



## KARSĀSP

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**KARSĀSP**, Av. Kərəsāspa, Pahlavi various forms (see below), Pers. Garšāsp (Garšāsb, Arabicized Karšāsf), Avestan dragon-slayer, son of Sāma, and eschatological hero. In the Pahlavi and Zoroastrian Persian traditions, several heroic feats are connected with him. In the *Šāh-nāma* and early historiography, he is a bleak figure, but then again becomes a hero, to whom Asadi Ṭusī devoted the *Garšāsp-nāma*, and founder of Sistān.

The most detailed modern description of the variants of the Karsāsp myth is Yarshater, 1983. Eduljee, 1983, is a comprehensive collection of texts in translation with analysis and copious references (more comprehensive than West, 1882). For other discussions, see, in particular, Spiegel, 1891, pp. 194-95; Darmesteter, 1877, pp. 213-18, 1892, II, pp. 626-28; Christensen, 1932, pp. 99-106; Boyce, 1975, pp. 100-104; and Williams, ed., 1990 (II, pp. 161-68), which also has the most up-to-date text edition and translation of the narrative in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, of which Nyberg, 1933, is an edition and translation with philological commentary.

On parallels between the Ferēdūn and Karsāsp myths, see also Wikander, 1941, pp. 161-70. On this and on Wikander's (1938) attempt to connect Kərəsāspa with the "Aryan band of young men," see Boyce's criticism (1975, p. 102, n. 110).

Garšāsp has today become a popular Internet figure among Iranians and has given his name to a game.



*The name.* Av. Kərəsāspa probably means “he with meager horses”; cf. Old Indic *kṛśvāśva* (Mayrhofer, 1977, p. I/60), similar to Jāmāspa, “he with scrawny horses” (cf. Old Indic *kṣāma* “emaciated”). Pahlavi *kars* is used in the *Zand ī Wahman yasn* (3.15, 4.68) together with *nizār* “weak” as the opposite of *frabih* “fat” (Tafazzoli, 1990, pp. 56-58).

In Pahlavi, the name is spelled variously as , , and . The spelling , which does not mark the long vowel, can be a misinterpretation of = with <š> for , while the shorter form (apparently common in some mss. of the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* beside and ), may be an error.

On the forms of the name in the *Šāh-nāma*, see ed. Khaleghi, *Notes I/1*, p. 168. Khaleghi also points out that the Arabic spelling with *k-* (rather than *j-*) points to original *k-*.

The change from Karsāsp to Garšāsp is problematic, but, conceivably, the name was influenced by Gar-šāh “king of the mountain(s),” epithet of Gayōmard (see [GAYŌMART](#); later usually understood as Gil-šāh “king of the clay,” i.e., of the earth; see Yarshater, 1983, p. 420). Note the combination of the stories of Garšāsp and Gar-šāh, e.g., in ms. MU29 (ed. JamaspAsa and Navābi, 1976; ed. Mazdāpur, 1378 Š./1999).

In the Pahlavi and later literature, he is also called Sām (Sāhm) or Sāmān (Sāhmān) Karsāsp (see below).

*Descriptions.* Kərəsāspa/Karsāsp is described in the *Avesta* as the strongest of strong men other than Zarathustra (*Yašt* 19.38). This may be why Zādspram (35.6) measures him by Zarathustra’s size (compare Dārāb Pāhlan’s *Kolāša-ye din*, where God tells Zartošt that he weighed his soul [*ruh*] by placing it on one side of the scale and heaven and earth on the other, and it weighed more; text p. 50, paraphrase, pp. 68-69). In the Pahlavi texts, he is said to “have much strength” (*was-ōz* [which also characterizes Dahāg]) or “be full of strength” (*purr-ōz*).

In *Yasna* 9.10, he is characterized by his hair as Av. *gaēsu*, Pahl. *gēsuar*, the original meaning of which is uncertain. The Pahlavi commentator Māhwindād says it refers to his being Tāzīg (Arab), but Māhgušasp points out that the Turks also have *gēs*, perhaps “braids.” He also carries a club (Av. *gadauvara* < *gada-bara*, Pahl. *gad-war*, elsewhere also *gad-dast*), which is how he performed most of his deeds, as the redactor of the Pahlavi version points out.



