that Darius' parents lost their lives when visiting his tomb. Schmidt (1970:80) believes that if this anecdote were true, it would date to the beginning of the first part of the reign of Darius (522–486). Roaf (1974:90) retains that the date of the Tomb of Darius is uncertain and the style of its bas-relief is more similar to Persepolitan bas-reliefs than to that of Bisotun, which is of an earlier date. This implies that the tomb had been designed and built in the middle of the reign of Darius, i.e., the last years of the 6th century.

These rupestrian tombs have chambers that vary in the number of spaces and sarcophagi. The interior walls have no decorations and are not polished. All the sarcophagi are broken in. The tomb elevations are cruciform with bas-reliefs and can be divided in three sections. The upper section shows the king in front of a fire altar standing on a podium upheld by the peoples of the Empire. There are various symbolic elements hovering above such as the moon, the sun and the winged circle, i.e., symbol of the royal glory. The central section is a palatial bas-relief similar to the architectural elements of the Palace of Darius, showing four columns with capitals of kneeling addorsed bulls, the entablature, two lateral antae and the entrance to the sepulchral chamber, which is smaller than the Palace entrance. The lower section is smooth in the Naqsh-i Rustam tombs. To give an idea of the dimensions, for example, the height of the rock where Darius' tomb is carved is almost 64m, the façade of the tomb is 22.93m and its entrance level is 15m high from the ground level. The distance between the top of the facade and the top of the mountain is 26m (Schmidt 1970:80). However, despite such difficulty of access, all the tombs had been looted in antiquity. The lower section is different in the Persepolitan tombs due to the gentle slope of the mountain and the existence of an open area with remains of earthen structures, presumably with funerary and ritual functions, in front of both tombs. Otherwise the general scheme of the façades is almost equal in all tombs with differences in decoration. For example, contrary to the Naqsh-i Rustam tombs, the entablatures of the Persepolitan tombs have a frieze depicting 18 lions in two antithetic rows, and the upper section of the cruciform elevation sits back more than one meter, while in the Naqsh-i Rustam tombs this recession is only 12–14cm. Furthermore, the ribbon on the elevation of the Naqsh-i Rustam tombs runs only the length of the upper section, but in both Persepolitan tombs it runs all along the length of the entablature. The entrance portal of the North Tomb has a border of three rows of 12-petaled lotuses

similar to other bas-reliefs in Persepolis. It is interesting to note that the guards carved on the lateral walls of tombs face towards the entrance as if entering the chamber (**Figure 2.43**), while the figures on the palaces are depicted as if leaving the halls.

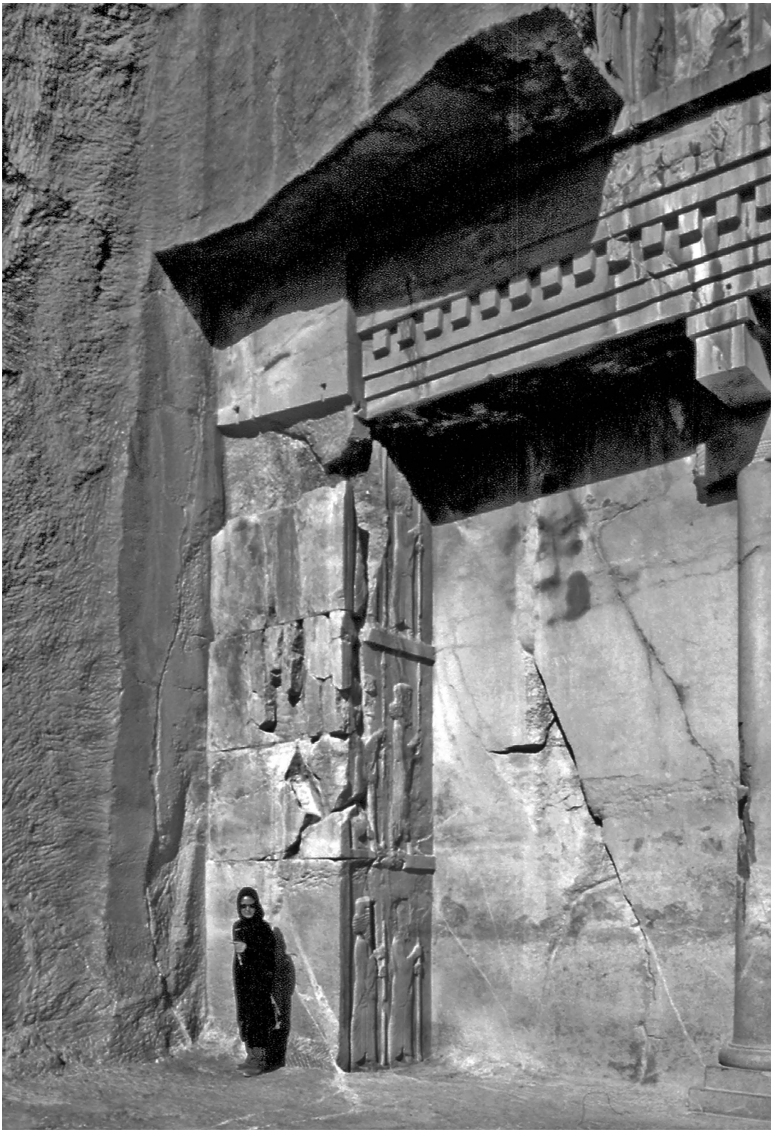

FIGURE 2.43 Persepolis, Tomb V or South Tomb (attributed to Artaxerxes II), north corner; the bas-reliefs of the doorjambs show the guards entering (1998)

(Courtesy of Jukka Jokilehto)

FIGURE 2.44 Persepolis, Tomb VI or North Tomb (attributed to Artaxerxes III), in the background, west view (2016)

2.9. Complexes Outside the Terrace

Situated in the plain, to the south of the Terrace, are structures that are testimony to the urban structure of the city that once surrounded the Terrace. These structures have the same orientation as those on the Terrace, with similar plans. These structures have been grouped in eight complexes (Tadjvidi, 2535:93ff):

Complex (**A**) consists of two porticoes (two rows of 8 columns and two rows of 14 columns), 46 rooms, halls and corridors.

Complex (**B**) has five hypostyle halls and various rooms and corridors.

Complex (**C**) consists of one hypostyle hall (4 ×4 columns) and three porticoes (2 × 4 columns) on its north, east and west sides. The plan of this structure is of apadana-type. On the east side there is a courtyard. Next to the east-west wall, a podium built in bricks, possibly used for rituals, has been discovered. In the area in the northeast corner of the courtyard there was an immense fire since the rooms are full of ash and charcoal.

Complex (**D**) is to the west of Complex (A) and is a small symmetrical building with a central hall, surrounded by four rooms. There are traces of stairs in this structure. The existence of a low podium, built in mud, could indicate the occurrence of rituals.

Complex (**E**) has an apadana-type plan and columns with stone shafts. Inscriptions of Xerxes have been found on the bases of these columns. This

building consists of a tetrastyle central hall with three bistyle porticoes on the north, south and west sides. Access to the corner rooms, as in the Apadana, is through the relevant porticoes (**Figure 2.45**). Tadjvidi (2535:63ff) retains that this building was the tallest and also on a higher level of terrain. Traces of fire and wall decorations in red, blue and white have been found in this building. Some 57m to the south of this structure a square pool of 23.55m on each side with a depth of 2.15m has been discovered. It has carved stones joined with metal clamps embedded in lead (Kiani, 1996:187).

Complex (**F**), discovered in the excavations of Sami (1330:53ff), consists of a hypostyle hall (3 × 4 columns), a portico on the east side and various rooms. In this palace Xerxes' inscriptions were found.

Complex (**G**) consists of four apartments equipped with courtyard, portico, hall and relevant rooms. In various parts of this complex are water canals built in brick.

Complex (**H**) consists of six independent apartments, with various rooms and corridors. All four sides of this complex have double walls with a corridor in between. The north corridor is wider, and the others were probably vaulted. All apartments had a central courtyard, a portico and a central hall with various rooms where many fragments with Xerxes' trilingual inscription (XPm) have been found (Tadjvidi, 2535:158), in which he declares to have built this palace. In the west part of the courtyard of this complex a bath provided with frigidarium and caldarium has been discovered.

FIGURE 2.45 Complex (E), in the plain, south of the Royal Terrace, north view (2016)

Herzfeld (1941:231) attributes these buildings to the periods of Darius and Xerxes, while Schmidt (1953:55) dates them to the reign of Darius due to the red floor pavement. This indicates that they were built or started to be built during the reign of Darius, or even at the beginning of the reign of Xerxes, implying that during the construction of the Terrace these structures were occupied. Tilia (1977:74) attributes the construction of a major part of these structures to Xerxes. This dating is verified due to the inscriptions of Xerxes (XPm) discovered on various fragments of the torus of the columns of Complex (H): "Saith Xerxes the King: This Palace [Tachara] I built." Identical inscriptions have been found on the tori excavated by Godard in 1954 as well as in the excavations of the Iranian General Office of Archaeology in 1968–1973 carried out by Tadjvidi. Moreover, the excavations by the Iranian archeologists in 1969 have revealed, circa 200m to south of these complexes, the remains of a red floor, resembling those in the Palace of Darius, attached to the decorated part of the cavetto socle (Tilia, 1972:261). Tadjvidi (2535:185) dates Complex (C) to Artaxerxes II and underlines that these structures had first been sacked and then set on fire. This assumption is due to lack of objects in excavations. It is probable that these complexes were the residence for the king and his court while in Persepolis. Furthermore, these were residential palaces and gardens, while the Terrace had a ceremonial function (Godard, 1962:124).

Fratadara Complex is located to the north at some distance from the Terrace. The Oriental Institute carried out its excavation, unearthing several hypostyle halls and other structures. There is a bas-relief of two figures, although much lost, on the jambs of a window. Herzfeld considered the male figure that of a Frataraka ruler in the early part of the third century (Schmidt, 1953:56; Mousavi, 2012:74ff). Although it has been dated to the post-Achaemenid period, Tadjvidi (2535:18) retains that it surely belongs to the Achaemenid period. This is due to the orientation of the structures, carvings of the bas-reliefs and archeological finds.

2.10. Construction Techniques

The stone quarried from the mountain was used in the construction of the Terrace wall. Stone blocks, irregular in dimension and form, were set in dry masonry. The edges were treated in *anathyrosis* to guarantee a perfect adherence of the joints (**Figure 2.4**). Once a block was put in position details were dealt with and the stone was dressed (Tilia, 1978:6). Iron clamps were set in lead inside hollows to keep the block in place. Sections of the Terrace wall are inclined inwards for major stability, and in some parts the walls are built with regular blocks, mainly near the Apadana. The upper parts of the Terrace wall are generally more regular. Like at Pasargadae, Nylander (1970:148) finds Ionian stonework influence at Persepolis, attributing the toothed dressing of the stone surface and the difference in the dimensions of the dovetail-shaped hollows to the presence of Ionian stonemasons. The use of toothed chisel or hammer is frequent in the buildings of

Xerxes and his successors, but not so often in the earlier buildings of Persepolis. During the time of Darius, stone was mainly worked with flat chisel or edged hammer, and the iron clamps were imbedded dovetail-shaped hollows (Nylander, 1965:52, Nylander, 1966:142; Tilia, 1972:161).

The stone was mostly provided from Mehr Mountain, but also from quarries in the plain such as Majdabad and Sivand. The gray stone of Mehr Mountain in Persepolis was used in various constructions including the Terrace wall, the Palace of Darius, major parts of the Apadana and the north stairway of the Central Palace, while the black stone of Majdabad quarry was used for building the Gate of Xerxes, the Hundred Column Hall, the Palace of Xerxes, the stairway of Artaxerxes I and the Central Palace. The black stone has a finer grain and is more suitable for carving fine details and polishing but is less resistant to weathering.

Other stone parts include column bases and foundations, stairways, doorways, architraves and frames of doorways, windows and niches. Only in the Treasury were these frames in fired bricks. The stone door and window jambs have a 'U' section to embrace and reinforce the mud-brick walls. There is a lotus pattern carved on stone pivots on the floor around the hole for the door-pin. The small holes on the neck of the figure of the king carved on doorway jambs indicate the presence of bracelets and necklaces that were once inlaid on these bas-reliefs. The column shafts and the capitals of the large buildings are in stone while in the palaces and the Treasury they were probably in wood. All columns in Persepolis have flutings. The spine of the bulls of the capitals is positioned parallel to the façades in all buildings. There are traces of the contour of the roof structure on the summit of the antae of the palace porticos, resembling the façade of the royal tombs (**Figure 2.46**). These flat roofs were in cedar wood, obviously all lost; as Darius declares in the Foundation Charter of Susa (DSf § 9–11), the **materials** used were cedar of Lebanon, gold of Lydia and Bactria, lapis-lazuli and cornelian from Sogdiana, turquoise from Chorasmia and silver and ebony from Egypt. The wall decorations were from Ionia, ivory from Ethiopia and Aracosia, the yaka wood from Kirman and Gandahara and the stone for columns from a village in Elam. The **workmanship**, instead, was composed of: stone carvers from Ionia and Sardis, jewelers and wall decorators from Media and Egypt and bricklayers from Babylonia. The Persepolitan tablets testify that the **workers** were regularly paid and that, in a period during the reign of Darius, there were 400 paid workers.

The walls were generally mud-brick masonry built on a stone base, which continued below the floor level. The exterior façade of the walls of some buildings such as the Treasury, the Hundred Column Hall and the Gate of Xerxes had vertical indented recessions (**Figure 2.12**), a typical feature of the Mesopotamian building tradition (Frankfort, 1954:221). The vertical cavities above the stone orthostates in the mud-brick masonry walls are for inserting vertical wooden posts, today disappeared, to consolidate the mud-brick wall (**Figure 2.47**).

The wall finishes in non-glazed bricks were simply painted. The glazed bricks, in siliceous paste covering as those of Susa, were composed of a lime and sand paste put

FIGURE 2.46 Palace of Darius, east view of the portico; the top of the western anta shows the contour of the roof structure (2016)

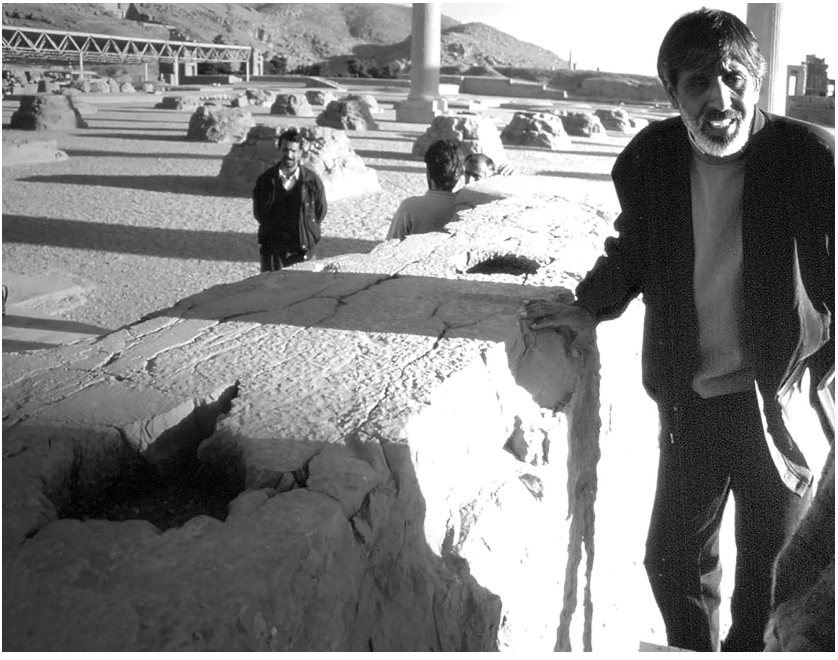

FIGURE 2.47 Apadana western wall, cavities for installing vertical wooden posts for wall consolidation (1998)

in molds and fired. The glazed bricks coverings were of the same paste, molded and dried and slightly fired. Then the outline of the figure was drawn with blue glaze; after a second firing, the empty spaces was filled in with paint and fired for the last time. The colors were blue, white, yellow and green (Zander, 1970:4; Van den Berghe, 1959:216). Fired bricks were used for doorsills, floors and lining the water channel.

Traces of the red floor, which is a characteristic of early Achaemenid architecture (Schmidt, 1953:32), have been discovered in the north rooms of the Palace of Darius, in the Treasury, in the Harem and in the structures in the south below the Terrace. The red floor of the Palace of Darius is lime mixed with stone and calcite in red color (Zander, 1968:35) and has four layers: (1) a layer of rough plaster of calcite of fine grain with rock fragments and quartz grain (2–5mm thick); (2) a layer of plaster of fine calcite for finishing (1–2mm thick); (3) a fine layer of hematite; (4) a layer of cinnabar (vermilion), finer due to wear (20–40μm) (Stodulski *et al*, 1984:149).

The mudbricks measuring circa 33 × 33 × 13cm were laid in layers of clay mortar, visible in the remains of the walls of the southeast corner 'tower' of the Apadana. For plastering, first a 5cm thick layer of clay and then a greenish-gray finishing coat of 1–5cm thick were applied. Traces of gypsum and lime have been found in plasters and mortars (cf. Matson, 1953:285–288). Such finishing layer is also found on the walls of buildings such as the Apadana, the Treasury and the Harem Complex. In the buildings of Xerxes, like the Apadana, the floor of the central hall has a 3–5cm thick layer of mud with a thin finishing coat of greenish-gray plaster, similar to the plaster of the wall surface, directly applied on the rock in the middle of the hall (Schmidt, 1953:72). The floor of the north courtyard of the Treasury was covered with a rough white plaster, while the pavement of the porticos of the same courtyard had a red surface (Tilia, 1972:175).

The precision in execution is shown, for example, on the podium of the Palace of Darius, where it is possible to see the exact position of the axes of the walls, the distances that indicate the thickness of the walls and the position of the door-jambs, as well as stone masons' marks.

The stone, once quarried, underwent some initial carvings on the spot before being transported to Persepolis. The amount of work on the quarry varied according to architectural element. The capitals, for example, were carved more in detail while the structural elements received less carving. Architectural elements were produced according to the size of the stone blocks, and details were carved on site. This is clearly seen, for example, in the Palace of Darius, where doors, windows and niches are sometimes carved in a single block and sometimes composed of several blocks, making each door or window a unique piece of sculpture. Each single block can be as heavy as 30 tons. The amount of work and time needed to produce each piece imply that there was no concern for the cost. Therefore, the joints between various composing elements of the doors or the windows are not always in the same position because there was not a prefabrication system. A similar approach is also seen in the stairways, where steps and parapets are carved from different sizes of stone blocks and sometimes even several steps and their parapet are carved from one single block (**Figure 2.7**). Not even the columns

FIGURE 2.48 Signs for matching stone torus and shaft (2006)

are composed of standard pieces, and difference in the size of blocks is found in column drums. This way of construction implies much in situ stonework, which is fundamentally different from the Greek way of working the stone, which involved a more developed prefabrication of the architectural elements.

The largest quarried stone block, sometimes 6m high, was used for the lower part of the column, and the smaller pieces were positioned in the upper parts up to a height of over 15m. The joints were prepared before positioning the blocks, and once the pieces were assembled, reference points were then used to guide the carving of the round shafts and flutings, making the final touches in situ (**Figure 2.48**). Metal clamps imbedded in lead were used to fix the blocks. The Greeks, due to their standardization, could substitute the column blocks, which were interchangeable, but this was not possible in the case of the Persepolitan columns since each column was composed of blocks of different dimensions. In the case of bas-reliefs, the work was done gradually, polishing the rough surface until it became smooth. The Ionian influence is more noted in Pasargadae, where the stone blocks are smaller. For stone repair and restoration, stone inlay is adopted (**Figure 2.49**, **Figure 2.50**). In bas-reliefs, sometimes the figure is carved on inlaid stone or even on metal clamp inserted for reinforcements.

Several 17th-century visitors mention color and gilding on bas-reliefs and on inscriptions. Herbert (1634:152) points out the existence of gilding on the friezes and cornices as well as on the trim of vests. Daulier-Déslandes (1673:61) mentions traces of gilding on cuneiform inscriptions. Of the later travelers, only

FIGURE 2.49 Palace C doorway (site museum), reintegration of the missing part (2017)

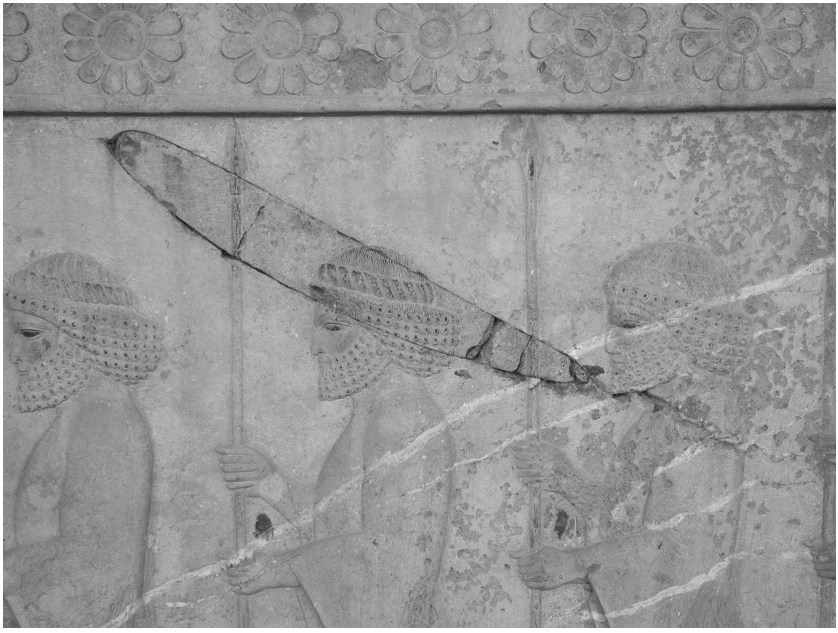

FIGURE 2.50 Apadana eastern stairway, reintegration of stone fragment in antiquity (2006)

Texier (1842:188ff vol.II) in 1840 declares to have found faded traces of gilding on some robes of the king and blue on the background of bas-reliefs. Curzon (1966:171, n.1) believes that these observations were based on the accounts of earlier travelers and the color traces were already lost and that the cause of such interpretation was the shiny surface due to the siliceous varnish with which the ancient Persians seem to have coated the bas-reliefs. Nevertheless, Curzon (1966:172) mentions traces of blue color on some bas-reliefs of the façade of the Tomb of Darius in Naqsh-i Rustam and the discovery of some fragments of red-painted stucco in a building on the Terrace, which were taken to the British Museum. According to Schmidt (1970:84) the façade of the Tomb of Darius in Naqsh-i Rustam was at least in part painted. The discovery of the traces of blue pigments by Boris Dubensky on some letters of the (DNa) inscription behind the figure of the king could indicate that, if not all the inscriptions, at least the Old Persian and Elamite versions were in blue. Traces of blue, reddish-brown and green pigments have been discovered under the projection of the lower row of the throne holders. Furthermore, some capitals have traces of blue color. The *candys*, or the Persian dress, should have been painted in red or blue, considering the traces of the pigments found on the bas-reliefs of the Central Palace, where the shoes of the king were painted in blue and the ankles in red. It seems that the columns of the Place of Darius were in wood or with a wooden core covered with a painted plaster.

Herzfeld, director of Persepolis excavations from 1931–1934, found traces of color pigments on some unearthed sculpture, but he does not mention where these were found (Schmidt, 1953:82). However, he makes a reconstruction drawing of the polychrome of some bas-reliefs such as the winged circle. The main colors are red, blue and gold, implying that Persepolitan buildings were richly colored (Tilia, 1978:29ff; Lerner, 1971:19ff). The analysis of the pigments has shown that among colors were Egyptian blue, malachite, hematite and cinnabar. It seems that gold sheet together with paint was used on decorations (cf. Stodulski *et al*, 1984:149, 153). Traces of polychrome have also been found on the Alexander Sarcophagus, which was discovered in Sidon in 1887 and is exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul. On this sarcophagus, the audience scene of Persepolis has been found inside the shield of a Persian warrior as well as traces of red color on the shoe of one of the figures (von Graeve, 1970:170).

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3

ARCHITECTURAL MORPHOLOGY AND PROPORTIONS

3.1. Morphology of Persepolitan Buildings

Achaemenid architecture is **symmetrical**, and buildings are often **detached**. The most common and dominant form in this architecture is the **square**, which is found in almost all the buildings of Persepolis. An important architectural element is the **portico**, often situated in the north of the building, although in the prototype of this architecture, i.e., the Palace of Darius, it is situated in the south. The portico faces the courtyard and is the semi-covered space joining the covered and uncovered spaces. Other important architectural elements are the podium and the monumental stairway, generally carved and decorated. The central courtyard, a typical element in Mesopotamian and Mediterranean architecture, in Persepolis is replaced by a generally square **central hypostyle hall**, probably developed from the rectangular central hall in Pasargadae. There are precedents of this architecture in the Iranian highlands, in sites such as Hasanlu, Baba-Jan and Nush-i Jan.

In brief, the main architectural elements of Persepolitan buildings include the central square hypostyle hall, secondary square or rectangular hypostyle hall, portico, podium and monumental stairway. Based on functional hierarchy and needs, there are architectural elements that reflect a precise plan and a specific character. For example, the general characteristics of **ceremonial buildings** is having a stone podium, one or more porticos, a square hypostyle hall, which is a fundamental element, with access through one or more monumental stairway(s) with bas-reliefs. Columns and capitals are in richly carved stone.

From a morphological point of view, there are two main types of internal spaces, i.e., with or without columns. The initial form of the early type of the square hypostyle hall seems to have been closed on three sides with columns on the fourth side (**Figure 3.1 form A**). This form also corresponds to the symbol

for house in the hieroglyphic alphabet. The second type, a space without columns, is a rectangular or square form closed on four sides (**Figure 3.1 form B**). Persepolitan architecture is based on variations and combinations of these two forms.

Form A in its variations A1–A4 shows various combinations of central hall and portico, while A5–A7 are variations of courtyard. The variations of B1–B4 are combinations of form B, while C1–C5 are combinations of A and B forms. In Persepolitan palaces can be found in the basic form D1 in its simplest basic form as well as in its D2–D5 variations. The result of these forms leads to two main building forms that can be called extrovert and introvert. The culmination of the extrovert form is seen in the Apadana while the introvert is found in the Treasury (**Figures 3.1–3.4**). In hieroglyphic writing, besides the symbol for 'house,'

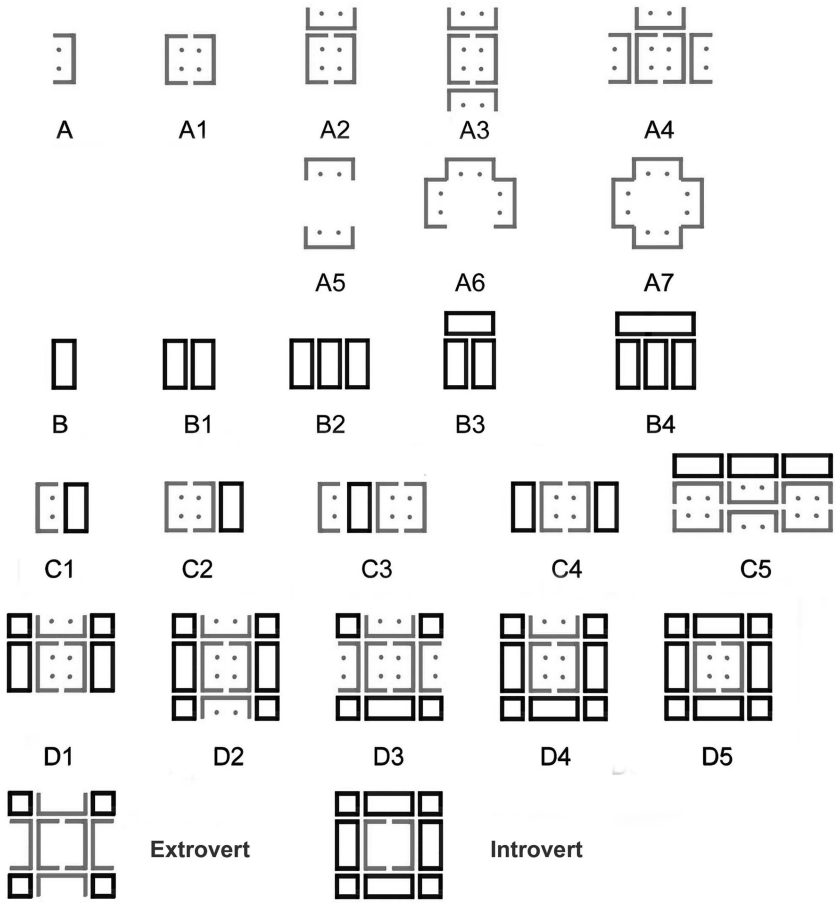

FIGURE 3.1 Morphology of the Persepolitan structures: variations of forms A, B, C, and D

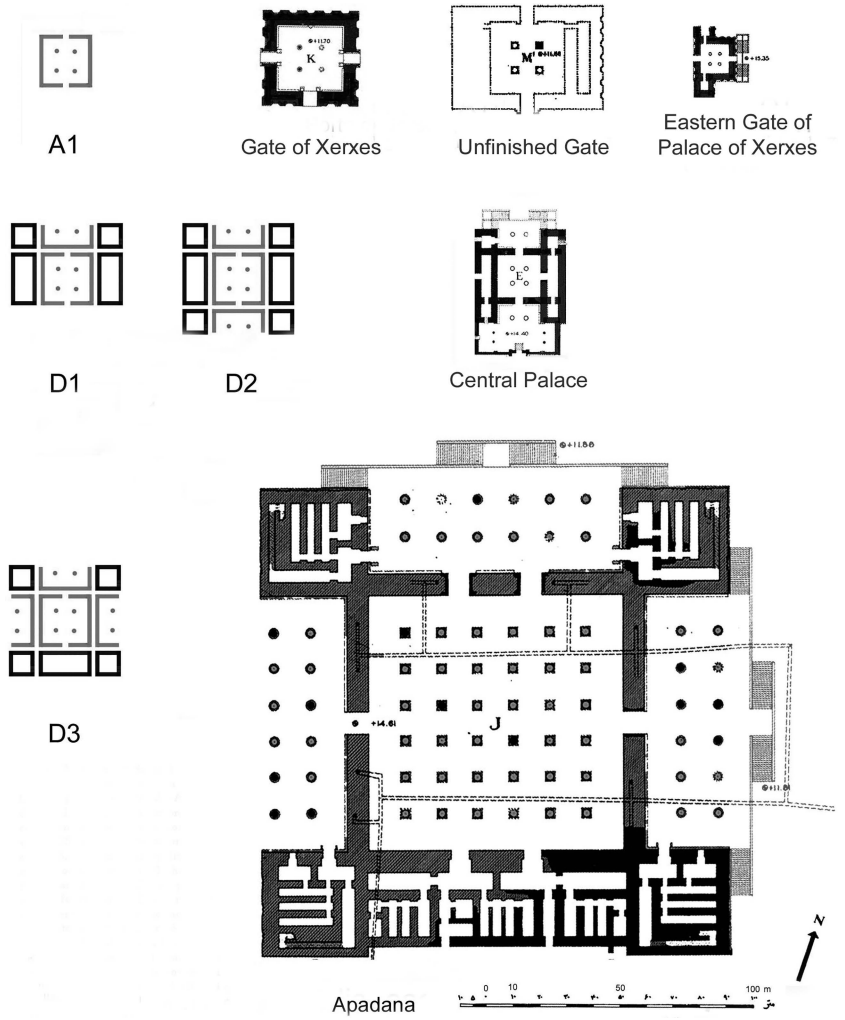

FIGURE 3.2 Morphology of the Persepolitan structures, examples of forms A1, D1–D3

there are other symbols that recall Persepolitan architectural forms, such as: 'door,' 'architrave,' 'stairway' and 'king.' This similarity does not imply that Achaemenid architecture is derived from hieroglyphic symbols. It intends, instead, to suggest that some simple basic forms were adopted and stylized to express architectural elements. In other words, signs are based on the representation of basic architectural forms, as in the hieroglyphics, which are full of allusive cultural meanings (Betrò, 1996:189).

