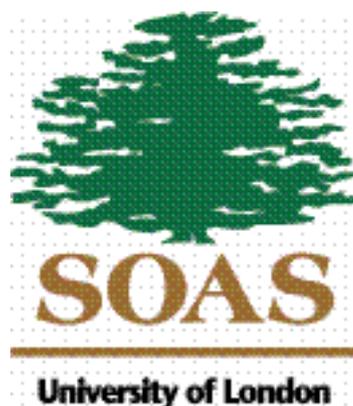


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THE FINAL PARAGRAPH OF THE TOMB-INSCRIPTION OF DARIUS I (DNb, 50–60): THE OLD PERSIAN TEXT IN THE LIGHT OF AN ARAMAIC VERSION

By NICHOLAS SIMS-WILLIAMS

The great inscription of Darius I at Bisitun has hitherto been the only Achaemenid inscription known to exist not only in the three versions carved on the rock-face—Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian—but also in an Aramaic translation on papyrus. The fragmentary scroll containing the Aramaic text was first published by Sachau in 1911.¹ In general, the Aramaic version agrees closely with the Babylonian and is therefore comparatively easy to interpret in spite of its poor state of preservation. However, both Sachau and all later editors have been baffled by one passage in the last column of the Aramaic text. The lines preceding and following correspond, at least approximately, to §§ 44 and 49 of the Babylonian: ² ‘King Darius states: King, whoever you are, who may arise after me, protect yourself well from lies. Do not trust the man who lies . . . Believe what I did and tell the truth to the people. Do not conceal (it). If you do not conceal these matters, but you do tell the people, may Ahura Mazda protect you . . .’. The intervening lines have not been identified up to now and their meaning has remained obscure.

Recently I was able to establish that the passage in question is a translation of the last paragraph of the tomb-inscription of Darius I at Naqš-i Rostam (DNb, 50–60). This discovery makes possible an interpretation of most of the Aramaic text. In its turn the Aramaic version throws light on the badly damaged Old Persian text of this paragraph, previous attempted restorations of which prove to have been incorrect in many points.³ The same no doubt applies to the even less well preserved Elamite⁴ and Babylonian⁵ versions of the final paragraph of DNb, which now require a more thorough revision than I am competent to give them.⁶

This last paragraph of DNb is virtually an independent inscription, differing in manner and subject-matter from the preceding text and separated from it, in all three versions, by an uninscribed space. When Darius’s son, Xerxes, issued a version of DNb in his own name (XPI), he did not include this paragraph.⁷ The fact that the Elamite text of the final paragraph does not begin

¹ E. Sachau, *Aramäische Papyrus und Ostraka aus einer jüdischen Militär-Kolonie zu Elephantine . . .*, Leipzig, 1911. See also A. Cowley, *Aramaic papyri of the fifth century B.C.*, Oxford, 1923. The Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum is shortly to publish a new edition by J. Greenfield and B. Porten, to both of whom I am indebted for helpful discussions concerning the text treated below.

² Cited here in the translation of E. N. von Voigtlander, *The Bisitun inscription of Darius the Great: Babylonian version*, London, 1978, 60–1.

³ For the OP text of DNb cf. F. H. Weissbach, *Die Keilinschriften der Achämeniden*, Leipzig, 1911, 92–5 (more convenient than and containing virtually the same text as *Die Keilinschriften am Grab des Darius Hystaspis*, *Abh. der phil.-hist. Kl. der königlichen sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften*, xxix, 1, 1911); E. Herzfeld, *Altpersische Inschriften*, Berlin, 1938, 4–13 with Abb. 4; R. G. Kent, *JNES*, iv, 1945, 39–52, and *Old Persian*, 2nd ed., New Haven, 1953, 138–40; W. Hinz, *ZDMG*, cxv, 1965, 227–41, and *Altiranische Funde und Forschungen*, Berlin, 1969, 53–62.

⁴ Hinz, *ibid.* Only isolated words were legible to Weissbach.

⁵ Herzfeld, *loc. cit.* with Abb. 5; R. Borger *apud* Hinz, *loc. cit.* with Abb. 21.

⁶ For advice on the interpretation of the Babylonian text I am grateful to Professor D. J. Wiseman.

