



KAYĀNIĀN III. KAUI KAUIĀTA, KAY KAWĀD, KAY KOBĀD (QOBĀD)

KAYĀNIĀN

iii. Kauui Kauuāta, Kay Kawād, Kay Kobād (Qobād)

Kauui Kauuāta ([Figure 1](#)) has no epithets in the Avesta to describe him, and the descriptions in the Pahlavi sources are mostly vague. His seed (*tōhmag*) is from the *xwarrah* (*Dādestān ī dēnīg* 36.26, see above); he was the first to establish kingship in Iran (*Dēnkard* 7.1.33); he was godfearing and a good ruler (*Mēnōy xrad* 26.45-47). According to a notice in the *Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr* (57), he may have married Wan, daughter of Gulaxš.

The tales of his origins vary. According to the *Bundahišn*, he was abandoned in a basket (*kēwūd*) on a river and, when it was caught in the reeds (? *pad kawādagān afsard*), was found by Uzaw, who called him Foundling (**Wistag/Windīdag*; see Christensen, 1934). This is the familiar story also told of Cyrus by Herodotus.

A variant of this story is that of Ferdowsi, according to whom, because the sons of Nowḍar were not fit to rule, Zāl followed the advice of a *mowbed* to seek out Kay Kobād of the line of [Ferēdūn](#) and sent Rostam to find him in the



Alborz (*Šāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, I, pp. 338-41; ed. Mohl, I, pp. 454-63; tr., I, pp. 382-87). The story is related to that of the Paikuli inscription, with which it shares the basic formulas (Skjærvø, 1998). The river motif is preserved, as Kay Kobād is found dwelling on a river shore in a paradisiacal environment. The origin story of Kawād is not found in the works of Islamic-period authors, who ascribe a similar story to Dārā (see below and [DĀRĀ i](#)).

Some of the later traditions have him descended from Manučehr via Nowḍar and Zāb (Zaw). Whether this is an ancient tradition or based on the order of the names in *Yašt* 13, where Uzauua and Manuš.ciθra and others are listed between Θraētaona and Kauui Kauuāta, cannot be ascertained. The *Mojmal al-tawāriḵ* cites this tradition, as well as another, according to which his father was Kay Kāma son of Zaw (ed. Bahār, p. 29). About his rule, the *Bundahišn* (33.7) notes that Afrāsiāb's devastation of Iran lasted until Kawād took up the rule.

In the Perso-Arabic sources, Kavād's connection with agriculture, borders, and defining provinces is more prominent. He arranged for irrigation, in addition to naming the lands, determining boundaries, and setting up provinces; he instituted a tithe to pay for army provisions; and he prevented enemies (Ḥamza) or the Turks (Ṭabari, Ebn Balkī) from invading Iran (Ḥamza, p. 35; tr., p. 24; Ṭabari, I/2, pp. 534-35; tr., III, pp. 116-17; Ebn al-Balkī, ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, p. 40; ed. Behruzi, p. 48). According to Ṭa'ālebi, he arranged to have tax income used to pay soldiers, so that the money would circulate from the king and among the soldiers, merchants, and the like, for the benefit of them all and not stay in one place for long to the detriment of the others. He enjoyed cultivating the earth (cf. Ṭa'ālebi's description, p. 150, with the description in *Videvdad* 3.22-29 of the things that most please and displease the earth) and first prohibited the drinking of wine as a dangerous habit, but then re-permitted it in moderation to heighten courage (Ṭa'ālebi, pp. 148-52). He founded the city of Ērān-āsān-kard-kawād (*Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr* 54), instead of which Ḥamza has Irān—kawād (Ḥamza, p. 35).

In the *Šāh-nāma*, upon mounting the throne, Kavād leads a campaign against the Turkmens and Pašang, Afrāsiāb's father. Here, Rostam is introduced as a great fighter, and Afrāsiāb berates Pašang for his ill-advised attack on the Iranians. Pašang writes a letter to Kavād, suggesting they stay within their respective borders and drop fighting, in reply to which Kavād reminds him that they were the aggressors, but agrees to leave them alone if they withdraw and stay beyond the river. Kavād then divides the realm among his army



leaders, while reserving the area of Nimruz (Sistān) for himself, departs for Eṣṭaḳr in Pārs, and makes a trip around the world, before returning to Pārs. Ferdowsi concludes the story by stating that he made the world cultivated (*ābād*) with law and generosity (*dād o daheš*; *Šāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, I, pp. 345-58; ed. Mohl, I, pp. 464-85; tr., II, pp. 11-23).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See at end of [KAYĀNIĀN XIV. THE KAYANIDS IN WESTERN HISTORIOGRAPHY](#).