



# KAYĀNIĀN VII. KAUI HAOSRAUUAH, KAY HUSRŌY, KAY ḲOSROW

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The name Haosrauuah is a *vriddi* formation of *\*husrauuah* “he who has good fame” and ought to mean “good fame” by itself. The later forms, in fact, seem to be descended from *\*hu-srauuah*, although shortening of the initial syllable is possible. The Pahlavi form is usually spelled , , or , all of which should probably be read as Husrōy. The Persian form may derive from this, or it may have been remade in analogy with compounds with *-sraw*. (On the morphological irregularities of the Avestan name, see Humbach and Ichaporia, 1998, p. 137.)

*In the Avesta.* The *Avesta* contains more details about Kauui Haosrauuah (Figure 3) than any of the other *kauuis*, except Vištāspa. His standing epithets are “stallion of the Aryan lands” (*arša airiianqm dax iiunqm*) and *xšaθrāi haṅkərəmō* “?. for command,” where *haṅkərəmō* has not yet been conclusively interpreted (*Yašt* 5.49, 15.32). It is also transmitted as *haṅkərətō* “put together” (*Yašt* 9.21).

The benefits obtained in return for sacrificing to his fravashi (see FRAVAŠI) are numerous, including strength and victory over one’s opponents, good health and progeny, long life, and healing. (*Yašt* 13.133-35; cf. *Āfrīn ī Zardušt* 7). He has a son named Āxrūra (*Yašt* 13.137). His activities are closely



connected with Lake Caēcasta (see ČĒČAST), where he sacrificed to Anāhitā that he might win the chariot race (*Yašt* 5.49-50) and where he killed Fraṅrasiīān as filial revenge for Siiāuuaršan, who had been killed by trickery by Ayraēraθa, son of Naru. The Avestan expression *janāt təm kauua haosrauua . . . puθrō.kaēna siiāuuaršanāi* “him (i.e., Fraṅrasiīān) he struck down, Kauui Haosrauuah, as revenge for the son, Siiāuuaršan” is reflected in the later literature, for instance, Ebn al-Balkī’s *az Afrāsiāb-e tork kina-ye pedar k̄vāhim tuxt* “We shall seek revenge on Afrāsiāb the Turk for my father” (p. 44; see below). This happened after Haoma sacrificed to Druuāspa that he might capture Fraṅrasiīān and lead him bound to Kauui Haosrauuah for him to kill him and after Kauui Haosrauuah sacrificed to her that he might kill Fraṅrasiīān by Lake Caēcasta (*Yašt* 9.17-23). He is said to have killed Fraṅrasiīān and bound Kərəsauuazda (*Yašt* 19.77; see KARSIVAZ). To kill him, he wielded the same victorious weapon as Θraētaona did when he killed Aži Dahāka, as Fraṅrasiīān did when he killed Zainigāuš, as Vištāspa did when he faced the army seeking to overcome *aša*, and as Astuuat.ərəta will, when he stands forth from Lake Kaṣaoiia (*Yašt* 19.92-93; see ASTVAT.ƏRƏTA).

Other activities, all obscure, are connected with a *razura* of uncertain meaning (in *Videvdad* 13.8, it is rendered by Pahl. *wēšag* “thicket”; Bartholomae, *AirWb.*, cols. 1515- 16, assumes two meanings: “forest” and “pit” covered with branches). Here, the land-lord Auruuasāra sacrificed to Vaiiu that he might “overtake” (“get the better of”? *uzaiieni haca*) Kauui Haosrauuah (*Yašt* 15.31), and Kauui Haosrauuah to Anāhitā that he might, apparently, drive the fastest two-horse chariot, but not cut through (?) the *razura* (*Yašt* 5.50).

In *Yašt* 5, Kauui Haosrauuah is followed by “the firm charioteer Tusa” (*Yašt* 5.53-55; the later Tūs [Tōs]), but the text is poorly transmitted. Tusa apparently asks Anāhitā for the ability to overcome the brood (*hunu*) of Vaēsaka (cf. Ferdowsi’s sons of Vēsa: Hōmān, Pilsam, and Pirān) at one of the gates of Kaṅha (later Kang; see below) and to strike down large numbers of Turian “lands.” This he is granted. Next the brood of Vaēsaka asks her for the ability to strike down Tusa, which is not granted (*Yašt* 5.57-59; see also Yarshater, 1983, p. 443).