This club is also called “arm-smashing” (*arm-zadār*; *Dēnkard* 9.23.6), *gāw-sār* “ox-headed” (*Dādestān ī dēnīg* 36.84; cf. GORZ), and *gad ī pērōzgar* “the victorious club” (*Zand ī Wahman yasn* 9.22).

His standing Avestan epithet is *naire.manah* from *\*narya-manah* “having a manly/heroic mind.” In the later traditions, Garšāsp, Sām, and Narīmān tend to split into two or three different characters, a development that had probably taken place by the third century, since, in the Manichean *Book of Giants*, the giant brothers Ohya and Ahya, sons of Šahmizād, are called in Middle Persian Sām/Sāhm and Narīmān (in the Sogdian version, Sāhm and Pātsāhm; Henning, 1943, pp. 69-70; Skjærvø, 1995, pp. 198-203).

In the *Avesta*, Kərəsāspa had a brother named Uruuāxšaiia, about whom nothing much is said, other than that he was killed by Hitāspa but avenged by Kərəsāspa, who killed Hitāspa and dragged him after his chariot (*Yasna* 9.10, *Yašts* 15.28, 19.41).

*Karsāsp’s heroic deeds.* Two main narratives are associated with Kərəsāspa in the *Avesta*: the slaying of the three-horned dragon (*Yasna* 9.11, *Yašt* 19, and elsewhere), on the back of which he cooked his noon meal (see Darmesteter, I, p. 89, for parallels), and various other monsters, and his slaying of Aži Dahāka (see below; see also [AŽDAHĀ](#)). A short list is found in the *Mēnōy xrad* (26.49-53) in the section on the “benefits” (*sūd*) from various mythological characters (ed. Anklesaria, p. 91). Lists of his deeds are also included in the narrative of his crime against the fire (see below), which was part of the *Sūdgar nask*. A resumé of it is in the *Dēnkard* (9.15, ed. Vevaina, pp. 274-75), and the full story in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (chap. 18f). Other versions are found in several Zoroastrian Persian texts, including the *Šad dar Bondahēš*, chap. 20 (ed. Dhabhar, pp. 86-92; tr. in *The Persian Rivāyats*, ed., Dhabhar, 1932, 516-20; text in the Paris ms. suppl. persan 46, see Blochet, pp. 93, no. LXV; Bartholomae, 1915, p. \*40) and the *Dinkard-nāma* (pp. 204-11); a versified version in the Paris ms. suppl. persan 38 (Blochet, p. 77, no. LI; Bartholomae, 1915, p. \*26; reproduced in Spiegel, 1860, pp. 336-48); and a pseudo-Pahlavi version, probably translated from Persian into Pahlavi, in ms. MU 29 in the Meherji Rana Library (ed. Mazdāpur, 1378/1999, pp. 122-51; on the ms. see pp. 11-12 and JamaspAsa and Nawabi, eds., introduction). The list of feats in these late texts only partly overlaps that in *Yašt* 19.

According to *Yašt* 19, it was when the *xvarənah* had left Yima (see [JAMŠID i. MYTH OF JAMŠID](#)) for the third time that it came to Kərəsāspa, enabling him to



perform his deeds (see, e.g., Hintze, ed., 1994, pp. 212-35; Humbach and Ichaporia, eds., 1998, pp. 115-25). Similarly, according to the *Dēnkard* (7.1.32; Molé, ed. and tr., 1967, pp. 8-11), Karsāsp's superior strength came from the "word," which came to him as his share of the second branch or function (*pēšag*) of the *dēn* (and its *xwarrah*), the warriors (*artēštārīh*), as part of Jam's *xwarrah* (see [ARTĒŠTĀR](#), [CLASS SYSTEM](#)).

As the first and second of these deeds, he slew the giant man- and horse-gobbling horned dragon (*Yasna* 9.11, *Yašt* 19.40, *Pahlavi Rivāyat* 18f5-7) and the giant Gaṇḍarəβa/Gandarw "with tawny heals" (*gaṇḍarβa zāiri-pāšna*) who dwelt in the Vourukaša Sea (*Yašts* 5.38, 15.28, 19.41; see [GAṆḌARĒBA](#)-), who with wide-open jaws devastated the land and who, according to the *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, dragged Karsāsp into the ocean, where they fought until Karsāsp got hold of his skin below his feet and pulled it off and tied him up in it (*Yašt* 19.41, *Pahlavi Rivāyat* 18f.9-14); this episode contains the only reference to his friend and helper Āxrūrag (*Pahlavi Rivāyat* 18f.11), Av. Āxrūra, who is otherwise mentioned only in *Yašt* 13 (see below).