⁷ For XPI see M. Mayrhofer, *Supplement zur Sammlung der altpersischen Inschriften*, *Sb. der phil.-hist. Kl. der Österr. Akad. der Wiss.*, cccviii, 1978, 21–5 (with references to previous literature).

with the word *a-ak* 'and' also tends to indicate that it was not regarded as a continuation of the preceding inscription.⁸

In the form in which it stands on the rock at Naqš-i Rostam, this paragraph contains advice on conduct addressed to Darius's people in general, the vocative 'O subject' (OP *marikā*, Bab. *gal-la*, El. *ma-ul-la*) occurring several times. In the Aram. version, the insertion of the passage into the context cited above results in the advice being offered to Darius's successor rather than to his subject. This change may have necessitated some modifications in the Aram. text, in particular the omission of the word 'subject'.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the Aram. version is the occurrence in it of two words of the OP text in transcription rather than in translation. From this it is at least clear that the Aram. text of this paragraph was not translated from the Babylonian version. Three possibilities must be left open: first, that it was translated from the OP text; second, that it was translated from the Elamite, which unfortunately is damaged at the relevant points but which is not unlikely to have contained the two OP words;⁹ and third, that it was written down in Aramaic directly from dictation in Old Persian.¹⁰

The Aram. text which follows is based on Sachau's,¹¹ whose readings here are superior to those of Cowley.¹² So far as possible, incomplete words have been restored on the basis of the OP and other versions, but I have not attempted to reconstruct the words lacking at the beginning of each line. The passage from DNb starts in the lacuna at the beginning of line 3 and ends in the lacuna at the beginning of line 7.

ARAMAIC TEXT

3] hwd' 'yk zy 'byd 'nt w'[yk] hlktk
 4 'd]nk y'mr šm' zy prtr y'mr
 5 y']bd zy mskn y'bd zk hzy 'p qdmtk
 6]twbk 'ymnš thwh []rklyk 'l yldn

Of the OP text of DNb, lines 50–60, very little could be read by Weissbach. All three subsequent editors (Herzfeld, Kent and Hinz) read a number of characters which are illegible on the photographs available to me. Some such readings are confirmed by the Aramaic, most strikingly in the case of *prtr* in line 54. However, some other readings given as certain by all three editors are shown by the photographs to be untenable, e.g. *amⁱ[i]y*, line 51, *recte* (*ah^oy*). The text below is based on the photographs published by Schmidt¹³ and on those taken for the Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum by M. Rustami of the Iran-i Bastan Museum in Tehran,¹⁴ which are in places more distinct than Schmidt's. I give a strict transliteration together with an interlinear interpretative transcription. The former makes use of the following conventions: + = illegible character; ° = uninscribed space due to a fault in the rock-face; square brackets enclose restorations, parentheses indicate uncertain readings.

⁸ See I. Gershevitch, *TPS*, 1979, 129–30.

⁹ On the unusually large number of transcribed OP words in the El. version of DNb see Hinz, *op. cit.*, 61–2.

¹⁰ I am grateful to Dr. Gershevitch for drawing my attention to this third possibility as well as for other valuable suggestions.

¹¹ Sachau, *op. cit.*, 196 (Papyrus 62 Verso, Col. 1, ll. 3–6), cf. Pl. 55.

¹² Cowley, *op. cit.*, 253 (Col. 4, ll. 52–5).

¹³ E. Schmidt, *Persepolis*, III, Chicago, 1970, Pl. 34–6, illustrates all three versions of DNb together with the accompanying but unconnected inscription in Aram. script (on which see W. B. Henning, 'Mitteliranisch', 24–5).

¹⁴ I am indebted to Dr. A. D. H. Bivar for bringing these photographs to my notice and to the Council of the Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum for allowing me to make use of them.

OLD PERSIAN TEXT

- 50 (mr)i°ka:d(r)šm:az(d)[a](:k^uš^u)[va](:)[ciya](k)rm
marikā d(a)ršam azdā kunšuvā ciyākaram
51 [:(ah°y):ciyak(r)mm(tiy:uv)[nra:ciy](ak)r
āhi ciyākaram-tai ūnarā ciyākaram-
52 (mmt°i)y:(pr)iy(n)m:(m)ati(y:)[av:frθ](m)m:
tai pariyanam mā-tai ava fraθamam
53 (θdy):t(yt)iy:guša(ya:θ)[hyatiy:](a)vš
θadaya taya-tai gaušāyā θahyāti avaš-
54 (c)i(y:°)axšn^ud^hiy:hy:[prtr:θhy](a)ti
ci āxšnudi haya paratar θahyāti
55 y:(m)[ri]°ka(:mat)iy:a(v)[:nibm:θdy:ty](:+ +)
marikā mā-tai ava naibam θadaya taya . . .
56 [+](:k^u)[n]°vati(y:ty:)[skuθiš:k^uunv](atiy)
kunavāt(a)i taya skauθiš kunavāt(a)i
57 (:a)v(šc°i)y:d^hi(d^hiy:mr)i(ka:)[+ + + + +]:ma:
avaš-ci dīdi marikā . . . mā
58 [pr](ay)°at(y:a)[+ + + + +](ma)[ptiy:š](iya)t(iy)
parāyātaya . . . mā-pati šiyātiyā
59 a:a(yu°mi)ni(š:bva:)[(d^hi)y
ayaumainiš bavā . . .
60 (:m°a:r)xθt^u(uv:)[+ + + + :
mā raxθa(n)tu . . .

