



HĀMUN, DARYĀČA-YE II. IN LITERATURE AND MYTHOLOGY

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In the literature and mythology of ancient Persia Lake Hāmūn occupied, along with the Helmand/Hirmand River, a position of particular importance (Bartholomae, p. 9), especially in Zoroastrian eschatology (Nyberg, pp. 304-5). The Hāmūn is mentioned frequently in the Avesta, where it appears with the name Kāsaoya-. In *Yašt* 19 (66-69) the *x^varənah-* (see FARR) of the Kavis is mentioned in connection with the “Helmandic” Kāsaoya (*Kāsaēm haētumatəm*), where nine rivers flow together, and with the mountain Uši.δam (cf. *Uši.dam* and *Uši.darəna* in *Yašt* 1.28, 19.2; cf. *Yasna* 1.14, 2.14, 22.26), probably to be identified with Kuh-e Kāvāja, the mountain that rises about 150 m above the Hāmūn basin. In *Yašt* 19.92 and in *Vidēvdād* 19.5 there are references to the birth of the *saošyant- astvaṭ.ərəta* from its waters, where, according to tradition, the seed of Zoroaster was preserved in order to impregnate the three virgins mentioned in *Yašt* 13.142, mothers of the three *saošyants* (*Yašt* 13.62, 13.28; *Dēnkard* 7.8.1 ff.; cf. Boyce, *Zoroastrianism* I, p. 285).



In the Pahlavi texts the Hāmūn is called Kayānsīh (*Bundahišn* 13.16), reflecting the name of the Kayanid dynasty. These texts preserve echoes of the Avestan traditions about the Hāmūn, both in regard to the connection with the birth of the Saošyant (Pahlavi Sōšyans) from the seed of Zoroaster and to the nine rivers that empty into it (*Bundahišn* [TD2], pp. 220, ll. 6-15, 89, ll. 6-11); they also provide the additional detail that the convergence of the waters at that point was the work of Frāsiyāv (Av. Fraṇrasyan, New Pers. Afrāsiāb, q.v.), a theme that has been studied thoroughly by Josef Markwart (pp. 11 ff.). It should be noted in this connection that the free-flowing waters of Sistān were considered among the beneficial deeds of Manūščihr (*Dādistān ī Mēnōg ī xrad* 27.41-44) and one of the signs of the restoration (cf. appendix to *Ayādgār ī jāmāspīg*, in Messina, pp. 80, 123).

In the Pahlavi treatise *Abdīh ud sahgīh ī Sagestān* (2) the Kayānsīh is mentioned as one of the wonders of Sistān. The sacred character of the Hāmūn is certainly extremely ancient (Christensen, p. 5) and continued to survive after the advent of Islam.

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