Daniel Beckman. “Law, Mercy, and Reconciliation in the Achaemenid Empire”

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REFERENCES

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- 1 The author discusses and attempts to contextualize those instances, when the Great King granted forgiveness to rebels against his authority rather than having them executed. The introductory section gives a brief overview of Achaemenid justice revolving around the concept of *dāta*, and deals in particular with the punishment of traitors – public executions, often in a gruesome manner – against the background of imperial ideology. The central section discusses in detail about half a dozen of instances of royal forgiveness of rebels mostly of (Persian) aristocratic descent, dating to the fifth and fourth centuries BCE.
- 2 In his conclusions, the author argues that pardon was in general 'an attempt to bring stability where violence or other means had failed' (p. 148), pointing to the inclusion of other (Persian) nobles in the rendition of the verdict in order to reduce the risk of ulterior dissent. He also notes the absence of mercy as a kingly quality in royal inscriptions, contrary to what is known from the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

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