In the *Sī-rōzag*, Kauui Haosrauuah is listed under the day of Fire (*ātar*) and is associated with Lake Haosrauuaṅha, Lake Caēcasta, and Mount Asnuuaṅt (*Sī-rōzag* 1.9 = 2.9 = *Niyāyišn* 5.5). His immortality (see below) is mentioned in the *Āfrīn ī Zardušt* (7).



*In the Pahlavi texts.* Kay Husrōy was born at Samarkand, founded by his grandfather Kay-Uš, and later he founded a Warahrān fire there (*Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr* 2-3 in *Pahlavi Texts*, p. 18 [220]). Frāsiyāg had founded the city of Zarang and installed the Karkōy fire there, but the city had been destroyed and the fire extinguished; Kay Husrōy reopened the city and reinstalled the fire, and the city was finally completed by Ardašīr son of Bābag (*Šahrestānīhā ī Ērānšahr* 38 in *Pahlavi Texts*, p. 22 [225]). After ruling for sixty years, he handed over the rule to Kay Luhrāsp and went in glory and victory to [Garōdmān](#) (*Mēnōy xrad* 26.62) on the day of Hordād, month of Frawardīn (*Bundahišn* 36.7; *Pahlavi Texts*, p. 105 [323], sec. 23).

The *Mēnōy xrad* lists the following benefits from Kay Husrōy: killing Frāsiyāb, destroying the idol temple by Lake Čēčast, setting up (*wirāstan*) Kang-diz (see below), and collaborating with Sōšāns (see below, xii) at the resurrection (*Mēnōy xrad* 26.59-63).

*Victory over Afrāsiyāb.* After overcoming Afrāsiyāb with the Word, as well as his brood (*wišūdag*) fellow Kiriswazd son of \*Wigērag, Kay Husrōy killed him on the shore of Lake Čēčast (*Dēnkard* 7.1.39). According to the *Māh Frawardīn Rōz ī Hordād* (*Pahlavi Texts*, p. 105 [323], secs. 20-23), he killed him on the day of Hordād, month of Frawardīn, the first day of the year, as revenge for his father. According to the *Bundahišn* (33.11), he then went to the Kang-diz.

*The idol temple by Lake Čēčast.* When Kay Husrōy destroyed the idol temple by Lake Čēčast, [Ādur Gušnasp](#), which had been protecting the world until then, mounted on a horse, smote darkness, and made light until the idol temple had been torn down (*Bundahišn* 18.12). If he had not destroyed the idol temple, the opposition of the forces of evil would have been so strong that it would not have been possible to perform the Resurrection (*ristāxēz*) and bring about the Final Body (*Mēnōy xrad* 1.93-95).

*Kay Husrōy, Wāy, Sōšāns and the Resurrection.* The *Bundahišn* (35.3) contains a brief note that Kay Husrōy had made Wāy of Long Rule “convey him across” (? *widārēnīdan*). In other texts, this event is connected with his collaboration with Sōšāns and the Resurrection. Kay Husrōy’s participation in this event is mentioned in several places, with more or less detail (*Dēnkard* 3.343: he is Sōšāns’ companion [*hamhāg*] in the Renovation; *Mēnōy xrad* 26.63: with his help it will be easier for Sōšāns to perform the Resurrection and bring about the Final Body).



In the *Sūdgar nask* narrative (*Dēnkard* 9.23.1), Kay Husrōy asks Wāy why he killed so many good people in the past; after Wāy answers, Kay Husrōy seizes him and turns him into a camel and rides him to where the other Renovators are lying asleep and rouses them (cf. *Zādspram*, *Wizīdagthā* 35.6). Together they go to Sōšāns, who asks Kay Husrōy who he is. Kay Husrōy tells him, and Sōšāns praises him for destroying the idol temple and for killing Afrāsiāb. Kay Husrōy praises the Mazdayasnian *dēn*.