*Yašt* 19 then lists several evil-doers (*Yašt* 19.41-44), among them Hitāspa (see above) and Snāuuiδka, who planned, once adult, to make the sky his chariot and the earth its wheels and then have it pulled by Spəṇta Mainiiu and Anra Mainiiu (see [AHRIMAN](#)). Also in the *Māh ī Frawardīn Rōz ī Hordad* (31; Jamasp-Asana, ed., p. 106; repr., p. 324) it is mentioned that Sām ī Nairīmānān slew this *dēw* (spelled ). In the *Mēnōy xrad*, several other characters are listed, among them the bird Kamak, which, according to the *Šad dar-e Bondaheš*, with its giant wings prevented rain from falling onto the earth.

The *Pahlavi Rivāyat* and the Zoroastrian Persian texts then list his slaying of the (seven in the *Šad dar*) giant highwaymen (*rāhdār*; 18f.68), which is connected with *Yašt* 13.136, where Kərəsāspa's fravashi is invoked for withstanding the enemy army and various kinds of robbers (*gaḍa*) and the evil they cause; the passage is cited by Zādspram (32.4), where (as elsewhere) the *gaḍa*, Pahlavi *gayg*, is associated with the *rāhdār*. Last comes his pacifying of the fleet wind, which had been deceived by the *dēws* to go after Karsāsp, which it did so violently that it threatened to destroy the earth, but Karsāspa persuaded it to do what it had been created to do: uphold heaven and earth (18f.20-23).

*Karsāsp's sins.* Kərəsāspa is mentioned in the *Videvdad* (1.9) as being followed by the witch Xnaθaitī, who was fashioned by the Evil Spirit as the adversary of



the land Vaēkərəta. The Av. *pairikəm yaqm xnaθaiti* is rendered in the Pahlavi version as “witch-desire” (*parīg-kāmagīh*), interpreted as “idol-worship” (*uzdēs-paristagīh*), and Karsāsp is said to be its first practitioner. This exegesis is cited in the *Bundahišn* (31.17-18), where the “witch-desire” is said to be the same as Sām’s worship of the *dēws*, although another authority says it referred to the sin of not tying the *kusti* (*wišād-dwārišnīh*).

The more popular narrative, however, is that of Karsāsp’s slaying of the Fire, son of Ohrmazd, and his punishment for that, recounted in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* and the Zoroastrian Persian texts. At the beginning of the narrative in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, Ohrmazd asks Zarathustra whose soul (*ruwān*) seems best to him, and Zarathustra answers, “that of Karsāsp.” Ohrmazd summons Karsāsp’s soul from hell and shows it to Zarathustra, who is frightened by its ferocity. Because of all the evil he experienced in hell, Karsāsp tells Zarathustra he wishes he had been a *hērbed* with a wealthy (*tuwān*) patron, which appears to be a reference to his function as warrior that had been assigned to him and for which he now wishes he had been assigned the first, the priestly function. According to the *Šad dar*, Garšasp points out that, if he had been a priest, he would not have had time for all these killings (tr. Dhabhar, p. 516). [Note: West (1882, p. 173 n. 5) read Sām in *Dādestān ī dēnīg* 48.41 and assumed that his “warriordom” was here turned against husbandry (the third function); cf. Eduljee, 1983, pp. 57-58. Instead of Sām, however, we should read *sahm* “terror,” i.e., of war, which keeps the farmers from work.]

Ohrmazd expresses his displeasure with Karsāsp’s soul, blaming it for killing the fire, his son, and not caring for it, and Karsāsp’s soul begs him to take pity on him and grant him paradise for all the good things he had done in life that contributed to keeping evil out of Ohrmazd’s creation and preventing Ahrimen from becoming its ruler (the *Mēnōy xrad* 26.52-53, ed. Anklesaria, p. 91, adds that, if even one of the adversaries had remained, the resurrection and Final Body would not have been possible). Finally, Karsāsp argues that he is needed for his eschatological function, but Ohrmazd points out that, as long as people keep sinning, the end will not be coming, and they have to suffer in the meantime.