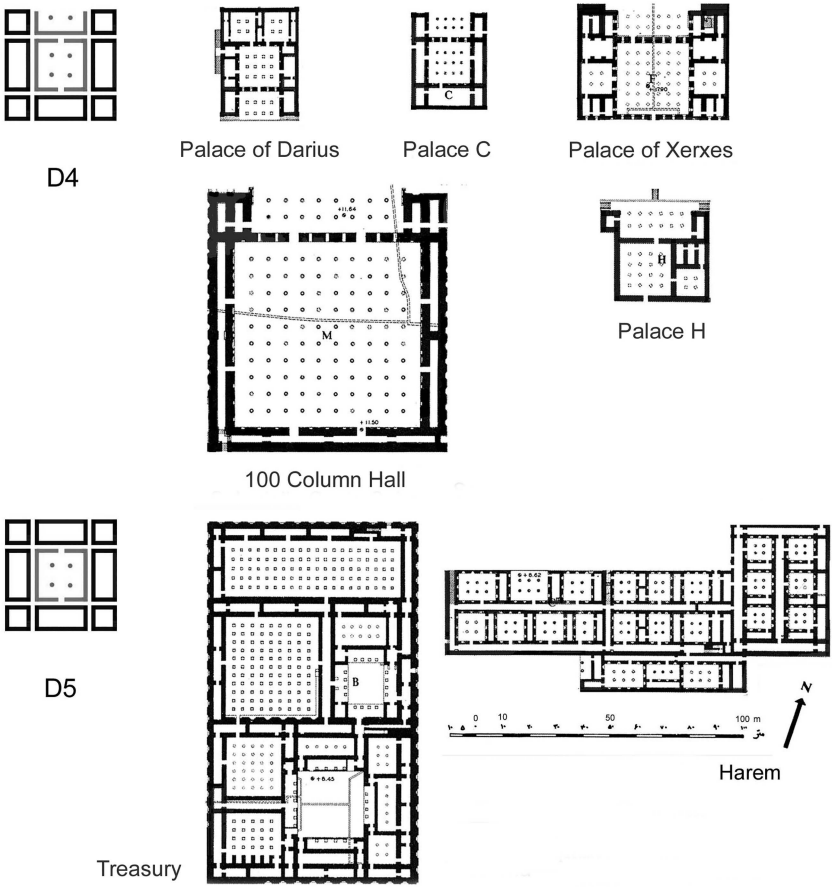

FIGURE 3.3 Morphology of the Persepolitan structures, examples of forms D4 and D5

3.2. Metrology

The western territories of the Achaemenid Empire, including Babylonia, Assyria, Asia Minor, Egypt, Syria and Palestine, used elbow or cubit as their measuring unit, while Greece and the Italic world adopted the foot. The Roman and Greek measurement systems were based on the Egyptian system, with one foot corresponding to two thirds of a cubit. There have been various hypotheses on the dimension of Persepolitan measuring units and their variations in different contexts. It seems that the metrology of the early Achaemenid sites of Pasargadae and Susa is similar to that of Persepolis and most of the buildings and stone elements at Persepolis correspond, even in small details, to these measuring units. It also seems

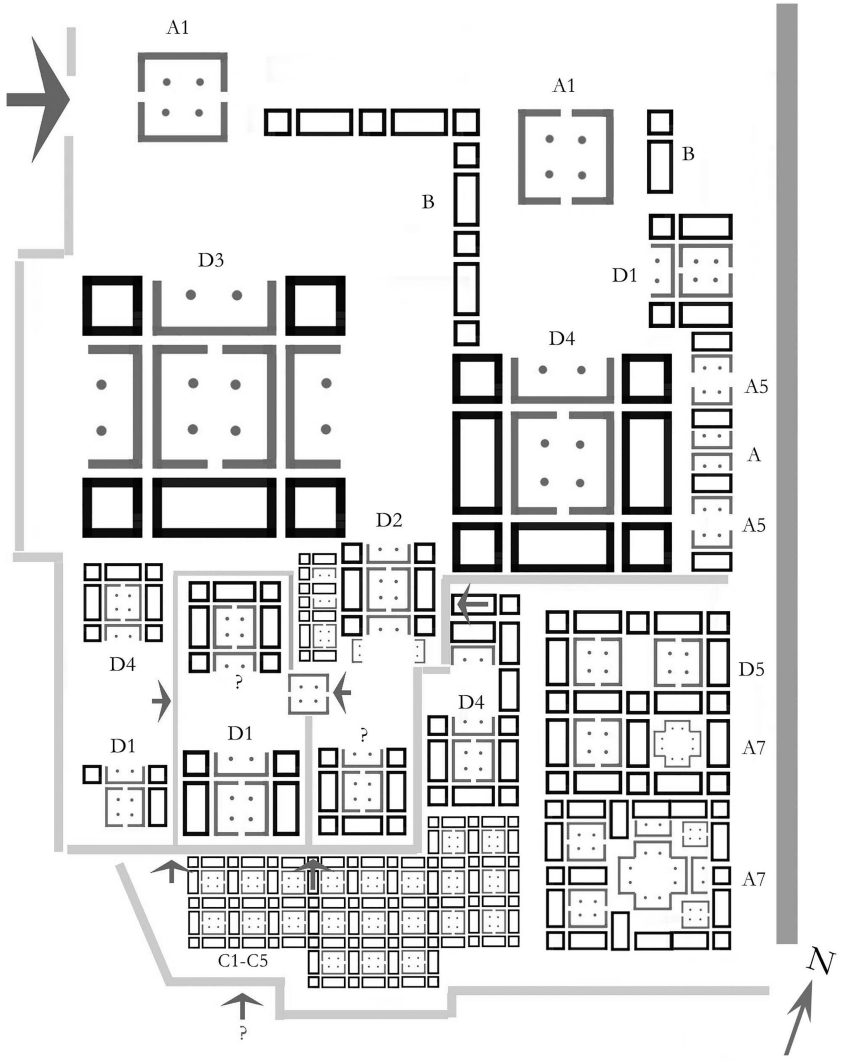

FIGURE 3.4 Morphological analysis of the Persepolitan structures, reflected proportionally in the whole Terrace

that there had been plans of buildings with dimensions indicated in exact numbers in Persepolitan cubits or feet. This assumption is based on some Egyptian and Mesopotamian building plans, and the close parallel between the Mesopotamian and Achaemenid metrologies shows that the Persians would have borrowed their system from Mesopotamia (Roaf, 1978:78). However, since similar measuring systems were also used in the Near East, we cannot be certain of the exact origin of the Persepolitan metrology.

There are three different types of marks on the podiums of the Palace of Xerxes indicating the positions of column axes and centers and edges of walls. Roaf (1978:68) retains that the highest common divisor of the distances between the marks on the eastern edge of the podium of the Palace of Xerxes is 34.76cm, calling it a Persepolitan foot. For the Palace of Darius, he suggests the unit of 52.1–52.2cm, i.e., a Persepolitan cubit. Therefore, a Persepolitan **cubit** would be equal to 1.5 **feet** of 34.7–34.8cm, 6 **palms** of 8.7cm and 24 **digits** of 2.2cm, which have been used in the palaces of Darius and Xerxes. Trümpelmann (1988:40ff) analyzes various construction details, especially the dimensions of the columns of the Apadana, and proposes a cubit of 52.065cm long, recalling that it is necessary to understand proportions of the building. Buildings were obviously built using simple proportions. Shahbazi (1994:90) believes that Darius and his successors consciously employed in their buildings the mystic figures of 3, 7, 9, 16, 21, 24 and 72, which are sacred constituents of the Avesta. He discovered these figures by counting the number of architectural elements such as steps and doorways.

3.3. Dimensions of the Apadana

Noting the importance of understanding building proportions, Trümpelmann (1988:41) proposes a cubit of 52cm, implying a length of 215 cubits for the Apadana and 115 for its central hall. The dimension of the hall is 60.5m on each side according to Schmidt, which will be 115 cubits and 2 feet based on Trümpelmann's cubit. (**Table 3.1**) shows the measured dimensions of the Apadana as well as the calculated dimensions based on the number of cubits multiplied by 52cm. Trümpelmann's

TABLE 3.1 Dimensions of the Apadana

Apadana Dimensions	*Measured (m)*	*Calculated (m)*	*Cubit (52cm)*
Total length	**111.94**	**111.8**	**215**
Length of tower	26.01	26	50
Length of portico	59.9	59.8	115
Length of central hall	60.5	60.5	115 cub + 2 ft
Height of podium	2.61	2.6	5
Height of column base	1.55	1.56	3
Height of shaft	15.6	15.6	30
Height of capital	2.1	2.08	4
Height of column	19.25	19.24	37
Height of parapet (hypothesis)		3.12	6
Total Height (hypothesis)		**22.38**	**43**

(*Continued*)

TABLE 3.1 (Continued)

Apadana Parapet Height (hypothesis)	*Meter*	*Cubit*
Height of the triple beam	1.04	2
Height of the secondary beam	0.52	1
Height of the clay filling	0.52	1
Height of balustrade	1.04	2
Total Parapet Height	**3.12**	**6**

calculations show that the total length of the Apadana is five times its height (215 cubits divided by 43 cubits = 5). It seems that the central hall columns of the Apadana were erected prior to building the walls. Ranieri (1997) attributes to the average distance between the columns (43.375m according to our measurements) a value equal to 125 (5 × 5 × 5), congruous with the value of 5 in the short side of the Pythagorean triad (5, 12, and 13). The resulting foot unit thus corresponds to 34.7cm, which is equal to the hypothesis of Tilia and Roaf, and nearly the same as Trümpelmann's, as well as corresponding to a cubit of 52.05cm. In the central hall of the Apadana, the distance between the column axes is equal to the distance between the axis of the last row of the columns from the internal surface of the external wall (**Figure 3.5**). Furthermore, this distance is equal to the distance between the axis of the internal row of the portico columns from the external surface of the wall of the central hall in all the three porticos. This implies that the thickness of the walls of the hall had initially been considered in the project.

We know that ancient Mesopotamia and related cultures used a system based on the multiples of number 6, which also continued during the Persian Empire (Portoghesi, 1969:28), as seen in the Babylonian division of day in 24 hours, hour in 60 minutes and minute in 60 seconds. The Romans used the stadium, corresponding to 600 feet, which is a multiple of 6. In Persepolis, the proportions of the spaces come close to this same system, and perhaps more precise measurements could reveal how much this may have been based on the same system, i.e., 120 rather than 115 as Trümpelmann suggests. For example, the division of the length of the hall in 120 parts makes working much easier both in design and execution. The main hall of the Apadana has 6 × 6 columns, and this figure can be met in other parts of the complex. Our measurements of the central hall of the Apadana differ from Schmidt's (60.5m on each side), probably because the present walls are modern reconstructions. In our measurements, the length varies between 60.58m and 60.82m; the thickness of the walls is circa 5.78m.

Most column bases of the Apadana are still in situ. In the north row of columns the distance between the axes of the two lateral column bases is 43.33m in the east-west direction. In the center of the hall, the same distance corresponds to 43.44m, while in the south row it is 43.47m. In the second row from the

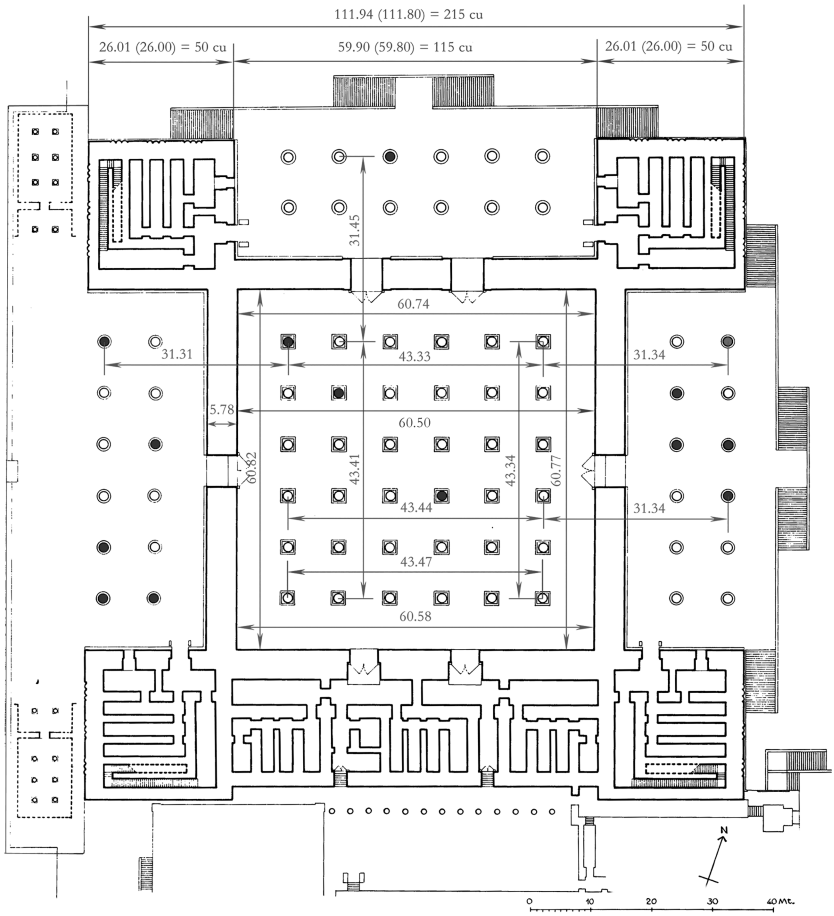

FIGURE 3.5 The Apadana, dimensions of the central hall (author's survey), compared to the general measurements by Trümpelmann on the top

west wall, the distance between the axes of the far-most north and south bases is 43.41m, while the same dimension for the first row of the columns in the east is 43.34m. The distance between the lateral rows of the columns of the central hall and the outer rows of the columns in the porticos is 31.34m in the east, 31.45m in the north and 31.31m in the west. Dividing the average of these measures by 5, the average distance between the axes is 8.675m.

Supposing that the hall originally measured circa 60.8m on each side, one fourth of this dimension will be equal to 15.2m. Comparing this measurement with the dimension of the central hall of the Palace of Darius, which is 15.14 × 15.44m, therefore it is circa 1/4 of each side and circa 1/16 of the area of the

central hall of the Apadana. This establishes an almost perfect relation between the two structures. For example, the central hall of the Palace of Darius, in order to be 30 cubits of 52cm, should be 15.6m long, while the dimensions of the hall vary from 15.14 to 15.44m. Instead, the thicknesses of the walls, which vary from 156cm to 160cm, correspond to 3 cubits of 52cm. The same issue is valid for Palace C of the Harem Complex, which measures circa 15.1 × 15.4m (**Figure 3.6**). Therefore, it seems that the central hall of the Apadana has been an important reference, since the layout of the Terrace and many spaces in various structures of the Terrace seem to be in proportion to this hall (double, half, one fourth, etc.).

3.4. Reference Grid of the Terrace

The **central hall** of the Apadana is considered the reference grid for the design scheme and the positioning of structures on the Terrace. Indeed, a grid based on one fourth of the central hall as module shows that the Terrace and almost all its structures are in some way related or aligned with such gridlines. The Terrace would then measure 15 modules in the north-south and 10 modules in the east-west direction. The 10th module includes the archeological remains of the eastern walls. This implies that the Terrace covers an area of 150 modules. Since the western margin of the Terrace in front of the Apadana is a later extension, the original margin coincides with the gridline. The Apadana itself fits in a square four times the size of the central hall (**Figure 3.7**).

The **first phase** of the Treasury is delimited by the grid. The eastern and western walls are slightly shifted to the west of the grid, but the south side corresponds to it. The Treasury in this phase, measuring 120.7 × 61.9m according to Schmidt, is almost twice the size of the central hall of the Apadana (60.5 × 60.0m). In fact, it is only 30cm shorter in length (2 × 60.5m = 121 – 120.7 = 0.3m) and 140cm longer in width (61.9 – 60.5 = 1.4m). This implies the existence of an original overall grid for the Terrace.

Parts of the **Grand Stairway** and the **Gate of Xerxes** seem to correspond to the grid. These include, for example, the alignments of the external surface of the western wall and the internal surface of the eastern wall of the gate, the southern landing in the east-west direction and the western edge of the Grand Stairway in the north-south direction. The east-west axis of the stairway and the gate is slightly shifted to the north. Dividing the length of the east courtyard of the Apadana in three equal parts, it is possible to note that the east-west axis of the Apadana corresponds to this division. The southwest corner of a square formed on this division is the starting point of the first step of the eastern ramp of the north stairway of Apadana.

The eastern wall of the **Central Palace** coincides with a gridline in correspondence with a rise of 5–6m half-way the width of the Terrace. The south wall of the north portico of the Central Palace coincides with the grid. The Palace also

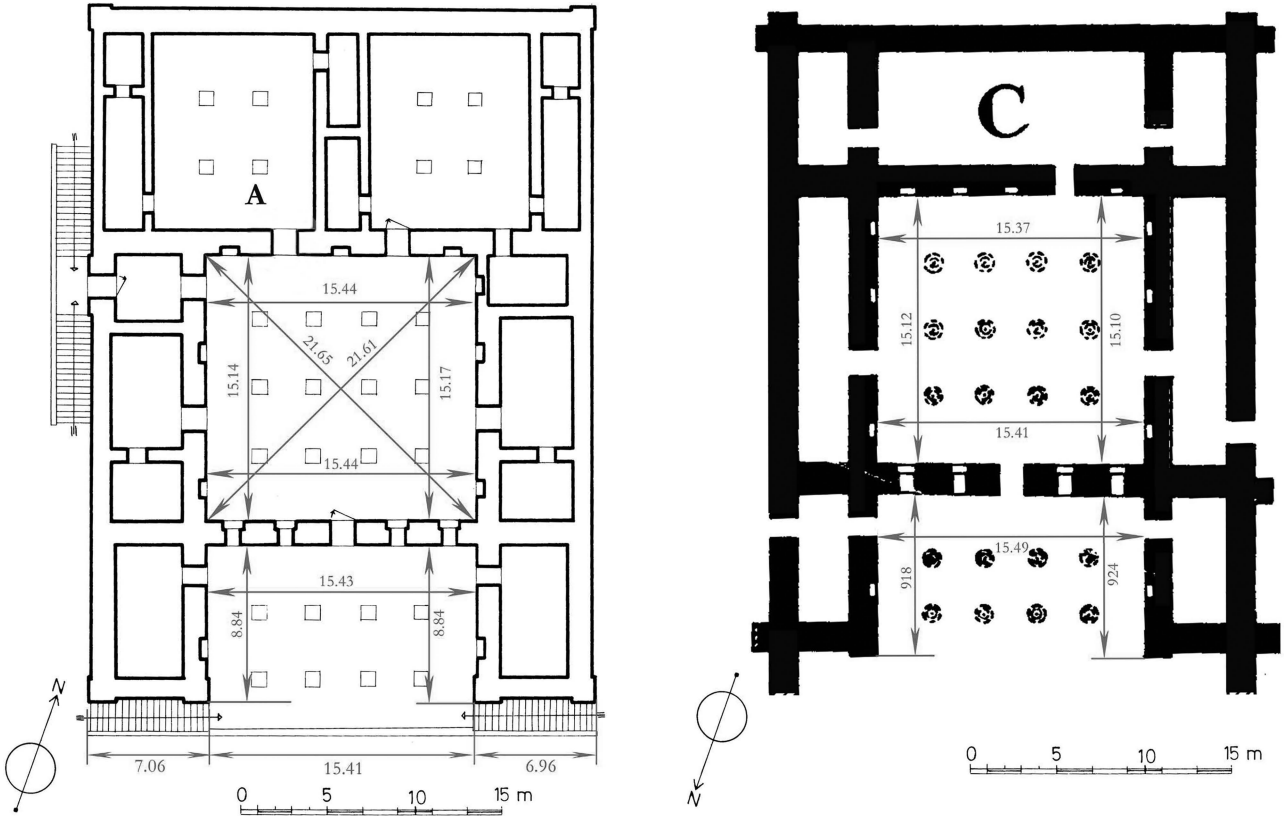

FIGURE 3.6 Comparison between the dimensions of the Palace of Darius and Palace C (site museum) (author's survey)

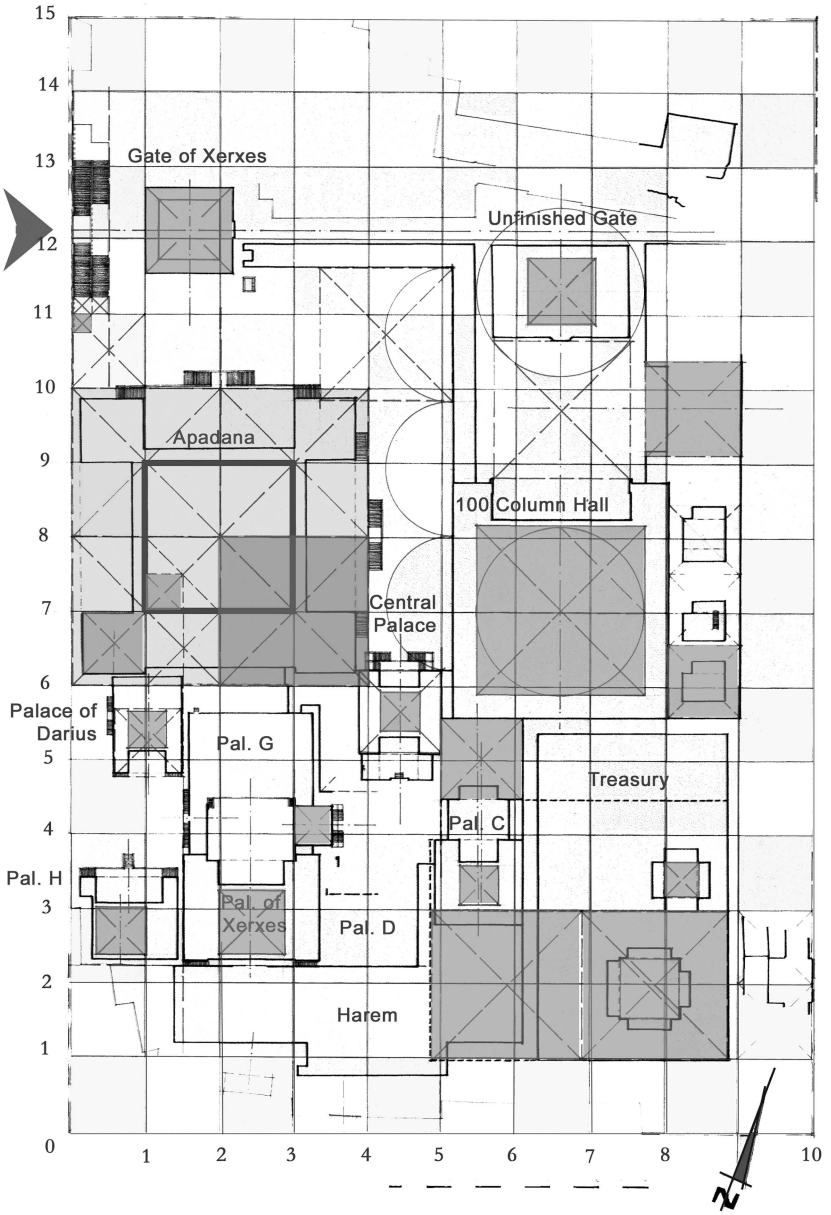

FIGURE 3.7 The construction of the Royal Terrace was based on a modular square grid, presumably in reference to the central Hall of the Apadana; the first phase of the Treasury is exactly twice the size of the Apadana central hall.

consists of a series of spaces that fit in a square delimited in the east by the same gridline. It is interesting to note that the length of each side of the central hall of the Central Palace, which is 15.46 (Schmidt, 1953:116), is almost one fourth of the length of the central hall of the Apadana (60.5m ÷ 4 = 15.125), and equal to one fourth of the module.

The east-west axis of the **Hundred Column Hall** coincides with the grid, which is also in line with the south wall of the central hall of the Apadana. The Hundred Column Hall, however, forms an autonomous complex with the Unfinished Gate, the courtyard and the 32-Column Hall to the east of the courtyard. Furthermore, the circle which is enclosed in the hall is equal to the circle which encloses the Unfinished Gate. The eastern side of the complex and the western wall of the 32-Column Hall correspond to the grid. The courtyard consists of a square delimited by the portico of the Hundred Column Hall and by the Unfinished Gate. The 32-Column Hall is in axis with the center of the courtyard, which is also the center of the square.

The position of the **Palace of Darius**, in the south of the Apadana, is defined by two gridlines strictly related to the Apadana. One gridline is the north-south axis of the southwest tower that coincides to the western wall of the Palace, and the other is the line in one fourth of the length of the hall, i.e., half of the module, that corresponds to the eastern wall of the Palace, also in line with the western wall of the Palace of Xerxes. It seems that the length of the central hall of the Palace of Darius (15.14/15.17 according to our measurements) corresponds to one fourth of the side of the central hall of the Apadana (60.5m÷4 = 15.125) or one fourth of the module. The Palace of Darius forms a square when its north rooms are excluded. The thickness of the walls of the Palace of Darius varies from 156 to 160cm, corresponding to 3 cubits of 52cm. The same situation is valid for the central hall of **Palace C** of the Harem Complex, which measures circa 15.1 × 15.4m. This hall also corresponds to one fourth of the module, which is confirmed due to its similarity to the Palace of Darius (**Figure 3.6**).

The **Palace of Xerxes** and **Palace H** also relate to the grid. This is evident in the west wall of the central hall of the Palace of Xerxes and the east wall of the central hall of Palace H. The east wall of the structure of the gate of the Palace of Xerxes, situated in the east of the courtyard of the Palace of Xerxes, coincides with the grid, and the hall of the gate is circa one fourth of the module

In brief, a grid based on a module measuring one fourth of the central hall of the Apadana provides a system for locating the buildings on the Terrace. The eastern wall of the Central Palace, the middle of the Terrace, corresponds to a level change coinciding to the grid. There is also a proportional rapport between the central hall of the Apadana and other square halls and buildings. For example, the first phase of the Treasury consists of eight modules and thus is twice the size of the central hall of the Apadana. Similarly, there exists a rapport between this module and the palaces of Darius, Xerxes, H, and C of the Harem as well as the Central Palace and the Gate of Xerxes. We can thus affirm that there is a general

grid to define the location of the buildings on the Terrace, as the total width of the Terrace is 15 × 10 modules, covering an area of 150 modules. Therefore, the grid confirms the existence of an **initial design scheme**; it also shows that the Palace of Darius and the Central Palace were conceived together with the Apadana and the first phase of the Treasury.

3.5. Design Scheme of Façades

Since the Persepolitan palaces are in a state of ruin, the tomb façades are the only reference for understanding the design criteria for the architecture of the palace façades. The Palace of Darius in Persepolis and his tomb in Naqsh-i Rustam are among the early building works of Darius. The design criteria of the forms and proportions of the tomb façade have symbolic significance. The same criteria have been used in the Palace of Darius, thus becoming prototypes for the design guidelines for the entire period of the Achaemenid reign.

The façade of the Tomb of Darius is articulated by a bas-relief of four columns with an intra-axes distance of 315cm. The height of the entablature is 160cm, the width of column bases is 54.5cm; the height of column shaft is 472.5cm, the height of capital is 95cm; thus, the total height of the column is 622cm. While in the Palace of Darius the total width of the door frame is 312.5cm and the total height is 595cm, in his tomb, due to lack of space, these measurements correspond to 245cm and 495cm respectively (Schmidt, 1970:81) (**Table 3.2**). The width of the presumed Tomb of Xerxes is 1,805cm, while the width of his palace, including the antae, is 2,985cm, and the distance between the axes is 375cm. The entrances of the tombs of Darius and Xerxes are identical (Schmidt, 1970:92). For the width of the South Tomb, Schmidt (1970:99) provides two different measurements: the first is 1,977cm, and the second is 1,980cm (Schmidt, 1970:105), while in our survey it is 1,986cm, corresponding to the width of the Tomb of Darius, plus 129cm (1,857 + 129 = 1,986cm) (**Figure 3.8**).

Proportions of the façade of the Tomb of Darius (survey of Haines, Schmidt, 1970:80ff): The central part of the cruciform façade of the Tomb of Darius, i.e., the palatial section, has the same design scheme as his palace. The total height of the façade of the Tomb is 2,293cm, the width of the upper and lower parts is 1,090cm, the height of the upper part is 850cm, while the lower part is 650cm high and 300cm deep. The analysis of the proportions of the cruciform scheme of the tomb reveals various related squares (**Figure 3.9**).

1. The lower line of the upper ribbon of the upper part of the façade, the floor of the palatial part of the tomb and the inner side of the antae constitute a square. The center of this square is in the middle of the upper line of the entablature. **Control**: this means a square 1,577cm wide. For calculating the vertical side of the square, the height of the upper ribbon, circa 55cm, should be subtracted from the height of the upper part, and the height of the middle

TABLE 3.2 Dimensions of various façades (Schmidt's measurements are shown in shaded cells)

Dimension. (cm)	*Tomb of Darius*	*Tomb of Xerxes*	*Palace of Darius*	*Palace C of the Harem*	*South Tomb*	*North Tomb*
Width: total	1857	1805	1860	1863	1980 & 1977	2017
			1854		1986	
Width without antae			1580			
	1577		1543	1549.5	1672	1682
Width of antae			140			171
	140		155 & 156	157 & 156.5	152 &162	171-north??
Intra-axes of columns			315		340	340
	315	315	Roaf 313.1		331–341	333–345.5
Height: total	782					775
Height antae			752			
	763		750	780		
Height of entablature	160					159
Height of column	622					616
Height of column base	54.5					
Entrance: external frame			312.5 × 595		250.5 x 409.5	
	24 5 x 490		312 × 585	313 x 489		254.5 x 403
Entrance: internal frame	140 x 365		138.5 ×.	138.5 x 416	148.5 x 358.5	150.5 x 351
			139 × 417			

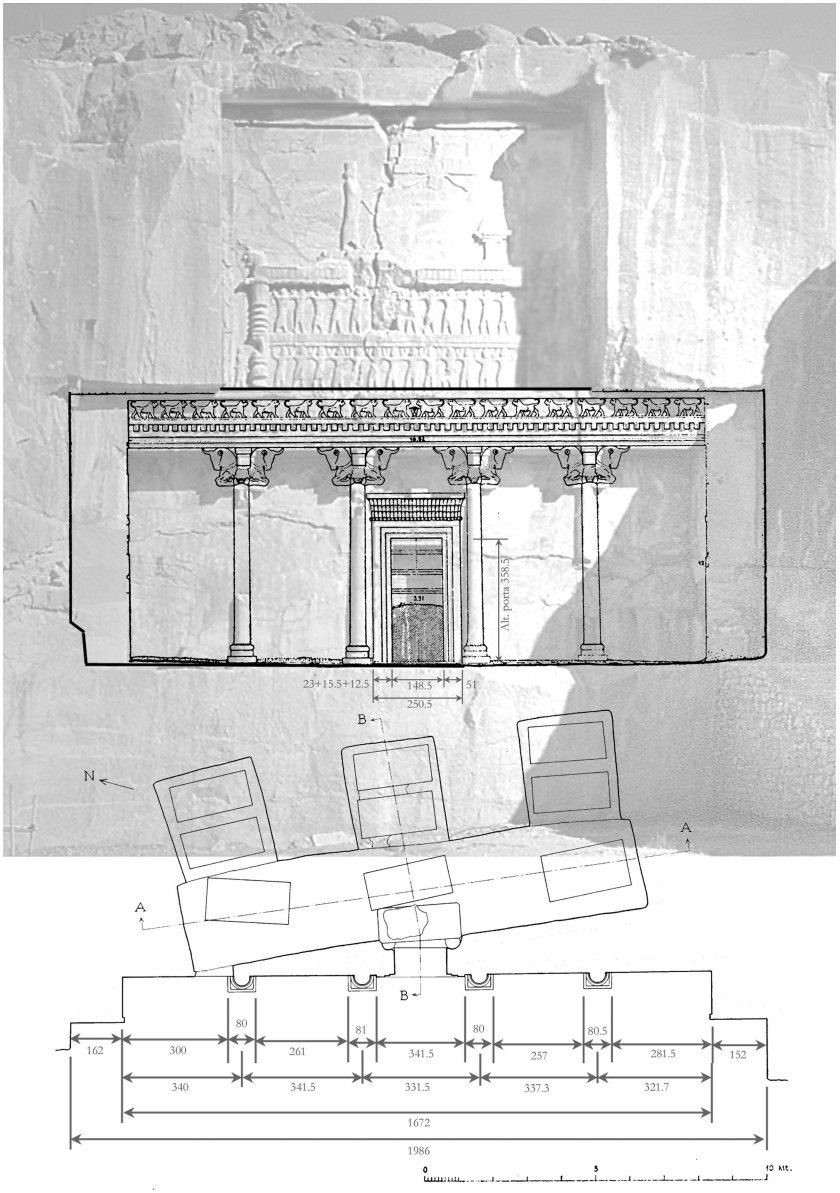

FIGURE 3.8 Persepolis, Tomb V (South Tomb), dimensions

(Plan drawing by Schmidt, 1970, Courtesy of Oriental Institute of Chicago) (author's survey)

part of the façade should be added: 850 – 55 = 795 + 782 = 1,577cm. In fact, half the vertical side of the square should be 1,577 ÷ 2 = 788.5cm, while our calculation gives only 782cm. This means the center of the square remains only 6.5cm above the upper line of the ribbon.

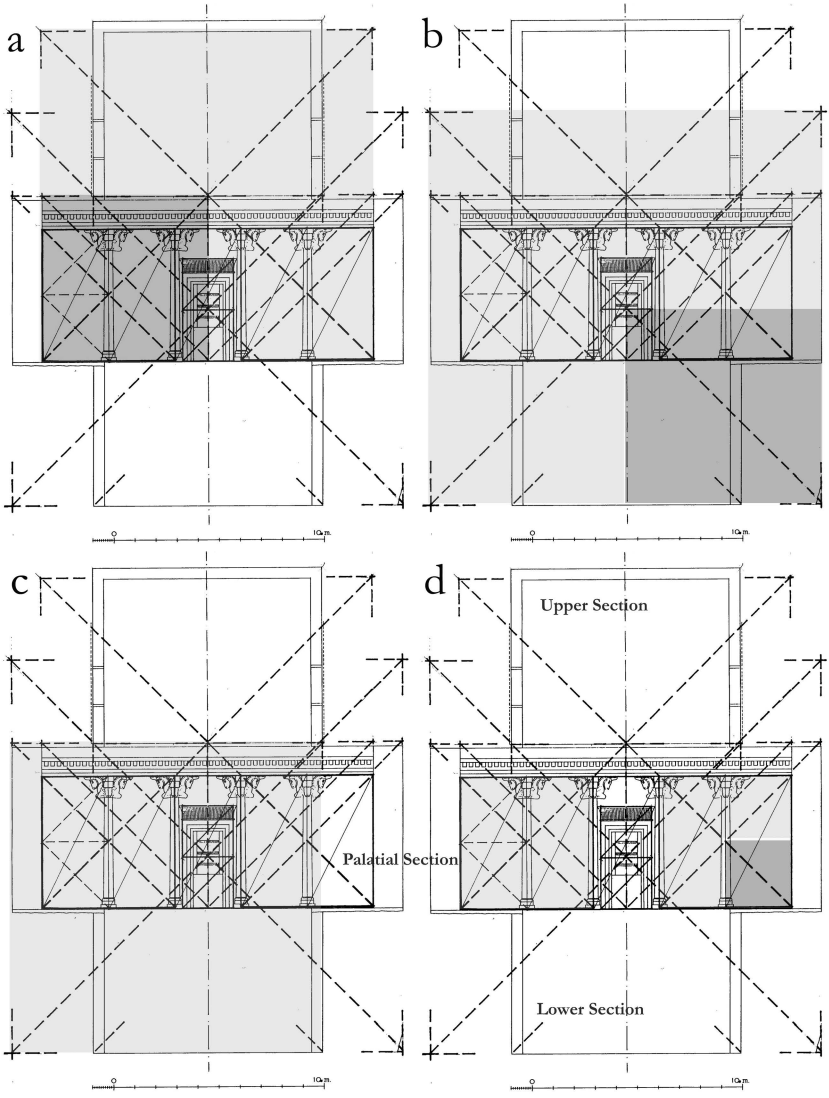

FIGURE 3.9 Naqsh-i Rustam, Tomb of Darius, analysis of the proportions and the use of square

(Base measurements Schmidt, 1970, Courtesy of Oriental Institute of Chicago)

2. The lower line of the lower part of the façade and the outer lines of the antae constitute a square measuring 1,857cm each side. The center of this square is in the middle of the entrance opening of the Tomb.
3. The lower line of the lower section of the façade, the outer lateral lines of the same section and the upper line of the entablature constitute two equal squares which partially overlap. This means forming a square with the vertical

wall to the right and another square with the wall to the left. **Control**: this means a square is obtained measuring [1,857 ÷ 2] + [1,090:2] = 928.5 + 545 = 1,473.5cm wide and 782 + 680 = 1,462cm high. The difference between the two sides of the square is only 11.5cm.

