

Old Persian is the name applied to the Persian language used in the cuneiform inscriptions of the Achaemenian dynasty; it was the vernacular speech of the Achaemenian rulers.

1 Typing Old Persian

1

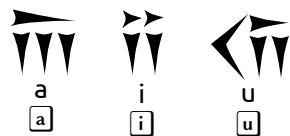
!	9	Q	i
"	:	R	j
#	;	S	k
\$	<	T	l
%	=	U	m
&	>	V	n
'	? <E	W	o
(@ <I	X	p
)	A	Y	q
*	B	Z	r
+	C	[s
,	D	\	t
-	E]	u
.	F	^	v
/	G	_	w
0	H	'	x
1	I	a	y
2	J	b	z
3	K	c	{
4	L	d	
5	M	e	}
6	N	f	
7	O	g	
8	P	h	

2 Writing System

3,5

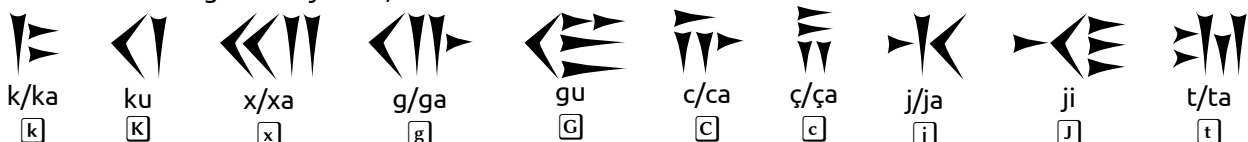
Old Persian is written in a cuneiform script, but with only a small number of signs compared to languages such as Akkadian. There are **3 vowel signs** and **33 consonant signs**

2.1 Vowel Signs (3)



2.2 Consonant Signs (33)

The consonant signs are syllabic, i.e.



tu [t]	θ/θa [θ]	d/da [d]	di [d]	du [d]	p/pa [p]	f/fa [f]	b/ba [b]	n/na [n]	n/nu [n]	m/ma [m]
mi [m]	mu [m]	y/ya [y]	v/va [v]	vi [v]	r/ra [r]	ru [r]	l/la [l]	s/sa [s]	š/ša [s]	z/za [z]
h/ha [h]										

Note that and are different.

r/ra
[r] l/la
[l]

For example, "Darius" is not

2.3 Logograms (Signs That Stand for a Whole Word)

king [q]	earth [e]	country [4][3]	god [6]	Ahuramazada [w][q]	Ahuramazada (genitive) [q]

3 Behistun Inscription



Figure 1: Behistun Inscription, Column i, lines 1-8²

1. (Pronoun)⁶ Darius^[4, p185]⁸ Alternative form of great⁹

- I am Darius, the great king, king of kings, the king of Persia, the king of countries, the son of Hystaspes, the grandson of Arsames, the Achaemenid.
- King Darius says: My father is Hystaspes; the father of Hystaspes was Arsames; the father of Arsames was Ariaramnes; the father of Ariaramnes was Teispes; the father of Teispes was Achaemenes.

3. King Darius says: That is why we are called Achaemenids; from antiquity we have been noble; from antiquity has our dynasty been royal.

References

- ¹ egreg. [How to typeset ancient Persian scripts in LaTeX](#).
- ² Livius. [Column I, lines 1-8](#).
- ³ Omniglot. [Old Persian Cuneiform](#).
- ⁴ H. Rawlinson. [Memoir on Cuneiform Inscription](#). 1849.
- ⁵ Prods Oktor Skjærvø. [An Introduction to Old Persian](#). 2002.
- ⁶ Wiktionary. [𐎧𐎠𐎼𐎡𐎹](#).
- ⁷ Wiktionary. [𐎧𐎠𐎼𐎡𐎹𐎧𐎠𐎼𐎡𐎹](#).
- ⁸ Wiktionary. [𐎧𐎠𐎼𐎡𐎹𐎧𐎠𐎼𐎡𐎹](#).
- ⁹ Wiktionary. [𐎧𐎠𐎼𐎡𐎹](#).