After listening to this, all the deities in the two worlds weep, as does Zarathustra, who points out that, if Karsāsp had not existed with body *and* soul (*gyān!*), then Ohrmazd’s creation would not have existed in this world (the *gētīy*). (This statement in 18f.29 contradicts the notion that Karsāsp had only body [see below], but the text is not well preserved; obviously, it was his



bodily strength, not his *gyān*, that enabled him to dispose of all the enemies of Ohrmazd's creation.)

The Fire itself then accuses Karsāsp and refuses to give him access to paradise, but, then, *Gōšurūn* intercedes and refuses to let him return to hell because of the good things Karsāsp has done for it, presumably by keeping in check the forces of evil, which hurt it (as described in *Yasna* 29).

Zarathustra then promises to care for the fire, and Ohrmazd explains to him that he is well aware of the necessity of Karsāsp's deeds and, according to the *Dēnkard* (9.15.4), is finally persuaded to let Karsāsp go to the *hamēstagān* (mss. *hamēst/hamēstīg axwān*).

In the *Šad dar-e Bondaheš*, Karsāsp's sin is called a sin against Ardibehešt (see *ARDWAHIŠT*, the *amahrspand* protecting the fire) and is specified as the sin of extinguishing the fire (cf. *Yasna* 9.11; cf. Antia, 1908). Ardibehešt then recounts the episode of the pot and the fire in some detail. After Zarathustra promises to look after the fire, Ardibehešt finally pardons Karsāsp's soul.

In the *Pahlavi Rivāyat*, the story is included in a chapter on the value of fires and follows a section listing the various fires used for practical purposes. The direct "trigger" (Skjærvø, 2008, p. 538) for the story's inclusion may have been the appearance in the list of the fire from pots (*dēg*), which probably evoked the *dēg* in which Karsāsp cooked his meal and then overturned (*Pahlavi Yasna* 9.11). Whether the later stories are part of the same original story complex as the Avestan story or the result of an exegesis on this story cannot be determined. See also Boyce, 1975, p. 103, n. 115, on this connection.

The exegesis in the *Sūdgar nask* preserved in the *Dēnkard* and the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* is loosely based on the Pahlavi version of *Yasna* 45. Though the fire is not mentioned, several of the other main features of the story have counterparts here. The main trigger may have been the mention in *Pahlavi Yasna* 45.7 of "deathlessness," the "questioning of the soul," and the Final Body. The Best Existence and the gift of Garōdmān (*Dēnkard* 9.15.2, *Pahlavi Rivāyat* 18f.5, etc.) are in *Yasna* 45.4 and 45.8; the mention of "protection of beasts and men" in *Yasna* 45.9 may have evoked the horned dragon, who devoured horses and men; and the "scorn" of *dēws* and men (*dēwān ud mardōmān tar-menēd*) is in *Yasna* 45.11.

In a further elaboration on the story, Sāmān Karsāsp is included with Jam and



Frēdōn among those to whom Ohrmazd offered the *dēn* but who did not accept it, because the Lie (*druz*) had made them not listen (*a-niyōšīdārīh*; cf. the story in the *Bahman-nāma* cited below); therefore, the *dēn* had to wait for Wištāsp, i.e., Srōš-ahlīy, to be accepted (*Dēnkard* 9.36; ms. DH fol. 293v; triggered by *a-niyōšīdārīh* and the equation of Srōš-ahlīy with Wištāsp in *Pahlavi Yasna* 43.12). Similarly, in the *Bundahišn* (29.8), Sām is said to have become unconscious because he scorned the Mazdayasnian *dēn*.

This appears to be contrary to what is said in the *Dēnkard* (7.1.32) that, when the *dēn* came to Sāmān Karišāsp, he obtained warriorhood (see above). Also in the *Sūdgar nask* (*Dk.* 9.23.6), in the exegesis of the *Airiīaman išīia* (see Vevaina, 2007), there is a reference to Karsāsp’s accepting the *dēn*. In the episode where Kay Husrōy changes Wāy into a camel and rides him, he passes by three of the Seven undead (one of them Tūs; see below) before he comes to Sōšāns, who praises him. Kay Husrōy then praises the Mazdayasnian *dēn*, whereupon Karsāsp arrives and is encouraged by Tūs (!) to praise the *Gāθās* and associate himself with them, whereupon Karsāsp praises Righteousness (*ahlāyīh*, i.e., *aša*, q.v.), and throws away his “arm-smashing” club.