4. Similarly, in the central section of the façade, i.e., the palatial part, it is possible to detect other squares that show the proportions between the various elements of the design scheme of the façade (see **Figure 3.9**). The difference between the width and height of the squares varies only a few centimeters:

    - The upper line of the ribbon of the entablature together with the inner sides of the antae and the floor of the tomb constitute **two equal squares**. **Control**: this means that each square is 1,577 ÷ 2 = 788.5cm wide and 782cm high; the difference between the two sides is only 6.5cm.
    - The lower line of the entablature, which is also the total height of the column, and the inner lines of the antae constitute two and a half squares, which is five equal parts. The axes of the columns correspond to these divisions, and the height of each division is almost double its width. **Control**: each division is 1,577 ÷ 5 = 315.5cm wide and 622cm high. Therefore 315.5 × 2 = 631cm, which means that the difference is 4.5cm in order to be exactly double. Each square will be 631cm wide and 622cm high. This implies that it is only 9cm short of being an exact square.
    - The height of the entrance opening is double its width. This implies that the opening consists of two equal squares. **Control**: the opening is circa 238cm wide and 483cm high (Schmidt, 1970:80); therefore, 238 × 2 = 478cm. This means that only 5cm are missing to be exactly two equal squares.

Proportions of the façades of the Palace of Darius: The Palace of Darius is built on a podium 2.4m high, with a double-ramped stairway, a portico in the south, a central square hall and various secondary rooms on the north, east and west sides. The **main façade** of the palace facing the portico is like the façade of the Tomb of Darius except for the windows. The main entrance is in the center with two lateral windows, while the lateral façades, also facing the portico, each have a niche and an entrance with a height lower than the main one. Darius designed the façade of his Palace as a model for the façade of his tomb. The design scheme of the architectural composition includes the height of the entablature. As in the façade of the Tomb of Darius the main façade of the Palace also consists of **two equal squares**, and each lateral façade is equal to one of these squares (**Figures 3.10–3.12**).

Control (**Figure 3.13**): the height of the Palace is determined by the height of the two antae 752cm (Schmidt, 1970:81) plus the 19cm ribbon above, as in the

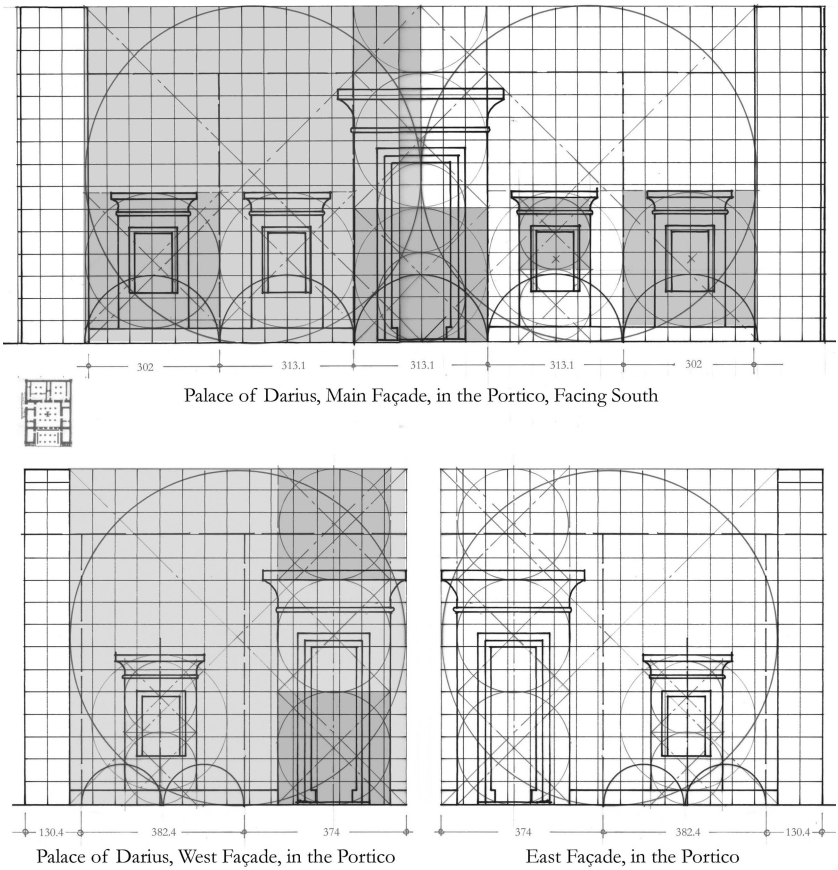

FIGURE 3.10 Palace of Darius, analysis of the design scheme of the façades of the portico; the main entrance (above), and the two lateral entrances (below)—the dotted lines indicate the position of the column axes

Tomb of Darius, arriving at the total height of 771cm. This height is a side of the square. The other side, for checking, is obtained by dividing the width of the façade by two: 1,543cm ÷ 2 = 771.5cm. The two sides are equal and therefore make a square. In this calculation, the width is measured by us and the height is by Schmidt. The height of the Palace should be ideally 780cm, similar to Palace C of the Harem Complex, while the antae of the Palace of Darius are slightly shorter, measuring 752cm. The difference, which is 28cm, corresponds to the height of the structure of the roof above the level of the antae, as in the façade of the Tomb of Darius.

The molding of the main entrance frame is 52cm wide, and the width of the entrance opening corresponds to 312, which is **six** times the width of this molding: 52cm × 6 = 312cm. Since the height and half the width of the façade is 52cm × 15 = 780cm, we can verify that the cubit of 52cm was the measuring unit

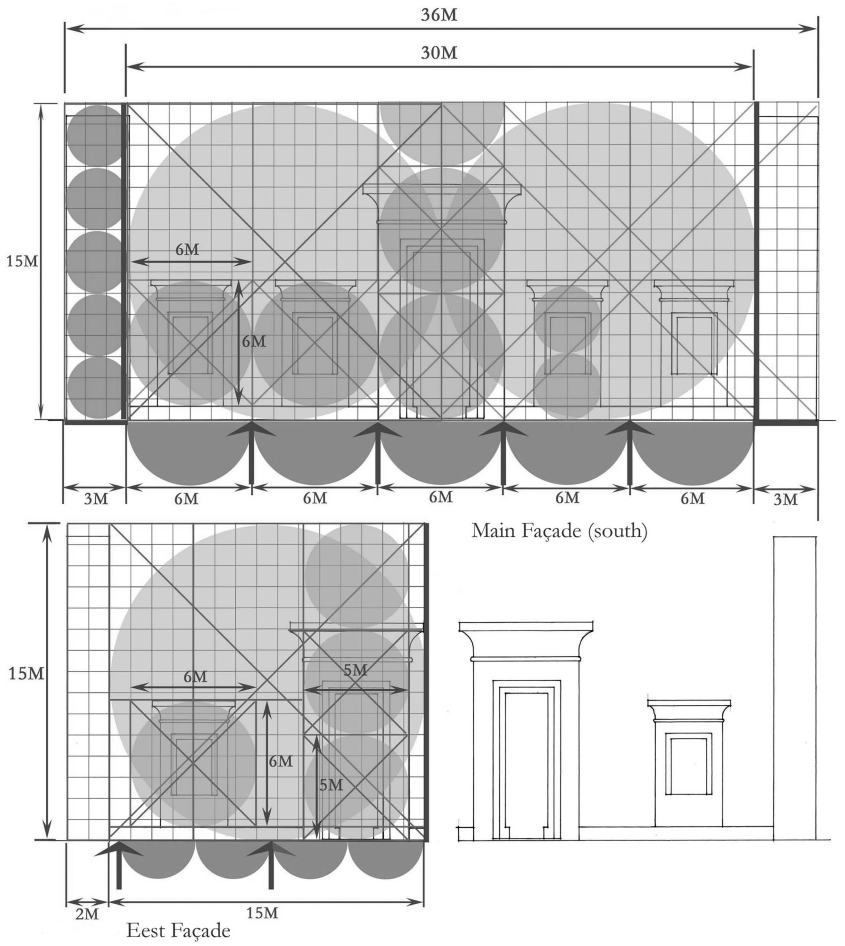

FIGURE 3.11 Palace of Darius, analysis of the proportions of the main and east façades in the portico (M = ca. 52cm)

used for the design of the façade. This cubit corresponds to the cubit proposed by Roaf. Furthermore, the height of the entrance opening should correspond to 8 cubits, or 52cm × 8 = 416cm. This measurement, taken from below the stone sill, is 417cm, implying a difference of only one centimeter.

The width of the **lateral façades**, which is also the depth of the portico, is 780cm without the anta (it is 785 in the west façade). Considering that the height of the lateral façades of the palace, which is defined by the height of the antae, is also 780cm, we can affirm that each lateral façade forms **a square** with the same proportions of the main façade. Therefore, the three façades are composed of **four** equal squares, two in the main and one in each lateral façade. Obviously, the width of the main façade is double the width of the lateral façades, which means

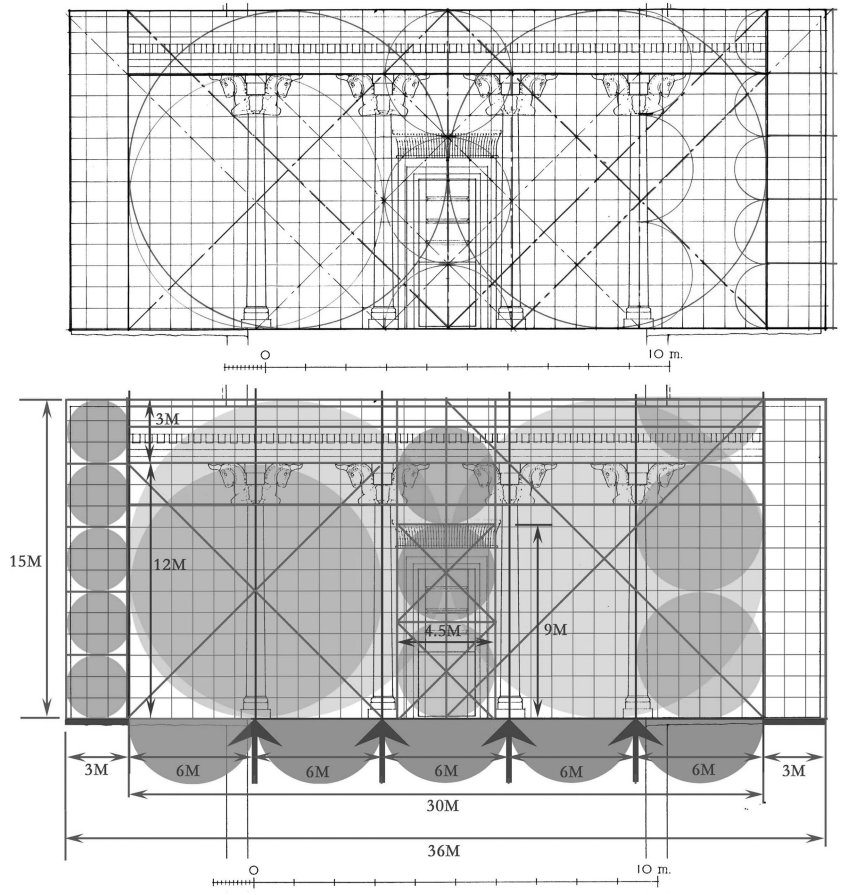

FIGURE 3.12 Naqsh-i Rustam, Tomb of Darius, analysis of the design scheme of the façade (top), and analysis of the proportions of the palatial part of the façade (M = ca. 52.13)

780cm × 2 = 1,560cm. These figures correspond to 15 and 30 cubits respectively (52cm × 15 = 780cm and 52cm × 30 = 1,560cm). Furthermore, we can observe that the width of the main façade is **five** times the width of the entrance opening, which is equal to the height of the window (1,560cm ÷ 312cm = 5). It is also **six** times the height of the window without the cornice, which corresponds to the width of the entrance opening of the lateral façades, while the width of the lateral façades is **three** times the width of the lateral entrances and is equal to the height of the niches and the windows without the section above the lintel (780cm ÷ 260cm = 3). Roaf (1978:71–72 & Figure 5) gives the figure of 313.1cm for the distance between the axes of the columns. This dimension is slightly more than the width of the entrance opening of the main façade, which is 312cm, but it is

equal to the entrance opening of the main façade of Palace C. The columns of the portico have been placed in a way that the axis of the outer row is 130.35cm from the south side of the anta and the axis of the inner row is 382.36cm from the north wall of the portico.

The **windows** are situated in the center and between the axes of the columns. Furthermore, the height of the windows, from above the socle to the upper line of the cornice (313cm ÷ 52cm = ca. 6 cubits), is equal to the distance between the axes of the windows and is also equal to the width of the main entrance (312cm = 6 cubits). It seems that the height of the window from the floor to the line below the cornice corresponds to twice the width of windows (330cm ÷ 2 = 165cm) (**Table 3.3**). The same argument is true for the niches in the **lateral façades**, their height being **twice** their width and equal to the width of the openings of the lateral façades. This dimension is one third the width of the side façade, which is equivalent to the depth of the portico, and is one sixth the width of the main façade.

These issues indicate that the working group executing the scheme of the proportions could also use the cubit, but what mattered most were the **proportions** between various architectural elements. A typical evidence for this assumption can be found in the width of the entrance opening and the height of the niche of the east façade, both measuring 262cm, while the same elements in the west façade measure 260cm, i.e., 5 cubits. The small variations that are found in the dimensions of various architectural elements of the same façade, for example in the main façade, can be the result of the work being assigned to different working groups.

The entrances of the **lateral façades** are smaller than the entrance of the main façade. The height of these entrances from the second line of the crown of the lintel from above is **twice** its width (260cm × 2 = 520cm = 10 cubits) and is also circa **two thirds** of the total height of the palace (780cm × 2/3 = 520cm = 10 cubits). Furthermore, the width of the entrance opening, which is 105cm, corresponds to circa 2 cubits (2 × 52cm = 104cm), and its height of 365cm is almost 7 cubits (7 × 52cm = 364cm). The height of the **entablature** is between 156 and 160cm, which is **one fifth** the total height of the palace and corresponds to circa 3 cubits. This has been reconstructed on the basis of the archeological indications and the evidences provided by the façade of the Tomb of Darius (**Figures 3.10, 3.11, 3.13**).

Façade of Palace C of the Harem Complex: The design scheme of Palace C of the Harem corresponds to that of the Palace of Darius. A comparison between the dimensions of the main façades of the two palaces shows that various dimensions are similar. For example, the width of the main entrance of Palace C (313cm) is almost equal to that of the Palace of Darius (312cm), and both have an equal height of 385cm. There are small differences of some millimeters between the dimensions of architectural elements of the two façades; for example, the windows of Palace C are slightly higher than those of the Palace of Darius (350–351cm instead of 347–348cm), and the total width of the façade is 8–9cm

TABLE 3.3 Palace of Darius, dimensions of the façades of the portico (Schmidt's measurements are in italics in shaded cells)

Palace of Darius (cm) *Cubit = 52 cm*	*Main Façade*	*Cubit*	*East Façade*	*West Façade*	*Cubit*
Total width	*1860* 1854	36	884	889	17
Width without antae	*1580* 1543	30	780	785	15
Width of antae	*140* 155 & 156	3	104	104	2
Width of entrance with frame	312	6	262.5	260	5
Width of entrance opening	139		105	104	2
Total width of entrance frame	86.5–86.6		78.5	?	1.5
Partial width of entrance frame	52	1	47.5	48	
Width of window or niche	165–166		165.5	165	
Total width of window or niche frame	39–39.5		40	40	
Partial width of window or niche frame	26	0.5	27	27	0.5
Inter-axis	*315* Roaf: 313.1		Roaf: 313.1		
Total height	780?	15	780?	780?	15
Height of antae	*752* 750		*752* 750	*752* 750	
Height of entablature	159–160?	3	159–160?	159–160?	3
Height of entrance including crown	*595* ***585***		540.5?	?	
Height of entrance from lower line of crown band			520?		10
Height of entrance opening	417	8	365	365.5	7
Total height of window or niche	347–348		348.5	346	
Height of window or niche from socle including crown	312–313	6	315.5	313	
Height of window or niche without socle and crown	260–261	5	262	260	5
Height of window or niche from the line below cornice	330?		?	?	

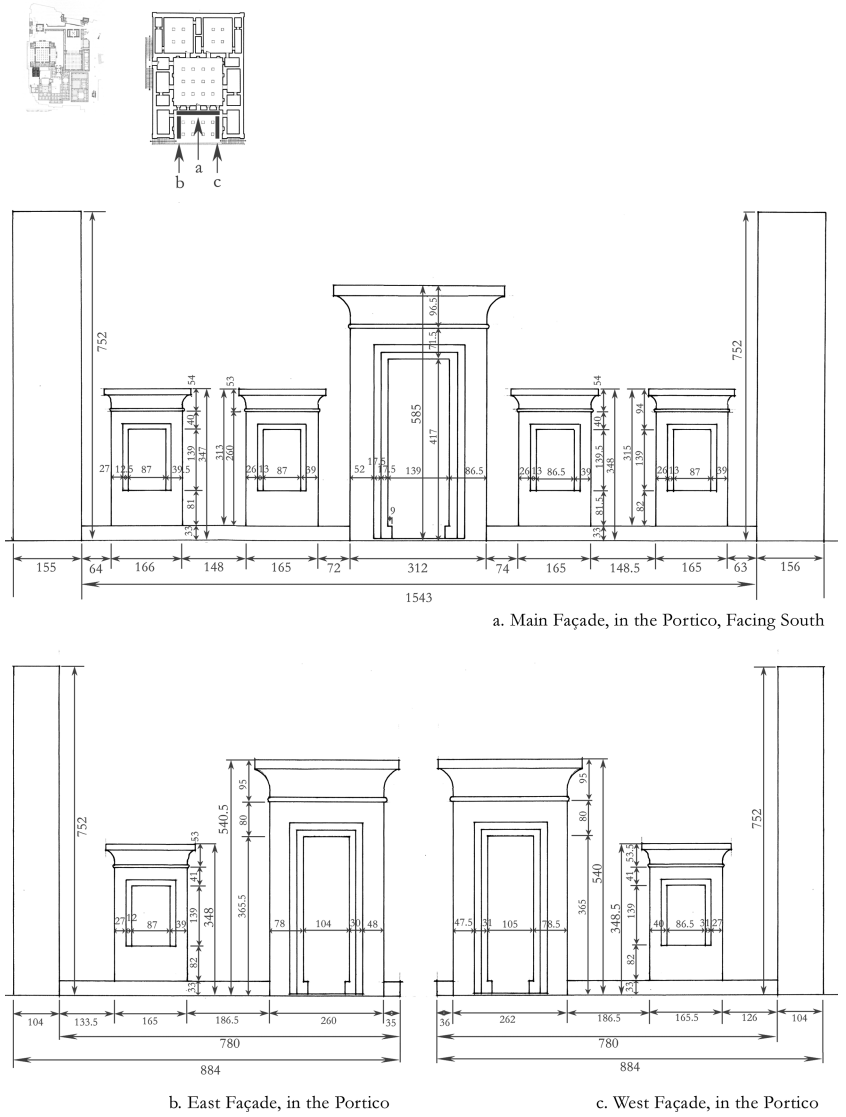

FIGURE 3.13 Dimensions of the facades of the Palace of Darius (author's survey)

more than the façade of the Palace of Darius **(Table 3.4**) (**Figure 3.13** & **Figure 3.14**). The central halls of the two palaces have almost identical dimensions (the central hall of the Palace of Darius is 1,544cm wide and 1,514–1,517cm deep, the central hall of Palace C is 1,537–1,541cm wide and 1,510–1,512.5cm deep). The portico of Palace C is circa 30cm deeper (915–916.5cm against 883–887cm in the Palace of Darius) (**Figure 3.6** & **Figure 3.14**).

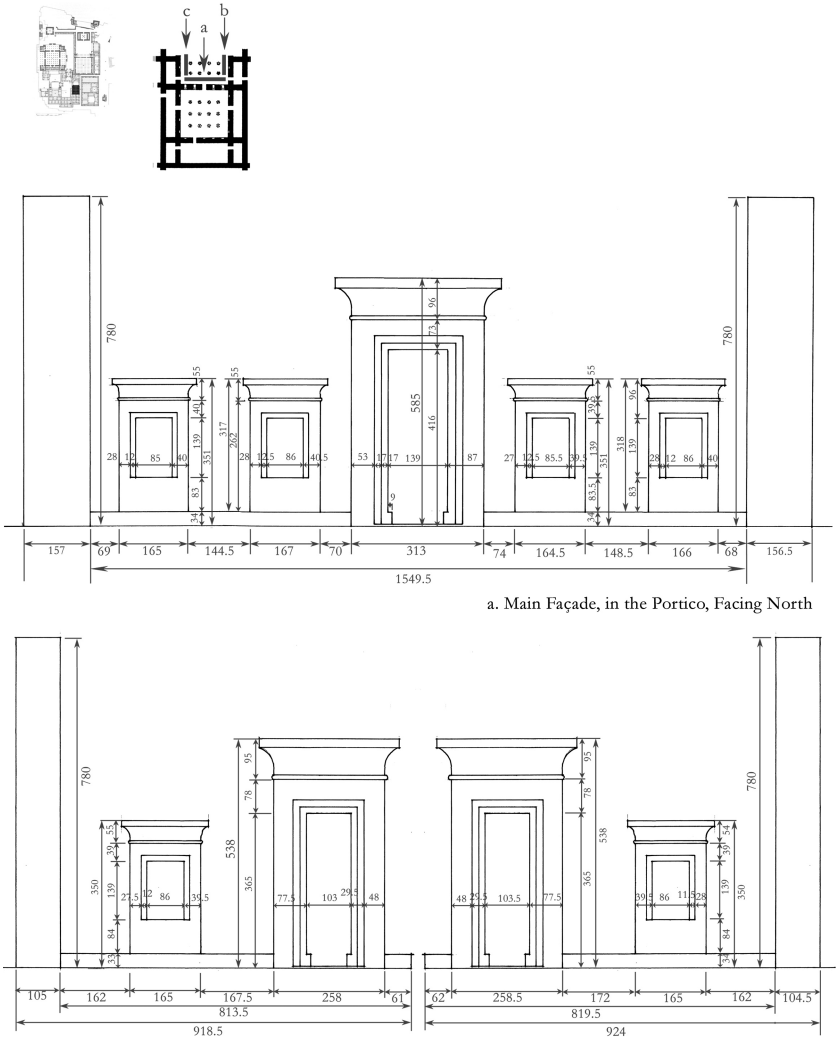

FIGURE 3.14 Dimensions of the facades of the Palace C of the Harem Complex (today site museum) (author's survey)

General observation on façades: In the Palace of Darius there are small variations in the dimensions of architectural elements such as the entrances, niches and windows. These variations probably resulted from the work being done by different groups of workers and vary from several millimeters to one to two centimeters. Furthermore, it seems that there are differences in the complexity of architectural details depending on their position in the building and the hierarchy

TABLE 3.4 Comparison between the dimensions of the facades of the Palace of Darius and Palace C of the Harem complex (author's survey)

Dimensions (cm)	*Palace of Darius*	*Palace C (Harem)*	*Difference*
Total width	**1,854**	**1,863**	Palace C is wider
Width without antae	1,543	1,549.5	Palace C is wider
Width of antae	155 & 156	157 & 156.5	Almost equal
Length of central hall	1,544	1,537–1,541	Palace C is smaller
Width of central hall	1,514–1,517	1,510–1,512.5	Palace C is smaller
Entrance	312 × 585	313 × 585	Almost equal
Entrance opening	139 × 417	138.5–416	Almost equal
Depth of portico	883–887	915–916.5	Palace C is deeper
Height of antae	*752* (Schmidt)	780	Palace C is higher

of spaces. This means that the main entrance is larger than the lateral ones or the frames of those doorways connecting the central hall to the adjacent rooms have a richer molding on the side facing the main hall. For example, the north doorways of the central hall of the Palace of Darius have a molding 87cm wide (53 + 17 + 17cm) when facing south to the main hall, but are only 61cm wide (46 + 15cm) on the north side facing the secondary rooms. The moldings of the architrave above the entrances are equally important and elaborated on both sides (**Figure 2.29**). There are similarities between the dimensions of the architectural elements of the Palace of Darius and Palace C, for example, in the entrances. Schmidt (1970:105) mentions that the horizontal dimensions of the palatial sections of the tomb façades are different between Tomb VI (North Tomb) and the Tomb of Darius, while their vertical dimensions are surprisingly similar. Moreover, the width of the palatial section of the North Tomb (2,017cm) is more than the width of the South Tomb (Schmidt: 1,980cm; ours: 1,986cm) and the Tomb of Darius (1,857cm) as well as his palace (1,854cm). The distance between the column axes of the Persepolitan tombs (340cm) is more than that of the Naqsh-i Rustam tombs (315cm). The axis parallel to the façade of the columns in the North Tomb is 4.5cm projecting from the façade, contrary to the axes of other tombs. It is interesting to note that the **column height** (619.5cm) on the rock surface in room 4 of the Harem is almost identical to the column height of the bas-reliefs of the Tomb of Darius, which is 622cm (Schmidt, 1953:260, Figure 108, 1970:83).

Considering the **proportions** of the façades of the Tomb of Darius and the height of the first upper line of the entablature (782cm) as reference, we can note a **module** equal to a cubit of **52.13**cm and the following proportions:

The total height is 15 cubits, equivalent to **five** times the height of the entablature, which is circa 3 cubits. The **capital** is circa 2 cubits high, the drum of the column is 9 cubits and the base is circa 1 cubit. The height, to the level under the

capital, is 10 cubits corresponding to two thirds of the total height, while the capital and the entablature together measure one third of the total height. The height of the entrance from the floor to the lower line of the ribbon above the crown corresponds to 9 cubits, or **one and a half** of the distance between the column axes, while the height of the entrance from the upper line of the ribbon above the crown is **twice** its width including the molding (**Figure 3.12**).

In the North Tomb, the distance between the axes of the columns varies between 333.5 and 333.8cm and in the South Tomb between 331.5 and 341.5cm while, according to Schmidt (1970:81), in the tombs of Darius and Xerxes they are 315cm. The width of the entrance in the North Tomb is 254.5cm, and in the South Tomb 250.5cm, while in the Tomb of Darius it is 245cm. The width of the façade without the antae is in the North Tomb 1,682cm, in the South Tomb 1,672cm and in the Tomb of Darius 1,577cm. It is to be noted that the width of the antae is more in the Persepolitan tombs, which is 171cm in the North Tomb and 152–162cm in the South Tomb but 140cm in the Tomb of Darius. Therefore, the Persepolitan tombs are wider and follow the design scheme of the façades (**Table 3.5**).

Observations on Persepolitan metrology and proportions: The Achaemenids seem to have considered measurements as a tool mainly related to proportions, and for this reason there may have been minor variations from one building to another, or in the case of entrances and windows. This may have depended on the organization of the working teams, confirming that the emphasis was more on proportions rather than on exact units. The difference here is only a few millimeters. Another question would have been the case of a square in a space, where the Achaemenids seem to have considered the perspective and designed the space so as to appear 'square' in plan. Therefore, a space may not have been exactly square in plan, but giving such perception to the observer. For example, all the tetrastyle rooms in the Harem are not square, but having four columns gives the impression of a square room. There may have been spatial rules to define such perception. Moreover, the tetrastyle halls of the gate of the Palace of Xerxes and of the Unfinished Gate are square in plan, having the same proportions, but with different dimensions.

TABLE 3.5 Achaemenid measuring units proposed by various authors

Dimensions (cm)	*Schmidt*	*Krefter*	*Trümpelmann*	*Nylander*	*Tilia*	*Roaf*	*Author*
Cubit	51.36	51.36	52	51.5	52.1–52.2	52.1–52.2	52–52.13
Feet	34.24	34.24	34.66	34.5	34.7–34.8	34.7–34.8	34.66
Palm	8.56	8.56	8.66		8.7	8.7	8.66
Digit	2.14	2.14	2.17		2.2	2.2	2.17

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4

THE CONCEPT OF MONUMENT

Quel che è fermo, è la storia

Cesare Brandi (1978:15)

The Achaemenid heritage bears witness to the intention of building monuments aimed at legitimizing the authority of the king and showing the divine support of his authority. Monuments were thus symbols of kingship, but also showed respect for the works of the past, having political and historical significance. Many of the buildings commissioned by the Achaemenids were conceived as 'intentional monuments' aiming to transmit a message, which was also a common practice of the Mesopotamian kings. There is archeological evidence of building works respecting the existing fabric and antiquity value of the preexisting buildings. The Achaemenids, however, used a new artistic and symbolic language in design of objects such as coins, seals, jewelry and vessels, thus developing a style that could represent their Empire and dynasty. This artistic language was based on the cultural heritage of the Persians influenced by other cultures and traditions in the Empire.

As already mentioned, in Assyria and Babylonia, 'monuments' were mainly built to justify the achievements of the king to the gods and to legitimize his power. Knowledge of the past was valuable in assuring that the present successes of the ruler were similar to those of the previous celebrated ones. Rituals and ceremonies provided useful models of behavior in achieving the desired result. Nevertheless, monuments were often used to intimidate people, forcing them into obedience to the ruling power, as well as admonishment. Such models were known to Achaemenid kings, who adapted them to their own specific aims. Bisotun and Persepolis are particularly significant examples as the messages they

transmitted were distributed all over the Empire. The role of Persepolis was, in part, to constitute an outstanding reference for the unity of the Empire and, in part, to symbolize the cultural identity of the Persians and show the dynasty's political aspirations. Here the discussion will concentrate on the cultural aspects associated with the Achaemenid monuments in general and illustrate these aspects in the case of Persepolis.

Monuments included stelae erected in various localities in the Empire for commemorating events and making political declarations. The completion of a canal joining the Nile to the Red Sea was recorded on many stelae along the canal. The few existing ones are rather mutilated, but the best-preserved is the stele of Chalouf, discovered 33km north of the oriental cost of the Suez Canal in 1866 by Charles de Lesseps. It is in red granite, 3m high, 2.33m wide and 0.78m thick. The cuneiform text, in Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian (DZa,b,c), is incised on one side of the stele while the hieroglyphic text is on its reverse (Schmidt, 1953:26). Achaemenid inscriptions were generally multilingual often including the local language. The two stelae in the Louvre were made for the Serapeum at Memphis in Egypt commemorating Cambyses (525) and Darius' (518) participation in the funeral of the Apis bull (Root, 1979:124).

There are similarities between the Latin concept of *monumentum* developed by the Romans and the Achaemenid concept of monument. For example, both concepts refer to the idea to admonish or to remind, which is the meaning of the Latin word *moneo* (Jokilehto, 1999:4). Various symbols used by the Achaemenids have a parallel in the Roman world, and although there may be some differences in details, both intend to sustain the politics of their empires. For the Greeks, instead, the concept of monument is rather a memorial, referring to memory. Monument consists of a moment of remembering (*Denkmal* in German). Such memorial value not only can be associated to a monument and its explicit messages, but also to ruins and other types of significant objects and places. Both these concepts, to admonish and to remember, are traceable in Achaemenid monuments. Bisotun is an outstanding example of such monuments. The royal ensemble of Persepolis is a more complex case being also part of a capital city. Nevertheless, its functions and symbolic significance are clearly relevant to the concept of monument.

Darius was the innovator and promoter of Achaemenid royal art and architectural language. Root (1979:3) considers Achaemenid art a program and tries to "understand the nature of the process of creation of Achaemenid imperial iconography" by analyzing the richness of cultural connotations and showing how the Achaemenids were themselves the central figures in the manipulation and control of their cultural history. In fact, "the Achaemenids commissioned the creation of a consistently idealized vision of kingship and empire—a vision which stressed images of piety, control, and harmonious order" (Root 1979:2). Darius restructured and reorganized the Empire to consolidate its vast multicultural territory. It was vital to use appropriate symbols to motivate his politics and maintain the integrity of the Empire. He identified motifs associating them

with symbolic meanings. These became the means to communicate the policy of the Empire and the universality of its vision. Some of these means of representation and transmission had already been experimented by previous empires; others were created by Darius, who also made use of inscriptions, bas-reliefs, monumental sculptures, coins, seals, commemorative stelae, buildings and symbolic cities. Renowned examples of such monuments are Bisotun bas-relief and inscription, the statue of Darius discovered in Susa, the Naqsh-i Rustam royal tombs and the Persepolis royal complex.

Bisotun consists of the longest Achaemenid inscription (DB) and a bas-relief commissioned by Darius (522–486) in the early years of his reign. It is carved on the rock on the sacred mountain of Bisotun, located on the main road connecting Babylon to Ecbatana. With a height of circa 500 meters from the plain, this mountain is a dominant feature in the landscape, and the monument itself is in an inaccessible position some 122m from the ground level. The inscription, too far up to be read from below, covers an area 20.5m wide and 7.8m high. There are many rock bas-reliefs with cuneiform inscriptions in mountain passes left by pre-Achaemenid kings, implying that the political significance of such inscriptions for transmitting messages was already recognized (Dalley, 1998:30). It is the most significant monument of its kind in the Achaemenid Empire, additionally because it is almost the only text to document a specific historical event. The text is trilingual, composed in 76 paragraphs. Its main theme is Darius' seizing power and defeating the rebel kings represented in the bas-relief. We may never know the whole truth of this event, but we can at least learn his version of the facts. The inscription also deals with dynastic policies and fundamental values such as justice and truth. Furthermore, Darius legitimates his kingship by confirming his Achaemenid genealogy, retaining Achaemenes as his ancestor. Achaemenes was also the ancestor of Cyrus the Great who was from a different branch of the dynasty.

Bisotun text was copied for distribution all over the Empire, as Darius mentions in DB § 70: "this inscription was sent by me everywhere among the provinces." It was translated into various languages, inscribed on stone slabs or on other supports and installed in visible places. Fragments of a copy were discovered on the road leading to the Gate of Ishtar in Babylon, and part of an Aramaic version was found on a papyrus dating to the reign of Darius II, i.e., prior to 418 (Briant, 1995:27). The closest historical text to the Bisotun Inscription is perhaps the "*Res gestae divi Augusti*" of the Roman Emperor Augustus (63 BC–AD 14), better known as *Monumentum Ancyranum*, which was also exposed in various places. Latin and Greek versions of it are carved on the walls of the Temple of Rome and Augustus in Ankara.

4.1. Persepolis as a Monument

The significance of Persepolis is related to a multiplicity of issues, ranging from the choice of the site and its urban layout to its architectural composition and

decorative features. The values important for the dynasty are expressed in the inscriptions, which are a significant part of the design of the site. Another key issue is the function of Persepolis. Various cities in the Empire were identified with a capital city function. The principal administrative and political functions were assigned to Babylon in Mesopotamia, Susa in Elam and Ecbatana in Media. Herodotus notes that the Greek delegates traveled to Susa to the court of the Persian king. Archeological finds have confirmed that the administrative function of Persepolis was secondary and limited to local and provincial matters.

