

Parsing an Iranian Participle (Dar. 388: 2) – The Neo-Babylonian tablet Dar. 388 contains in its second line a curious hapax form which merits examination:

« Ten loads of *paḥasēmunu*-fodder (10-*ta bil-ti šá šam-mu pa-ḥa-se-e-mu-nu*) are owed by Arad-Sutitum, son of Kidinnu son of Nanasagri, to Nabû-nadin-šum, son of Erība-Marduk son of Mandidu; at the end of Šabātu he will deliver it; the balance of the seed grain (ŠE NUMUN) Arad-Sutitum will pay in full to Nabû-nadin-šum by the end of Šabātu »

The *AHW*. surmises that the term *pa-ḥa-se-e-mu-nu* indicates a type of plant. Since the term is known only through a single Achaemenid-era document, there is a good possibility that *pa-ḥa-se-e-mu-nu* is of Iranian origin. I would like to suggest that (a) the final syllables of *pa-ḥa-se-e-mu-nu* are amenable to parsing in terms of early Iranian morphology, and (b) it is possible to make at least one plausible guess as to the identity of the underlying stem.

(a) The ending *-mu-nu* calls to mind the middle-voice participial suffix **-mn-a-* (fem. **-mn-ā-*) of Iranian, suggesting that the stem to which the suffix has been added is verbal. The *-ē-* preceding the participial ending may thus be interpreted as a reflection of the verbal stem-suffix **-aya-*, employed in early Indo-Iranian to derive causative and denominal verbal stems. The final syllables of *pa-ḥa-se-e-mu-nu* thus suggest that we might take this word to be the cuneiform rendering of an Iranian mediopassive participle built from a verb derived by means of the *-aya-* stem-suffix (**X-aya-mn-a-*, «*being-made-X»).

(b) As to the identity of the stem reflected in *pa-ḥa-se-*, we may compare the Modern Persian term *paxs* «melting, withering» and its derivative *paxsīdan* «to become shriveled from heat.» At the etymological heart of these words is the Iranian root **pak-* (< Indo-European **pek-*), which has as its basic sense «cooking» but which also shows the semantic development «ripening, maturation» (cf. Modern Persian *puxtān* «to cook, boil, ripen»). The lenited *-ḥ-* < **-k-* suggests that the velar was in direct contact with the following sibilant, since Iranian systematically lenited a voiceless stop in contact with a following consonant. The use of CV-characters to render the Iranian clusters (*-ḥa-* in *-ḥs-* and *-mu-* in *-mn-*) is paralleled in the rendering of such personal names as *Ba-ak-ka-su-ru-ú* = *Ba-ga-sa-ru-ú* (*Bagasrava-*) and *Ba-ga-bu-ki'-šū* (*Bagabuxša-*) (see Zadok, *BiOr* 33: 217). The identity of the stem-final sibilant is unclear, but the fact that the participle is spelled with *-se-* rather than *-še-* suggests that it might contain either Old Persian *-ç-* (< Iranian **paxtra-*) or *-s-* (Iranian **paxs-*).

In the *pa-ḥa-se-e-mu-nu* of Dar. 388 we thus seem to find the cuneiform rendering of an Old Persian derivative **paxç-aya-mna-* or **paxs-aya-mna-* «*being made **paxça-/paxsa-*,» in which the underlying **paxça-*

/**paxsa*- evidently expressed some aspect of fodder preparation—quite possibly a procedure involving heat, if we are correct in relating the form to the root **pak*- «cook». It is quite likely that the «cooking» in question simply referred to the natural process of ripening or curing hay; on the other hand, the roasting or parching of grain to produce special fodder for horses (ŠE.SA.A) is documented among the Assyrians (see Salonen, *Hippologica Accadica* 186, *CAD* s.v. *qalītu*), and it is conceivable that the Persian verb **paxç/saya*-reflected a comparable procedure.

David Testen (15-10-1999)
Oriental Institute, University of Chicago
1155 East 58th Street, Chicago IL 60637 (USA)
dtesten@orinst.uchicago.edu