On the similarities with the Old Indic Indra–Vṛtra myth, see Eduljee, 1983, pp. 62-63.

*Karsāsp in the eschatological narrative.* There are a few references to Kārāsāspa’s eschatological functions in the *Avesta*. In *Yašt* 13.61, his body (*kərp*) is said to be guarded by 99,999 fravashis of the “sustainers of (the cosmic) order” (*ašauuan*). Manuščīhr cites this passage in the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* (16.5).

The Pahlavi narratives vary a bit in their descriptions of Karsāsp’s long sleep and his final task (notably in the number of fravashis). According to the *Bundahišn* (29.8-9), when Frēdōn had captured Dahāg, he wanted to kill him, but was unable to do so and instead chained him to Mount Damāwand. When Dahāg escapes from his chains at the end of time, another dragon-slaying hero will therefore be needed, and Ohrmazd had destined Karsāsp (Sām) for this task. Until this time, he lies unconscious (*a-hōš*) or asleep in the plain of \*Pēšyānsēy, guarded by 10,000 fravashis of the “sustainers of order.” It was a Turk named \*Nōhīn who shot him with an arrow while he was asleep, so that evil Būšāsp fell upon him (cf. Darmesteter, 1877, pp. 181-82). He lies in the middle of a wormwood bush (Pers. *dermana?*), covered with snow and guarded by the fravashis, awaiting his awakening and final task. According to



the *Mēnōy xrad* (61.20-21), Ohrmazd and the *amahrspands* appointed 99,999 fravashis to protect his body (*tan*) as it lies near Mount Damāwand in the plain of \*Pēšānsēy, where the only growing things are barley and other edible plants and, apparently, wormwood, but not trees (ed. Anklesaria, pp. 164-65).

It may be the reference in *Yašt* 13.61 to his “body,” only, that caused the discussion about whether he also had a “soul” (*gyān*) seen in the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (54.1), where the Seven unconscious (*a-hōš*) and deathless (*a-marg*) “makers of the Renovation” (*fraškerd-kerdār*) are listed, among them Tūs and Wēw (see *GĒV*), who still have souls, and Karsāsp, who has a body (*tan*), but no soul. *Zādspram* (35.6) may refer to the same detail, but the text is not clear: *kēš* (*tan?*) *a-hōš* “whose (body?) is unconscious.” On the “undead,” see Christensen, 1932, pp. 153-56.

According to *Zādspram* (35.6), Tūs and Wēw also lie in the snow. The inclusion of Karsāsp among the unconscious ones lying in the snow is probably not original, since it is apparently connected with the story in the *Šāh-nāma* about the end of Kay Kōsrow (also one of the Seven), who was lost in a snowstorm together with Tūs, Giv, and others (ed. Mohl, IV, pp. 268-71; ed. Khaleghi, IV, pp. 367-69; tr., IV, pp. 307-8).

The waking of Karsāsp is described variously. According to the *Zand ī Wahman Yasn* (9.16-22), when Dahāg/Aždahāg escapes from his chains and begins wreaking havoc, the fire, the water, and the plant complain to Ohrmazd and ask him to revive Frēdōn and send him against Ažidahāg, and Ohrmazd tells Srōš and Nēryōsang to go and shake Karsāsp’s body to wake him. They call him four times, and Karsāsp gets up and strikes Ažidahāg with his club and kills him.

In the *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (48.32-36), Ohrmazd and the *amahrspands* go and wake up Frēdōn’s soul (*ruwān*) and tell him to slay Dahāg. When Frēdōn’s soul says it cannot do it, they go to Karsāsp’s soul, and Karsāsp gets up and slays Dahāg.

Manuščihr, in the *Dādestān ī dēnīg* (36.84), is more concise: when Dahāg runs loose, a brave man called Sāmān Kersāsp is raised from the dead before his time and smashes Dahāg with his club. The *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (18f.33-34) and the *Bundahišn* (33.42) agree that he is the first among those of the world of the living to be raised from the dead.

