



## DAIVADANA

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**DAIVADĀNA** (lit., “temple of the *daivas*,”), Old Persian term that appears in the “*daiva* inscription” of Xerxes (486-65 b.c.e.) at Persepolis (XPh 37-38; Kent, *Old Persian*, p. 151): *pasāva vašnā Auramazdāha adam avam daivadānam viyakanam* “Afterwards, by the favor of Ahura-mazdā, I destroyed that temple of the *daivas*.” The name is composed of *daiva-* “god” (but with a negative connotation, as in Av. *daēuua-*, reflecting Zoroaster’s condemnation of polytheism) and *dāna-* (IE. \**dṃHno-*) “building, house, structure,” as explained by Ilya Gershevitch (p. 35). Xerxes’ destruction of a temple dedicated to the *daivas* is evidence of the king’s Zoroastrian faith: The *daivadāna* mentioned in his inscription must have been a place for worshiping several deities that were no longer accepted in the theological revisions documented in the Younger Avesta (Gnoli, p. 58). The *daivadāna* of XPh was probably Iranian, perhaps Persian, as relevant religious-political conflicts are known to have occurred in Persia beginning with **Darius I** (522-486 b.c.e.): the Gaumāta episode and the destruction of the *āyadanas* “places of worship” ordered by the magus (DB 1.63-64). It is significant, however, that after the order to destroy the *daivas*’ temple the cult of **Ahura Mazdā** was reinstated in the same place (XPh 39-41). It seems, therefore, very unlikely that the *daivadāna* destroyed by Xerxes was Marduk’s temple at Babylon (Hartmann, pp. 158-60; Nyberg, pp. 365-66), the Parthenon in Athens (Levy), or some other sanctuary in a foreign country (Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* II, pp. 174-75).

The results of archeological research do not yet permit reconstruction of the typology of the *daivadāna*, despite Roman Ghirshman’s attempt to do so (cf.



Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* II, p. 37 n. 136). It is possible that a demolished religious building next to the southwestern corner of the terrace at Persepolis may be related to the *daivadāna* mentioned in XPh 35-41 (cf. Tilia, pp. 241ff.; Dandamaev and Lukonin, p. 354).

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