Pasargadae, the capital city of Cyrus the Great and location of his tomb, had a special significance because the coronation ceremonies of the Achaemenid kings took place there throughout the dynasty. It seems that shortly after the death of Darius II, Artaxerxes II went to Pasargadae to receive the royal investiture from the Persian priests (Plutarch, *Artaxerxes*, III. 1). The king was dressed in the investiture worn by Cyrus for the coronation ceremony and carried out rituals unknown to the profane (Lecoq, 1997:159). It seems that Darius respected Pasargadae for its symbolic value. He carried out some building activities there and seems to have added the Old Persian inscriptions, signing them in the name of Cyrus (Nylander, 1968:157), but wanted to stress the difference between his own family branch with that of Cyrus. Therefore, he decided to build Persepolis as his capital city in the heart of Parsa, but at some distance from Pasargadae. This decision could be interpreted as if to mark a new life for the Achaemenid Dynasty and a radical cut from the previous branch of the dynasty, which had its center in Pasargadae (Lecoq, 1997:97). Persepolis thus became the new center for the Achaemenid Dynasty, substituting Pasargadae (Frye, 1962:96n).

The significance and function of Persepolis have been subject to many hypotheses. In Persian mythology and legends, such as the epic of *Shahnameh* (10th century AD), Persepolis is mentioned as the seat of legendary kings or associated with biblical characters. The Persepolis Terrace has often been called a citadel. Schmidt (1953:40) notes that the height of the Terrace would have corresponded to defensive requirements. Herzfeld (1941:224) also comments that one reason for such a high platform could have been defense, or perhaps 'mere fashion.' Classical texts tend to speak of a citadel or a fortress. Diodorus Siculus (XVII. 71) writes that Alexander went to the 'citadel,' where the treasure was located. The citadel was described as having triple walls: the innermost wall was the Terrace itself; the outer wall also enclosed the royal tombs, which were higher up on the mountain. Defining the site as a citadel may also be due to the translation of specific words, because in the Elamite text of the Persepolis Foundation Inscription, (DPf § 2), the word referring to the royal ensemble has also been translated as 'fortress' rather than 'palace' (Lecoq, 1997:220).

It is possible that the eastern walls were initially built for defensive reasons but later lost this function (Tadjvidi, 2535:37). Referring to the outcome of the excavations in the 1930s, Krefter made a hypothetical reconstruction drawing and model of the Terrace, showing mudbrick walls on all sides of the Terrace except on the west

side in front of the Apadana and the Palace of Darius. Giuseppe Tilia believed that there had been a wall in front of the Palace of Darius but that the Apadana had been open towards the plain. In fact, no evidence of a wall has been found on the western edge of the Terrace, but there are some traces on the stone paving in front of the Apadana, which may suggest the location of a throne. The royal complex was, however, well protected on all sides considering that the height of the Terrace wall in some parts is circa 18 meters high on the west side towards the plain. Due to diversity of interpretations in translating Old Persian terms, we cannot be sure of the intentions of Darius, but we can suggest that the purpose in building the Terrace was to present an image of grandeur, characterized by the splendid appearance of the royal architecture. At most, the walls would have sustained the image of the imperial power, although this ensemble had a 'peaceful' character, sustained by the ritual and religious tone of the inscriptions and the iconographic character of the bas-reliefs and architecture.

4.2. Functions of the Royal Terrace

The **typological** characteristics of the buildings reveal great flexibility in their use. Similar flexibility exists in later traditional Iranian architecture. This means that a building could have various functions. For example, the Palace of Darius could have been a dwelling for the king, but it could have also had a ceremonial function. The Central Palace could have had a provisional function such as a throne hall or other functions of ceremonial character. The Gate of Xerxes could have been used as a reception and passage area with some administrative functions, due to traces of a bench along the walls and a main seat in the center of the north wall. That the royal family or the court ever lived on the Terrace or where the ordinary population lived, and why the Terrace was not rebuilt after the fire, are questions asked. The Achaemenid kings are known to have traveled continuously between their different capitals, living in luxurious tents (Boucharlat, 1997:217), having a kind of 'itinerary capital.' It also seems that the nearby city of Matezziš provided the work force and some services for Persepolis (Kuhrt & Sherwin-White, 1987:76). Considering the abundance of water in the plain and the archeological evidence of water pools and gardens in the south below the Terrace, it seems natural that the post-Achaemenid rulers had decided not to fully occupy the Terrace. The huge palaces, some seriously damaged, had not been easy to repair and maintain on a provincial scale. Furthermore, the lack of signs of wear and tear in the palaces implies that the symbolic and ceremonial aspects of the site had been sufficiently important to exclude other functions that could have helped in the reuse of the royal ensemble. The fact that building work on the Terrace was never finished may sustain such hypothesis.

According to Trümpelmann (1974:170), Darius intended to build a residence with all its necessities; based on the tradition of the Persian court, such function would have been associated with administration. The Gate of Xerxes and the

Central Palace, besides the Unfinished Gate, could have had such use. He also presumes that the Central Palace could have been the entrance to the ceremonial area before the completion of the Gate of Xerxes. These buildings could have served for administrative and legal affairs of lesser importance. Trümpelmann also assigns a ceremonial use to the Central Palace, i.e., a temporary throne hall before the completion of the Apadana. The Persepolitan clay tablets indicate that the administrative activities in Persepolis were mostly locally related to the province and refer to the construction work of the site itself. Diodorus Siculus (XVII. 71) mentions that the citadel had plenty of accommodation for the king and his generals, as well as costly equipment and well-designed treasuries. It seems that the source of Diodorus had been Cleitarchus, who lived in the 3rd century. This source, however, may not be fully reliable, and Persepolis may have been mistaken for Ecbatana (Curzon, 1966:188). It is also possible that such services were not necessarily on the Terrace but in the plain below it, where excavations have revealed large palaces. This implies that there is yet a whole city to be surveyed. Curzon (1966:149–150) believes that the Terrace was used for the king's audiences and various ceremonies.

Considering that the Persepolis royal ensemble is built on a high platform and that its most representative buildings each have their own podium, reminiscent of the concept of the 'primeval hill,' the sacredness of the place can thus be highlighted. The only representative building without a podium is the Hundred Column Hall, although its important ceremonial function is shown in its architecture and bas-reliefs. Pope (1957:125) and Herzfeld (1941:233) observe rosette decorations carved on door-pin plates, which testify attention paid to perfection even in details of invisible places, almost as a religious act. This was most certainly not only for the aesthetic but also for the symbolic significance of the place.

The ceremonial function also seems highly probable, confirmed by the layout of the site, centered on representing the king and the festive character of architecture and the bas-reliefs with delegations of the various lands of the Empire bringing gifts to the king. This would imply the Nowruz, the Persian New Year celebrations, similar to the Babylonian New Year rites. Lentz-Marburg (1972:289–290) retains that the site was also conceived in function of astronomy to follow some celestial phenomena. Zoka (1358), noting a circle and three lines carved on a square stone on the floor in the middle of the hall of the Central Palace, retains that it could have been related to astronomy in correspondence with the winter equinox in coincidence with the foundation of Persepolis. Trümpelmann (1974:170), however, believes that Darius had no intention to build an observatory for astronomy and not even a place for Nowruz festivities but, mostly, a royal residence with all its necessities.

The symbolism represented in the bas-reliefs shows the presence of the king even when he was physically absent. This observation stresses the importance of the site, although it does not imply that Persepolis would have been the only site for such ceremonies (Jamzadeh, 1993:145). Among the Achaemenid capitals,

Persepolis, however, certainly had a special significance. The other capitals had a long history with cultural and historical stratigraphy, but Persepolis was built on a virgin site. It was the place where memories and symbolic objects of the Achaemenid dynasty were kept and works of their ancestors presented.

4.3. Concept of Kingship

The history of kingship in ancient Persia was apparently dominated by the conflict between central power and the ancient feudal organization. In this context, the concept of kingship involved political and religious issues, always in conflict with each other. The king was careful not to allow alliance between these two powers, thus granting himself a role of surprising continuity in Iran. The feudal system was politically opposed to the royal ideology, which always kept its sacred character. Widengren retains that in pre-Achaemenid times the Iranian king was elected, and therefore not sacred. The election was reserved for families who had the right to the crown and whose members were heirs of royal dignity. This system came from a mixture of elective and hereditary kingship, also known to Germanic tribes. The Medes and the Persians probably followed an Indo-European tradition. This custom changed with Darius. According to a legend, his election was the result of an omen, the neighing of his horse (Herodotus, III. 86), a sign said to have been given by Mithra, the god of the royal family. Similar stories are known in Indian Buddhist tradition, associated with the idea of the **divine origin** of kingship (Widengren 1974: 85, 89). The conquest of Babylon and the acquisition of the title of 'King of Babylonia' by Cyrus not only indicated political authority, but also religious supremacy; he thus became a symbolic figure with ancient associations (Frankfort, 1954:214). The (CB) inscription of Cyrus on a clay cylinder seal was discovered in Babylon in 1879. The text is in Babylonian and consists of 45 phrases. Following an ancient formula, the king declares:

> I am Cyrus, the King of the world, the Great King, the powerful King, the King of Babylon, King of Sumer and Akkad, the King of the four regions of the world, King of Anshan.
>
> *(Lecoq, 1997:183)*

Cyrus, referring to his own genealogy and royal ancestors, defines himself as "the one whose reign Bel [Marduk] and Nabu [Babylonian god of writing] have cherished, the one for whom they have wished kingship for the joy of their hearts." The relationship between the gods and the king is evident in this passage. Cyrus declares that the gods approved his reign, as it was convenient, and that it was not he who asked a favor. This is what distinguished the Achaemenid approach to religion; the king did not ask for a favor; rather, it was conceded by god.

Dalley (1998:23) retains that the royal ideology and its icons were common among the main powers of the Near East and the symbol of the winged disk was

the symbol of the sun-god, used by the pharaohs of Egypt, the kings of Ugarit, the Cypriot governors, the Hittite and the Assyrian kings. This symbol is also found in the bas-reliefs of Elam, Urartu and Persia (**Figure 4.1**). The concept of kingship, historically and culturally, has various symbolic meanings. For example, the image of the king on throne, held up by people, is the personification of the lands of the Empire, a visual metaphor of the king's bond with the peoples of the Empire (Root, 1979:160), finding similarities between this artistic conception and the Egyptian traditional metaphor of the Nine Arches under the feet of the pharaoh, symbolizing the people dominated by Egypt.

The concept of universal empire in the Egyptian depictions could have influenced Darius during his Egyptian sojourn. Nevertheless, he introduced this with a new message, replacing the lament of prisoners with the praise of free people. Whether the Achaemenid sculptural representation should be seen as a pure metaphor of the royal power or as a symbolic representation of a ceremony demonstrating imperial power are among questions that arise. In both cases, the image of the king, carried by the delegates of the peoples of the Empire, expresses graceful harmony and serenity. This was certainly intended to transmit a political message

FIGURE 4.1 Persepolis, winged figure (1998)

with calculated meanings. Rising to a symbolic figure, the king's image is thus given a particular emphasis in the bas-reliefs (Sancisi-Weerdenburg, 1995:1044).

4.4. Ritual City

Persepolis was conceived with a political and ritual scope "imbued with the peculiar virtue of royal authority conferred by the power of Ahuramazda" (Pope, 1957:125). The ritual and religious aspect of Persepolis is so dominant according to Pope that he considers that the main function of Persepolis was to provide a splendid setting to reflect heaven above on earth. Pope (1969:16–18, 1957:124) assigns a specific significance to the relations with divine powers, retaining that Darius did not build Persepolis only to glorify the dynasty or to show his political power or to proclaim the unity of the state or to satisfy the royal pride, but to found a special and ritual city for the spring festivities of the New Year and to appeal to the powers of heaven for fertility and abundance. In brief, as a kind of replica of the mythical and ancient 'Celestial City' that ensured the concordance with the divine, it was a spiritual center of the nation rather than an administrative center of the Empire, similar to the Sumerian ensemble of palace-temple-garden of Gudea (c. 2100). Persepolis would be the last and the highest example of such tradition in the long history of ritual and symbolic ensembles of the Ancient Near East, a symbol of some profound and central ideas that were vital for the life of the state, as were the great ziggurats of Mesopotamia.

In the Elamite text of the Foundation Inscription of Persepolis (DPf § 2), Darius mentions having built Persepolis by the favor of Ahuramazda and other gods, thus strengthening its sacral aspect. The idea that Persepolis was mainly dedicated to the festivities of Nowruz was first suggested by Pope (1957:124). There is not, however, sufficient evidence to sustain this hypothesis. Nevertheless, different types of ceremonies probably took place in Persepolis. The Persian scholar Abu Reihan-e Biruni (973–1048 AD), in his *Athar al-Baqiyah* (Chronology of Ancient Nations), mentions that Nowruz was not linked to spring and occurred in different periods of the year due to calculation errors accumulated over time.

From the third millennium until the Hellenistic period, on the first day of the year the Babylonians performed the event of the victory of Marduk over the forces of 'chaos' when the world was created. The story of creation was recited, and a fake battle was fought in which the king played the role of the victorious god (Frankfort, 1948:8, 24ff). People's wellbeing depended on the victory of the positive forces. Thus, in Egypt as in Babylonia, people accompanied the main changes of nature with similar rituals. Every morning the sun defeated obscurity and chaos as in the first day of creation and as in every New Year's Day.

Precedents of the New Year' procession can be found among the Assyrians in Nimrud, in Khorsabad and in Nineveh (Farkas, 1974:47). The New Year ceremonies were among the most important celebrations in Mesopotamia, and they were attended by the Achaemenid kings. The New Year festival continued over

time; for example, during the Parthians (BC 247–224 AD) the inhabitant of the city of Ashur rebuilt a temple dating to the 7th century for this festivity (Dalley 1998:152). In Babylon, the New Year celebrations took place between the 1st and the 12th day of Nisan, the month corresponding to the spring equinox (Kuhrt & Sherwin-White, 1987:71). This period corresponds to the present Nowruz festivity in Iran, lasting 12 days, and the 13th day is celebrated in the countryside. There is evidence of an ancient Indo-Iranian new-year festival including a combat between the god (personified by the king) and a dragon monster (Widengren, 1965:41ff). This combat is similar to the image of king fighting supernatural beings in Persepolitan bas-reliefs, especially those on the doorjambs of the Hundred Column Hall (**Figure 1.4**).

Other festivities were surely celebrated in Persepolis. The king went to Persepolis in the autumn to celebrate *Mithragan* (*Mehrgan*), and the satrap of Armenia used to send the Persian king 20,000 foals every year at the time of the Mithracina (Strabo, XI.14. 9), i.e., every autumn. In fact, on the stairways of the Apadana, the Armenian delegation is depicted offering foals. This does not necessarily mean that the foals were actually brought to Persepolis; instead it may show that these were the most important product of Armenia, which merited to be offered to the king, implying that the most significant product of each land is depicted on the stairways. Even if there may not be a direct relationship between the bas-reliefs and the ceremonies, it does not exclude the presence of delegations during festivities at Persepolis. There were other ceremonies such as celebrating the king's birthday and distribution of gifts (Herodotus, IX. 110).

In conclusion, the Persepolis Terrace had a representative, dynastic, ceremonial and ritual function. It was, at least in part, enclosed by the walls but probably mainly due to prestige. The Royal Terrace was reserved for ceremonial functions, while most of the dwellings, offices and military barracks would have been in the area below the Terrace or, during official visits, in tents. Persepolis thus symbolized the relationship between the king and the people, and the bas-reliefs depicting ceremonies were given universality signifying the values sustained in the Empire and its special significance. Therefore, it is not a surprise that no other Achaemenid city had the fate of Persepolis. Susa, Ecbatana and Babylon were not destroyed by Alexander.

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5

SIGNIFICANCE OF INSCRIPTIONS

Achaemenid inscriptions are almost the only existing Old Persian literary sources. A new version of cuneiform script was innovated by Darius to be used in public monuments. In conformity with Mesopotamian traditions, these inscriptions were means of communicating and transmitting political messages to contemporary as well as future generations. The inscriptions were thus conceived as 'intentional monuments,' seen as admonishment of the dynastic authority and its relationship with the peoples of the Empire. The official languages in the Empire besides Old Persian were Elamite and the Akkadian dialect of Babylonian, while the common administrative language was Aramaic. The local language often accompanied the other official languages. Old Persian writing was an adapted cuneiform, which had an oblique sign that separated words; thus it was the key to the deciphering of this writing, which contributed to the reading of ancient texts and philological studies in the 19th century and to the knowledge of the Ancient Near East. The study of the Achaemenid inscriptions will help to "read between the lines" the meaning of honesty, justice and truth in imperial policies, as well as concepts of identity, genealogy and the role of religion. Regarding respect for the past, it is possible to trace various activities in relation to maintenance and repair or to continuation and completion of an existing building.

5.1. Significance of Writing

Mesopotamian civilization evolved with the invention of writing, which was used to fix and perpetuate ideas and messages, thus giving the opportunity of constantly elaborating and improving on the preexisting (Bottéro *et al*, 1996:53). In Ancient Mesopotamia, writing embodied the communication between three main protagonists: the people, the gods and the figure of the king as the mediator. The

world was divided between the **visible** (the world of humans) and the **invisible** (the world of gods). Visible things were to represent invisible things; for example, the pharaoh was a visible representation of an invisible Egyptian god. Language and word represented the invisible and were the link between humans and gods in liturgy and prayer. Through writing, language became visible, and at the same time the written text obtained a sacred and eternal significance. Therefore, writing was the visible representation of the invisible. Particularly in concepts such as the name of god, an inscribed sign became a meeting point between the two worlds (cf. Bottéro *et al*, 1996:117).

In the conception of a name there is difference between today's modern approach and that of the Ancient Mesopotamians. Today, a name is a sound representing an object. For them, instead, a name was the same as the object, the signified. Gods were creators of everything, not only on the day of creation, but every day and according to a continuous process. The objects created by the gods were messages, because the gods 'wrote' in their own manner the beings and the events. Humans were in the hands of the gods, and everything was 'written.' In the same way, when humans wrote, they produced objects; writing became the object itself. The world, which was made by gods, was like a written tablet filled with messages. Gods sent messages through singular and unusual events to humans, but these events had to be deciphered. This task was given to professionals called *Baru* who studied and listed past abnormal events for basing their knowledge on past experiences (Bottéro *et al*, 1996:65ff).

At the beginning, writing was linked with a specific language, such as Akkadian. At the end of the second millennium, by the order of their king Kutik Inshushinak, the Elamite scribes simplified certain existing symbols and produced others, thus inventing Linear Elamite writing. This made it possible for the king to have texts written in his own language, rather than in Akkadian. The result was a phonetic and syllabic writing. Writing was thus freed from the limitations imposed by a specific language, and language was separated from signs. It became possible to use the same syllables for writing in other languages (Herrenschmidt, 1996:111). It is also on this basis that Darius developed Old Persian cuneiform writing. The basic thought behind the invention of Old Persian cuneiform writing was Mazdaism, its speculation on ritual, on language and the position of the Achaemenid king in ritual, in religion and in politics. Writing and reading in Old Persian was considered a **ritual act**. What mostly counted for the king was not only the language but the royal word, which represented the law of Ahuramazda. This law gave order to the human world. It was not just a ritual law but concerned the totality of the affairs of the world, symbolized in the battle of the Mazdeans against evil creations (Herrenschmidt, 1996:157ff).

Nylander (1968:136ff) retains that cuneiform writing was developed by Darius in order to use the Old Persian language in his public declarations. This writing became a synthesis of the systems that were then accessible to the Persians, including cuneiform, ideographic, syllabic and alphabetic, and is referred to as an

innovation by Darius in his Bisotun Inscription (DB § 70): "this inscription in other ways I made. In addition, it was in Aryan." Therefore, it is understood that the term *ariya* indicated a common language among the Iranian people, the language of the Achaemenid inscriptions (Lecoq, 1974:62).

Darius' intention was to use Old Persian writing for Bisotun Inscription, which is a crucial political declaration and the justification of his access to kingship (Lecoq, 1997:213). It was first written in Elamite and Babylonian, and the Old Persian version was later added. It seems that Darius also added an Old Persian version to the Elamite and Babylonian inscriptions of Cyrus in Pasargadae. These inscriptions are (CMc): "Cyrus the Great King, an Achaemenian" and (CMa): "I am Cyrus the King, an Achaemenian." Darius probably added the Old Persian version of (CMa) not only as a tribute to Cyrus but also as a natural act to **improve** some imperfections (Nylander, 1968:175). This act of Darius can be regarded as **care** for the heritage of Cyrus.

Old Persian writing has 36 characters including three vowels (a, i, u) and syllables consisting of a consonant together with one of the three vowels. There is also a slanting wedge used as a word separator, plus numerals (Walker, 1987:46). Old Persian cuneiform text normally used alphabetic writing, but there were ideograms for five concepts, i.e., Ahuramazda, god (*baga*), earth or country (*bumi*), people (*dahyu*) and king (*xshayathia*). Lecoq (1997:65), however, proposes eight ideograms for the same five words, which are three for Ahuramazda and two for *dahyu*. Ideograms are characterized as non-divisible and non-analyzable graphic blocks, therefore not leaving the possibility of any error. Reading correctly was therefore a **religious act**, and texts were written in a way to avoid mistakes, i.e., evil. Since few were able to read, the written texts acquired an even more mysterious significance as symbols with metaphysical and metaphorical connotations. The presence of the five ideograms, which were highly symbolic, shows that the Persians also preferred to maintain the immanence in the graphic expression of key issues (Herrenschmidt, 1996:158). Ideograms are linguistic emissions of Ahuramazda as well as pilasters of the Achaemenid cosmology, legitimacy and politics (Herrenschmidt, 1996:154). Darius captured these supernatural signs of language and fixed them in ideographic immobility.

As has already been indicated in various contexts, the royal Achaemenid inscriptions were normally written in the three official languages of the Empire: Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian. The content of the texts did not change much from one language to another, although there were exceptions. The policy was to sustain the local languages, while adopting Aramaic as the administrative language of the Empire. Cuneiform writing was engraved on heavy and encumbering materials such as stone and metal or clay tablets, while Aramaic was written in ink on light materials such as papyrus, parchment or canvas. Aramaic was rarely used for inscriptions, and its use was mostly in diplomatic correspondence and in the ordinances of the king sent to provinces. These were first translated from a local language into Aramaic, sent to the destination and then translated into

another local language. An example of this practice is the Bisotun text, translated into Aramaic from the Babylonian version and then defused all over the Empire (Lecoq, 1997:56). This inscription was copied and defused before 519, i.e., immediately after the bas-relief was ready and before introducing the Old Persian cuneiform writing. Furthermore, there existed copies of the Bisotun text in the chancery of Darius, and this text was later copied by Xerxes (Hinz, 1969:46). Fragments of a papyrus have been discovered in Elephantine in Egypt containing Aramaic copies of the Bisotun text (Cowley, 1923; cf. Seidl, 1976:125, n.4). There is also evidence on the use of local languages, such as Demotic and Greek, in the inscriptions of Achaemenid monuments and on the commemorative stelae, as Darius is said to have done when completing the bridge across Bosphorus (Herodotus. IV, 87).

Old Persian as a new official language of the Empire seems to have been a synthesis of Old Persian, Median and probably other Iranian languages (Lecoq, 1997:50). As such, it was an artificial language used only for royal inscriptions and for political reasons intended to express the values and identity of the Empire. The origin of the second official language, **Elamite**, is unknown. It was the administrative language in Persepolis (Henkelman, 2008:49) and continued to hold an honorary place as one of the four languages of the Foundation Inscription of Persepolis, (DPf), which describes the construction of the Terrace ensemble. Elam was occupied by the Persians in 594, and Elamite settlements such as Anshan were in the province of Parsa; therefore, Elamite was a local language. Elamite and Babylonian scribes had worked with the Median scribes at the Median court and continued their task at the Persian court. The structure of the Elamite text, (DPf), is similar to the royal Elamite literature of Susa. It contains the titles of the king, the history of the site, a prayer and an admonishment. The Elamite scribes were bilingual, and the Elamite royal literature contributed to the Old Persian literature. Some passages of the Babylonian text of Darius (DPg), instead, resemble the Assyro-Babylonian royal inscriptions, such as those of Nebuchadnezzar II (Herrenschmidt, 1990:59). **Babylonian** was the third 'official' language of the royal inscriptions, considering that the Achaemenid kings were also kings of Babylonia. This was clearly for reasons of succession and political continuity.

The political intent, which is shown in the Cyrus Cylinder and the Egyptian text of the statue of Darius from Susa, is also reflected in the Persepolis foundation texts. In brief, the sacred and cosmic character of Darius' kingship is expressed in the Old Persian (DPd) and (DPe) inscriptions, while his building work is mentioned in the Elamite text (DPf). The involvement of the whole empire in the construction of his royal complex is mentioned in the Babylonian text (DPg). In these inscriptions, Darius presents himself literarily as the **successor** of the Elamite and Assyro-Babylonian kings. The Persepolitan administrative records, discovered in 1933–1934, are thousands of clay tablets written in Elamite. These texts reveal details of the local economy in payment receipts, accounting records, travel expenses and authorizations for receiving goods from the state silos.

5.2. Form and Content

Achaemenid inscriptions were intended to perpetuate the king's name, his deeds and memory as well as messages and admonishments. The same formula can be seen for example in the Assyrian inscription of Shikaft-e Gulgul (Grayson & Levine, 1975:29ff). They can be classified in relation to politics (titles, genealogy, legitimacy of the power, divine support, extension of the Empire, values, admonishments), to constructions (builder, quality of the work, respect and any work on or addition to the existing buildings) and to commemorations or events. The most significant political text is the trilingual inscription of Darius on the Bisotun cliff, where the Old Persian cuneiform writing appears for the first time. The inscription on the Statue of Darius, which was commissioned in Egypt but discovered in Susa, can also be considered in the category of political declarations. Other such texts are the Cyrus Cylinder, discovered in the foundation of the Temple of Esagila, dedicated to Marduk, in Babylon, and Darius' letter to Gadatas inscribed on a stone block in Greek and discovered in Magnesia ad Maeandrum, an ancient Greek city today in Turkey. Inscriptions that deal with the theme of construction are mainly in Persepolis, Susa and Hamadan. Among commemorative inscriptions are the stelae of Darius on the construction of the canal in Egypt and on the crossing of the Danube. There are also texts inscribed on objects and vessels.

Political aspect: The form of the inscriptions follows a sequence already present in Bisotun Inscription, (DB), starting with the origin of Darius and the genealogy of the Achaemenids, discussing the events, i.e., the subject of the message. The phrase "Saith Darius the king: . . ." is recurrent, dividing the text in paragraphs. This formulation shows the **o**ral character of the inscription, which was not intended to be read but proclaimed in the Empire, not only in Old Persian but also in other languages. Translations were made through the intermediate of an Aramaic version (Lecoq, 1997:95). Bisotun text is composed of 76 paragraphs in which Darius, among the more general and political issues, mentions his battles and victory over the rebellious kings. In (§ 1–6), Darius announces his noble origins and genealogy; (§ 6) is the list of the peoples of the Empire; in (§ 7–9) he speaks of his relationship with the people and the bond between the king, the people and Ahuramazda. In (§§ 10–54) he mentions his campaigns against rebels and the reasons for their punishment. From (§ 55) onward there are admonishments and messages to the future, and in (§ 70) he notes the invention of the Old Persian writing and the dispatch of the text in the Empire (cf. Kent, 1950).

DB § 3 Saith Darius the King:
"For this reason we are called Achaemenians.
From long ago we have been **noble**.
From long ago our family had been kings."

Divine kingship: In (DB § 5), Darius declares his kingship conferred by Ahuramazda, implying that the kingship was a divine gift obtained through merits accumulated through good actions.

DB § 5 Saith Darius the King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda, I am the King;
Ahuramazda bestowed the kingdom upon me."

In the Elamite version, the last line is "By the will of Ahuramazda," while in the Babylonian version is used the Mesopotamian traditional expression of "under the shadow of" implying "under the protection of" (Lecoq, 1997:188). The expression of "under the shadow" is commonly used in Iran today.

Bond with peoples: In (DB § 6–7), Darius lists the peoples of the Empire, a total of 23 at the time, and affirms that these people are loyal and bounded to him. He uses the Old Persian term *bandaka*, meaning 'servant, slave' (*bandeh* in modern Persian). With this word, however, he does not intend 'slave' but describes a type of 'bond, tie' (*band*) between the king and his people (Lecoq, 1997:189). The same word has been used in relation with the generals of the Persian army. Considering the modern meaning of the word 'band,' i.e., 'an organized company,' used in various European languages, we can assume that people became part of a 'band,' meaning part of the Empire, having a 'bond' with the king, a bond which was often established through the practice of exchange of **gifts**.

DSe § 4 Saith Darius the King:
"Much which was ill-done, that I made good.
Provinces were in commotion; one man was smiting the other.
The following I brought about by the favor of Ahuramazda,
that the one does not smite the other at all,
each one is in his place.
My law—of that they fear,
so that the stronger does not smite nor destroy the weak."

Another inscription with a clear political character is Darius' epitaph in Naqsh-i Rustam. This trilingual text (DNa) resembles his Susa (DSe) inscription. It consists of 6 paragraphs: (§ 1) deals with the creation of the world and praise of Ahuramazda, (§ 2) is about titles and genealogy of Darius and (§ 3) is a list of the peoples of the Empire. The importance of (§ 4) is in its dealing with the reestablishment of the order in the world sustained by Ahuramazda and Darius' intention in the **pacification** of the Empire. In (§ 6) Darius unites the commandments of Ahuramazda, and the '**right path**' with his reign, emphasizing that submission to his power corresponds to divine will. This is done by addressing the observer, imploring obedience and loyalty to the king.

DNa § 3 Saith Darius the King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda, these are the countries
which I seized outside of Persia;
I ruled over them; they bore tribute to me;
what was said to them by me, that they did;
My law [*data*]—that held them firm:
Media, Elam, Parthia, Aria."

DNa § 4 Saith Darius the King:
"Ahuramazda, when he saw this world in **commotion** [in Babylonian version: hostile lands, mixed with each other],
thereafter bestowed it upon me, made me king;
By the favor of Ahuramazda I put it down in its place;
what I said to them, that they did,
as was **my desire.**
If now thou shalt think that 'How many are the countries which King Darius held?',
look at the sculptures (of those) who bear the throne, then shalt thou know,
then shall it become known to thee: the spear of a Persian man has gone forth far;
then shall it become known to thee: a Persian man has delivered battle far indeed from Persia."

DNa § 5 Saith Darius the King:
"This which has been done, all that by the will of Ahuramazda;
Ahuramazda bore me aid, until I did the work.
Me may Ahuramazda protect from harm,
and my royal house, and this land:
this I pray of Ahuramazda,
this may Ahuramazda give to me."

DNa § 6 "O man, that which is the command of Ahuramazda, let this not seem repugnant to thee;
do not leave the **right path**;
do not rise in rebellion!"

The Foundation Inscription of Persepolis on the south wall of the Terrace is trilingual consisting of four texts, (DPd) and (DPe) in Old Persian, (DPf) in Elamite and (DPg) in Babylonian. Each text has its own subject, different from the others, but forming a coherent whole. The inscription provides a frame for the features that form the political and cultural heritage in which the Persians found themselves better expressed than in any other text (Herrenschmidt, 1990:59). The first text, (DPd), is to honor the Persians and implore the protection of Ahuramazda. It alludes to the sacred character of the rapport between Ahuramazda, Darius and

Persia. The second text (DPd) is a list of the subject peoples, reminding the reader of the importance of Persian power as a guarantee for **peace and happiness**. The third text (DPf) deals with the **construction** of Persepolis, and the fourth (DPg) concerns the **cooperation** between various peoples in the construction of Persepolis. The intention of Darius in building Persepolis is to achieve a political act to create a symbol for the dynasty. This intention is obvious in the Old Persian text:

DPe § 3 Saith Darius the King:
"If thus thou shalt think,
'May I not feel fear of (any) other,'
protect this Persian people; if the Persian people shall be protected,
thereafter for the longest while **happiness** unbroken—
this will by Ahura come down upon this royal house."

This paragraph certainly gives a precious indication on the essential function of Persepolis, which is the political function, affirming the eminent role of the Persians to whom the other peoples are subjected (Lecoq, 1997:98). It thus shows that Darius had built Persepolis as an **intentional monument** to represent his political ideals.

The Gate of Xerxes as the main access to Persepolis complex was also the most appropriate place to demonstrate the multicultural character of the Empire by dedicating and calling it the Gate of All Lands, as mentioned in Xerxes' (XPa) inscription. This trilingual inscription is repeated four times on the doorjambs of the eastern and western entrances of the Gate above the winged bulls. Here, Xerxes underlines the **multiethnic** aspect of the Empire.

XPa § 2 "I am Xerxes, the Great King, King of Kings,
King of countries containing **all kinds of men**,
King in this earth far and wide,
son of King Darius, an Achaemenian."

The phrase "countries containing all kinds of men" is translated "peoples of many origins" by Lecoq, while the Babylonian version is: "the many-tongued countries" (Lecoq, 1997:251). The significance of this phrase is in showing the consciousness and importance given to the diversity of the peoples and their origins. In Achaemenid art and epigraphy everything is conceived and presented in the function of **politics**, and, wherever religious aspect appears, it is subordinated to royal ideology. Even Ahuramazda, who seems to have the power to bestow legitimacy to the king, is no more than a guarantor, prestigious in his transcendence of the temporal power (Lecoq, 1997:102). In this context, the importance of the so-called Persian Man, depicted as an archer king on Darius' tomb and coins, emerges as the intermediate between the divine and the people as in the Mesopotamian traditions. Darius was also aware of the political aspect of constructing important buildings. The so-called 'Foundation Charter' of Susa (DSf) mentions that the lands contributed by providing building material and workmanship in his construction

work. For Darius building activity was a further opportunity to declare the extension of the Empire, mentioning its most remote corners (Nylander, 1972:312) and thus highlighting its unity. Therefore, the significance of the Susa Charter should not be considered literally but rather in its intrinsic intentions.

Religion: The fundamental role of religion in politics is evident in the inscriptions. Lecoq (1997:167) retains that when Darius asks Ahuramazda to protect his people from the **enemy**, **famine** and **Lie** (DPd § 3) he gives a formula that reflects the ancient ideology of the Indo-Europeans corresponding to the three functions of war, nutrition and religion. Lie, in third position, is similar to the position of religion in the Indo-Europeans' list. This means that the royal ideology had supplanted the theological power, putting it at its own service. Such 'laicization' is also evident when Darius affirms that his subjects obey his law, ***dâta***, and not the religious law (DB § 8, DNa § 3, DSe §§ 3–4).

The Daiva Inscription of Xerxes (XPh), discovered in the eastern fortification in Persepolis in 1935 (Schmidt, 1953:4), can be considered an historical text since it mentions the defeat of a rebellious people. Here, Xerxes declares that, with the favor of Ahuramazda, he has defeated the worshippers of *deva (daiva)*, the demonized gods of the Iranian people, has destroyed their sanctuary and has worshiped Ahuramazda according to ritual, in the same place and in the pre-established moment. This event is rather unusual since the Achaemenids generally respected the religions of other people. It is probable that here the question was not the veneration of other gods, but those gods who had become demons for the Iranians. This could mean that the people who venerated the *devas* were those Iranians who were doing something forbidden.