According to a note in the *Māh ī Frawardīn Rōz ī Hordad* (31), Sām ī



Nairīmānān, having slain Dahāg, takes up the rule of the seven continents until Kay Husrōy (see [KAYĀNIĀN](#)) appears and Sām hands over the rule to him.

The Persian versions are more detailed, but differ in their details. According to the Persian *Bahman-nāma* (*The Persian Rivāyats*, ed., Dhabhar, 1932, pp. 472-73), when Žoḥāk escapes, Ahrimen comes up from hell and rules for a day and a half, upon which Ohrmazd orders that Sām Narīmān be roused. Sōšāns [the text has Sāsān and Sāšān] invites Sām to accept the Mazdayasnian *dēn*, so that he may become deathless like the other *fraškerd*-makers, but he does not accept it. When Sōšāns becomes threatening, Sām accepts and goes to confront Žoḥāk/Dahāg, asking him too to accept the Mazdayasnian *dēn* and so become deathless. Dahāg tries to seduce Sām into helping him and do the will of Ahrimen and capture [Garōdmān](#) ([where this story is not mentioned]). Sām refuses, curses Ahrimen and his brood, and kills him. The Persian *Jāmāsp-nāma* (see [AYĀDGĀR I JĀMĀSPIG](#)) is similar, but, here, Žoḥāk accepts the *dēn*, and evil leaves this world (*The Persian Rivāyats*, ed., Dhabhar, 1932, p. 493).

The *Jāmāsp-nāmag* is brief: Ažidahāg offers Karsāsp friendship, and Karsāsp encourages him to accept the Mazdayasnian *dēn* so that they may rule together. Ažidahāg does not accept, and Karsāsp strikes him, whereupon Ažidahāg agrees to rule the world together with him, but now too late (tr. Modi, pp. 118-19; ed. Messina, 17.7, pp. 75-76, 119).

*Garšāsp in the Šāh-nāma.* There are several references in the *Šāh-nāma* to the descent of Garšāsp from Jamšēd (see [JAMŠĪD](#)). When Ferēdun answers his sons, who are unhappy about his patronage of Manučehr, he does it in front of his great army commanders, including Sām son of Narimān and Garšāsp son of Jamšēd (ed. Mohl, I, pp. 174-75 l. 721; ed. Khaleghi, I, p. 132, l. 692; tr. Warner and Warner, I, p. 212). Another reference comes much later in the book in the description of Kay Kōsrow walking in the garden with the *pahlavāns*, Gudarz, etc., and Barzin, (son) of Garšāsp, of the seed of Jam (ed. Mohl, III, pp. 272-73, ll. 20-21; ed. Khaleghi, III, p. 289, ll. 21-22, where “Barzin and Garšāsp”; tr. Warner and Warner, III, p. 273; see [BARZĪN](#)). Finally, in the episode where [Esfandiār](#) scorns Rostam’s father [Zāl](#) as being the brood of a *dēv* (see [DIV](#)), Rostam answers that Dastān (i.e., Zāl) is the son of Sām, son of Narimān, son of Karimān, son of [Hōšang](#) or Karšāsb, according to the manuscripts (ed. Mohl, IV, pp. 614-15, ll. 3037-39; ed. Khaleghi, V, p. 346, ll. 649-51 with n. 12; tr. Warner and Warner, V, p. 202), and his descent, Rostam adds, is from the loins of Sām and Jam (ed. Khaleghi, n. 14). Another, less



explicit, reference to Karimān occurs after Rostam and Tahmina's first amorous encounter, when Rostam prophesies that, if she has a boy, he will be as tall as Sām son of Narimān and as manly as Karimān (ed. Mohl, II, pp. 82-83, ll. 124-25; ed. Khaleghi, II, p. 124, ll. 87-88; tr. Warner and Warner, II, p. 125). Note also the episode in which Sām addresses the newly-crowned Manučehr, promising him his support, and cites his forebears "from Garšāsp to Narimān" (ed. Mohl, I, pp. 214-15, ll. 39-40 [not in ed. Khaleghi, I, p. 164, where the two lines in Mohl are missing between ll. 38 and 39]; tr. Warner and Warner, I, p. 239). The story of Narimān is restricted to that of his death at Mount Sepand, told by Zāl to Rostam, before Rostam sets out to take it and thus appeases Narimān's soul (ed. Mohl, I, pp. 364-67, ll. 1856-68; pp. 374-75, l. 1957; ed. Khaleghi, I, p. 277 in footnotes ll. 46-58, p. 280 in footnotes l. 147; tr. Warner and Warner, I, p. 329).

