



## ĀYADANA

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**ĀYADANA** “place of cult.” The term occurs once in the Old Persian Bīstūn inscription of Darius I (DB 1.63f.): āyadanā tayā Gaumāta haya maguš viyaka adam niyaçārayam “the places of cult which Gaumāta the mage had destroyed, I restored.” The āyadanas can hardly have been temples, since we know from Herodotus that the Iranians, even in his time, had no temples, and since statues of gods (and therefore presumably temples to house them) were not introduced until the time of Artaxerxes II. There is absolutely no proof that the so-called Ka’ba-ye Zardošt at Naqš-e Rostam, and the similar structures at Pasargadae and Nūrābād, ever were fire temples as suggested by W. Hinz (“Altpersische Feuerheiligtümer,” *Geistige Arbeit* 9/2, 1942, pp. 1f.) and called āyadana (see also E. Schmidt, *Persepolis III*, Chicago, 1970, p. 45, and D. Stronach, *Iran* 3, 1965, pp. 16f.). The term must therefore have designated podiums, terraces such as those excavated by R. Ghirshman (*Terrasses sacrées de Bard-è Neshande et Masjid-i Soleiman*, Paris, 1976). To what gods the āyadanas that Gaumāta destroyed were consecrated is a moot question. Gaumāta’s gesture has often been interpreted as reflecting a religious conflict, either a Zoroastrian revolt of the magi (thus, e.g., L. H. Gray, in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. J. Hastings, I, Edinburgh, 1908, p. 71) or, on the contrary, an attempt on the part of the magi to suppress Zoroastrianism (see, e.g., R. N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, Cleveland and New York, 1963, p. 88, and J. Duchesne-Guillemin, in *Acta Iranica* 3, 1974, p. 19). It has even been suggested that the conflict between Gaumāta and Darius reflected a class struggle, Darius being helped by the noblemen (M. Dandamayev, *Iran pri pervykh akhemenidakh*, Moscow, 1963, pp. 256f.). But this hypothesis too runs



up against major difficulties since one would expect Darius to name the gods whose places of cult he restored (gods of the aristocrats, such as Vərəθraϥna, the god of war). In fact, he only names Ahura Mazdā.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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See also M. Boyce, “On the Zoroastrian Temple Cult of Fire,” *JAOS*, 1975, pp. 454f.

Idem, *Zoroastrianism II*, pp. 88-89.

G. Widengren, *Die Religionen Irans*, Stuttgart, 1965, p. 141.

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