In a certain moment in history the Old Persian word *daiva* referred to the evil gods of the Iranian people. The question is whether the evil gods were venerated by the heretic Iranians or by those Iranians hostile to the cult of Ahuramazda and, consequently, rebellious to the imperial power. According to Lecoq (1997:105) the word *déva* probably referred to the foreign non-Iranian divinities, a thesis that is consolidated by reference to the destruction of a "sanctuary" (*daiva-dâna*) in Darius' Bisotun Inscription, (DB § 14), that cannot be other than foreign. Therefore, the venerators of the *daiva*s could have been Iranian people who had modified their rituals and had also constructed a temple. The veneration of Mazdah was probably parallel to that of Mithra in the lands of the Iranians. Zarathustra presents himself as a powerful and pious man in search of **truth**, opposing the veneration of the *daivas*. For Zarathustra, the opposite of the *daivas* was Mazdah, who was not the god of a people, but the creator of the human being and in constant combat with his enemies, the *daivas* (Christensen, 1351:47). During the reigns of Darius and Xerxes, according to Christensen (1351:51), the Persians, although Mazdaens, were not followers of Zarathustra, while Boyce (1988) considers them to be Zoroastrians.

(XPh) also indicates the rituals carried out by Xerxes in the destroyed sanctuary. Although Xerxes condemns religious practices in regard of his law, the divine law does not disappear totally, but continues to coexist with the law of the king (cf. XPh §§ 3–7).

It seems that 'the law of Ahuramazda' mentioned in (XPh) indicates the tendency to the constitution of a priest cast, i.e., the magus, who were 'technicians' of the cult (Gallutta, 1980:187). The magus may not have approved the policy of Cyrus and Darius, which proposed to eliminate every intermediary between Ahuramazda and the people, who freely worshiped him according to their local customs. The Daiva Inscription is the longest and the most original inscription of Xerxes, while the others follow his father's established formulae. The religious severity that appears in this inscription indicates the beginning of the end of that 'consensus' which was the basis of the imperial structure (Gallutta, 1980:184ff). There was also a fracture in the conception of imperial power between Darius and Xerxes, and it seems the Daiva Inscription shows that Ahuramazda was no more the only main god of the empire, freely venerated by the subjects through local gods but simply the god of the king, imposed on all, with his specific cult. This hypothesis does not seem fully reliable; instead, the intolerant act of Xerxes towards the veneration of the *daiva*s could be justified when dealing with an Iranian people. Therefore, we can suppose that the Achaemenid policy towards the religion of other peoples was not changed. Xerxes sometimes mentions other gods (XPc § 4): "Me may Ahuramazda together with the gods protect" as does Darius for example in (DPg). This can be interpreted as the recognition of the gods of the peoples of the Empire.

Artaxerxes II (405–359), besides Ahuramazda, mentions Anahita and Mithra in his Susa inscriptions (A^2Sa §§ 2–3) while Artaxerxes III (359–338) only mentions Mithra in the Persepolitan inscription **(**A^3Pa § 4). This could imply that the cult of Mithra had some sort of diffusion in that period, indicating a change in the religious politics of the Achaemenids, although Ahuramazda always maintains the primary position.

A^2Sa § 3 "May Ahuramazda, **Anaitis** and **Mithras** protect me from all evil, and that which I have built"

A^3Pa § 4 Saith Artaxerxes the King:
"Me may Ahuramazda and the god **Mithras** protect,
and this country, and what was built by me."

In (XPh § 1) Xerxes repeats the usual formula of Darius, speaks of the protection of Ahuramazda and in (§ 2) indicates his genealogy, while in (§ 3) mentions his law, the Achaemenid law, above the divine law (Kent, 1950:151; Lecoq, 1997:257):

XPh § 3 Saith Xerxes the King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda these are the countries of
which I was the king,
outside of Persia;
I ruled over them; they bore tribute to me;
what was said to them by me, that they did; **my law**
—that held them firm"

XPh §4a Saith Xerxes the King:
"when that I became king,
there is among these countries which are inscribed above,
one which was in commotion.
Afterwards Ahuramazda bore me aid;
by the favor of Ahuramazda I smote that country
and put it down in its place.

XPh §5b And among these countries there was (a place)
where previously false gods were worshipped.
Afterwards, by the favor of Ahuramazda,
I **destroyed that sanctuary** of the demons, and I made
proclamation,
'The demons shall not be worshipped!'
Where previously the demons were worshipped,
there I worshipped Ahuramazda and Arta reverent(ly)."

Later, in the same text, the concept of bearing the message of monument is expressed. Xerxes addresses the reader of the inscriptions in a religious tone, advising him to venerate Ahuramazda if he wants to be happy in life and blessed when dead, but also asks him to respect the law of the king, naturally favored by Ahuramazda according to rituals.

XPh §4d "Thou who (shalt be) hereafter, if thou shalt think,
Happy may I be when living,
and when dead may I be blessed,
have respect for that law that huramazda has established;
and **worships Ahuramazda**, and **Arta** reverent(ly).
The man who has respect for that law which Ahuramazda has
established
and worships Ahuramazda and Arta reverent(ly),
he both becomes happy while living, and becomes blessed when dead."

Furthermore, Darius also mentions the support of Ahuramazda and other gods in the construction of Persepolis, thus strengthening the sacred aspect of Persepolis.

DPf § 2 "By the favor of Ahuramazda, I have built this palace,
and Ahuramazda wanted as such**, together with all the gods**,
that this palace be built; and I have built it."

Ethical values: An important aspect of the messages of the inscriptions concerns ethical values, in an educational sense, in rapport with the Empire and religion as well as the life of individuals. Obviously, these values are strictly linked with other aspects of the messages, mainly political, including truth, loyalty, honesty, protection of Ahuramazda, numerous family, longevity, justice, intelligence, bravura, goodness, beauty, happiness and self-control; while injustice, violence, Lie, anger and harm to the weak are condemned.

When referring to Lie, Darius seems to intend lack of loyalty to the king. In the Persian political and religious language, the Lie (drauga) is synonym of disloyalty and rebellion, opposed to the Truth (arta, or order according to Kent's Lexicon), for which Darius stands as the valiant defender (Briant, 1995:26). He requires Truth from the subject people: in other words, loyalty to the king. He also warns against damage to the inscriptions and the bas-reliefs. For the faithful, he invokes the protection of Ahuramazda, who will guarantee peace, happiness and prosperity. In the education of young Persians, it was fundamental to be truthful, which was considered proof of loyalty to the king. The concern of the Persians for Lie and Falsehood is found all along in the history of the Iranians, but also the question of what was intended by Truth occupied their minds. There are various interpretations on the meaning of Truth, i.e., the significance of the concept of Truth in rapport to justification of power.

In Bisotun Inscription, Darius justifies his battles and accuses **Lie** as the cause of the rebellions. He then admonishes the **future king** of the danger of Lie and finally formulates his wish for the protection of the monument (DB §§ 54–55).

DB § 54 Saith Darius the King
"These are the provinces which became rebellious;
The **Lie** made them rebellious,
so that these (men) deceived the people;
Afterwards Ahuramazda put them in my hand;
as was my desire, so I did unto them."

DB § 55 Saith Darius the King
"Thou who shalt be king hereafter,
protect thyself vigorously from the **Lie**;
the man who shall be a Lie-follower,
him do thou punish well, if thou shalt think:
'May my country be secure!'"

Inscriptions have a strong **educational** sense. In Bisotun in (DB § 56), for example, Darius takes the chance to advise the future king:

DB § 56 "Thou who shalt here-after read this inscription,
let that which has been done by me convince thee;
do not thou consider it false."

Darius' epitaph (DNb) is in 12 paragraphs in praise of the king. The same formula is used by Xerxes for his (XPl) inscription discovered on a stone near Persepolis. In (DNb §§ 1–5) Darius speaks of his political and military merits, considering these a gift from Ahuramazda. He declares to be **friend of just** (true) and **enemy of unjust** (false) and, most of all, **protector of the weak**, to have a sense of judgment and to make decisions without anger. He also retains that he commends or punishes after a just trial. In (DNb § 6) Darius says that he values the gift received from a person according to the possibilities of that person. This means that the importance of a gift was not only in its materialistic value but also in proportion to the possibilities of the donor. This could also indicate that Darius did not ask heavy tributes regardless of the economic condition of the subject people.

In (DNb § 1) Darius attributes the creation of the world's excellence, beauty and happiness of mankind to Ahuramazda, using the Old Persian word *fraša*. The exact meaning of this word is not clear. Lecoq (1997:221n) retains that in the Avesta it has a religious meaning but that in Old Persian it should have a profane significance, such as happiness, intelligence, bravura. The etymological meaning of this word is 'ce qui se présente, qui s'est développé' but also 'eminent, excellent.' Lecoq uses the French word *beau*, underlining the parallelism between the eminent quality of beauty created by Ahuramazda and what is constructed by Darius (cf. DSf § 14, DSj § 3, etc.). Some of the significant concepts are highlighted in Darius' epitaph.

DNb § 1 "A great god is Ahuramazda,
Who created this **excellent** [*beau*] work which is seen,
who created **happiness** for man,
who bestowed **wisdom** and **activity** [bravura] upon Darius the King."

DNb §.2 Saith Darius the King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda I am of such a sort that
I am a friend to **right**,
I am not a friend to **wrong**.
It is not my desire that the weak man
should have wrong done to him by the mighty;
nor is that my desire, that the mighty man
should have wrong done to him by the weak."

DNb §.3 "What is **right**, that is my desire.
I am not a friend to the man who is a **Lie-follower**.
I am not hot-tempered.;
What things develop by my **anger**,
I hold firmly under **control** by my thinking power.
I am firmly ruling over my own (impulses)."

DNb §.5 "What a man says against a man,
that does not convince me,
until he satisfies the Ordinance of Good Regulations." [until I hear the testimony of gods, in Babylonian (Lecoq, 1997:223)]

DNb §.6 "What a man does or performs (for me),
according to his (natural) **powers**,
(therewith) I am satisfied, and my pleasure is abundant, and I am well satisfied."

When Darius speaks of the spear of the Persian man in (DNa § 4), he intends to show the extension of the Empire, and when he alludes to his bravura as 'the Persian man' in (DNb § 9) he praises his own capacity of justice and guidance of the Empire.

5.3. Building Work

The majority of the existing Achaemenid inscriptions are incised on Persepolitan buildings. There are two main types of inscriptions; the first type consists of proclamations and long texts while the second type refers to short protocols containing names and titles. Later completions or additions to building are recorded by mentioning the names of the original builder and the one who did the additions. Examples are found in (XPc), (XSa), (XV), (A^1Pa) and (D^2Sb). The royal protocol used in the architectural context may have formal, aesthetic and even ritual functions. Sometimes an inscription is repeated many times in the same building, implying a decorative function.

The Susa inscriptions are often fragmentary, and it is difficult to identify their original location. This may be because excavations were not scientifically carried out and mainly aimed to unearth objects. Furthermore, the name of the relevant building is not always specified in the inscription. Darius' inscriptions are inscribed on objects such as clay tablets, stone slabs, column bases and barillets or glazed bricks belonging to wall surfaces. An almost complete Babylonian version of Darius' (DSe) inscription was found on a stone slab measuring 35 × 37cm, providing a list of the peoples of the Empire and peace among them, as well as mentioning the construction of a fortification wall and reconstruction of the damaged walls of Susa (Lecoq, 1997:108–110).

DSe § 5 Saith Darius the King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda,
much handiwork [construction],
which previously had been **put out of its place**,
that I put in its place. A town by name. . . [Susa], (its) wall fallen from age, [its wall was in ruin]
before this unrepaired—**I built another wall** (to serve) from that time into the future."

Another important text from Susa, (DSf), is an historical document called the "**Charter** of the Foundation of the Palace." There is an almost complete example of the Old Persian version of it on a clay tablet. Other versions of this text were discovered on fragments of marble slabs, glazed bricks, barillets and clay tablets, dispersed in various parts of the archeological site. This indicates that there were numerous copies of this text in various buildings. (DSf) consists of a long preamble, followed by the description of the construction procedure and a protection prayer. Here, many master builders with different skills and origins and the provenance of building materials are mentioned. The fact that the palace was built by workers of different origins is also a political message and a metaphor of the construction of the whole empire (Lecoq, 1997:112). Furthermore, Darius mentions some of the building techniques used, such as the preparation of bricks:

DSf § 7 "This Palace [*hadish*] which I built at Susa,
from afar its ornamentation was brought.
Downward the earth was dug,
until I reached **rock** in the earth.
When the excavation had been made, **rubble** was packed down,
some 40 cubits in **depth**,
another (part) 20 cubits in depth.
On that rubble the palace [*hadish*] **was constructed**.

DSf § 8 And that the earth was dug downward,
and that the rubble was packed down,
and that the **sun-dried brick** was molded,
the Babylonian people—it did (these tasks).

DSf § 9 The **cedar timber**,
this—a mountain by name Lebanon—from there was brought.
The Assyrian people, it brought it to Babylon;
from Babylon the Carians and the Ionians brought it to Susa.
The **Yaka timber**
was brought from Gandara and from Carmania.

DSf § 10 The **gold** was brought
from Sardis and from Bactria, which here was wrought.
The precious stone **lapis-lazuli** and **carnelian**, which was wrought here,
this was brought from Sogdiana.
The precious stone **turquoise**,
this was brought from Chorasmia, which was wrought here.

DSf § 11 The **silver** and the **ebony**
were brought from Egypt.
The **ornamentation** with which the wall was adorned,

that from Ionia was brought.
The **ivory** which was wrought here,
was brought from Ethiopia and from Sind and from Arachosia.

DSf § 12 The **stone columns** which were here wrought,
a village by name Abiradu, in Elam—from there were brought.
The stone-cutters who wrought the stone,
those were Ionians and Sardians.

DSf § 13 The goldsmiths who wrought the **gold**,
those were Medes and Egyptians.
The men who wrought the **wood**,
those were Sardians and Egyptians.
The men who wrought the **baked brick**,
those were Babylonians.
The men who adorned the wall,
those were Medes and Egyptians.

DSf § 14 Saith Darius the King:
"At Susa a **very excellent** (work) was ordered,
a very excellent (work) was (brought to completion).
Me may Ahuramazda protect,
and Hystaspes my **father**, and my **country**."

Cedar timber had an important symbolic value and great prestige as building material. We can trace its use to as early as the end of the third millennium in the Epic of Gilgamesh in the Sumerian mythology.

In (DSaa) inscription, which is a variant of (DSf) and exists only in the Babylonian version on a stone slab, Darius declares:

DSaa § 2 Saith Darius the King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda,
this palace which is built here, is built by me;
on the site of the construction of this palace,
its foundations were dug
until I reached rock in the earth.
and rubble was packed down, 20 cubits;
On that rubble the foundations of the palace was founded.

DSaa § 3 These are the material which were used in this palace:
gold, silver, lapis-lazuli, turquoise, carnelian,
the timber of cedar, the wood from Makan, ebony,
ivory and ornamentation of the bas-reliefs;
all the columns are in stone."
In § 4 Darius lists the peoples of the Empire, and in § 5 mentions even the remote proveniences.

DSaa § 5 By the favor of Ahuramazda,
the materials for ornamentation of this palace **from afar** were brought, . . ."

There was a high political significance in the construction of Persepolis. This is evident from the Babylonian text of the Foundation Inscription on the Terrace wall, (DPg), indicating the many people that participated in its construction as a political demonstration of the significance of Persepolis for the Empire. Similar lists were also made by the Babylonian kings for the 'restoration' of the temple of Marduk and by Darius for the construction of the palace in Susa (DSf § 7–14).

DPg § 2 "Saith Darius the King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda,
these are the **countries** that did this, that are **gathered here**:
Persia, Media and other countries
of other languages, from mountains and from valleys,
from this coast of the sea and from other coast of the sea,
and from this side of the desert and from other side of the desert,
as I had given them order;
all this that I did, by favor of Ahuramazda I did.
Me may Ahuramazda protect, together with the gods,
me and what that I love."

As indicated earlier, contrary to the Assyro-Babylonian inscriptions inscribed on the figures of bas-reliefs, the Achaemenid inscriptions have an assigned area in relation to the aesthetic aspect of the architectural whole. There are a few exceptions such as those on the garments of Darius and Xerxes in the Palace of Darius in Persepolis. On the stairways, for example, the inscriptions are carved on the central and lateral frames (**Figure 2.26**). Persepolitan inscriptions sometimes go beyond their function of prestige (Lecoq, 1997:106), as those on the door knobs, or on the door and window frames of the Palace of Darius, which may not have only a decorative character. The rigorous symmetry in positioning the inscriptions indicates they not only had the function of proclamation but also served an aesthetic purpose (Nylander, 1968:152). Thus, a doorway has on its two jambs the same sculpture and the same inscription. Longer texts of proclamation type may be repeated twice or more times in symmetrical positions within the same architectural unit, and the same short protocol or inscription is sometimes repeated in the same building or hall up to 50 times. Such use of inscriptions continued to have an important role in the Iranian architecture of the Islamic period, emphasizing aesthetic aspects.

The third part of the Foundation Inscription, (DPf), in Elamite, records Darius' care and personal interest in the construction of Persepolis (Roaf, 1990:113ff), an interest which is found in the inscriptions of the later kings. Darius sustains to

have ordered everything to be constructed **according to his plan** in a new site and to have paid attention to the **quality** of the construction:

DPf § 2 And saith Darius the king:
"On this **terrace** [*gâtu*], there where this **palace has been built**;
there, **no other palace had been built**.
By the favour of Ahuramazda, I have built this palace,
and Ahuramazda wanted as such, together with all the gods,
that this palace be built; and **I have built it**;
therefore, it has been built **solid and excellent**,
and **exactly as I had ordered it**."

DPf § 3 And saith Darius the king:
"Me may Ahuramazda, together with all the gods, protect,
as well as this palace, and also
to what **that is assembled on this terrace**;
may not happen what that a disloyal man thinks!"

In the English translation (DPf § 2) reads: "at this **place** [*gâtu*] where the **fortress** was built, formerly, here, no fortress was built." Here, the word 'place' refers to the Old Persian word *gâtu*, i.e., *gâh* in modern Persian, meaning 'throne,' while in the French translation *gâtu* is '*terrasse*,' intending 'throne' (Lecoq, 1997:229).

The trilingual inscription of Darius (DPa) on the doorway jambs of the main entrance of the Palace of Darius indicates him as the builder: "Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian, who built this palace [*tachara*]." Kent translates this phrase as 'of countries' while it is translated as 'of peoples' by Lecoq. This phrase is 'of all origins' in the Elamite and 'of countries of the totality, of all languages' in the Babylonian versions (Lecoq, 1997:227).

There are two examples of another trilingual inscription of Darius, (DPb), indicating his name and titles: "Darius the Great King, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenian." One example of this inscription is carved the garment of Darius on the western doorjamb of his palace, and the other is on the doorjamb of the east entrance of the north wall of the Palace of Xerxes.

On the garment of Darius, on the east doorway jamb of the main entrance of the Palace of Darius, there is the (XPk) inscription of Xerxes in Old Persian and in Elamite: "Xerxes, son of King Darius, an Achaemenian." Since in (XPk) Xerxes does not present himself as the king, it is presumed that this inscription was carved when Xerxes was still the crown prince. This, therefore, indicates that the Palace of Darius was completed during the reign of Darius and in close collaboration with Xerxes.

The trilingual inscription (DPc), which is repeated 16 times on the architraves of the windows, doors and niches of the Palace of Darius, "Stone window-frame,

made in the house of King Darius," is called the *marque de fabrication* (Lecoq, 1997:100), or production mark.

Another short trilingual text, (DPi), has been discovered on door knobs: "Door knob of precious stone, made in the house of Darius the King." These inscriptions can indicate that the Palace of Darius was conceived as a place of particular connotations, probably for special ceremonies or rituals. However, that similar elements have not been found in other palaces does not mean that such rituals did not take place elsewhere.

On the Gate of Xerxes, (XPa § 3) indicates that Xerxes built this 'Colonnade of All Lands' together with his father. This is evident when he declares: "Much other good (construction) was built within this (city) Persepolis, which **I built** and which **my father built**," thus underlining the '**quality**' of the constructions. In the inscriptions of Xerxes, it is common to use the word 'good' or 'excellent' for qualifying constructions (Lecoq, 1997:251), such as in (XPg § 1), (XPh § 6) and (XV § 3).

5.4. Heritage and Continuity

All the kings declare to have built or completed a building and are vigilant to praise the works of their fathers as if the continuity of works would be an **additional value** to the structure. Buildings were testimonies of dynastic identity and significance, thus acquiring heritage value. The figure of Darius, as the author of the dynastic identity and image, was of fundamental importance. It is underlined in palaces that the buildings were **inherited** from the forefathers, and the kings show pride in having them preserved and in having **continued** and **completed** the works started by their predecessors. All this is declared with a ritual approach referring to the Persians, the Empire and the support of Ahuramazda. Thus, in the case of Bisotun, (DB), Darius requests the observer to **protect** the monument and admonishes and condemns he who would destroy or fail to protect it.

DB § 65 "Thou who shalt hereafter behold this inscription which I have inscribed,
or these sculptures, do thou not destroy them,
(but) thence onward **protect** them, as long as thou shalt be in good strength!"

DB § 67 "If thou shalt behold this inscription or these sculptures,
(and) shalt destroy them and shalt not **protect** them,
as long as unto thee there is strength,
may Ahuramazda be a smiter unto thee, and may **family** not be unto thee,
and what thou shalt do, that for thee may Ahuramazda utterly **destroy**."

The Old Persian inscription of Xerxes (XPg) on the Apadana stairway gives homage to the works carried out by Darius on this building, confirming to have completed and made additions to the work of his father:

XPg § 1 Saith Xerxes the Great King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda, King Darius **my father built**
and ordered (to be built) **much good** (construction).
By the favor of Ahuramazda,
I **added** to that construction and **built further** (buildings)."

Another important inscription is the trilingual text of Xerxes (XPc), inscribed three times on the south stairway and on the antae of the Palace of Darius, indicating the construction this palace. It is interesting since Xerxes testifies the work of Darius:

XPc § 3 Saith Xerxes the Great King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda [Ahura Mazda] **this palace** [*hadish*],
Darius the King **built**, who was **my father**.

XPc § 4 Me may Ahuramazda together with the gods protect,
and what was **built by me**,
and what was **built by my father** Darius the King,
that also may Ahuramazda together with the gods **protect**."

(XPc § 3) is the only case where the name of Ahuramazda is written in two words (Lecoq, 1997:253). Besides the Bisotun Inscription, another example of a text that deals with historical events is the (XPf) inscription of Xerxes, discovered in the excavation of the Harem Complex and therefore called the 'Harem text.' There are various examples of it in Old Persian and Babylonian. Its main theme is the justification of the succession of Xerxes to the throne of Darius. Lecoq (1997:104) retains that this text merits to be called the 'succession text.'

XPf § 4 Saith Xerxes the King:
"Other sons of Darius there were,
(but)—thus unto Ahuramazda was the desire—
Darius my father made me the greatest after himself.
When my father Darius went away from the throne,
by the will of Ahuramazda,
I became king on my father's throne.
When I became king,
I **built much excellent** (construction).
What had been **built by my father**, that I **protected**,
and **other building I added**.
What moreover I built, and what my father built,
all that by the favor of Ahuramazda **we built**."

In (XPf § 4), the phrase "I built much excellent (construction)" refers to the buildings of Xerxes and his care for his father's buildings when he declares to have **protected** the buildings built by his father and have **added other buildings** to them. This can indicate that Xerxes felt responsible for a construction program already began by his father and the aim was indeed to construct a dynastic complex and a monument for the Empire. In the inscription of the doorways of the Gate of Xerxes (XPa), Xerxes declares:

XPa § 3 "By the favor of Ahuramazda,
this Colonnade of All Lands **I built**.
Much other **good** (construction) **was built** within this (city) Persepolis,
which **I built** and which **my father built**.
Whatever good construction is seen,
all that by the favor of Ahuramazda **we built**.

XPa § 4 "Me may Ahuramazda protect, and my kingdom,
and what was **built by me**, and what was **built by my father**,
that also may Ahuramazda **protect.**"

Among the inscriptions that mention the construction of Palace H, there is the bilingual text of Artaxerxes I (A^1Pa) in Old Persian and Babylonian, discovered on some stone fragments in Palace H, where Artaxerxes I, following the pre-established formula, declares to have completed the construction of a palace already started by his father Xerxes:

A^1Pa § 3 Saith Artaxerxes the Great King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda,
this palace [*hadish*] Xerxes the King, **my father**, previously (began to **build**),
afterwards **I built** (to completion)."

In the (A^1Pb) inscription, in Babylonian, on a stone slab found near the Hundred Column Hall, Artaxerxes I reveals to have constructed a palace on the foundations built by his father Xerxes:

A^1Pb Saith Artaxerxes the King:
"This palace, Xerxes the King, **my father laid its foundations**;
By the favor of Ahuramazda, I, Artaxerxes the King,
I built it to completion."

Darius II in his bilingual, Old Persian and Babylonian, inscription (D^2Sb) on column bases refers to a palace "constructed" by his father and then "reconstructed" by him:

D²Sb § 2 Saith Darius the King:
"This palace [*hadish*] **Artaxerxes previously built**, who was my father;
this palace [*hadish*], by the favor of Ahuramazda, **I afterwards built** (to completion)."

Artaxerxes II (405–359) in a trilingual inscription on the **reconstruction** of the apadana of Susa (A²Sa) mentions to have built a palace that was originally built by his ancestor Darius (522–486) but was later burned during the reign of his grandfather Artaxerxes I (465–425). This inscription is fragmentary and is inscribed on two column bases of the central hall of the apadana of Susa. These column bases were in red granite from Aswan that Darius had brought from Egypt to Susa (Zander, 1970:6). Epigraphists do not agree on the translation of the word 'burned.' If it were correct, it would be a demonstration of the will to record the phases of the transformation of a building in different periods.

A²Sa § 2 "This palace [*apadana*] Darius my **great-great-grandfather built**;
later under Artaxerxes my **grandfather** it was **burned**;
by the favor of Ahuramazda, Anaitis [Anahita], and Mithras,
this palace [*apadana*] **I built**."

Among the Old Persian inscriptions of Artaxerxes II on the construction activities in Susa is (A²Sc), a lacunose text on a stone slab that mentions a palace probably constructed in conjunction with a 'stone stairway':

A²Sc § 2 Saith Artaxerxes, the Great King, King of Kings,
King of Countries, King in this earth:
"[I built] This palace [*hadish*] and this stone staircase . . .
Ahuramazda"

Another text of Artaxerxes II (A²Sd) is a trilingual inscription found in numerous fragments on column bases of Chaour Palace in Susa:

A²Sd § 2 Saith Artaxerxes the King:
"By the favor of Ahuramazda, this is the palace [*hadish* in Old Persian, *Tachara* in Elamite and Babylonian versions]
which I **built** in my lifetime as a pleasant retreat."

There is discussion on the meaning of 'pleasant retreat,' which Lecoq translates *consacré* in French. This word has also been translated as 'paradise,' but this may not be a correct interpretation (Lecoq, 1997:116, 274).

In the Old Persian inscription, (A³Pa), on the western stairway of the Palace of Darius in Persepolis, Artaxerxes III declares to have built the stairway, thus consenting to distinguish his addition from the original part of the palace. This

respectful approach shows an historical consciousness that can be considered similar to the modern concept of conservation, since he distinguishes the work of his time from the work done in the past. The same text is inscribed on the stairway of Palace H.

> **A^{3}Pa** § 3 Saith Artaxerxes the King:
> "This stone staircase was **built by me in my time**."

In brief, there are some general characteristics in Persepolitan inscriptions, which follow a fixed formula based on Mesopotamian tradition. These were adopted by Darius, reformulated to reflect his intentions and followed by his successors. Persepolitan inscriptions constitute a fundamental aspect of the **architectural program** of the site, and their position in the architectural layout of the buildings is in specific assigned areas integrated with bas-reliefs. Inscriptions indicate the personal interest of the kings in the construction of their palaces and show their approach towards the works of their forefathers, a respect for the preexisting structures and their significance. Inscriptions were generally incised at the end of the construction work, even in a partial work such as addition of a stairway. Inscriptions are historical documents, offering the possibility of understanding the past reflected in the buildings. This is possible when a structure is signed by its builder. Darius was an authority whose building formula became the official format to be followed and respected. Persepolitan inscriptions testify the significance of this site as a ceremonial and ritual place and as a means of transmitting its significance to future generations. They also show that Persepolis was built as an 'intentional monument,' becoming an 'historic monument' already during the Achaemenid period.

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6

SIGNIFICANCE AND SYMBOLISM

Persepolis was an **intentional monument**, built for symbolic and political reasons, and it was also destroyed on political grounds. It acquired an historic and legendary significance with a strong reference to ethnic identity during Persian revivals; its significance was rediscovered in modern times. It was considered a monument due to its urban, architectural, sculptural and literary aspects. It carried messages addressed to the people, showing that the king, an omnipotent combatant, with the support of Ahuramazda guaranteed peace and a united and amalgamated Empire, which was sustained by its peoples, while maintaining their own ethnic identity and cultural diversity. Persepolis became the model for the architecture and figurative representation of values and messages to be transmitted. Buildings such as the Treasury and the objects discovered indicate a collector's taste in the ritual manufactures, with nostalgic aspects, of probable historical, political and religious significances. Similarly, the monumental architecture of Persepolis has strong symbolic references showing conscious spatial harmony. This can be noted, for example, in the Terrace constructed as an architectural ensemble composed of a podium, the above-standing ceremonial structures and architectural details.

6.1. Significance of Podium

In Egyptian belief, creation started with the emergence of a mound, the **primeval hill**, from the waters of chaos (Frankfort, 1948:25). Every sanctuary had a podium, which became the architectural expression of the Primeval Hill, the center of the creative forces where the orderly life of the universe had its beginning. The Egyptian royal tomb assumed the form of a pyramid as the transposition of this concept (Frankfort, 1948:22). Thus, the buildings in Antiquity followed specific criteria with various philosophical, symbolic, metaphoric and mythological connotations, especially in the

constructions of temples and palaces. This means that the **podium** or platform had a particular significance related to the concept of the 'primeval hill.' This concept is also found in Mesopotamian architecture. Gudea (ca. 2100), a Mesopotamian ruler, mentions that in founding a temple he molded a brick in clay, purified the site with fire and consecrated the **platform** with oil (Frankfort, 1948:13). When the condition of a site did not provide a natural platform, this was artificially constructed, such as the palace ensemble built by Sargon II (721–705) of Assyria in his capital city, Khorsabad. This is an earlier example of an elevated and partly projecting palace platform, from where the king could have been seen in ceremonial state above the city walls (Stronach, 1985:435). The same method is also found in Greek and Roman temples. Building on a podium surely had practical reasons such as protection from floods.

The Achaemenid sites are also situated on a high terrain, like a terrace, e.g., Tall-i Takht in Pasargadae (**Figure 1.7**) or Susa and Persepolis. Susa was already the capital of Elam, and Darius reconstructed the city and its walls and built a palace ensemble on a terrace, more than 12 meters high, dominating the plain of the Chaour River. In Persepolis, the Terrace itself is a high platform, and most structures have their own podium. In the Elamite text of the Foundation Inscription of Persepolis, (DPf § 2), Darius affirms to have built on this *gâtu*, i.e., terrace, the palace. *Gâtu* is an Old Persian word meaning 'throne,' which is translated as *terrasse* (terrace) by Lecoq (1997:220). The modern Persian suffix *gâh* meaning 'place' is derived from this word. Furthermore, Persepolis in modern Persian is called *Takht-e Jamshid* (Jamshid's throne). Zoka (1358:46) attributes two meanings to the word *takht*: 1) seat, chair, king's chair, bed, i.e., *gâh*, and 2) terrain, flat and high, i.e., a podium or terrace. Numerous Iranian sites contain the word *takht* in their names.

The throne of Pharaoh also imitated the primeval hill: "It was reached by steps and was sometimes placed upon a double stairway" (Frankfort, 1948:152). This kind of stairs is typically Persepolitan. The bas-relief of the Apadana podium represents the Empire, and the podium itself can be considered the throne of the Empire, since the four holes on the western border of the Terrace in front of the Apadana could be traces of a portable throne (Jamzadeh, 1993:146). The concept of podium is also manifested, in a smaller scale, in the form of the throne sustained by the peoples of the Empire, as found on the doorway jambs of the Central Palace and the Hundred Column Hall. This implies a hierarchy of thrones in Persepolis. The Terrace is the podium in a large scale, the podiums of the buildings are in a medium scale, and finally, the king seated on a dais sustained by the peoples is in a small scale. Such representation is also found on the façade of the Tomb of Darius and reproduced on the tombs of successive kings.

Although Achaemenid architecture shows influence from Egyptian architecture, it should be noted that similar symbolic and mythological concepts were diffused in Antiquity. However, it seems that the choice of symbols and forms was conscious and referred to political and cultural policies, as well as to the values that were generated in each culture. For example, the royal Achaemenid tombs were sculpted and painted externally but without internal decoration. This is conceptually different

from the Egyptian tombs, where decorations were inside the tombs. The upward aspiration of Achaemenid architecture finds logical correspondences in other attitudes and in architectural formulas, for example, the way the high platform, the Terrace walls and the monumental stairway with access ramps were designed to further accentuate this concept (De Angelis d'Ossat, 1982:33).

6.2. Significance of Square

The geometric form of square is particularly significant in Achaemenid architecture, and it is repeatedly found as a reference in plan and in elevation. It is fundamental in the definition of the proportions and design schemes of royal and sacred architecture. The square plan is of ancient origin (De Angelis d'Ossat, 1982:34) and can be found in the idea of the Primeval Hill, as in the Egyptian temples and pyramids. The Step Pyramid of Djoser in Saqqara (built 2630–2611) was designed by the Pharaoh's vizier and architect Imhotep. It has an oblong plan (125 × 109m) with a height of 62m. Pyramids later developed into square plan during the Fourth Dynasty (2575–2465) when the pharaoh Cheops (Khufu) built the gigantic Pyramid of Giza, covering more than four hectares and reaching a height of 147m (Holthoer, 1994:127). The same geometric form is also found in Mesopotamian architecture, although with different structural solutions, specifically in ziggurats. Here, the 'steps' could be considered as the superposition of a series of square-plan podiums or, as in the Elamite ziggurat of Chogha Zanbil near Susa, a series of concentric tower-like structures based on a square plan, all starting directly from the ground within the 'courtyard' of an existing temple. Esarhaddon (680–669) of Assyria describes Babylon as a square city (Dalley, 1998:109), although archeological evidence shows that this is not the case, thus indicating the importance of square.