Another couple of references to Garšāsp are found in descriptions of the great ones of the realm, the *pahlavān*, in various situations. Those gathered to witness Ferēdun giving the throne to Manučehr include Qāren, Garšāsp, and "the son of Narimān" (= Sām; ed. Mohl, I, pp. 168-69, ll. 638-40; ed. Khaleghi, I, p. 127, l. 610 [with two lines less than Mohl, including the one mentioning Garšāsp]; tr. Warner and Warner, I, p. 207). In the description of Manučehr's army, Garšāsp is assigned the command of the left flank and Sām and Qobād the right flank (ed. Mohl, I, pp. 182-83, l. 821; ed. Khaleghi, I, p. 138, l. 792; tr. Warner and Warner, I, p. 217).

More specific situations include Qāren's seizure of the fortress of the Ālāns, where he goes along with Garšāsp, and Aḡrirat's advice to his son Pašang after the death of Manučehr not to go for Nawḡdar, but for Qāren and Garšāsp in order to please the souls of his ancestors (ed. Mohl, I, pp. 194-95, l. 951 and pp. 392-93, ll. 125-26; ed. Khaleghi, I, p. 146, l. 916 and p. 293, l. 109; tr. Warner and Warner, I, p. 345). In a description of Ferēdun's court, with the king seated on his throne and Manučehr next to him, Garšāsp is mentioned among his ministers specifically as treasurer (*ganjvar*; ed. Mohl, I, pp. 178-79, l. 771; ed. Khaleghi, I, p. 135, l. 742; tr. Warner and Warner, I, p. 214), which recalls his position as vizier in the Muslim sources (see below).

In some manuscripts, a chapter is ostensibly devoted to the reign of Garšāsp, son and successor of Zav, but all that is said about Garšāsp is that he was born and, fifteen lines later, died (ed. Mohl, I, pp. 440-41, ll. 1-2, 15; ed. Khaleghi, I, pp. 329-30 in the footnotes after ll. 33 and 44; tr. Warner and Warner, I, pp. 374-75). The chapter is, in fact devoted to the rise of Rostam. It is fairly clear



that the lines devoted to Garšāsp are secondary; note, in particular, that he, anacronistically, puts on the Kayanid crown (*kayāni kolāh*). As Kāleqi-Moṭlaq points out, the historians who relied on the *Šāh-nāma* also do not include Garšāsp's reign (ed. Khaleghi, *Notes*, I/1, p. 366).

*Karsāsp in mythological history and later historiography.* In the list of the first four *haoma*-pressers in *Yasna* 9, Kərəsāspa's father Ōrita of the Sāmas is listed after the fathers of Yima and Ōraētaona (see [JAMŠID](#), [FERĒDUN](#)), before Zarathustra's father Pourušāspa. In *Yašt* 13 to the fravashis, Kərəsāspa's fravashi is invoked after those of Manuš.ciθra and the *kauuis* (see [FRAVAŠI](#), [KAYĀNIĀN](#)) and before that of Āxrūra (see above), son of Haosrauuah. In the Pahlavi texts, there is less consistency. In *Dēnkard* 7.1.31-33, he is placed between Mānušcihr and Kay Kawād, and, in *Bundahišn* 36.7, Sām is said to have ruled between (? *andar*) Manušcihr and Uzaw and Kawād, but, in *Bundahišn* 35.32-33, he is listed with his father after Kay Husrōy and before Luhrāsp (see [KAYĀNIĀN](#)).

According to the *Bundahišn* (35.42-43), Sām had six children, one of them Dastān, whom he treasured more than the others and whom he made king of Sistān and Nēmrōz, and who became Rōdstahm's (Rostam) father.