Apparatus

51 (*ah°y*) almost certain; *am^r[i]y*, as read by Herzfeld, Kent and Hinz, does not fit the traces and requires one to believe that the character *i* was inscribed despite the fault in the rock which prevented writing in the preceding and following lines. **51 & 51-2** *ciyākrmmtiy* apparently dittographic for **ciyākrmmtiy* (due to the near identity of the signs *m* and *t*). Already Weissbach read the third character of line 52 as *t*; all later editors have read *c* instead (also in line 51), but the photographs show that this reading is impossible. **51** Only the initial *u* of (*uv*)[*nra*] is nearly certain. **52** (*pr*)*iy(n)m* almost certain; so read by Weissbach and all subsequent editors. **52** Instead of [*frθ*](*m*)*m* or [*frt*](*m*)*m* one could equally well read and restore [*ras*](*t*)*m*. **53** (*θ*)[*hyatiy:*] has been preferred to (*θ*)[*hathy:*] as more adequate to fill the lacuna. **54** Weissbach's reading *hy* is certain, though all later editors read *ty*. **54** *prtr* is totally illegible from the photographs, but the Aram. transcription remarkably confirms Herzfeld's (*p*)*r*[and Kent's *pr*][(read from Herzfeld's copy, cf. Kent, *Language*, xv, 1939, 173, though this shows only very faint traces of *p* and *t*!) against Hinz's (*mn*)[*a*]. **55** The space taken up by the words restored as :*a(v)*[:*nibm:θdy:ty*] is about 15 per cent less than that taken up by the corresponding words in lines 52-3 and should therefore contain one or two characters less. **55** The last two signs look like *d+*, *c+*, or *i+* (Herzfeld suggested *dš*, Kent *+t*, Hinz *ib*); the preceding word-divider appears almost certain. **57** The traces favour Hinz's reading *mrīka*; Herzfeld and Kent's *yciy* cannot be correct. **58** [*pr*](*ay*)°*at(y)* was read *ptiyaty* by Hinz, but the first two signs (not legible to any previous editor) are totally effaced and the third may be *a* rather than *i* (though read *i* by all editors from Weissbach onwards). **58** Of *ma*, as read by Herzfeld, Kent and Hinz, only faint traces are to be seen. **58-9** The first four characters of [*š*](*iya*)*t(iy)a* are largely effaced, but Herzfeld and Kent read [*atiya*], Hinz [*yatiya*]. **59** One expects **ayayuminiš*, but one character, either the second *a* or the *u*, is lacking (thus Cameron *apud* Kent, *JNES*, iv, 1945, 44; wrongly Kent and Hinz); both Weissbach and Herzfeld read the third sign as *a*, but from the photographs *u* seems slightly preferable. **59** For (*bva:*)[one could also read (*bva*)[*h*](*y:*)[; Herzfeld, Kent and Hinz all give *bvatiy*], but the last three signs were at most partially visible to Herzfeld (cf. his copy and transliteration) and no trace resembling them is to be seen on the photographs. **59** [(*d^h*)*y*] almost certain; Kent's [*xšay*]*θiy* is impossible. **60** (*r*)*xθt^u(uv:)* almost certain; hardly (*b*)*xθt^u(uv:)*. The characters at the end of the line are illegible.