There is a mythological connotation in Fargard 2, i.e., the second chapter of *Vendidad* (c. 2nd–3rd century AD). In this book, where myth and folklore are integrated (Mehr, 1991:82), Ahuramazda orders the mythological king Jamshid (Yima) to build the subterranean city of War i Jamkard as a shelter for humans and animals to protect them against the great cold and winter snow until the return of the moderate climate. Ahuramazda's instructions for the construction of this shelter define a square plan (Saidnia, 1374:494). A Babylonian origin is attributed to this legend, resembling Noah's Flood (Dalley, 1998:173; Daryaee, 2017:3).

> Then make this enclosure long as a riding ground with **equal four sides**, thither carry families of cattle, draught animals, men, dogs, and birds and the red blazing fire, then make that enclosure long as a riding ground with **equal four sides** for handsome men, make it long as a riding ground with equal four sides as cattle pen for cattle.
>
> *(Vendidad, Fargard 2 § 25)*

> In that place make the water flow one hathra [c. one mile] long path together with a market established, together with green colored (food) to

> eat, and unfailing love, together with **a residence** set up with **rooms, pillars,** long extended **walls** and **enclosing wall**.
>
> *(Vendidad, Fargard 2 § 26)*

Sacredness of the square has contributed to its repeated use in religious and palatial architecture. The plan of the ziggurat of Chogha Zanbil (ca. 105 × 105m) is almost equal to the dimensions of the square formed by the axes of the outer row of the columns of the western and eastern porticos of the Apadana of Persepolis (106 × 106m) (**Figure 6.1**). Most probably Darius had considered the sacred

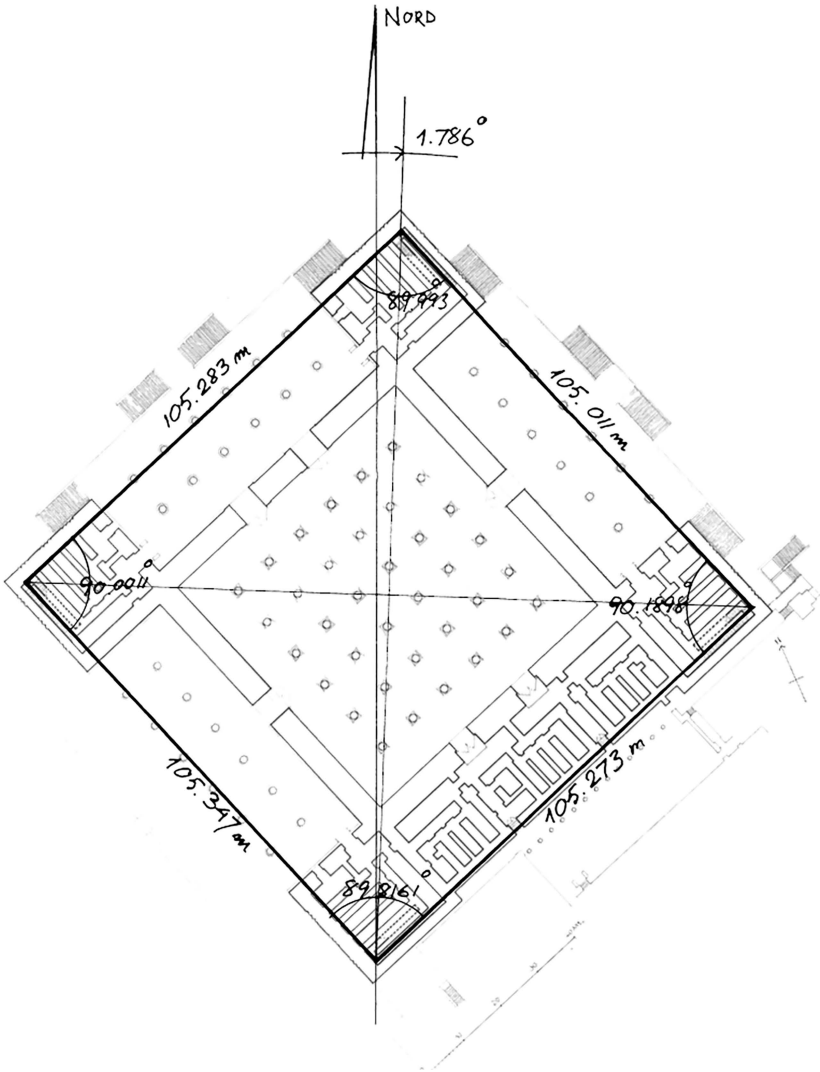

FIGURE 6.1 Chogha Zanbil ziggurat overlaid on the Apadana

significance of the square form of the ziggurat. Contrary to general belief, it seems that Nineveh and Susa were not destroyed as it has been described in legends (Dalley, 1998:28). In fact, Darius, in circa 520 reconstructed Susa and restored its walls to become one of the capitals of the Empire.

In Antiquity, numeric combinations, 'precise' Pythagorean triads and 'quasi precise' triads were used to make rectangular angles. In practice, simple numeric combinations were chosen to simplify their application on the worksite. It was of prime importance to correctly build a rectangular angle, which was the first step towards building a perfect square only by means of integers. Literary sources indicate the use of these numeric combinations in Antiquity (Ranieri, 1997:209ff). The simplest, the 3–4–5 triad, was certainly known in Mesopotamia in the second millennium; in China in the first millennium; in India, in Persia and in Greece in the 6th century; and in Rome in the 1st century. The Mesopotamians constructed complex buildings based on precise measurements. However, their construction methods are still not fully clear. In Persepolis the alignment of columns was the key to the comprehension of the schemes of squares in the planning of the site, i.e., squares made by a systematic use of numeric triads. The group of P-triads, for example, the 5–12–13 triad clearly appears in the first phase of the Treasury while the 8–15–17 P-triad is found in its final phase. The geometry of the squares of the Apadana is also interpretable as the result of the perfectly harmonious composition of the 5–12–13 (like the 10–24–26) and 7–24–25 triads (Ranieri, 1997:239ff). The search for the perfect form is found in Achaemenid architecture, where the oblong plan of the palaces in Pasargadae is developed into the dominant square form in Persepolis. Square as the symbol of earth and circle as the symbol of heaven have continuously been present in Iranian architectural forms, implying the transition from a square plan to a circular dome.

6.3. Significance of Design Scheme

Persepolitan art is expressed in the ceremonial buildings of the Achaemenid court, reflecting the spirit of an imperial order. This art produces grand visions, based on **geometrical order**, that frame the 'cold' and 'almost anonymous' representations of the federated subject people that are seen in the slow and solemn processions dominated by a sublime imperial hierarchy (De Angelis d'Ossat, 1982:33). Achaemenid architecture reveals the evident spirituality with which it is impregnated and offers a testimony for their ethics. The Greeks who qualified the Persians as barbarians, i.e., 'foreigners,' remained marveled by their philosophical and religious conceptions. Darius created an architectural language to represent his vision on the universality of the Empire, kingship and the dynasty. The question is in what way Persepolis reflected such intentions through its architecture and the layout of the ensemble and to what extent there had been an **original plan** and **design scheme** to guide its constructions and decorative program and whether the site was built accordingly. It is evident that it was built in a singular way, and a work of such dimension

had no precedent. In the Foundation Inscription of Persepolis (DPf § 2–3), Darius mentions having built a new palace complex in a place where "no other palace had been constructed." He also says he had it built 'solid and excellent,' exactly as he had ordered, implying that there existed a precise and prefixed scheme. In (DPf § 3) when mentioning what "that is assembled on this terrace," he indicates having foreseen the whole complex and an architectural project with details. Xerxes says in his (XPa) inscriptions on the Gate of Xerxes that he is the builder of the Gate, but he also mentions his father as if they had built it together. This may indicate that the construction of the Terrace and major part of the buildings were fruit of a **single architectural** conception and the building works had already been started by Darius and mostly completed by Xerxes (Herzfeld, 1929–1930:21). Therefore, from the beginning there had been a close collaboration and unity in the architectural conception of the works between the father and the son.

The modular **design scheme** establishes the position of the structures and is not in contrast with additions and modifications carried out during and after the reign of Darius. These modifications are rather minor in relation to the whole of the complex (Tilia, 1977:68). Inscriptions, bas-reliefs and architectural structures follow the guidelines established by Darius. Furthermore, the position of each building was fixed on the Terrace according to a grid system. In the construction of the Terrace wall, the stone blocks of different sizes and shapes were matched in situ. This certainly made it possible to obtain a more solid masonry wall that shows individuality in the constituent elements. Darius thus built the architectural ensemble of Persepolis in such a way that each building corresponded to a precise scheme in plan and in elevation. This scheme is seen in an initial 'urban' grid that covers the whole site, where the majority of the structures of the Terrace fit in. The constant geometrical form is the square, which is found in large buildings such as the Apadana and its central hall and in the smaller structures such as the palaces. The square is also found in the design of elevations and architectural details such as the doors and windows of the palaces and tomb façades.

6.4. Significance of Sculptural Decoration

> Not only has every sculpture its rigorously assigned position in the architectural scheme, with the contents conditioned by their place, but the principles of composition are a function of that position in architecture.
>
> *(Herzfeld, 1941:248)*

Darius' bas-relief at Bisotun reminds of a tradition dating back to the beginning of the second millennium. The victorious king Darius is represented with a foot laid over the body of his enemy, Gaumata, who rebelled together with eight other kings at the death of Cambyses II in 522. The ninth king, king of the Scythians, was depicted later in 518. All the nine kings are illustrated standing in

front of Darius with hands tied, and behind him are two armed officials. Darius with a long and stylized beard similar to Assyrian kings is represented in a conventional manner according to the Mesopotamian tradition that for each epoch had fixed a portrait corresponding to a certain ideal. The individuality of the model did not depend on the artist and not much on the episodic reality of the represented action but, rather, for affirming the definitive fact of the royal victory (Amiet, 1974:169). This corresponds to a very ancient conception of kingship, inherited from the early urban civilizations of Mesopotamia and Elam, that the Persian monarchy had known how to incarnate and revitalize in a particularly impressing manner until the point of becoming a privileged reference for other dynasties. In the development of these ideas, the most significant work is represented by the sculptures integrated in the whole of Persepolis, where the dynastic policy of Darius is expressed in all its extension. As Root (1979:161) indicates, the symbolic sculptural language resulted from a selection and adaptation of specific traditional ideas contributing to a new vision of kingship.

In the theoretical evaluation of the creative process of Achaemenid art, there are three factors: the impact of artisans, the impact of the patron and his selected planners and the impact of long-term cultural and historical influences (Root, 1979:5). There was little freedom of expression in the work of the sculptors, who only executed designs handed to them (Roaf, 1983:96). They worked under the supervision of the designers, following the instructions of the king, i.e., Darius as the promoter of this art, which finds its fullest expression at Persepolis during the last years of his life (Farkas, 1974:54–55). Darius' bas-reliefs include almost every theme found in the art of the later kings at Persepolis. Later kings do not seem to have made important changes or innovations in Achaemenid art. At the end of the reign of Xerxes, the main sculptures of Persepolis were nearly completed. The incomplete parts of the bas-reliefs, such as lotus decorations, were probably painted in case of a ceremony or other particular occasion and were later carved.

Achaemenid **sculptural art** can be classified in three phases: the art of Cyrus, the mature art of the court introduced and developed during the reign of Darius and the art of the period of Xerxes (Farkas 1974:83). The art of Darius seems to be a direct continuation of the art of Cyrus, although based on new criteria, the result of Darius' intention to formulate a standard royal art to create an artistic uniformity. Thus, the image of the king becomes the ideal image of king in the image of the later Achaemenid kings. The role of Xerxes has been that of a superintendent and executer of the grand project of Darius because the bas-reliefs of the northern stairway of the Apadana were carved by Darius' sculptors towards the end of his reign or at the beginning of the reign of Xerxes, while those of the eastern stairway, carved later, indicate that Xerxes' sculptures had added a certain refinement to this art (Farkas, 1974:4, 70). The repetition of the style of the bas-relief is a further indication of the rigor in the application of the **initial design**, although with a slight stylistic evolution, identified through attentive study. It is,

however, difficult to distinguish between any art created in Persepolis during the reign of Darius based on stylistic study (Farkas, 1974:53), considering that Xerxes was responsible for completing the major part of Persepolis and the refinement of the stylistic conventions formulated by Darius.

The sculptural and architectural compositions follow Darius' fixed **formula**, considering his palace as the model for the later palaces, where sculpture is as an integral part of architecture. The bas-reliefs follow a certain symmetry. On the doorway jambs, for example, when the right profile of a figure is depicted on one doorjamb, the other doorjamb shows the left profile of the same figure. Even if various groups of sculptors had worked on the Apadana stairway, the outcome shows a surprising stylistic unity. Nevertheless, the style of the stairway and the plan of the Palace of Xerxes–Artaxerxes I on site H, from the late period of Artaxerxes I (465–425), based on Tilia's graphical reconstruction (cf. Shahbazi, 1976), seems to be different from the early buildings of the Terrace.

Contrary to Assyrians inscriptions, Persepolitan **inscriptions** are an integrated element in the figurative composition with assigned areas in the architectural whole. The bas-reliefs have a **ritual** and religious aspect reflecting symbolic implication, as in the slow and majestic manner when climbing the stairways and in the gestures of the people represented on the Apadana stairways while ascending to offer their gifts. The hand-holding gesture is an explicit reference to the presentations of gifts in front of the divinity in the Mesopotamian and Egyptian traditions. This gesture presumably was to convey a feeling of dignified humility and solemn intimacy (Root, 1990:271). It is necessary to understand the metaphoric language as the key for reading the significance of these works. Therefore, the bas-reliefs are artistic representations that are not necessarily intended to show actual life but rather contain symbolic and metaphoric references to activities that may have taken place at Persepolis and elsewhere. The sculptures of Persepolis do not represent the throne bearers as stereotyped 'caryatids,' but, rather, they are individuals depicted with a lively sense of observation and joy with ethnographic details (Walser, 1972:368). The difference between the Achaemenids, the Egyptians and the Assyrians in showing the victorious king and his subject people is that the Achaemenid relief gift-bearer does not hide his enthusiasm. This is shown, for example, in the figure of the shepherd from Anatolia on the Apadana stairway, who touches the wool that he is bringing to examine its quality, or the lioness of the Elamites that turns towards his cub. Therefore, in Persian ethnography, the ethnic characteristics are not only shown as another form of praise of the power of the king, but also, they acknowledge and represent the specificity of each ethnic group. This manifestation of affection is not necessary for the sole representation of ethnic individuality, but it shows the interest for the various characters of people and animals and the care in showing details. Consequently, the Persepolitan bas-reliefs have interest for the cultural history of the world that surpass artistic interest, while from an iconographic point of view they show a complex multicultural character.

In the works of Darius, both sculpture and architecture represent the figure of the king as the center of the composition and reference point, especially when he is shown on the throne together with his courtesans (Farkas, 1974:2). The intention of Darius is thus to create a **royal art**, an image and an eternal model for the dynasty. The bas-reliefs of the Apadana stairways are unique in the Near East and show an idealized vision of the conceptual structure of the Achaemenid Empire, depicting the king and the crown prince in the center, the Persian nobility behind them and the gift-bearers in their front.

The (DNa § 4) inscription of Darius on the façade of his tomb in Naqsh-i Rustam mentions:

> **DNa** § 4 "If thou shalt think that
> 'How many are the countries which King Darius held,'
> look at the sculptures (of those) who bear the throne, then shalt thou know,
> then shall it become known to thee: the spear of a Persian man has gone forth far;
> then shall it become known to thee: a Persian man has delivered battle far indeed from Persia."

This is the constant theme of the **royal propaganda**, which is also repeated in Persepolis (Amiet, 1974:168). The statue of Darius in Susa and his hieroglyph inscription confirm his intention to use art for emphasizing the extension of his Empire and reminding others of his deeds (Farkas, 1974:118). These were probably the aspects that had marveled the Greeks when carving the Panathenaic procession on the frieze of the Parthenon in Athens in the 5th century, as Brandi (1978:18) notes.

6.5. Symbolism and Metaphor

The bas-reliefs bear messages in a language of **metaphor** and symbolic representation such as the personification of the lands of the Empire and the king fighting with supernatural beings. It is by means of an iconographic, metaphoric, non-temporal program and with the introduction of universal concepts that Darius transmits these messages, reformulating traditional Near-Eastern motifs. The Neo-Assyrians regarded the battle of king and lion motif symbolic of royal value. This motif was adopted by the Achaemenids but depicted the king fighting not only a lion or a bull but also supernatural beings (**Figure 1.4**), implying that the king, by defeating these beings, acquires their supernatural powers. This motif may also have apotropaic significance, being carved on doorway jambs. The king, in the quality of a warrior constantly **defended the values** of 'order and truth,' i.e., *arta*. A similar concept, victory over the forces of chaos, can be found in Near-Eastern culture. Representing the king as a super hero was without a doubt

Darius' innovation since in the Assyro-Babylonian glyptic only gods and genii fought with supernatural beings and not kings (Root, 1979:304). The king is a dynastic character represented as an archer on the bas-reliefs of Bisotun and Naqsh-i Rustam and on coins. In this case, although the opponent is not visible, the supreme power of the king is not questionable. The lion-bull combat theme is an ancient motif, but it does not refer to the victory of good on evil in the Avestic sense, because bull is not a symbol of evil in the Avesta, where it mentions 'the bulls of days' but ignores the lion. There is a myth on the dominion of the sun symbolized by lion or a bird. In the Mesopotamian glyptic lion is the star of the evening that is conquered by the bull of the warmth of the day (Duchesne-Guillemin, 1972:269). The lion and the bull combat scene, symbol of power of the king, represents the royal, temporal and supernatural authority of the king (Stronach, 1989:263), probably an innovation of Darius. This scene could be a symbolic representation of the conflict between the king and various forces that dispute his royal power: the lion as the emblem of the triumphant majesty and the bull as the symbol of the powerful force that is defeated (Curzon, 1966:160).

The theme of the anthropomorphic winged bulls guarding the entrances of the Gate of Xerxes has **apotropaic** significance. Such themes, with some differences in motifs, also exist in Near-Eastern art, borrowed by the Achaemenids. The cherubim, which "stood on the right side of the house when the man went in" (Ezekiel 10:3) are known in Akkadian as kuribu, a generic term meaning 'blessed' which refers to the winged guardian spirits that stood on the either side of the monumental entrances of the Assyrian courts (Dalley, 1998:78). These angels are found in the Sasanian, Roman and Christian building traditions.

Variations of the image of the **winged circle**, or winged disk, are found in Ancient Near-Eastern art. The similarity of the image of the Achaemenid king with the image of the winged circle can indicate an overlapping of the royal image and the divine image. Porada (1961:68) retains the winged circle a godly image, and both Root (1996:116) and Roaf (1983:133ff) consider it the image of Ahuramazda, while others, including Shahbazi (1974; 1980), consider the winged circle, or *Faravahar*, the symbol of kingship conceded by Ahuramazda. Mehr (1991:85) considers it the **divine grace** (*xvarenah*) and among the constituent elements of human nature, while Christensen (1351:167) calls it *xvarenah*, referring to the glory and fortune that always accompanied the true Arian kings (Soudavar, 2010:120ff). This word is *xvarr* in Pahlavi and *farr* or *frohar* in modern Persian. The concept of 'royal glory' is mentioned as *Farr-e Shahi* in Persian literature as in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*. The Parsis, who escaped to India in the 7th century AD, consider this symbol the **royal glory** of the king, and refuse to identify it as the image of Ahuramazda.

At Persepolis, the king on throne is presented under a baldachin decorated with celestial symbols. The symbol for a portable sky above the king exists in Near-Eastern art as well as in the concept of the portable nomad tent. The idea

of tent symbolizing the sky and power is continued by Alexander and Ptolemy in Egypt. It is also found in architecture since a tent held by four columns resembles Persepolitan structures. The king installed his camp under a tree that provided shade; the tree, the baldachin, the tent and the parasol held above the head are symbols of power and fortune (Schefold, 1968:49, 50). This is evident in Georg Friedrich Handel's opera *Xerxes*, the king reflects with admiration on the shade of a Plane tree.

To summarize, the dominant theme of the bas-reliefs of Persepolis, besides the glorification of the king and the Empire, includes the rapport of the king with his peoples and their reciprocal collaboration to maintain the fundamental values of peace. These aspects are shown in bas-reliefs such as the audience scene, king on throne upheld by the peoples, divine protection represented by the winged circle and the non-temporal aspect of the representations. The figure of the king is a symbolic and idealistic image representing his dynastic identity. The Apadana stairway bas-reliefs depict the relationship between the king and his peoples in an elaborate metaphor of an empire in which an ideal world order is shown in a gift-bearing ceremony. This theme, which in the Assyrian and Egyptian context shows military subjugation, here is a scene of sincere reverence (Root, 1979:284). The depicted ceremonies did not necessarily take place at Persepolis; they are a metaphor of the Empire and its various festivities even elsewhere (Jamzadeh, 1993:145).

Direction of bas-relief figures: The analysis of the direction of bas-reliefs figures, and concentration of bas-reliefs and inscriptions in various places, makes it possible to understand the site as a whole and make a hypothesis on the circulation, activities and function of the Persepolis Terrace. Moreover, the figure of the king, especially when on throne, indicates the hierarchy and importance of the buildings. The direction of the figures shows that, as a rule, the king moves from interior spaces towards exterior and from the south to the north of the Terrace, i.e., from the palace area towards the audience halls (**Figure 2.41**). In this context, the Central Palace and the courtyard of the Palace of Darius particularly stand out. The Central Palace is the crossroads of all the movements of the king depicted enthroned on its eastern doorway jambs. The hall of this palace is the only space on the Terrace where the king faces two opposite directions, both towards the exterior to meet the nobles carved on the northern and southern stairways of the palace. The Palace of Xerxes is different from the Palace of Darius and Palace C due to its great number of attendants. There is no combat scene, and no attendant is depicted alone on its doorway jambs. This may indicate a less intimate aspect for this palace.

6.6. The Alexander Sarcophagus

The Alexander Sarcophagus, a masterwork of oriental Ionian sculpture probably dating to 312, was discovered in Sidon in Lebanon in 1887 AD. Some scholars believe it was the sarcophagus of Abdalonymus, the last governor of Sidon, and

others think it belonged to Mazaeus, a Persian noble and governor of Babylon. The bas-reliefs on the sarcophagus represent events associated with Alexander. These include scenes of the Greeks and the Persians hunting together or fighting against each other (**Figure 6.2**). It seems that such events were historically possible. There are various aspects that re-propose the Persian influence such as the way of representing animals and ornamentations by Greek artists with oriental motifs and a rich program of symbols (von Graeve, 1970:169). The artists based their work on traditions that were present in Ionia, Greece and Persia. Other discovered objects, such as a bull-headed capital resembling those of the Hundred Column Hall in Persepolis, indicate that the Greek artists were conscious of Achaemenid art and architecture (von Graeve, 1970:166). Therefore, it seems that although the workshop of the sculptors was in Sidon, the artists most probably had **direct knowledge** of Persia or had visited Persepolis (von Graeve, 1970:12). The sarcophagus bas-reliefs are not copies but a new artistic creation, but they may have been influenced by other images of the same theme common in that period such as the House of the Faun mosaic in Pompeii dating to ca 317, showing the Battle of Issus.

Ultraviolet investigation has shown traces of paint on the inside surface of the shield of a Persian warrior on the sarcophagus depicting an **audience scene** resembling those of the Persepolitan bas-reliefs. Von Graeve (1970:107) retains

FIGURE 6.2 The so-called Alexander Sarcophagus (4th century) in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum (2004); the audience scene depicted on the inside of the shield of the Persian Warrior (on the left) can be seen in ultraviolet light

that, most probably, at least one of the artists who worked on the sarcophagus had visited Persepolis considering the strong similarity in everything that refers to Persia. Such resemblance could not have been possible only based on secondary sources. The audience scene of the shield is a testimony of the diffusion of the image of the Persian king in the Empire, emphasizing communication between the center and the periphery. Similar to Bisotun bas-reliefs and inscriptions, the audience scene was equally diffused in the Empire. The impact of the Achaemenid Empire and the propagandistic policy introduced by Darius towards the end of the 6th century still existed at the end of the 4th century as demonstrated by the Alexander Sarcophagus. Other such evidence may be discovered in the future.

6.7. Respect for the Past and Antiquity Value

In the ancient world, there were already examples of respect for testimonies that represented the past. The word used by the Sumerians and the Assyro-Babylonians to indicate the future was *warkâtu*, meaning 'what is found behind the shoulders.' The word for 'in the past' or 'once upon a time' was *panânu*, from the root meaning 'face' or 'in front' (Schnapp, 1993:31). This implies that for the ancient Mesopotamians, **the past** was already lived and therefore known, while the future was yet to be discovered. The Babylonians explored their past and the visible natural and astrological phenomena as if these could inform the present of the possible future. The historicity of a work implied respect, almost as a **ritual act**. Traditions were handed down from generation to generation by means of memories of the past, knowledge of the ancestors and respect for their actions and heritage. These traditions became more explicit and consolidated when writing was invented and memory was historicized. The study of the past became a regular occupation, and documents were kept in libraries and temple archives particularly in Babylonia. Ashurbanipal had an important library and ordered the collection of all documents regarding rituals, prayers and everything useful for his palace and kingship (Speiser, 1955:48). The **Epic of Gilgamesh** clearly indicates the appreciation of **age value** and use of **square**. The prologue of the epic includes the following verses:

> He was to build the walls of Uruk, the fold
> Of the saint Eanna, the resplendent place.
> Behold its walls: its crenellations are as copper!
> Observe its stature, no work it equals.
> Cross its threshold, which is from times immemorial,
> Approach Eanna, house of the goddess Ishtar.
> No one, not even a king, can ever construct
> A monument to be its equal.
> Mount the walls of Uruk and walk along them,
> Inspect the foundations, examine the bricks:
> Is it not true that they are truly fired bricks?

> Have the seven sages not laid its foundations?
> One square mile is the city, one square mile are its orchards, one square mile are its cisterns beyond the lands of the temple of Ishtar.
> For three square miles extends Uruk not including its agricultural lands.
>
> (translated from Pettinato, 1993:123)

Concerning **sacred cities**, the city of Babylon was built as a sanctuary dedicated to its patron god, Marduk. Any construction work, repair or reconstruction in the city was considered a ritual act. Temples were often restored or rebuilt, but this was done with respect, and the works were recorded in inscriptions. In the temple of Ashur in Babylonia, an inscription by King Irishum I states: "Should the building grow weak with age, and should a king like myself wish to rebuild this structure, he shall not displace the nail that I have driven in, but shall restore it to its place" (Speiser, 1955:47). The nail or peg was the symbol of completion, dedication and inauguration of a temple, and it guaranteed the approval and protection of the god to whom the temple was dedicated. The original foundation document also had to be preserved and kept in its original form and place. The respect shown by Nebuchadnezzar (605–562) regarding his building works in Babylon can be understood in the same sense:

> Since my heart did not desire the residence of my royal majesty in any other city, in no other place have I constructed a royal residence. In Babylon, my royal residence however, could not contain my royal treasure. For the respect that my heart nourishes for Marduk, my Lord, I did not deviate in Babylon, my beloved loyal city, the course of the streets to enlarge my royal see, I did not demolish his sanctuary, I did not canalize the river; for the new residence I let myself be guided by the respect for all that pre-existed.
>
> (translation from Pettinato, 1988:135)

This discourse shows the wish to conserve the pre-existing fabric of the city, and the relationship between the king and the god. The king respects the historic fabric of the city dedicated to Marduk and seeks blessing by consolidating the walls of the Temple of Esagila, "May Nebuchadnezzar live, may become old the conservator of Esagila" (Pettinato, 1988:136).

The Mesopotamian tradition of burying **foundation texts** under the building was followed by the Achaemenids, e.g., in Babylon, Persepolis and Susa. When Cyrus conquered Babylon, he started a series of projects to guarantee the continuity of rituals and ceremonies and restored temples. The so-called **Cyrus Cylinder** records such works. This seal was discovered in the excavations of the Temple of Marduk. There are cases where the foundation text of an earlier building was found under a later construction. Burying an old foundation text aimed to transfer the values and significance accumulated in the old building to the new one. In

Babylonia, excavations were made to discover interesting documents or objects. Some Mesopotamian kings were real antiquarians: Nabonidus (555–539), the last Neo-Babylonian king, boasts to have discovered the inscriptions of Naram-Sin (2254–2218) that had been buried for 3,200 years under the foundations of the Temple of Shamash at Sippar (Speiser, 1955:46). In the Ancient Near East and Egypt, scribes and artisans copied ancient texts. There is evidence indicating appreciation of antique works, such as the collections of Nabonidus in Ur or the library of Ashurbanipal (668–627), which contained various antique editions of the Epic of Gilgamesh. War trophies were collected and exhibited in visible places. Their value was without a doubt more than just a war trophy. The Elamites, for example, in 1160 took the Code of Hammurabi (ca. 1750) from Babylonia to Susa, where it was discovered. The Manishtusu Obelisk and the Stele of Naram-Sin were also on display in Susa. Three large statues of Taharqa were taken from Egypt to Nineveh by Esarhaddon (680–669) or by Ashurbanipal to be exhibited in front of a gateway. Ashurbanipal transferred the colossal guardians of Susa to Assyria (Root, 1979:27).

Objects such as those originating from Mesopotamia or Egypt and discovered in Susa acquired a new symbolic, political and **historic significance** in their new context. The so-called statue of **Penelope**, found at Persepolis, may have been a war trophy or a gift of an Ionian satrap (**Figure 6.3**). Use of dynastic seals was a common practice in the Near-Eastern civilizations. An example of this is an antique seal bearing the inscription of Cyrus I, the grandfather of Cyrus II the Great, used by an official on behalf of Darius on the Fortification Tablets. The discovery of a tablet under the Temple of Sippar, deposited by King Nabopolassar

FIGURE 6.3 The so-called statue of Penelope (5th century), discovered in the Treasury of Persepolis; exhibition in Iran Bastan Museum, Tehran (2015)

(626–605), indicates its antiquity value since it originally belonged to the Babylonian king Nabu-apal-iddina dating to the 9th century, i.e., two centuries earlier (Root, 1979:27ff). Nabopolassar made a stamp of this tablet and buried it together with the original under the Temple (Ellis, 1968:105). The cylinder seals were also used as amulets; the more antique were the more valuable (Calmeyer, 1994:133) because their attributed protective power became greater with age. There is evidence of respect for the works of the past due to their **historical** value. Historical consciousness is shown, for example, in collecting documents and objects, as well as in respect for existing buildings. This approach is evident in the inscriptions of Persepolis and Susa. The Achaemenids were conscious of their past, shown by the appraisal of the value and significance of antique objects.

To summarize, Persepolis Terrace, built as an intentional monument, was already an **historic monument** in the Achaemenid period, attributing an historicity value to the site. Furthermore, continuity in following the guidelines established by the initial program of Darius indicates the respectful approach to the historicity of the place and towards the original plan. There are exceptions to this, such as the modifications in the Treasury, which could have been due to its mainly utilitarian function.

The Achaemenids had an effective organization system and sufficient means to maintain their capital cities and palaces. Once this organization diminished, the palaces collapsed, as in Susa, where excavations have shown that the destruction of the royal complex was caused by the abandonment of the palace of Darius towards the year 300 and the ruins of the construction towards 250–200. In the Palace of Darius, for example, various parts were abandoned, and others were modified; the reuse of the Achaemenid material until the Sasanids period also contributed to the destruction of the site (Boucharlat, 1990:226ff). The destruction of the palaces was due to their fragility and size; Susa became the capital of a satrapy instead of an empire and did not have enough means to maintain its buildings. It seems that the Susians wanted to **conserve** the symbolic objects of the Achaemenids; for example, the statue of Darius, incidentally broken in the Parthian period, remained visible until the Sasanian period; it was re-erected in the Islamic period and was finally saved again by being buried. Such **reuse** of antique material can be considered a sign of nostalgia for the grandeur of the past (Boucharlat, 1990:230ff). Undoubtedly the Persians were interested in **safeguarding** the memories of their ancestors, especially in telling the story of their kings and heroes. This approach is evident in the *Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi (10th century AD), a monument in its own right, as well as important to the memory of Persia.

After the Achaemenids, the significance of Persepolis remained in memory, and the site was visited for various reasons. In the early Islamic period, Persepolis was regarded as a sacred site and a place of local cults. Its significance was associated with mythological and historical figures. The ruins of Persepolis were considered a sign of the futility of the materialistic world in relation to the celestial

world, a place to learn a lesson. The flow of European travelers started mainly in the 17th century and stimulated interest in philological studies.

Cyrus and Cambyses: The Achaemenids built new sanctuaries and restored or reconstructed many of the existing temples, ensuring the continuity of the local cults and traditions. In 496, Darius built the Temple of Hibis in El-Khargeh, in Egypt, on the site of a previous sanctuary. The temple has some similarities with the Palace of Darius in Persepolis in plan and in decorative details, such as cavetto cornices, winged circles and the floral decorations of some capitals. Darius is depicted in the vest of the pharaoh while celebrating Egyptian rituals on the walls of the temple. This indicates that the Achaemenid king did not impose his own religion on the Egyptians and was aware of the political impact of assuming the traditional role of the pharaoh. The organization of the vast Empire was based on Cyrus' policies aimed to ensure peace and respect of religions and traditions. Such policies were unusual at that time, as most were based on intimidation, deportation and destruction. Cyrus' policy was already seen in his treatment of the Medes, who were absorbed as partners in the rise of the Persians to imperial glory, benefiting from the trustworthy Median generals (Young, 1988:42). Cyrus is mentioned in the Old Testament (2 Chr. 36:22–23; Isaiah 44:28, 45:1–14; Daniel 6:28, 10:1) and was invited to enter Babylon as a liberator, where he governed as the legitimate king of Babylonia.

It was an Achaemenid general policy to return the statues of gods to their original places and restore sanctuaries, presumably at royal expense. The Cyrus Cylinder text (CB) indicates that he respected the Mesopotamian traditions and kingship ideology, mentioning Ashurbanipal (c. 667–630) and his numerous constructions in Babylonia. Root (1979:38) believes that the reason for Cyrus' interest in this king, who had died 100 years earlier, was in the similarity of their historical context. Ashurbanipal had restored the temple of Marduk in Babylon, and Cyrus also restored and built buildings in this city, showing respect and care for local traditions. In the Cyrus Cylinder (CB § 13), Cyrus refers to having increased the great wall of Babylon, consolidating the construction of the brick banks of the moat where a previous king had started, using bricks and bronze coating (Lecoq, 1997:185). This implies that Cyrus was conscious of the internal problems of Babylonia and was aware of the importance of tradition as well as of diplomacy. He had prepared, the ground for his conquests in advance, which permitted him a somewhat peaceful victory, as mentioned in the Old Testament, and in the Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles (*ABC 7:* "Nabonidus chronicle"), indicating that there was no military aggression in Babylonia. He maintained his promise to retain religious rituals and return the statues of the gods to Babylonian towns. He therefore succeeded in legitimizing his kingship through understanding the cultural context. There is no mention of any revolt against him. Presumably, this *laissez-faire* policy of the Achaemenids in the conquered lands ensured continuity and permitted development during their reign.