The early Muslim historians, approximately contemporary with the final redactions of the Pahlavi texts, also had difficulties fitting him into their chronologies. For instance, Ḥamza states briefly that Karšāsf reigned while Zav reigned (ed. Gottwaldt, p. 35; tr., p. 24), and K̄vārazmi (pp. 99-100) says they shared the reign; Mas'udi (*Moruj* II, p. 117) says that Manučehr (spelled Manušehr) was succeeded by Sahn, his great-great-grandson, and alludes to Sahn's "long wars and reign." According to Ṭabarī (ed. De Goeje, pp. 532-33; tr., III, pp. 115-16), Karšāsb was Zav's vizier and the son of Aṭreṭ son of Sahn son of Narimān and descended from Afrēdun (Ferēdun). Ṭabari gives another genealogy, as well, which has him descended from Manučehr. He also stresses that, contrary to what some thought, he did not rule. Bal'ami has Dastān son of Sām son of Narimān son of Garšāsp son of Barbeṭ (for Aṭreṭ; ed. Gonābādi, p. 133 [not in tr. Zotenberg, p. 104]) and merely mentions that he was Zav's vizier and a descendant of Afrēdun (ed., p. 523, tr. Zotenberg, p. 406). Similarly, the *Mojmal* (p. 25) has Rostam son of Zāl son of Sām son of Narimān (with the daughter of the king of Meṣr) son of Garšāsf/Garšāsp (with the daughter of the king of Rum) son of Aṭreṭ; see also *ibid.*, pp. 41-44, on the exploits of Garšāsp and Sām Narimān under Ferēdun, Manučehr, and Nawḍar.



According to Ta‘ālebi (ed. Zotenberg, pp. 68-69)—who does not mention Garšāsp—Sām, son of Narimān, and father of Dastān/Zāl, was Manučehr’s main support, generalissimo, and guardian of his provinces and was nicknamed *yal* “hero” and *pahlavān-e jahān*, which Ta‘ālebi rendered as “support (*omda*) of the world.” He was governor of Sistan, Zābolestān, and the Indian provinces. Mirk<sup>v</sup>ānd has Sām as Manučehr’s governor of Nēmrōz, Kabul, Zābolestān, and the Indian provinces (ed. Kayānfarr, II, pp. 634-35; tr. Shea, pp. 166-67) and Garšāsb as Zāb’s fraternal nephew, his mother being a daughter of Benjamin, son of Jacob (ed. Kayānfarr, II, p. 658; tr. Shea, p. 205; note that the reign of Manučehr was thought to be contemporaneous with Moses, e.g., Ṭabari, ed. De Goeje, p. 434; tr., p. 23; Mas‘udi, *Moruj* II, p. 117). He also points out that, “in most histories,” Garšāsp’s rule marks the end of the Pēšdādiān dynasty.

For further references, see Justi, pp. 161-62, and Eduljee. Genealogical tables are found in Justi, p. 391; Biruni, *Ātār*, ed. Sachau, pp. 104-8, tr. Sachau, pp. 112-14; and in Eduljee, p. 78.

*Garšāsp in the Tāriḵ-e Sistān.* According to the indigenous tradition of Sistān, as reported in the introduction of this work (ed., Bahār, pp. 2-5), Garšāsb was descended from Jamšid and ultimately from Gayumart, identified with Adam, and founded Sistān. He wanted—so he told the knowledgeable men he had assembled from the whole world—to found Sistan as a counterpart to the ruined world of Žoḥāk and asked them to investigate which would be a propitious time, which they did and concluded that this land would endure for 400 years until the appearance of the prophet (of Islam) and that they would be the first to comply with him.

The author then goes on to tell about Garšāsb’s feats, including—at Žoḥāk’s command—the killing of an *aždahā* as large as several mountains when he was only fourteen, and going to India (cf. [GARŠĀSP-NĀMA](#)). When he came back, Afrēdun summoned him, and he went with Narimān, his grandson, son of Kurang and father of Sām (father of Dastān). Afrēdun set Garšāsp on the throne and Narimān on a golden chair (ed. Bahār, pp. 5-6).

In the section on the manners of the Sistanians, Garsāsp and his offspring are credited with Muslim virtues, including some that went against points of the Zoroastrian faith such as *xwēdōdah* (p. 33; see [MARRIAGE iii. NEXT-OF-KIN](#)). There follows the story about the Karkuy fire, which was dedicated to Garšāsp (p. 36).



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