TRANSLATION

- 50 O subject, very much make known [of what] kind
 51 you are, of what kind your ab[ilities, of what] kind
 52 your conduct! Let not [that] seem [bes]t to you
 53 which [is spoken] in your ears;
 54 listen (also) to that which is spoken openly!
 55 O subject, let not that [seem good] to you [which a]
 56 [powerful man] does; what [a weak man] does—
 57 observe that (also)! O subject, . . . do not
 58 nor
 59 be insecure as regards (your) [happ]iness!
 60 let not

COMMENTARY

50 *azdā kunšwā* ~ Aram. *hwd* 'make known' (2 sg. impv.). Following W. Cowgill, *KZ*, LXXXII, 1968, 262–4, I interpret the OP verb as a pres. (not aorist) impv. and transcribe it *kunšwā* (with nasal). I differ from Cowgill in explaining the stem *kun-* as an allegro-form of **kunu-* (itself an allegro-form of **krnu-*, probably originating in the 2 sg. impv., as argued by F. B. J. Kuiper, *AION-L*, II, 1960, 165–70, and K. Hoffmann, *Aufsätze zur Indoiranistik*, II, Wiesbaden, 1976, 587–8); cf. the reverse process in *durūwa-* < **druwa-* etc., and the variation in *sugda-/suguda-*, which show that the rhythmic difference between *-u-u-* and *-u-* was not felt to be significant.

50–51 *ciyākaram āhi* ~ Aram. *'yk zy 'byd 'nt*. The Aram. phrase probably means 'how you (have) act(ed)', the passive participle *'byd* being used actively as elsewhere in this text (Col. 1, line 6, p. 251 in Cowley's edition). For this 'etymological' translation, implying recognition of a form of the root *kar-* 'to do' in the OP adv. *ciyākaram* 'how, of what kind', one may compare Bab. *ap-pit-tum ep-ši-ka* (from *epēšu* 'to do') ~ OP *avākaram ami* 'I am thus, I am of such a kind' (DNb, 6–7).

51–2 *ciyākaram-tai ūnarā ciyākaram-tai parīyanam*. The restoration *ūnarā* 'abilities' agrees well enough with Bab. *ep-še-e-ta* 'works, achievements, accomplishments'; it is more strongly supported by the El., which according to Hinz has *be-ut-ni*, a word also used to render *ūnara-* in DNb, 48. The Aram. probably abbreviates here, so that *w'[yk] hlktk* 'and how your conduct (is)' may translate *ciyākaram-tai parīyanam*. The usual translation of *parīyana-* as 'superiority' cannot in any case be regarded as appropriate. Almost certainly it means 'behaviour, conduct', cf. *pari-ay-* 'to behave', and stands for **par(i)y-ayana-* (cf. Av. *ayana-* 'going', OInd. *pary-ayana-* n. 'going about'), either by haplology (*-yaya-* > *-ya-*) or by contraction (*-iya-* > *-ī-*).

52–3 & 55 *mā-tai ava fraṭhamam/naibam θadaya* ~ Bab. *a-ga-šu-ú i-na pa-ni-ka la i-ba-an-na* 'let not that be pleasing to you'. Considerations of space show that the OP cannot, unlike the Bab., be identically worded in both passages. Hence my tentative proposal to restore in one a superlative, in the other a positive adj., thus making a distinction in the OP which the Bab. could not reproduce. For the assumption that **fraṭhama-* (cf. MP *pahlom* 'excellent, best, foremost') or *fratama-* (attested in the sense 'foremost') may have been used as superl. of *naiba-* cf. the employment of the compar. *fraṭhara-/fratarā-* in XPf, 26–7 and 37, XPg, 11, beside *naiba-* in XPg, 4. Possible alternative restorations would be *rāstam* 'right' in line 52, *frašam* 'excellent' in line 55 (cf. DSa, 5, Dsj, 6). In the former passage Hinz restores **vahyas-krtam*

‘better-done’ on the basis of the El. version, in which he finds a transcription of this hypothetical OP word. There is then no room for the restoration of *ava* (as in line 55), which is supported here both by the El. (*hu-be*) and by the Bab.

53 *taya-tai gaušāyā θahyāti* ‘what is told you in (your) ear (i.e. privately)’ (thus Hinz). The encl. pron. °*tai* is ambiguous, either genitival, as in the Aram. [°*d*]nk ‘your ear’, or datival, as taken in the El. (where Hinz’s *v.nu-in pa-ri-in* is probably to be corrected to *v.nu-in ti-ri-in* ‘(is) to tell you’). The unique form *gaušāyā* is mostly taken as gen. dual, with *-āyā* for expected **-ayā* under the influence of the nom.-acc. dual *gaušā* (Hoffmann, *Aufsätze*, I, 55, n. 7). One may also invoke the analogy of f. *ā*-stems: nom. sg. *-ā*, gen.-abl.-instr.-loc. sg. *-āyā*. Hence *gaušāyā* might equally well be loc. dual in agreement with the El. loc. [*sē*]-*ri-ma* (cf. the Sogd. abl. ‘numerative’ in *-y* < **-āyāh*, *BSOAS*, XLII, 2, 1979, 342, likewise coinciding in form with the gen.-abl.-loc. sg. f.). The verb has been restored as *θahyāti* (passive), although it seems to have been translated in all versions as an active (El. *ti-ri-in*(?), Aram. *y’mr* ‘says’) with indefinite subject (Bab. *ma-a[m]-ma* ‘someone’), since the OP active **θahāti* would hardly fill the lacuna. Cf. the following note.