Herodotus (III. 29–33) considers Cambyses a madman who destroyed temples, killed the sacred Apis bull and assassinated his siblings. On the contrary, the proof of Cambyses' mental sanity is in the confidence that Cyrus showed in him, his eight years of peaceful reign as crown prince and governor in Babylonia, his conquests in Libya and Nubia and his ability in military campaigns and as the governor in Egypt (Young, 1988:51). Many of the accusations have recently been revealed false. Cambyses did not profane the ancient sanctuaries. Apis was already dead before his arrival in Egypt in 524. A stele with the sarcophagus of Apis represents Cambyses in local costume kneeling in front of the sacred bull. It thus records that the honors for the bull were ordered by Cambyses, who was the pharaoh of Egypt (Posner, 1936:35ff). He was also responsible for the reorganization of the religious orders in Egypt, which was a calculated action to face the problems from previous poor administration. The Achaemenid policy in Egypt, like in Babylonia, was to sustain the local religious system. The reorganization, however, may have provoked the reactions of the clergy, who feared losing their rights and wealth; thus Herodotus had used prejudiced sources. In fact, the reforms of Cambyses were fruit of a conscious decision and had already been intended by the previous Egyptian pharaoh.

Darius and Xerxes: The death of Cambyses in 522 created instability in the Empire. Darius had to suppress a rebellion aiming at a sacerdotal oligarchy under the magus Gaumata, impose authority on the nobles who had initially helped him take power and pacify the revolts in various parts of the Empire. His account of these events is inscribed on the Bisotun cliff. Darius not only saved the Empire from disintegration but also established a solid government. Like Cyrus and Cambyses, Darius was officially the protector of the religious cult in each land. His statue was in the sanctuary of Atum at Heliopolis, of which a copy has been discovered in Susa. In a hieroglyphic inscription on the statue, Darius declares that he was chosen by Atum, lord of Heliopolis, to be master of all that is encompassed by the solar orb, recognizing himself as his son, and that the goddess Neith had given him the bow so that he could defeat all his enemies. This inscription concedes Darius a series of titles traditionally attributed to the pharaohs, such as 'perfect god,' and attests that the statue was made on the order of the king, so that he would be remembered beside his father Atum. There is also, inscribed on the vest of the statue and presumably only in the Susa copy, the usual trilingual inscription presenting Darius as a Persian king and a Zoroastrian (Boyce, 1988:25).

In 519, Darius ordered the Satrap of Egypt to summon the generals, priests and scribes of Egypt to compile the ancient Egyptian laws. Such compilation may have been intended for the imperial officials who otherwise would have ignored these laws (Johnson, 1994:157). Briant (1995:58ff) believes that the king had never thought to impose on Egypt or any other land an Iranian law code, just as he did not impose the Persian language. It is not by chance that the historian Diodorus Siculus writes that Darius was considered a great pharaoh-legislator. The compilation of the Egyptian laws and effort to maintain their

traditions were the highest Persian contributions to the history and culture of Egypt (Johnson, 1994:158). Knowing the people and their customs made it easier to govern and to mitigate conflicts. The Empire naturally imposed tributes, and as long as the subject people paid their dues, they were free to follow their own laws, religious rituals and traditions. Local people were generally left to govern but in conformity with the principles and rules of the Empire and in keeping with peace.

There is evidence of the privileges conceded to local sanctuaries discovered in Magnesia ad Maeandrum, a city in Ionia, which became the residence of a Persian satrap and was later presented by Artaxerxes I to Themistocles. This concerns a 'letter' (DMM) inscribed on stone, today in the Louvre, dated prior to 486 and written in Greek by Darius to **Gadatas**, the satrap of Ionia. Darius reproaches the satrap for having taxed the sacred gardeners of Apollo and having forced them to work on profane land. The letter indicates Darius' respect for Apollo and his concern for respecting the pact between his ancestors and the priests of the temple. The inscription was probably exhibited in a visible place, demonstrating Darius' recall to respect justice and in keeping promises.

The Greek historians call Xerxes 'the destroyer of sanctuaries,' affirming that he had taken away the statue of the god Marduk and destroyed Babylonian temples, including Esagila, the main sanctuary of Marduk. Herodotus (I. 183) reports that Darius intended to remove a gold statue from a temple in Babylon, but it was Xerxes who killed the priest and took away the statue. It seems, however, that these accusations are not true. Although Xerxes had to face two rebellions in Babylonia, he still did not seek revenge by deliberate destruction of temples and removal of the statue of Marduk as sustained by Herodotus. Therefore, this story is, at least in part, a result of the prejudices of the Greeks wanting to give a false image of Darius and Xerxes and a Greek version of the behavior of the Persians. There is no evidence of the destruction of Egyptian temples or of the removal of the statue by Xerxes, although he is often regarded as the bad king who had confiscated the lands belonging to the temples (Kuhrt, Sherwin-White, 1987:71ff). This land reform, which had already been intended by the pharaohs, was finally implemented by Xerxes, thus raising the anger of the priests, who passed the erroneous information to Herodotus. Furthermore, the Ionians set fire to Sardis and burned the Temple of Cybele, the great mother-goddess of Anatolia who was venerated in Asia Minor. This event provoked the Persians to attack Miletus (Herodotus, V. 102; VI. 18, 19) and set fire to Greek temples during the reign of Darius in 494. Similarly, Xerxes attacked Athens and destroyed the Acropolis (Herodotus, VI. 53; V. 77). The Daiva Inscription of Xerxes, which refers to the destruction of a temple, i.e., a sign of intolerance, probably concerned the Iranian people who were required to respect a common faith to consolidate ethnic ties and give a solid base for governing (Boyce, 1988:24). Furthermore, Artaxerxes I made extensions to the Temple of Hibis in El-Khargeh, originally built by Darius.

He also donated gold and silver to the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 7:15, 17), and Darius II repaired the Temple of Enna in Uruk.

Post-Achaemenid period: Classical authors hardly mention Persepolis, and modern authors have even spoken of 'silence of Persepolis' (Pope, 1969:18). The Greek geographer Strabo (BC 63–ca. 24 AD), however, mentions that the distance between Susa to Persepolis was 4,000 stadia (Strabo, XV.3. 1) and stresses the importance and significance of Persepolis: "Although they [the Persians] adored the palace at Susa more than any other, they esteemed no less the palaces of Persepolis and Pasargadae; in any rate, the treasure and richness and tombs of the Persians were there, since they were on sites that were at the same time hereditary and more strongly fortified by nature" (Strabo, XV.3. 3); and: "Persepolis, next to Susa, was the most beautifully constructed city, and the largest, have a palace that was remarkable, particularly in respect to the high value of its treasures" (Strabo XV.3. 6). Classical authors mention Persepolis after Alexander's fire according to two versions. The first version by Athenaeus (ca. 170–ca. 230 AD) is attributed to Cleitarchus, who wrote a biography of Alexander (310–301), which is lost. Cleitarchus wrote that the fire in Persepolis was accidentally caused by the provocation of Thaïs, the Athenian courtesan and Ptolemy's mistress, while Alexander was drunk. The Sicilian Greek historian of the second half of the 1st century AD, Diodorus Siculus (XVII. 20–22), and the 1st century AD Roman historian Curtius Rufus (V. 7) have written their history according to this version. The second version is based on the words of Ptolemy or Aristobulus, who accompanied Alexander to the East. They both wrote a history on Alexander. Aristobulus' work, which is also lost, tries to make a better portrait of Alexander. He narrates that Alexander set fire to Persepolis to revenge the destruction of the temples of Athens by Xerxes and other crimes committed by the Persians. Arrian (*Anabasis*, III. 18) and Strabo (XV.3. 6) refer to the second version (Hammond, 1992:359ff), i.e., to avenge the Greeks. It seems that the fire followed a discussion between Alexander and his friend and general Parmenion on the politics of Alexander. Curzon (1966:186) prefers this hypothesis to the version on the provocation of Thaïs. The fire could have been a calculated action to demonstrate power. Alexander, however, did not destroy the other Achaemenid capitals, i.e., Susa, Babylon and Ecbatana. Therefore, it seems that he had considered Persepolis so important for the Persians that only its destruction would mean defeating the Empire.

The fire did not cause total destruction, although the Apadana, the Hundred Column Hall, the Palace of Xerxes and the Treasury were badly damaged. The city of Persepolis probably suffered less since it presumably hosted Alexander's army for four months. Persepolis survived as the capital of the province of Parsa (Persia) during Alexander (Hammond, 1992:364). There are indications of some minor adaptation works on some buildings after the fire; however, the site fundamentally maintained its Achaemenid structures. With time the material of the palaces was gradually taken away and used in other constructions in the region

(Godard, 1951:68). The mud-brick walls collapsed, the stones decayed, many tall columns fell sometimes due to earthquakes and bas-reliefs were damaged by iconoclasts (Meyers, 1875:325).

In the post-Achaemenid period, the province of Parsa was governed by local kings who claimed ancient Persian kingship. It seems they occupied part of the Persepolis Terrace and some structures nearby. In Naqsh-i Rustam, there are traces from the Hellenistic period, including a badly conserved Old Persian inscription, written in Aramaic characters, incised on the façade of the Tomb of Darius. Due to increasing Hellenization, Persia began to lose its direct contact with the past. The Parthian **Arsacids** (BC 250–230 AD), who originated from the northeast, reacted to this trend and tried to stimulate greater interest in Persian traditions, but there seems to have been little result. The glorious past of the Achaemenid kings was given more focus during the **Sasanid Empire** (224–636 AD), and it was mainly conserved in the Sasanian historic texts in the Pahlavi language, i.e., Middle Persian, where a vague memory of a King Darius was kept. The names of Cyrus and Darius remained in the biblical texts. The Achaemenid inscriptions were not read any more, and the writing was also changed from cuneiform to Sasanian Pahlavi. It seems that the Sasanids had great respect for their past, since monumental bas-reliefs depicting Sasanid kings (224–636 AD) are carved on the same cliff below the Achaemenid tombs and some over the Elamite bas-reliefs, which may indicate that the Sasanids did not care for the Elamite bas-reliefs which were of earlier date (**Figure 6.4**). Like the Achaemenid kings, who spent part of the year in Persepolis, the Sasanid kings also spent some time during the year in Istakhr, a city near Persepolis. Istakhr is mentioned in the Sasanian texts and in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (VIII, 2579).

However, the magnificent ruins attracted the interest of even the early Sasanids, shown by their graffiti and inscriptions on its ruined palaces, including the figure of **Shapur**, satrap of Pars. In the central hall of Palace C of the Harem, there is the graffiti of a knight on horseback, identified as Shapur's younger brother **Ardashir I** (226–240 AD), the founder of the Sasanid dynasty. There is another figure representing their father, Papak (Herzfeld, 1941:307–309).

In the Palace of Darius on the east jamb of the doorway of the south wall of the central hall, there are two inscriptions in Pahlavi from the reign of Shapur II (310–379 AD). The upper inscriptions mention Shapur's visit in the second year of his reign, his great pleasure and erection of a pilaster to commemorate the occasion, blessing his father and the builder of the palace. The lower inscription is by two nobles and dates to the 48th year of the reign of Shapur, describing the Mazdaic ceremonies and offerings for blessing the ancestors and builders of the structures (Mostafavi, 1978:216ff). There are some 50 inscriptions in Persian in Naskh calligraphy or in Arabic Kufic to record the visits of local kings, governors, princes and literary texts. The more important inscriptions are from 10th to 15th centuries. Next to the Sasanian inscriptions of Shapur II, there is a Kufic inscription of the Buyid prince **Azad od-Dowleh** dating to 955 AD, where he mentions visiting the ruins and having the Pahlavi text of Shapur II translated for him. Azad od-Dowleh is probably the author of the transfer of fragments and the doorway jambs of the

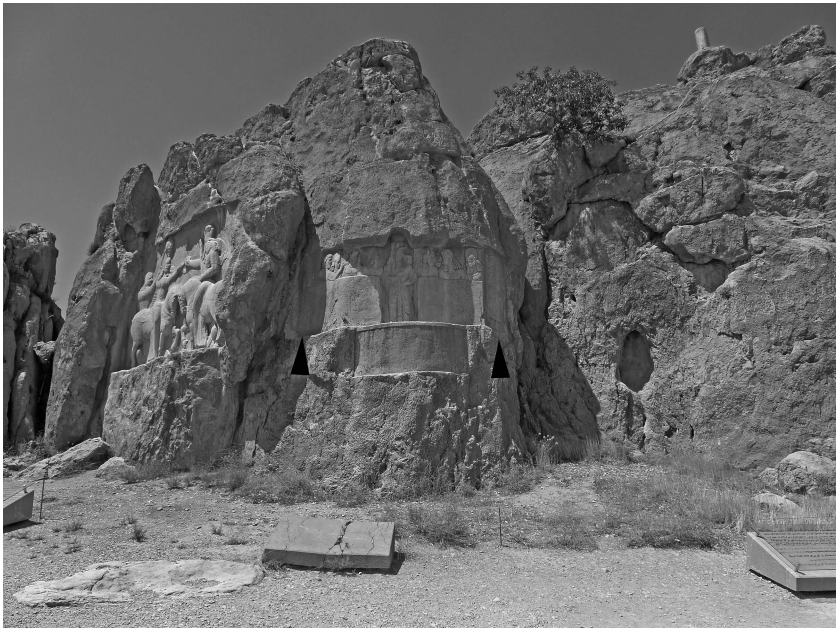

FIGURE 6.4 Naqsh-i Rustam, Sasanian bas-reliefs carved over the Elamite ones (2016)

Palace of Darius to Qasr-i Abu Nasr (Wilber, 1989:111). A second Kufic inscription is on the south wall of the west jamb of the same doorway dating to 1002 (Schmidt, 1953:223). These inscriptions indicate that Persepolis never lost its fascination even when its original significance was unknown. Many visitors have carved their names and the date of their visit, mainly on the stones of the Palace of Darius (Mostafavi, 1978:216–230) and on the Gate of Xerxes. The discovery of coins belonging to Ardashir I (226–240 A.D), Khosroes II (590–628 A.D.) and the Islamic period (8th century onwards) in the debris of the Apadana courtyard (Schmidt, 1953:72; Shahbazi, 1977:200) shows a continuous interest and pride in Persepolis even by common people, when a shepherd whose goats were scattered about the ruins asks Morier (1818:66) whether he has anything like this in his country. The memory of the glory of the past was, however, mainly maintained in the texts of the Greek authors and read and rediscovered by European scholars and travelers.

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7

ARCHEOLOGY AND RESTORATION

7.1. Oriental Historians

Achaemenid sites have generated fascination and reverential emotion for their grandeur. Their history, forgotten with the passage of time, reveals that these sites were considered places related to mythical characters. With the Arab invasion of Persia in the mid-7th century AD many ancient sites were associated to legendary and biblical characters and therefore saved from destruction. For example, historians like **Tabari** (d. 923 AD) in his *Commentary on the Koran* combines the mythological Jamshid with Solomon, and **Biruni** (973–1050 AD) in *Athar al-Baqiya*, mentions the invasion of Alexander and the fire of Persepolis, calling the ruins the Mosque of Salomon son of David, and writes about the people who spoke of the visible traces of the fire (Biruni, 1879:127; Nylander, 1974:137ff). The Baghdadi geographer **Ibn Hawqal** (d. 933 AD) in his *Surat al-Arz* identifies Persepolis as the Mosque of Solomon, saying that, according to some, Jamshid coincides with Solomon (Ibn Hawqal, 1345:47). **Estakhri** (d. 957 AD) equally mentions Persepolis as the Mosque of Solomon, comparing it to sites in Ba'albek and Egypt, emphasizing the majestic stone structures with bas-reliefs and inscriptions (Estakhri, 1347:110, 131). **Masudi** (d. 956 AD) in *Moruj az-Zahab* (1344:605) considers the Mosque of Solomon (Persepolis) originally a fire temple built by the mythological Homai, daughter of Esfandiar. He writes to have seen there a large temple near a mountain with marvelous stone columns and capitals, beautiful statues of many large animals in stone and images carved with great care considered portraits of prophets by the locals. In his *Farsnameh*, written in the early 12th century, **Ibn Balkhi** (1313:102ff) provides an extended description of the site, attributing the images of the king to Jamshid and mentioning the tall columns and the power of the stone powder from there in healing wounds. He underlines that the image

of Jamshid in the act of venerating the sun was contrary to the function of the mosque, as sustained by other writers, and that Solomon had never come to Persia or, at least, had never stayed long to build a mosque (Mostafavi, 1978:21). Mofidi Bafqi (d. 1673 AD), an historian and geographer of the Safavid court of Shah Soleiman, describes Persepolis in his *Dictionary of Mofidi* as a windy temple where Solomon had confined the wind and Chehel Menar (Persepolis) as one of the wonders of the age, built by Jamshid and Homà the daughter of Bahram. He also mentions that Eskandar-e-Rumi (Alexander) ordered its demolition when he came to Fars (cf. Mostafavi, 1978:xi).

Names associated with Persepolis such as Sat Setun (Hundred Columns), written in the Sasanian inscriptions of Persepolis, were already in use since 350 AD (Frye, 1966), as well as other names such as Hazar Sutun (Thousand Columns) or Chehel Menar (Forty Minarets). Achaemenid sites were associated with biblical figures such as Solomon and with Iranian mythological figures like Jamshid or Rustam. The Tomb of Cyrus was called the tomb of Solomon's mother and was transformed into a sanctuary in the early 14th century AD during the reign of Atabak Sa'd ibn-e Zangi. A portico was built around the tomb using ancient columns from the palaces of Pasargadae, and a Mihrab was carved on the interior wall of the sepulchral chamber.

History has often been used for **nationalistic** and political scopes; for example, the Iranian-origin Samanids (892–999 AD) of Khorasan and Transoxiana claimed to be descendants of the Sasanian general Bahram Chobin (Frye, 1962:254). The Buyids (10th century AD), Iranians of the Caspian Sea region, tried to associate themselves with the ancient kings of Persia in order to legitimate their kingship. Although they were more interested in the Arab traditions of the prophet's family and in Islamic culture, they still had an antiquarian interest for the past (Frye, 1962:251). This interest can especially be seen in the revival of the Persian language at the court of the Samanids rulers of Khorasan in the 10th century AD, which later found a concrete demonstration in the *Shahnameh* of Ferdowsi.

7.2. European Travelers

The first European to visit Persepolis was the Franciscan friar **Odorico di Pordenone** in 1325 AD on his way to China. Among other early travelers were the Venetian Josafa Barbaro (1474 AD) to the court of Uzun Hasan in Tabriz and the Portuguese missionary Antonio de Gouvea (1598 AD). Don Garcias de Silva y Figueroa, the ambassador of the king of Spain Philippe III to the court of Shah Abbas I (ruled 1587–1629), visited Persepolis in 1618–1619 AD, taking with him a copy of the works of the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus. Don Garcia identified the site, then called Chihil Minar, as Persepolis and mentioned the cuneiform inscriptions. The Italian Pietro **Della Valle** (1621 AD) is the first to transcribe some of the cuneiform characters. The German Heinrich **von Poser** in 1624, while visiting Persepolis, related Jamshid with Cyrus (Wiesehöfer, 1996:229).

Among the many important travelers are Herbert, van Mandelslo and Kaempfer. Between 1664 and 1667 the Frenchmen Jean de Thévenot (1633–1667) and Jean (Sir John) Chardin (1643–1713) visited Persia for the first time during the reign of Shah Abbas II (1642–1667). Thévenot was convinced that Tchehelhimar, i.e., Persepolis, was too small to have been the palace of the kings of ancient Persia. Chardin visited Persepolis for a second time in 1674, providing a detailed description and some drawings, which were published in 1687 and considered the first documentation of cuneiform inscriptions. The following publications increased interest in the historical and archeological study of the Ancient Near East. André Daulier-Délandes published his *Les beautés de la Perse* in 1673, and the Dutchman Cornelis **De Bruijn** (1652–1727) visited Persepolis in 1704–1705 and published his travel book in 1711. His drawings were for long the best available illustrations of Persepolis until 1878, when Andreas took the first photos of the site (Andreas & Stolze, 1882).

The German mathematician and cartographer Carsten **Niebuhr**'s *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien* (1778) contains recordings of Persepolis where, for the first time, there is a realistic impression of the remains of the grand palaces. His son, the historian Barthold G. Niebuhr, comments that the image of the ruins remained with his father for the rest of his life as the most beautiful jewelry that he had ever seen (Wiesehöfer, 1996:230). Niebuhr's book, translated into English in 1792, initiated the study of the inscriptions. The orientalist George F. **Grotefend** (1775–1853) first in 1802 published his reading of 12 cuneiform signs (McCall, 1998:188) and later in 1837 his fundamental work, *Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der persepolitanischen Keilschrift*. Based on Niebuhr's book, Johann Gottfried Herder wrote a treatise in 1787, recognizing the site as the residence of the Achaemenid kings and describing the gift-bearers as peoples of the provinces of the Persian Empire. Among the visitors in the early 19th century was Sir Gore Ouseley, on a mission for the British government to explore Persia. He was nominated the extraordinary ambassador and plenipotentiary minister to the Persian court in 1810 and visited Persepolis for the first time in 1811, together with embassy staff James Morier and Robert Gordon. They carried out excavations that were soon interrupted by the local governor. They collected various fragments to be sent to England. In 1821–1822, Sir Robert **Ker Porter** published his *Travels in Georgia, Armenia, Ancient Babylonia, etc.* in two volumes. The first volume is dedicated to Persepolis and the second deals with Behistun (Bisotun), Assyria and Babylonia. Ker Porter was sent by Alexis Olinen, the president of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts, to study and copy the sculptures of Persepolis and Pasargadae. He (1821:486ff, vol. I) considered Persepolis a temple. In 1827 James Buckingham published *Travels in Mesopotamia* on the information collected from modern travelers and ancient writers and the recognition of the buildings. In 1829 he published *Travels in Assyria, Media and Persia*, the description of the travel from Baghdad to Zagros mountains and Persepolis (McCall, 1998:193). The French scholar Baron Charles **Texier** (1802–1871) visited Persepolis in 1840, and

his *Description de l'Arménie, la Perse et la Mésopotamie* in 1842 contains tentative reconstructions of some palaces.

In the 19th century the European travelers became more involved in the study of the sites. The task of reading cuneiform inscriptions was handed to the English officer Henry Creswicke **Rawlinson** (1810–1895), who had taught himself Sanskrit, Avestan and Persian while he was in India at the service of the East India Company. In 1833, Rawlinson, once in Persia, first copied the Persepolitan and then the Bisotun Inscriptions. He contributed to the translation of the first part of the Bisotun Inscription in Old Persian and Elamite, and in 1846–1850, the Irish priest and scholar Edward **Hincks** (1792–1866) worked on the text. His results helped Rawlinson complete the third part of the inscriptions in 1851. Hincks, however, did not obtain the merit he deserved for his contribution (Cathcart, 1994:8).

The most beautiful illustrations of Persepolis were drawn by the French orientalist, artist and diplomat Eugène Flandin and printed in 1851 in the five-volume publication of *Voyage en Perse*, in collaboration with architect Pascal Coste. They also made some tentative progress in understanding the general layout of the palaces. In the same year, the Englishman James Fergusson published *The Palaces of Niniveh and Persepolis*, which containing interesting reconstruction hypotheses, although he had never personally visited Persepolis. Following the publications of Jane and Marcel Dieulafoy in 1887 and 1888, excavations of Susa started. George Curzon on a long trip to the Orient visited Persia in 1886 and made a systematic description of Persepolis and some critical observations on the Middle Eastern and Greek sites. George Perrot and Charles Chipiez's *History of Art in Persia*, published in 1892, contains a series of drawings of the graphical reconstruction of Persepolitan palaces.

The German scholars Friedrich Carl Andreas and Franz Stolze were the first to publish a photographic documentation of Persepolis in 1882. These photos were taken in 1877 by Stolze (1857–1924). Much earlier in 1850, Nasser od-Din Shah (1831–1896) had commissioned the Frenchman Jule Richard (1816–1891) to take photographs of Persepolis. Unfortunately, this opportunity was lost because Richard, who was then in Isfahan and not having received the required funds, returned to Tehran (Adle & Zoka, 1983:256). Richard might have refused such a mission, retaining that daguerreotype (silver plate technique) was not suitable (Bohrer, 1999:20). Fortunately, a Neapolitan military officer, Luigi Pesce, took the first photographs of Persepolis in calotype (silver iodide technique) at his own expense and presented them in an album to Nasser od-Din Shah in 1858 (Mousavi, 2002:217). Pesce's photographs are in the Golestan Palace photographic archive in Tehran. More photographs of Persepolis, dating to circa 1900 and taken by Antoin Sevruguin (late 1830–1933), are in the Freer Gallery of Art and in the Smithsonian Institution. He was born in Tehran of Russian and Georgian parents (Bohrer, 1999:22).

The number of travelers and amount of literature on the ancient sites of Persia substantially increased in the 20th century. The French kept the monopoly of

excavations in Iran until 1929. The French architect André Godard was appointed director of Iranian antiquities. He designed Iran Bastan Museum in Tehran and published *Athar-e Iran*, a periodical on Iranian historic buildings. Among other publications are Arthur Upham Pope's *A Survey of Persian Art*, in six volumes in 1938–1939, Ernst Herzfeld's *Iran in the Ancient East*, in 1941, and the fundamental work on Persepolis and Naqsh-i Rustam in three volumes by Erich Friedrich Schmidt *Persepolis I, II, III*, 1953, 1957 and 1970. Successively, Friedrich Krefter made a model and drawings on the reconstruction of Persepolis Terrace in his publication of 1971, *Persepolis. Rekonstruktionen*.

7.3. Early Explorations

Archeological evidence has shown that parts of the Terrace, such as the Palace of Darius and Palace H, were in use for some time after the fire of 330. After it was abandoned, Persepolis underwent a gradual decay and suffered from several earthquakes, and its ruins were associated with mythological, biblical and nationalistic figures. In 1891 Curzon (1966:162) counted 13 standing columns in the Apadana of the original total of 72, while in the 17th century there were over 20 columns. The Arab invasion of Persia seems to have been responsible for some iconoclast actions. Buckingham (1827:269ff) sees the Terrace full of broken and detached fragments, each worthy of attention, but too scattered to give an idea of the whole, with tall, slender and isolated columns and separate doorways spread over a large elevated platform, like a fortification, from the level of the surrounding plain.

Most probably Persepolis had been used for centuries as a building material quarry by the locals. Chardin mentions that Shah Abbas II (ruled 1642–1666) used the stones of Persepolis to build mosques and palaces in Isfahan, and Imam Qoli Khan (d. 1633), the governor of Fars, provided material for his buildings in Shiraz from Persepolis. It seems, however, that other testimonies may contradict such lack of interest in the ruins. For example, the Dutch painter Philip Angel, who accompanied the French jeweler Jean-Baptist Tavernier to the court of Shah Abbas II, disliked the ruins of Persepolis (Tavernier 1677:657), but had wasted eight days making drawings of them. This implies that Angel may have been commissioned by the Shah to make such drawings, thus showing the shah's interest in the ruins (Mousavi, 2002:215). Chardin also mentions that the minister of Shah Safi I (ruled 1629–1642), disturbed by having to deal with the large number of the European visitors to Persepolis, sent a group of 60 men to destroy the bas-reliefs (Curzon, 1966:188ff) to discourage them from visiting the site. The situation was no better when De Bruijn in 1706 asked a mason from Shiraz to cut away fragments of the bas-reliefs, causing damage to figures.

By the early 19th century, many Persepolitan buildings, bas-reliefs and inscriptions had been studied. Carsten Niebuhr, in 1765, noticed Tomb VII, i.e., the Unfinished Tomb, behind the mountain to the south of the Terrace (Curzon, 1966:184), and in the same year he unearthed the lower part of the northern

stairway of the Apadana completing his drawings (Sancisi-Weerdenburg, 1991:22). In 1811 James Morier (1780–1849), with the help of English artillerymen, cleaned up the entrance to the North Tomb, but his excavations were stopped by the local governor. Later, in July of the same year during his second visit, he carried out further exploration, finding interesting fragments including a sculpture of a chariot drawn by two horses, driven by a man standing upright, and another of a caparisoned horse, both of which were perfectly preserved (Morier, 1818:114ff). Morier, however, had to break some of the bas-reliefs because they were too big to be integrally transported. These fragments are today in the British Museum and in the Miho Museum in Japan (Curtis, 1998:49).

The French Eugène Flandin and Pascal Coste carried out some excavations during 1839–1841. Flandin was a painter and Coste was an architect. They discovered the bas-reliefs and inscriptions of the stairway of the Palace of Darius, which was then partially visible (Curzon, 1966:169). Fergusson (1851:117) mentions that Flandin and Coste partially cleared up the floor of the central hall of the Palace of Darius, which was covered by debris, exposing bases of 16 columns. These columns are in fact only 12, and this mistake was repeated by many, including Curzon in 1891 (1966:167ff), until the excavations in the 1930s.

Prince Mo'tamed od-Dowleh **Farhad Mirza** (1817–1887) carried out two excavation and cleaning campaigns when became the governor of Fars in 1876. The account of these two campaigns is documented in two inscriptions on a northern doorway of the central hall of the Palace of Darius. The first inscription, engraved in Naskh calligraphy in April 1877, records that Farhad Mirza went to Persepolis and "commissioned several thousand workmen to clear away the earth which had been heaped up through countless centuries on this platform, so that foreign and national travelers might view the carvings" (Mostafavi, 1978:228). The second inscription is in Nastaliq calligraphy, mentioning that in 1877 Farhad Mirza came from Shiraz to visit the buildings of Persepolis and ordered some stone carvings and monuments covered with earth to be cleaned and unearthed. The inscription was engraved in 1879 to record the visit of Farhad Mirza's son and successor, Ehtesham od-Dowleh, who came to this ancient site to visit and search for some objects and stayed several nights. It seems that Farhad Mirza also carried out excavations around Ka'beh-e Zartosht in Naqsh-i Rustam in the same period (Curzon, 1966:141). Wilber (1989:114) points out that a more extensive excavation campaign was carried out under the direction of Friedrich Andreas by Farhad Mirza's workers. In these excavations, column bases were discovered in the Hundred Column Hall, but the findings were not recorded. This building was a jungle of architectural elements scattered around, and yet it was possible to understand that the columns were in a composite order, with a base in the form of lotus and double kneeling bull capitals. Not even one of the 116 columns had totally survived, but it was confirmed that they were 12.1m tall and that the distance between the axes was 6m. Curzon (1966:176) mentions a certain

Cecil Smith, who discovered stonemason's marks similar to the Greek ones on some of the columns.

In 1893 Herbert **Weld-Blundel**, in a British Museum expedition, excavated in various parts of this building but did not find any precious objects (Wilber, 1989:115, 175). He dug trenches both on and below the Terrace and made molds of the bas-reliefs. Weld-Blundel can be considered the first whose goal was to obtain data and study the site and its architecture. He mainly excavated in the Palace of Xerxes, Palace H and areas around the Palace of Darius, making sketches of the structures in the south in the plain (Weld-Blundel, 1893:538; Mousavi, 2002:220). By 1893, the underground canals of the Palace of Xerxes were also exposed.

In 1891 Curzon (1966:158) saw only two standing columns in the Gate of Xerxes. He saw the southeastern column in fragments and the capital and drum of the northwest column on the ground partially covered with earth. It seems that in the time of Chardin (ca. 1670) all four columns were still standing. The Palace C of the Harem was buried half the height of doorways. Traces of fire in the Hundred Column Hall were discovered in the excavations of 1878. A thick layer of ash was found covering the floor. Microscopic analysis showed that it was the ash of carbonized cedar wood. Texier in 1840 and Stolze in 1877 also noticed that the stones of the Palace of Xerxes showed traces of the violent heat of a fire (Curzon, 1966:180). Herzfeld's excavations in the 1930s revealed traces of **fire**, because of a thick layer of charcoal left by burned cedar roof structures (Breasted, 1933:15).

There are various archeological remains visible around the Terrace in old illustrations, such as an isolated column and column bases in the plain in the southwest corner of the Terrace belonging to a lost structure. It did not exist when Curzon visited Persepolis in 1891. Curzon (1966:148) retains that this column fell in 1803 to local tribes for extracting the metal in the drum.

7.4. Hypothetical Reconstructions

For centuries, Persepolis was considered a temple, a sacred site or a royal palace, compared with other archeological sites in the Near East. The term 'Persepolis,' in fact, was set along 'Acropolis.' The Gate of Xerxes was defined as 'Propylaeum', meaning entrance to a sacred enclosure of architectural importance. The comparison of bas-reliefs, architectural elements, stone-working techniques and the general layout of the site with Greece remained preponderant until a consciousness of the creativity and artistic originality of Achaemenid art and architecture gradually emerged in the later decades of the 20th century.

The first illustrations are printed around the middle of the 17th century. This was also the period of publications on Italian archeological sites such as Rome, Pompeii and Paestum and debate on the superiority of Greek and Roman art. Charles **Texier** published the first edition of his *Description de l'Arménie* . . . in

1842. His proposal for the reconstruction of the Apadana, like Flandin and Coste, foresees an architrave above the columns creating an open space.

Another tentative reconstruction belongs to the English scholar James **Fergusson** (1851), whose approach is more architectural and realistic. Until then no indications on the existence of masonry walls in the Apadana had been found, and the previous reconstructions had ignored the possibility of the Apadana as a closed structure, considering it a group of pavilions open on all sides. Niebuhr in his plan (1778) had already recorded two pairs of stones symmetrically situated in the north of the Apadana. These were later affirmed to be doorway jambs. Fergusson considered these stones traces of doorways and walls and, using the logic of the constructor, proposed a single structure with three porticos on the north, west and east sides, the corner 'towers' lower than the porticos and the central hall higher surmounting the whole structure. The discovery of the foundations and parts of the walls of the corner 'towers' indicate that the Apadana corresponded to Fergusson's reconstruction proposal and was in contrast with the reconstruction hypotheses of the French scholars. Fergusson also proposes the Gate of Xerxes as a closed building, confirmed by later excavations. In 1929 Robert William Rogers published some reconstruction proposals for the palaces, following the ideas of Fergusson.

