



## GABAE

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**GABAE** (Gk. *Gábai*), the name of two places in Persia and Sogdiana.

1. A town in Persis with the name *Gábai*, which apparently is derived from an unattested stem, OPers. \**Gaba-* (for an etymological hypothesis see Henning), is mentioned by Strabo (15.3.3) as being situated “somewhere in the upper (i.e., inland) parts of Persis” and being the site of a royal palace of the Achaemenid kings. Ptolemy (*Geography* 6.4.7) listed *Gábai* among the towns in Persis, although the coordinates given by him would lead one to suppose instead a location south-east of Persepolis. According to Polybius (31.9.3), Antiochus IV Epiphanes died in *Gábai* in 164 B.C.E., if the obviously rather ancient manuscript reading *en Tábais* has been rightly corrected into *Gábais* by Friedrich Carl Andreas (which interpretation has been rejected, however, by Altheim and Stiehl, p. 567). The same mistake (*T-* vs. *G-*) seems to have also occurred in Curtius Rufus (5.13.2), who mentions *Tabae* as a town in extreme Paraetacene (i.e., in the Median-Persian border zone), to which Alexander came when pursuing Darius III.

The province of *Gabēnē'* is mentioned by Diodorus (19.26.1, 5; 34.7; cf. Polyaeus 4.6.13) and Plutarch (*Eumenes* 15.4, where the ethnic name *Gabēnoí* is found) in connection with the power struggle between Eumenes and Antigonos I in 317 B.C.E. Ptolemy (*Geography* 6.4.3) enumerated the Gabaeans (*Gabaíoi*) as living above the Uzaeans (i.e., the people of *Kūzestān* or the Elamites), and Strabo (16.1.18), drawing from another source, has *Gabiané* as a province of Elymais.



Since Andreas (apud Hoffmann, p. 132 n. 1130) had identified Gábai with Ar. Jay (see Schwarz, *Iran*, p. 586 n. 1), the ancient name of Isfahan (more exactly perhaps of the capital of the province Isfahan) in the works of early Muslim geographers like Yāqūt, Ya‘qūbī, Ṭabarī, etc., that location has become customary, even if the campaigns of the year 317 B.C.E. might not be supposed to have taken place so far in the north. Later also the Middle Persian name of Sasanian Isfahan, i.e., *Gay*, was found in the *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērān* (sec. 53; see Markwart, *Provincial Capitals*, p. 104).

The definitive proof of this identification at last was provided by the trilingual evidence of Šāpūr’s inscription at Ka‘ba-ye Zardošt (cf. first Henning; now Back, p. 213), which once mentions Wārzin, the satrap of Gay (Pers. *w’lcn ZY gdy štrp*, l. 33; Parth. *w’rzn g’b ḥštrp*, l. 27; Gk. *Gouarzin Gē satrápou*, l. 63). This provides, as it were, the missing link between Gk. *Gábai* and the late Sasanian forms.

2. The same name (Gk.) *Gabaí* (accented this way, however) is attested for a stronghold in the no man’s land between Sogdiana and the land of the Massagetian Scythians, where, in 328 B.C.E., the Bactrian nobleman and commander Spitamenes and his followers persuaded about 3000 Scythian horsemen to join them in attacking Sogdiana (Arrian, *Anabasis* 4.17.4, where the variant reading *Bagai* must be given up). That town is not known elsewhere and can not be located precisely. It seems quite probable that its name is identical with Av. *Gauua-* (a region near Sogdiana in *Yt.* 10.14) and *Gā/āuua-*, acc. *Gāum* (described as “inhabited by Sogdians” in *Vd.* 1.4) and thus is homophonous only in Greek with the Persian toponym (see Humbach, p. 32).

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