53-5 *avaš-ci āzšnudi haya paratar θahyāti* ~ Aram. *šm’ zy prtr y’mr* ‘hear what (someone) says *prtr*’. Again both the Aram. and the El. ([*ti*]-*ri-man-ra*, 3 sg. Conj. III_m) have active verbs, but the extent of the lacuna in the OP favours the restoration of *θahyāti*. Whether one reconstructs a passive or an active verb, the nom. sg. m. *haya* must stand for the nom.-acc. sg. n. *taya*. The same irregularity is probably to be recognized in the *haya* of XPl, 24 (~ *taya*, DNb, 22), cf. also nom. pl. m. *tayai* for nom. pl. f. in XPh, 31. From the context it seems that the Aram. *prtd/pdtr* etc., and its OP source, is probably an adv. meaning ‘aloud, openly’. The Bab. may have an adverbial phrase *a-na* [... The OP word may be *paratar* ‘before, in front’, cf. Av. *²parō* ‘id.’, OP *paranam* ‘formerly’, etc., probably a recent formation (with adv. suffix *-tar* as in OP *antar* ‘in’, OInd. *sanutār* ‘aside’, etc.) from an adj. **para-* (postulated by Gershevitch in *Indo-Iranica, Mélanges . . . G. Morgenstierne*, Wiesbaden, 1964, 82-3) like Av. *paurvatarə* from the adj. *paurva-*. Cf. the use of the adverbs MMP *pyšy*, Pth. *prw’n* ‘in front’ in the phrases *pyšy(h) phyppwrs-*, *prw’n pdbwrs-* ‘recite aloud’ (*Mir. Man.*, II, 304 with n. 3; Boyce, *Word-list*, 76).

55-6 *taya . . . kunavāt(a)i*. In the Aram. and Bab. versions only the verb ‘does’ ([*y*]bd, *ip-pu-šu*) is legible. Its subject, as Dr. Gershevitch has suggested to me, should contrast with the ‘weak man’ of the next sentence. In OP one would expect *tunuvā* ‘powerful (man)’ (contrasting with *skauθiš* as in DB 4.65, DNb, 8 ff.), but this is incompatible with the visible traces and the space available, which demand a word of only three characters probably beginning with *d*, *c* or *i*. Such a word, a near synonym of *tunuvā*, is attested in DB 4.71-2, most recently read as *dθs* = *daθans* (Gershevitch, *The Avestan hymn to Mithra*, Cambridge, 1959, 197-9). The present passage might contain the same word, though unfortunately it is not sufficiently well preserved either to confirm or to cast doubt on the reading suggested.

56 *taya skauθiš kunavāt(a)i* ~ Aram. *zy mskn y’bd* ‘what a weak man does’. The restoration of the OP is suggested by the correspondence of Bab. *muškēnu* (= Aram. *mskn*) to OP *skauθiš* in DB 4.65 and DNb, 8 ff.

57 *avaš-ci dīdi* ~ Aram. *zk hzy*, Bab. *a-ga-šu-ú a-m[u]-ur* (preceding the relative clause instead of following it as in the other versions), El. *hu-[be] zi-ya-i[š]* ‘see that’ (2 sg. impv.). The following words in the Aram., ‘*p qdmrk* ‘also before you’, can be understood in two ways. Either *qdmrk* is an idiomatic expansion of *hzy*, as in the Proverbs of Aḥiqar, line 101, p. 215 in Cowley’s

edition, *ḥzy qdmk* 'look before thee' (so translated by H. L. Ginsberg in *Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the Old Testament*, ed. J. B. Pritchard, 3rd ed., Princeton, 1969, 428b), in which case 'p may translate OP *-ci* 'also, indeed'; or 'p may introduce a new sentence, thus corresponding functionally to OP *marīkā* 'O subject' (which could not have been translated literally in the Aram. version, cf. p. 2 above).