At the end of the 19th century, the French scholars Georges Perrot and Charles Chipiez made a reconstruction proposal for the Terrace, similar to Texier and Flandin and Coste's in many aspects. The Gate of Xerxes, then called the Propylaeum, was drawn open on all sides and enclosed only by columns (Perrot & Chipiez, 1892:294). The Apadana, which was called the Hypostyle Hall of Xerxes, was drawn as a group of pavilions in a garden, proposing the structure without walls, although they were aware that a major part of the masonry structures could have disappeared without leaving any trace. They compared this hypothesis with the Hundred Column Hall and noticed that, contrary to the Apadana, traces of the walls had remained intact in this building (Perrot & Chipiez, 1892:307, 309). Their proposal came 40 years after Fergusson's and was a complex solution for the wooden roof structure. It consisted of 'laminated' beams, covered with clay, metal or ivory and polychrome rich decorations. The cubic form of the Apadana was proposed by Count Joseph-Arthur de Gobineau in 1869, Friedrich Carl Andreas in 1882 (cf. Springer, 1907:81) and Herzfeld (Herzfeld & Sarre, 1910:116). Only at the beginning of the 20th century was the architectural form of the Apadana better understood and developed by Friedrich Krefter and Ernst Herzfeld. The Hundred Column Hall reconstruction hypothesis was proposed with mud-brick walls and a decorated coffered ceiling. Since there was no standing column on the site, the height of the hall was hypothetical.

Perrot and Chipiez (1892:329) also mention an interesting observation made by de Gobineau (1869:458ff, vol.V) that Persian art was characterized by its being **modular**, that there was a proportional rapport between various buildings of Persepolis. On this basis, although the structures were in ruins, Perrot and Chipiez

believed that they were close enough to estimate the correct height of the Hundred Column Hall. They considered the column base 1.75m and the drum 94cm in diameter. For the columns of the Gate of Xerxes, they estimate the height of the columns at 11.5m, and the height of the capital was to be added. Traces of the small rooms around the central hall of the Palace of Darius were discovered. Since only the foundation stone plinths of the column bases existed, the authors retained that the columns were wooden. Having found the contour of the roof beam on the upper part of the antae, they estimated the height of the building. In these reconstructions, the external walls are decorated with polychrome tiles. The central part of the main façade is higher, and both antae have a statue of lion on the top. We can also notice that none of the reconstructions, until then, indicated the presence of fortifications on the Terrace; instead, they opened the Terrace towards the plain to the west.

7.5. Beginning of Systematic Excavations

The sporadic excavations by local governors and travelers were mostly treasure hunting and searching for antique objects. Our knowledge of Persepolis is mainly based on the results of the systematic excavations, carried out by the Oriental Institute of Chicago (1931–1939), the Iranian Archaeological Service and the studies of the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, IsMEO (1964–1979), in collaboration with Iranian authorities. The first campaign of the Oriental Institute was conducted under the direction of the German archeologist Ernst **Herzfeld** (1931–34) assisted by two German architects, Friedrich Krefter and Karl Bernger, and two field assistants. The photographer of the mission was Hans-Wichart von Busse. The second campaign was carried out under the direction of Erich F. **Schmidt** (1935–39). During the first excavation season of Schmidt's campaign, Krefter left but two new architects, John S. Bolles and Eliot F. Noyes, joined the team (1935–1936). They were later followed by architect Richard C. Haines (1935–38). One of the most important team members was the Russian-born Iranian photographer Boris Dubensky (Mousavi, 2002:232). Many of his photographs were used in Schmidt's publication on Persepolis. At his departure in 1938, Ursula Schneider replaced him.

In 1924, the Iranian government had already asked Herzfeld to prepare a report on the condition of the ruins and make a proposal for their conservation and its cost. This report was published in *Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*, Nr. 1, 1929–1930:17–40. The work started in 1931 with the support of James Henry Breasted (1865–1935), then the director of the Oriental Institute. The 1931–1939 excavations uncovered a large part of the site, including clearing up and reconstructing Palace C of the Harem Complex to house the offices, the laboratory and the site museum. These works demanded moving stone blocks weighing over 20 tons (Breasted, 1933:13). In 1932, Herzfeld cleared up the Gate of Xerxes, the underground canals and the surroundings of Palace G and discovered the

southern stairway of the Central Palace, the eastern stairway of the Apadana (Herzfeld, 1933:488) and part of the west wing of the Harem. In the same year, he also carried out excavations in the so-called Temple of Fratadara, some 200m to the north of the Terrace, and in Naqsh-i Rustam. Meanwhile, Krefter discovered the foundation texts of the Apadana in the northeastern and southeastern corners of the central hall of this structure. The 1933 excavations included the east courtyard of the Apadana, the access staircase to the underground canal in the east of the Terrace, the northeast fortification and the discovery of some 30,000 clay tablets, the so-called Fortification Tablets. He also made a transcription of the Tomb of Darius in Naqsh-i Rustam. In 1934 Herzfeld cleared up the major part of the Terrace, putting some fallen stone fragments in their original position, unearthed structures to the south and north below the Terrace and discovered the nearby post-Achaemenid remains (Schmidt, 1953:3). A reed screen was made to protect the eastern stairway of the Apadana. In the same year, Gustav Adolf VI, the crown prince of Sweden, visited Persepolis with his family and received two sculptured fragments of Persepolis from Herzfeld, which are now in the Museum of Mediterranean and Near-Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm.

From 1935–1939, under the direction of Erich Schmidt (1897–1964), excavations were carried out in the Treasury and in the Hundred Column Hall. The discovery of the Treasury Tablets, the audience panels and the rather large number of objects in the Treasury was important especially because these were still in their original place. Most of the structures of the Harem in the south of the Terrace were uncovered in this period. In 1939 the American Mission left Iran due to the Second World War. The excavations resumed under the responsibility of Ali **Sami** (1910–1989), director of the Archaeological Institute of Persepolis, from 1941 until 1961. He first worked with André **Godard** and later with Mohammad Taqi **Mustafavi**, both director generals of the Iranian General Office of Archaeology. Sami (1958:77) removed some 100,000m^3 of surplus earth from the palace areas to sites outside the Terrace. A canopy was built over the eastern stairway of the Apadana and the northern stairway of the Central Palace. A model of Persepolis was made for the museum in Tehran, and a site library was set up. He was assisted by architect Ali **Hakemi**, who was responsible for drawing the maps and plans of the structures. Sami unearthed many structures including those in the north, northeast and east part of the Terrace, the south part of the Harem, Palace H and the area to the south below the Terrace. Sami also completed the plan of the underground canals. This was to prove that there had been an initial general plan for the Terrace made by Darius, as had been envisaged by Herzfeld.

From 1969 a yearly excavation campaign was carried out for five consecutive years by Akbar **Tadjvidi** as the head of the archeological team, with collaboration of architect Mohammad **Mehryar** and archeologists Mahmud **Kordovani** and Mahmud **Mousavi**. This campaign was mostly concentrated on excavating the area to the south below the Terrace, aiming to investigate the urban settlement of Persepolis and the city surrounding the Terrace. This campaign ended

due to the coronation celebration in 1972, and the archeological activities were not resumed afterwards (Mousavi, 2002:241). Fortunately, Tadjvidi published the results of the campaign in 1976. In the 1970s the **Asia Institute** was founded in Shiraz, aiming to sustain research works by Iranian and foreign scholars. The Institute of Achaemenid Research was established in 1974 under the direction of Alireza Shapur **Shahbazi** and was active until 1979, producing publications regarding Achaemenid sites including two volumes on Persepolis and Naqsh-i Rustam by Shahbazi himself. The decade of the 1970s was a fruitful period for study on Iranian cultural heritage, and many international meetings were held on Iranian art and archeology, mainly due to the initiatives of Firouz **Baqerzadeh**, director of the Iranian Archaeological Organization.

7.6. Restoration and Conservation

Until the 1930s restoration works were mostly limited to putting some fallen stone fragments in position. For example, Herbert **Weld-Blundell** in 1893 cleaned up debris in some areas and put several fallen fragments of the Apadana stairway back in position (Barnett, 1957:58). Restoration and reconstruction works began in the 1930s with the activities of the Oriental Institute. One of the earliest works of Herzfeld and Krefter was the reconstruction of Palace C of the Harem to be used as office, storage and exhibition space as well as restoration laboratory for the archeological mission. Herzfeld initially intended to reconstruct the Palace of Darius for such purpose, but on Krefter's suggestion he chose Palace C, which was larger, more centrally located and in a much lower level, thus less disturbing the general appearance of the Terrace. Various stone column bases were found in the excavations and reused. The column drums and the structure of the roof were reconstructed in wood and painted in red. A simple rendering in clay mortar was applied on the exterior walls. The south part of Palace C, used as office and deposit, was reconstructed on the original foundations, although some walls moved circa 50cm in the south part of the complex. Schmidt (1953:3) mentions that the red floor in the restored part of Palace C is the original floor of the Treasury of Darius, partially demolished by Xerxes. In the reconstruction work, Herzfeld has marked the plan of the walls of Darius' period with black tiles on the floor. This approach shows attention to the legibility of the original structure. The attitude of the American Expedition towards conservation can be shown in a text with the title of 'Restorations':

> Persepolis requires a considerable effort to restore such structural parts as are restorable at all. Herzfeld and Krefter have made an excellent restoration of a large part of the palatial Harem of Xerxes, which had been superimposed on an earlier structure of Darius. Every excavation in or near the stone-built palaces brings to light heavy structural fragments which have to be replaced or, if not possible, lowered to the ground from the debris on which

> they are resting. . . . The columns of the Apadana had weathered badly. The holes were filled, and the form was restored in cement. Many fragments of the monumental stairways could be replaced and cemented in their original positions. The Expedition is even trying to preserve the mud-brick structures by capping them with a mud-and-straw layer and with baked bricks at the edges. The principal reliefs are temporarily protected by matting; but another system will have to be found to preserve them permanently.
>
> *(Schmidt, 1939:97)*

The mud-brick walls, discovered in the Apadana and the Treasury excavations, were some 2–3m high. The decision of the archeologists, nevertheless, was to demolish and lower these original walls to the height of 40–60cm, reconstruct the edges with fired bricks and cover them with clay-straw plaster. This treatment was later repeated, for example, in the northern courtyard of the Harem, by the Iranian archeologist during the directorship of Sami and Godard after the departure of the foreign expedition (Mousavi, 2002:235). It seems that this approach was justified due to the difficulty of mud-brick conservation, which unfortunately resulted in the loss of original Achaemenid material and the information contained.

During the time of Sami and Godard, in order to protect the eastern stairway of the Apadana from rain and frost, a kind of hot wax was applied on its surface (Godard, 1946:269), and a protection cover was built over the eastern stairway of the Apadana and the northern stairway of the Central Palace, which was removed in the late 1960s, probably for reconstituting the visual integrity of the site. Use of wax on stone surfaces has generally produced undesired results. The use of new fired bricks and rendering of the ancient sun-dried brick walls with clay mortar for protection also continued in Sami's period. Restoration and conservation activities began with the Italian team of restorers (1964–1979) of IsMEO. In this period, Shahbazi intervened to consolidate the foundations of the eastern doorway of the Central Palace endangered due to erosion and restored the stone staircase linking the Harem courtyard to the vestibule leading to the Apadana courtyard. He also walled up the eastern part of the Central Palace in stone to re-propose the original form of the central hall and its southern portico and reconstructed the retaining wall in the west of the Harem courtyard up to 7m (Mousavi, 2002:245).

Krefter's model: In the 1960s Heinz **Luschey**, the first director of the Iranian section of the German Archaeological Institute in Berlin, encouraged Krefter to develop the ideas of Herzfeld in a study for a complete reconstruction of the Persepolis Terrace. This work was published in 1972. Krefter's idea of the architectural and structural typology of the Persepolitan structures follows the principles established with Herzfeld and Schmidt based on research carried out by that time. In 1963 Luschey proposed to have a model made of the Terrace, and in 1967 the Auswärtiges Amt of Bonn commissioned Krefter to make a wooden model in the

scale of 1:200, to present to Iran in the occasion of the coronation celebration of the Shah (Krefter, 1972:287). The model measured 330 × 275 × 10cm and was divided in three parts of 110 × 275cm each. A forth part was made to show the mountain, the tombs and the cistern. Krefter coherently presented the entire site, with a typological approach to the interpretation of the structures. There are defensive walls surrounding the Terrace, except along the west front of the Apadana until Palace H. The heights are circa 10m for the wall and almost 13m for the towers. Contrary to Schmidt (1953:62) who, like Herzfeld and Godard, believed that the defensive wall was connected to the Gate of Xerxes on the west side towards the plain, Krefter (1972:283) considers the Gate detached from the wall. He also retains that the Palace of Xerxes and Palace G make an ensemble since they share the same podium. Furthermore, he believes that the two pavilions in front of the Apadana were detached from the Apadana itself, even though these structures are attached to the Apadana in Godard's plan (**Figure 7.1**). The detachment of the pavilions from the parapet of the Terrace is visible looking at the Palace of Darius from the south in Krefter's model and drawings. It seems that this model is in a basement in the Iran Bastan Museum, and a smaller model, also made by Krefter, is presently kept in the Charlottenburg Museum in Germany (Trümpelmann, 1988; Mousavi, 2002:239). There is another model showing the Terrace ruins in the scale of 1:75, made by Javad Zakataly in 1951, who spent four years making it when Sami was responsible for Persepolis. He was an excellent

FIGURE 7.1 Traces of the southern pavilion of the Apadana on the western edge of the Terrace, Palace of Darius in the background (1998)

sculpture from Caucasus emigrated to Iran due to Russian Revolution of 1917 (Mousavi, 2012:196). This model was in a storage building to the southeast of the Terrace on the mountain skirt in the late 1990s.

IsMEO's activities: From 1964 until 1979 the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, IsMEO, was active in Persepolis mainly in research and restoration works. The program director was Guglielmo De Angelis d'Ossat in collaboration with Giuseppe Zander and Paolo Mora. The site director was first Cesare Carbone, and later this task was conceded to Giuseppe Tilia. Giuseppe's archeologist wife, Ann-Britt Tilia, was especially involved in investigation and study of the structures. The results of these studies were published by IsMEO (Zander, 1968; Tilia, 1972, 1978). Cesare Brandi, the founder and director of the Italian Istituto Centrale del Restauro, was among the illustrious Italian visitors of Persepolis during these years. IsMEO's activities were concentrated specifically on the **conservation** of the site and its technical and structural problems, including stone deterioration, consolidation of stone or mud-brick structures and identification of stone fragments and their assemblage with integration of new stone. An important task was the removal of cement used by the Oriental Institute Expedition on structures such as the column bases of the porticos of the Apadana. IsMEO's activities covered most areas of the Terrace including the tombs (Zander, 1968) and the on Achaemenid remains in the Marvdasht plain and its vicinity, including reassembling of an architrave, erecting a fallen column in the Gate of Xerxes and another in the east portico of the Apadana and studying the stratigraphy of the site of Palace H. Important discoveries include the original position of the audience panels, the westwards extension of the Terrace wall and the earlier structure of the Apadana. The polychrome of architectural elements was also studied.

The task of recomposing the fragments of the columns was difficult for the Italian restorers since these had previously been removed from the place of their discovery. Tilia (1972:47) acquired a plan of the excavations of the 1930s from Haines and succeeded in identifying the original positions of some important blocks and fragments. Furthermore, it seems that the American team was not so keen to conserve the original material considering the many architectural and sculptural fragments that were used in the construction of the foundation under the floor of the central hall of Palace C. These fragments were rediscovered during the restoration works of 1971 (Tilia, 1972:58). The removal of the post-Achaemenid structures in various parts of the Terrace (Tilia, 1977:75) testifies that historical stratigraphy was not much respected, a common approach in many archeological sites. The dispersion of fragments was not limited to the Terrace, as these were dispersed and reused throughout the region, including in **Qasr-i Abu Nasr** approximately 35km to the south of the Terrace near Shiraz, where Wilkinson (1965:341ff) had been excavating in the 1930s on behalf of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. However, Flandin and Coste in 1840 and Stolze in circa 1878 had noticed the stone elements of this site and had concluded that these fragments and blocks, many of which were sculpted and inserted in a modern farmhouse, belonged to an Achaemenid site. Stolze retained that these fragments belonged

to the doorway situated in the plain to the north, less than 1km from the Terrace. Tilia (1972:54ff, 262) and Carbone identified the fragments that belonged to the northern rooms of the Place of Darius and the 10 large black blocks with cavetto carving cornices that belonged to the site of Place H. They restored these architectural elements, together with other elements recuperated from the plain, to their original position.

The conservation work of the Italian mission was based on the principles of the **Venice Charter**. Anastylosis was the main approach in the case of reconstruction of columns. The reintegration of new stone was carried out only when it was required for the consolidation and stability of the structure, and restoration was done when necessary. Use of exposed cement was avoided due to its unharmonious chromatic effect when next to ancient stone, which had acquired a *patina*. Powder of the same stone was used in the mortar for jointing of stones. The exposed surfaces of the new stone and the mortar were treated in a way as to differentiate the new from the original (*a gradina* or *a bocciarda*), without changing the surface level. In the case of stairway steps, the reintegration of new stone was carried out only where the lack of a step created a safety hazard. When such a risk was not present, it was sufficient to consolidate without adding new stone. In the case of a stone block with a smooth surface, the same plane was kept, while for blocks with bas-reliefs, the original background plane was respected, even where there were missing projecting parts. When dealing with architectural elements such as fluted column bases and shafts, architectural decorations, zoomorphic capitals and architraves, the new parts of the column shafts were treated in a way to show the difference between the new and the unfinished ancient parts. The date of intervention was incised on the new stone where necessary (Zander, 1970:9). It should be mentioned that one of the most significant contributions of the Italian mission was the training of Iranian technicians and specialists in the field of conservation.

After the departure of the Italians in 1979, work continued under the direction of Hassan Rahsaz, carrying out consolidation and restoration work on architectural elements, including columns of the Apadana, windows and doorways of the Hundred Column Hall and the Palace of Xerxes. For example, when restoring lintels, holes were bored along the lintel, then iron beams inserted, and cement mortar was poured in. Once the cement was set, the lintel was pulled up and laid over the doorway jambs. In 1995, a metal structure was built over the eastern stairway of the Apadana and the northern stairway of the Central Palace to protect the bas-reliefs from rain and frost and allow the monitoring of the microclimate changes. This was a major intervention due to its aesthetic impact on the site, material compatibility and technical aspects, such as rust falling with rain on the stone beneath.

7.7. World Heritage

In 1979 Persepolis was included in the World Heritage List of UNESCO. This nomination was one of the early sites to be inscribed, considering that the World

Heritage listing had only been initiated in 1978. By the end of 1979, there were 56 properties inscribed on the list, 14 of which were natural heritage and 42 cultural heritage sites. Among these early inscriptions, besides Persepolis, were two other sites from Iran, the Ziggurat of Chogha Zanbil in Khuzestan and Meidan-i Naqsh-i Jahan in Isfahan. Persepolis is inscribed under criteria (i), (ii) and (vi). From the time when Persepolis was inscribed, the policies of the World Heritage Committee have evolved, with increasing attention paid to a more holistic approach in the definition of sites. In the same line, the Iranian authorities have also reflected on the development of management plans that would not only include the area of Persepolis and its immediate surroundings, but also extend this to include Naqsh-i Rustam and pay due attention to the many other sites of the province of Fars, i.e., ancient Persis. In 2001, Persepolis-Pasargadae Research Foundation (PPRF) was established with a broad remit covering recording, documentation, evaluation of restorations, investigation in the surrounding area and improvement of the boundaries and buffer zones, as well as visitor management (**Figure 3.12**). Conservation and maintenance works have included issues such as water drainage, surface consumption, improving access and site presentation. Some restoration intervention has been carried out in the Apadana and on the façade of the so-called Unfinished Tomb.

A research program of geophysical investigations in the vicinity of the Terrace and in the area between Persepolis and Naqsh-i Rustam was launched in 2005 to better understand the location and the extension of the ancient city of Persepolis. This was in collaboration among the French Foreign Office, the Iranian Centre of Archaeological Research and (PPRF). The five-year Iran-Italy project for Persepolis was launched in 2008 in partnership with the University of Bologna, the Istituto Italiano per l'Africa and l'Oriente (IsIAO), the Iranian Centre for Archaeological Research, Shiraz University and (PPRF). The aim of this project was also to investigate the ancient city below the Terrace. Due to the importance of stone conservation issues, it was also decided to study the stones used in Persepolis and organize stone conservation training workshops. In the past such training had been organized with partners such as International Centre for the Study of Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM). Persepolis faces some threats such as weathering and industrial pollution. However, the growth of the town of Marvdasht and the nearby villages and the control of the boundaries of the property against increasing development remain the main problems of the site.

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8

CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS

The Achaemenids were heirs of the millenary traditions of the Ancient Near East and the Iranian highland. Royal Achaemenid art is the result of a complex synthesis of influences, tangible and non-tangible, and transformations derived from deliberate and justified choices, to transmit a clear political message by means of monuments. Of these, the most significant are those at Bisotun, Naqsh-i Rustam and Persepolis, which are among the few that have survived. The Royal Palace complex of Persepolis was built with the intention of establishing a symbol and a reference for the Achaemenid Dynasty and the Empire; i.e., a place to represent their values and transmit messages significant for the Empire. These messages referred to peace, stability, grandeur and praise for the dynastic figure of the king as the protector of values, fighting falsehood, but also reconciling the Empire by means of collaboration between all peoples. There were references to ethical values, such as justice and loyalty to the king, courage and capability to make the right decision. Darius presented himself as a model for respecting such values, and he developed cuneiform writing in Old Persian to formally transmit such messages to the peoples of the empire, as in his Bisotun Inscription and his epitaph in Naqsh-i Rustam. Based on the analysis of the Terrace and its various elements, it is possible to identify features indicating the meaning of the **concept of monument** for the Achaemenids. Achaemenid monuments aim to transmit the **values** significant for the dynasty and the Empire. These values are represented in monuments bearing messages that are transmitted through various means, such as inscriptions, sculpture and architecture. The messages were expressed in a new, symbolic language using metaphors obtained through a conscious selection and creative adaptation of traditional themes and forms. The innovative artistic expression represents a new vision of empire, of universal order and of terrestrial kingship.

Empire: There is a fundamental difference in the significance of the concept of empire created by the Achaemenid Persians compared to the Assyro-Babylonian civilization. The Persians, with their cultural background and religion, had a new perception, the 'Pax Persica.' Their government could almost be seen as 'federal,' considering that the aim was to ensure political stability while respecting local cultures and traditions. Achaemenid diplomacy consisted of promoting the development of commerce, communication and agriculture, and the king had an advisory council representing various lands. The background and concept of religion of the Persians were also different from those of the Mesopotamians. The relationship between god, king and people also emerges as a fundamental aspect in the conception of monuments. The Achaemenid king was an ally of his god, Ahuramazda. The support of the god was ensured, except when the king did not respect the values associated with the principles of faith and the defense of justice and 'truth' (*arta*). Therefore, the Persians built monuments to address the peoples of the Empire. Their intention was not to intimidate, but to unite. Furthermore, rather than glorifying a single king, the concept of monument found a new meaning expressing the concept of kingship by referring to the dynasty and the Empire.

Notion of history: The Persians inherited their approach to the past from the Mesopotamian kings, who studied history to foresee the future and to make correct decisions. It was important for a king to associate himself with another king who had reigned with success in the past and to try to acquire his qualities. History was studied, and knowledge gathered on different supports in libraries and special archives, such as treasuries. There were attempts to appropriate the significance and 'powers' of antique objects, for example, by reusing foundation documents of earlier buildings, no matter in stone, gold or other material, under the foundations of new buildings. It was also common practice to erect commemorative monuments and hand down one's name to posterity; examples include dedications in stelae, tombs, temples and even entire cities such as Babylon. The Achaemenids had great respect for the traditions and works of the past, whether their own or belonging to others. This respect is shown in safeguarding the continuity of rituals as well as in the repair and reconstruction of temples and buildings in Babylonia, Egypt and Persia itself. This attitude is evident in the interventions in Persepolis, which was, like Pasargadae, the place of memory *par excellence*. It was here that the memorials and the historical objects were kept, and it was also the place to contain the physical records of the ancestors directly linked to the dynasty. The Achaemenid inscriptions reflect the various approaches to the treatment of existing heritage. In some respects, this seems to have similarity with modern conservation approaches. For example, the paternity of the intervention is specifically mentioned to indicate the time of the intervention, i.e., the period or the date of the conclusion of the work, indicating historic consciousness. The antiquity of a building secured additional value, and attention was spent to distinguish the works of the present from those of the past. Persepolitan inscriptions

show the significance of this site as a ceremonial and ritual place, indicating it an intentional monument from the moment of its creation, to become an historic monument, in the modern sense, already during the era of the Achaemenids themselves.

Universal monument: Respect for the work of ancestors, repeatedly mentioned in the inscriptions, presents Persepolis as an **historic monument** as well as an **intentional monument**. The concepts that guided the design scheme of Persepolis refer to dynastic policies and to the significance of the Empire representing universal order. This intention is not only shown in the inscriptions and bas-reliefs but is also reflected in the character of the program of the architectural and urban ensemble. The planning scheme is expressed in the architectural composition, the proportions of façades and the unity of measurements, as well as in the reference grid laid for the whole site indicating the position of each building. The construction of Persepolis was a result of the involvement of many elements representing various cultures of the Empire, the choice of interpretative motifs and the use of materials and workmanship of different provenance to represent the Empire. The universality of the Empire is highlighted immediately on arrival by naming the main entrance gate the 'Gate of All Peoples.' This policy is also seen in foundation texts of Persepolis and Susa. Furthermore, Persepolis is a major monument to Achaemenid art and architecture, where great care was taken in the finishing touches and details, as well as in the infrastructure and the general plan of the site. The impact of such care developed into forms in art and architecture which continued to exist in the following centuries not only in Iran, but also in other countries.

Project: It has been possible to confirm, from the start, that the construction of the Persepolis royal complex was based on an initial project built in major part by Darius himself and his son Xerxes. Their successors had respected these initial ideas and maintained the essential layout of the plan. The design concept of the royal complex, as planned by Darius and executed mainly by his son and heir, Xerxes, was followed by their successors, who maintained and preserved the site and added their own work in conformity with the initial plan during the following two centuries until its destruction. Even the destruction was mainly due to its symbolic, dynastic and imperial significance, with which Persepolis differentiated from other Persian capitals. There is much evidence that consolidates our assertion on the existence of an **initial project** for Persepolis. These include the reference grid for the site, the design scheme, the consistent use of symbolic architectural elements such as the square and the podium, the morphology of the structures, the system of underground channels, formal and spatial relationships in architecture, the bas-reliefs and sculptural symbolism and the inscriptions and their literary formulae. Besides the morphology of each building, the study of the relationship of the position of the buildings on the Terrace, the proportions of the different elements of the façades and the rigor in following the models established by Darius strengthens our thesis on the existence of such an original project.

There is coherent use of a measurement unit in the design of the buildings and the site, with a minimum of flexibility in its use in detail, because the essential elements were the proportions. The module used for the **reference grid** is in relation to the size of the central hall of the Apadana. Most structures of the Terrace are directly related to this grid. Analysis of the façades of the Palace of Darius, Palace C of the Harem Complex in Persepolis and the Tomb of Darius in Naqsh-i Rustam shows that their **design** criteria followed a precise **scheme**, indicating their forms and proportions. The dominant geometric form both in elevation and in plan is the square. In the case of the tombs, we can find references to squares in the entire cross-form elevation, i.e., in the parts above and below the central palatial section.

Constructing a **podium** for a building or complex had particular significance related to the concept of primeval hill, from which the creation of the world would have taken its beginning in the Ancient Near East, traceable in 'monumental' and sacred architecture in Egypt and Mesopotamia. When a site did not have a natural podium, buildings were built on an artificial platform. The **square** is a fundamental form both in regal and sacral architecture, found in ziggurats or pyramids. In Achaemenid architecture it became the fundamental reference for the definition of the proportions and design schemes of the palaces, repeated as a reference both in the plan and in the elevations. Furthermore, the **morphology** of Persepolitan structures became the foundation of design guidelines for Persian architecture in later centuries, reflected in the traditional architecture of Iran. Achaemenid architecture is symmetrical. Buildings are generally detached, and their common feature is the use of the square. An important aspect of this architecture is the link between covered and open spaces, which is provided through a semi-open space, the portico. The main architectural elements include the podium, monumental stairways, a hypostyle square central hall and secondary square or rectangular hypostyle rooms and one or more porticos. From a morphological point of view, Persepolitan architecture is based on the variations of combination of two forms: a space enclosed on three sides with columns on the fourth side and a space enclosed on four sides without columns.

Bas-reliefs: The interpretation of the messages transmitted through **bas-reliefs** needs to be considered in symbolic and metaphoric aspects. Bas-reliefs do not necessarily depict a specific event, they are not temporal, but rather they invoke an indefinite moment and eternal time. The king is represented in Persepolis even when he is physically elsewhere; his image is a symbolic and idealistic image that represents dynastic, not individual, identity. The key representations in Persepolis are the **audience scene** and the king enthroned, supported by peoples of the Empire and sustained by Ahuramazda, symbolized by royal glory hovering above in the middle. Those images were copied and diffused in the Empire, as shown in the audience scene on the Alexander Sarcophagus. The bas-reliefs of the Apadana represent the relationship between the king and his peoples in an elaborate metaphor of an empire where an ideal world order is shown in a ceremony

of presenting gifts. The depicted ceremonies were not necessarily taking place in Persepolis, but were a metaphor of concepts, including the conquest of the Empire and the festivities in its various regions.

Based on the **orientation of the bas-relief figures** and the position of the inscriptions in relation to the whole of the Terrace, it is possible to formulate an interpretation on the ceremonial circulation that would have taken place. The king on the doorways always moves from secondary internal rooms towards the main spaces to reach the portico and then go out. As a rule, the king moves from the southern part of the Terrace to the north, i.e., from the palace area towards the audience halls, going through the Central Palace. We can thus detect a hierarchy in the significance of the palaces, spaces and decorative elements; for example, the representation of the enthroned king indicates the importance of that building, such as the Apadana, the Hundred Column Hall or the Central Palace. These contain spaces of high hierarchical level and therefore will have had a major ceremonial function. Besides the courtyard facing the eastern and northern stairways of the Apadana, the courtyard of the Palace of Darius forms a space with a high concentration of symbolic elements. In this courtyard, there are three monumental stairways, a possible representation of the enthroned king on Palace H and various inscriptions, all situated on the western edge of the Terrace directly connected with the terrace of the Apadana. Therefore, we can conclude that the concentration of such symbolic elements shows the ceremonial importance and the significance of this space. There are other clues indicating how such symbolic meanings penetrated even the minor architectural details. Such is the molding of the door frames facing the central hall of the Palace of Darius, which is more elaborate than the molding towards the secondary rooms in the same door frame.

Inscriptions were means for fixing, memorializing, defusing and perpetuating the messages containing the concepts and values important for the Empire and the dynasty. They followed a fixed formula with certain similarities with those of Mesopotamian kings, but reformulated to reflect the values that were significant for the Achaemenids. Various inscriptions show the **personal interest** of the kings in construction works. The royal inscriptions were declarations concerning the Empire as a whole, where the king proclaims the legitimacy of his kingship. There is evidence of the diffusion of inscriptions, such as those of Bisotun, in different parts of the Empire. In addition to ritual meaning, the written text also possessed a visual significance considering its assigned specific position in the sculptural and architectural composition of the buildings.

Objects: The objects discovered in the **Treasury** of Persepolis constitute the richest and most varied collection of existing Achaemenid material. This collection includes cuneiform tablets and objects of different provenances, including Egypt, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and the Orient. Some of these could be war booties or **gifts**, probably presented in a ceremonial context as depicted on the stairways of the Apadana. Gifts were the materialization of imperial power and were deposited and kept in the Treasury not only for their economic value but especially for

their symbolic, commemorative or political value as a sign of alliance and submission of the donor. Various objects, such as the seal of Cyrus I, had memorial and historical value, having belonged to the early kings of the dynasty or because of association with specific events. Some of the objects, such as the cylindrical seals, had belonged to the Temple of Esagila; others had apotropaic value. The fact that the audience panels of the Apadana stairways had been deposited in the Treasury strengthens the hypothesis that it was also used as a deposit-museum (**Figure 8.1**).

No other significant Achaemenid site had a destiny like that of Persepolis; it was the only site to be set on fire by Alexander, indicating its **special significance** and function in relation to particular aspects of the Empire, such as the foundations of the dynasty and its ceremonial, ritual and monumental meanings. All these were to emphasize the figure of the king as a reference and defender of values. The Terrace was reserved for ceremonial functions while the quotidian and residential activities were most probably accommodated in structures under the Terrace or, during official visits, even in temporary arrangements. Persepolis maintained its significance as a place of cult and memory even after its destruction; it was subject to visits, commemorations and admiration, finding an expression in inscriptions and graffiti. After a period of occupation of some parts, the site was abandoned, causing its decay, but also contributing to the survival of the

FIGURE 8.1 Apadana northern stairway, gift-bearers bringing gifts similar to Treasury objects (2004)

parts covered by earth. Considering the enormous remains, Persepolis must have been a building material quarry for centuries, just to think of the 72 columns of the Apadana. In addition, earthquakes also contributed to its ruin. Nevertheless, the site continued to retain a particular cultural and spiritual meaning, becoming the seat of ancient legendary and religious characters, a reason for not being transformed. Starting in the 17th century, European travelers made illustrations, presenting Persepolis and Achaemenid art in the cultural world, resulting in the deciphering of cuneiform script. At the same time, the visitors also carried away architectural fragments today enriching various museum collections. The excavations in the 1930s uncovered areas that had remained hidden for over two millennia. Unfortunately, even if they were carried out with care and using the best available technologies, not all architectural findings were preserved. Some earthen walls of substantial height were demolished and replaced with the present low structures. The reason for such treatment was attributed to the lack of knowledge in the conservation of mud-brick structures, but it is also probable that these findings had not been associated with any historic or artistic value. Fortunately, the subsequent interventions of IsMEO, in the 1960s and 1970s, were based on modern conservation principles, leaving a tradition of conservative restoration in Iran. Today Persepolis is included in the World Heritage List of UNESCO.

Bibliographical Abbreviations

AchHist	*Achaemenid History*
ActaIr	*Acta Iranica*
ActaO	*Acta Orientalia, Copenhagen*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AMI	*Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran, D. Reimer Verlag, Berlin*
BAI	*Bulletin of the Asia Institute for Iranian Art & Archaeology*
BastChen	*Bastan-Chenassi va Honar-e Iran, Revue d'archeologie et d'art iraniens*
CAH	*Cambridge Ancient History*
CahDAFI	*Cahiers dela Délégation Archéologique Française en Iran*
Iran	*The British Institute of Persian Studies Publication*
IrAnt	*Iranica Antiqua*
Iraq	*British School of Archaeology in Iraq, London*
JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies University of Chicago*
OIC	*Oriental Institute Communications University of Chicago Press*
OIP	*Oriental Institute Publications University of Chicago Press*
OrSu	*Orientalia Suecana*
Syria	*Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie, Institut français d'archéologie de Beyrouth*

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