



ANĒRĀN



Figure 1. Intaglio of Šāpūr I. Garnet.
Bibliothèque nationale de France
(1970.392)

ANĒRĀN “non-Iran,” [Middle Persian](#) ethno-linguistic term generally used



pejoratively to denote a political and religious enemy of Iran and [Zoroastrianism](#). It is etymologically a plural form with negative prefix and contrasts with [Ērān](#) (see also [Arya](#)). [Ērān](#) derives from *Ariyānām, and designated in the Sasanian period those areas which were inhabited by “Aryans” (i.e., Iranians) or in which Iranian languages were spoken. [Anērān](#), the antonym to “Iran,” is found in the Avesta; *Yt.* 8.2 and 19.68 refer to the destruction of non-Iranian realms by *xʷarnah-* (“Brilliance”). On coins, in the inscription of Šāpūr I at the [Ka’ba-ye Zardošt](#), and on a seal ([Figure 1](#)), the Sasanian kings styled themselves “king of kings of [Ērān](#) and [Anērān](#).” In his inscription Šāpūr I apparently included in “[Ērān](#)” regions such as [Armenia](#) and the Caucasus which were not inhabited predominantly by Iranians; [Anērān](#) comprised the areas conquered from the Roman empire: Syria, [Cappadocia](#), and [Cilicia](#). The high priest Kirdēr, thirty years later, gave in his inscriptions a more explicit list of the provinces of [Anērān](#), including [Armenia](#), [Georgia](#), [Albania](#), and [Balāsagān](#), together with Syria and [Asia Minor](#). In Zoroastrian literature and possibly in Sasanian political thought as well, the term has also a markedly religious connotation. An *anēr* person is not merely non-Iranian, but specifically non-Zoroastrian; and *anēr* designates also worshipers of the *dēws* (“demons”) or adherents of other religions (see *Dēnkard*, p. 147). Arabs and Turks are called *anēr*, as are Muslims generally, the latter in a veiled manner.

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