57-8 . . . *mā parāyātaya* A continuous interpretation is excluded here by the poor state of preservation of all four versions. The Bab. contains a 2 sg. prohibition: *la te-ep-pu-uš* 'do not do'. The OP should therefore have a 2 sg. verb, preferably (with prohibitive *mā*) an injunctive. This verb is presumably *-yātaya*, as suggested by Hinz, but the preverb is unclear: if the third character is *a* (rather than *i*) the most likely candidates are *parā-* and **frā-*.

58 *mā-pati*. The reading](:*ma*[and its interpretation as the prohibitive *mā* are supported by the Bab. *la* (if this is a complete word). At approximately this point in the El., Hinz reads *a-ak ša-rak*. Very little can be seen from Rustami's photograph, but if *ša-rak* is correctly read (preferably preceded by the prohibitive *a-nu* rather than by *a-ak* 'and') this would almost certainly imply that the OP had *-pati* (cf. Gershevitch, *TPS*, 1979, 168-88), which neatly fills the lacuna after *mā*. Both OP *-pati* and El. *ša-rak* quite typically occur at the head of the second of two parallel phrases, to which they seem to do no more than add a note of emphasis or contrast. Thus OP *nai* . . . *nai-pati* (DNb, 19-20) and El. *in-ni* . . . *in-ni ša-rak* (PF 1975, 9-11) appear to me to mean 'not . . . nor', to which *mā* . . . *mā-pati* would be the prohibitive counterpart.

58-9 *šiyātiyā* ~ Aram. *ṭwbk* 'your happiness'. Of feminine *i*-stems such as *šiyāti-* only nom. *-iš* and acc. *-im* are securely attested in OP. Masculine *i*-stems have gen. *-aiš*, but it is not unlikely (in view of the well-known tendency towards syncretism of the f. *ī-* and *ī-* declensions) that f. *i*-stems instead used the *ī*-stem ending *-iyā* for all the oblique cases of the sg. (a possibility anticipated by Kent, *Old Persian*, § 179.II).

59 *ayaumainiš*, transcribed as *'ymnš* in the Aram. version, is without doubt the negative form of the adj. *yāuma(i)nīš*, which occurs in DNb, 40 (= XPI, 44-5) in the sentence 'I am *yāuma(i)nīš* (~ Bab. *ga-āš-ra-ak* 'I am strong') both in hands and in feet'. The meaning, form, and etymology of *yāuma(i)nīš* have been much discussed (most recently by J. Duchesne-Guillemin in *Mélanges linguistiques offerts à E. Benveniste*, Louvain, 1975, 137 ff.), often without sufficient attention to the Bab. translation (which may be only approximate) and to the context, which together demand a meaning within the range 'strong—firm—sure—skilful'. For the negated *a-yaumainiš* a sense such as 'weak—unsteady—insecure—clumsy—careless' is indicated.

59 *bavā* ~ Aram. *ṭwhh*, probably 2 sg. impf. of *hwh* 'to be'. Since *ṭwbk* is m., and the OP hardly allows the restoration of another noun in this sentence, *ṭwhh* is unlikely to be 3 sg. f. If the OP verb is 2 sg., it can only be *bavā* (impv.) or *bavāhi* (subj.). Second person prohibitions are generally expressed in OP by *mā* + injunctive, but the verb *bav-* may have been exceptional in this respect, cf. *mā dauštā* [. . .]ā 'do not be a friend' (DB 4.69), usually restored as opt. [*biy*]ā.

59 A possible restoration of the last word of this line would be *rādī* 'on account of, towards' (postp.), which could correspond to the Aram. prep. 'l. Unfortunately the preceding and following words of the Aram. are incomprehensible.

60 *mā raxθa(n)tu*. The verb *raxθa-*, of which this is the 3 sg. or pl. impv.,

is otherwise unknown. According to Hinz the El. has *a-nu me-te-in* (prohibitive particle + Conj. III inf.), whose equally unknown verb *mete-* he translates 'be successful, prosper' on etymological grounds. On this basis M. Mayrhofer has very tentatively proposed to derive OP *raxθa-* from **rafθa-* = OInd. (*vi-*)*rapśa-* 'overflow, be full, abound' (*Farhang-i Iran Zamin*, XXI, 1976, 89-92). If, on the other hand, *raxθa-* is an inchoative (as suggested *apud* Gershevitch, *TPS*, 1979, 151, n. 46), it might be compared either with Sogd. *āraxs-* 'take refuge, rely on' or with Khot. *ārīs-* 'decrease', *pārīs-* 'diminish'.