



DEŽ-E BAHMAN

DEŽ-E BAHMAN (Fortress of Bahman, Pahl. Wahmandiz), according to legend a fortress in Azarbaijan conquered by the Kayānian king Kay Ƙosrow, son of Sīavaš and grandson of Kāvūs, king of Iran. According to the *Šāh-nāma* (ed. Khaleghi, II, pp. 460-67), after Kay Ƙosrow returned from Tūrān to Iran two prominent courtiers, Ʀūs and Gūdarz, consulted about the royal succession. Ʀūs proposed Farīborz, Kāvūs' son, while Gūdarz put forward the name of Kay Ƙosrow. Finally, Kāvūs declared that both candidates should be sent to Ardabīl, where the fortress of Bahman was located, and that the one who succeeded in taking it would be his heir. Farīborz and Ʀūs made the first attempt, but the grounds of the fortress, the abode of demons (*dīvs*) and sorcerers (*jādūs*), heated up, forcing their army to withdraw. Then Kay Ƙosrow, accompanied by Gīv, son of Gūdarz, advanced. Kay Ƙosrow wrote a letter pleading with God for assistance. He tied the letter to a long spear, which he gave to Gīv to hurl at the fortress wall. When the letter hit the wall it raised an uproar, and the world became cloudy. At Kay Ƙosrow's command the army then shot arrows at the fortress, killing many demons. Afterward the air cleared, and Kay Ƙosrow, accompanied by Gūdarz, entered the fortress, where he beheld an extensive city with numerous gardens and palaces. He ordered construction of a high dome, where he installed **Ādur Gušnasp**, one of the three great Zoroastrian fire temples (*Sāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, II, pp. 463-67), the fire from which is said to have then appeared on the ears (*gūš*; *Tārīk-e Sīstān*, pp. 35-36) or on the mane (*buš*; *Bundahišn*, TD2, p. 125) of his horse.

The fortress was probably originally located in eastern Iran. Later, when



eastern Iranian traditions about Kay Ḳosrow, Ādur Gušnasp, and Čēčast were transferred to the west, the fortress, too, came to be located in Azarbaijan. In the Zoroastrian tradition it has been located on Mount Asnwand (Av. Asnuuant), and it is related that it was the assistance of Ādur Gušnasp that enabled Kay Ḳosrow to conquer “Bahmandez” (*Ātaš Nyāyišn* no. 5, in Dhalla, pp. 146-47; *Zand-i Khurtak Avistāk*, p. 38). As Asnwand was sometimes identified with Sabalān, the fortress has also been located there (*Nozhat al-qolūb*, ed. Le Strange, p. 81). The story of events involved in the overthrow of the image shrine on Lake Čēčast and the installation of Ādur Gušnasp in Pahlavi (e.g., *Bundahišn*, TD2, p. 125) and Persian (e.g., *Tāriḳ-e Sīstān*, pp. 35-36) texts is obviously connected with the conquest of this fortress. According to one account (*Nozhat al-qolūb*, ed. Le Strange, p. 81), it was also called Rūyindez (Dež-e Rūyīn).

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