

# **A GUIDE TO THE OLD PERSIAN INSCRIPTIONS**

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A Guide to the Old Persian Inscriptions by Herbert Cushing Tolman

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**HERBERT CUSHING TOLMAN**

**A GUIDE TO THE  
OLD PERSIAN  
INSCRIPTIONS**





THE BEHISTAN MOUNTAIN.

A GUIDE  
TO THE  
OLD PERSIAN  
INSCRIPTIONS

BY

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1893

TO  
MY HONORED TEACHER,  
WILLIAM DWIGHT WHITNEY, Ph. D., LL. D.  
*under whose instruction and guidance were spent five  
years of my study in the Sanskrit language,*  
this volume is  
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

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## TO THE READER.

This book does not claim to be a contribution to Iranian subjects. In these recent years there has been such an advancement in this line of scholarship that Sanskrit students have been compelled to surrender this field to specialists among whom in America the name of Dr. A. V. Williams Jackson of Columbia College is conspicuous. In 1862 Haug published an outline of Avesta grammar in the first edition of his essays. At that time seventy octavo pages were sufficient to contain the discovered material. Two years later Justi's grammar of one hundred and fifteen octavo pages was looked upon as practically exhaustive. The grammar of Spiegel appeared in 1867, that of de Harlez in 1878, that of Geiger in 1879. Kavasji Edalji's grammar (1891) and Jackson's grammar (1892) extend four fold the horizon of Avestan scholarship as contrasted with the outline presented by Haug thirty years before, although the same quantity of text of the Avesta is the basis for grammatical work. This statement can enable the reader to realize the great strides this study has made during a few years. My work in the Zend Avesta and in the dialects of Persia has been simply an avocation from my chosen field of Sanskrit.

No book has been published in English containing the grammar, text and vocabulary of all the Old Persian Inscriptions. It was this fact that induced the author in 1891 to issue a little volume entitled "Old Persian Grammar" the copies of which have now been sold. The first fifty pages of the present volume, which contain the grammatical principles, are based on this work.

The following features characterize this volume on Old Persian Inscriptions.

- (1.) The grammatical principles arranged as a grammar of the language.
- (2.) The complete classification of all the verb-forms occurring in the inscriptions.
- (3.) The transliterated text. The portion supplied by conjecture has been inserted without brackets unless the conjectural reading be doubtful.

(4.) The references at the bottom of the page in the text which call the attention of the student to the grammar on the first occurrence of a form or principle.

(5.) The cuneiform text.

(6.) The translation.

(7.) The vocabulary giving the related words in Sanskrit, Latin, Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, etc.

The author recommends to the reader the following books as being of interest in the history of the early decipherment of the inscriptions:

(1.) Die altpersischen Keilinschriften nach Hrn. Westergaards Mittheilungen. Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes herausgegeben von Dr. Christian Lassen. Leipzig, 1845.

(2.) Die persischen Keilinschriften mit Uebersetzung und Glossar von Theodor Benfey. Leipzig, 1847.

(3.) The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. X, by H. C. Rawlinson. London, 1847.

(4.) Mémoire sur les inscriptions des Achéménides, conçues dans l'idiome des anciens Persans, par M. Oppert. Journal Asiatique ou recueil de mémoires d'extraits et de notices relatifs à l'histoire, à la philosophie, aux langues et à la littérature des peuples orientaux. Paris, 1851, 1852.

(5.) Expédition scientifique en Mésopotamie exécutée par ordre du Gouvernement de 1851 à 1854 par MM. Fulgence Fresnel, Félix Thomas et Jules Oppert, T. II. pp. 154-256.

(6.) Memoir on the Scythic Version of the Behistan Inscription by Edwin Norris, M. R. A. S. (Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. XV, 1855.)

(7.) Mémoire sur les rapports de l'Égypte et de l'Assyrie dans l'antiquité éclaircis par l'étude des textes cunéiformes, par M. Jules Oppert. Paris, 1869.

(8.) Die altpersischen Keilinschriften im Grundtexte mit Uebersetzung. Fr. Spiegel, Leipzig, (two editions).

(9.) Zur Erklärung der altpersischen Keilinschriften von Dr. H. Kern. Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Band XXIII, 1869.

(10.) Inscriptiones Palæo-Persicæ. Cajetan Kossowicz, St. Petersburg, 1872.

In my references to foreign journals, I have used abbreviations as little as possible. They are mostly of the nature of the following and need not be explained.

*ZDMG.* = *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*; *f. vergl. Sprachforsch.* = *für vergleichende Sprachforschung*; *idg.* = *indogermanische*; *ai.* = *altindische*; *Wb.* = *Wörterbuch*, etc., etc.

The author is aware of the many faults this book contains as fully as the severest critic can be, and he shall be glad to receive all suggestions which may make it more useful to the reader.

HERBERT CUSHING TOLMAN.

Madison, Wisconsin, November 4th, 1892.