The *Pahlavi Rivāyat* (48.39-48) contains the same story, but Sōšāns adds that, if Kay Husrōy had not done what he did, the Renovation would not take place (also *Mēnōy xrad* 1.93). He then tells Kay Husrōy to praise the Mazdayasnian *dēn*, which he does. After this, for fifty-seven years, Kay Husrōy rules the seven continents with Sōšāns as *mowbedān mowbed*. The *Māh Frawardīn Rōz ī Hordād* (secs. 32-33) adds that Kay Husrōy receives the rule from Sām Narīmān (see [KARSĀSP](#); the last to be resurrected before Sōšāns, *Pahlavi Rivāyat* 48.35-37) and that, when Kay Wištāsp is remade into a body, Kay Husrōy hands over the rule to him, and Sōšāns his office to Zardušt.

*In Perso-Arabic tradition.* Of the long story of Kay Ḳosrow, Ḥamza (p. 36; tr., p. 25) reports that the Persians considered him a prophet (also *Mojmal al-tawāriḳ*, p. 29) and that he used to live in Balk. According to Ebn al-Balkī (ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, p. 47; ed. Behruzi, p. 56), it was because of his prophethood that he overcame Afrāsiāb. Ḥamza (p. 36) adds a variant of the Afrāsiāb narrative not found elsewhere: once upon a time, there lived a dragon (*tannin*) in the red mountain of Kušid on the border of Fars and Isfahan, which terrorized men and destroyed the crops. Kay Ḳosrow killed the monster and founded a fire named after the mountain.

The birth of Ḳosrow is patterned on the common story of the royal child brought up by shepherds. Ṭabari's version (I/2, pp. 601-2; tr., IV, pp. 4-5) is the shorter and more rational, with longer versions in Ṭa'ālebi (pp. 213-16) and the *Šāh-nāma*.

In the *Šāh-nāma*, Kay Ḳosrow is born to Farangis (Ṭabari, I/2, p. 600; tr., IV, p. 3; Wesfāfarid; Ṭa'ālebi: , perhaps for “Gisēfrī”), daughter of Afrāsiāb, and Siāvaš, son of Kāvus; he is entrusted by Siāvaš's counselor, Pirān (Ṭabari: Firān), to shepherds from Mount Qolā or Q•lu (ed. Khaleghi, II, p. 368, v. 2415, and commentary in *Notes* I/2, p. 700 on v. 2323; ed. Mohl, II, pp. 420-21; tr., II, pp. 328-29, where Kalúr). At age seven, his royal descent is revealed when he makes himself a bow and arrows, and at ten, he is a great warrior. Afrāsiāb is



troubled by dreams and asks Pirān about Ƙosrow. Pirān tells him the boy is just a brute, young child, and when the boy is brought before Afrāsiāb for questioning, he, as advised by Pirān, answers all the questions backward. Afrāsiāb, convinced that the boy is an idiot, orders Pirān to send him and his mother Farangis to Siāvašgerd (ed. Khaleghi, II, pp. 364-76; ed. Mohl, II, pp. 416-51; tr., II, pp. 325-34). Ʀa‘ālebi (pp. 213- 16) says he and his mother went to <sy’wn>-ābāḍ.

Gōdarz dreams that Soruš tells him about Kay Ƙosrow and that only Gēv will find him (see [GĒV](#), [GŌDARZ](#)). Gēv (Ṭabari, I/2, pp. 604-5; tr., IV, p. 8; Bayy) searches for Ƙosrow, finds him, and together they go to Siāvašgerd, where Kay Ƙosrow is prepared, before they go to Iran in company with Farangis and appear before Kāvus (Ʀa‘ālebi, pp. 219-22; *Šāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, II, pp. 413-70; ed. Mohl, II, pp. 476-557; tr., II, pp. 363-99). According to Ebn al-Balkī, Kay Kāvus sends Gēv secretly to find the boy and his mother and help them escape from Torkestān (ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, pp. 41-42; ed. Behruzi, p. 50).

The final battles with Afrāsiāb are fueled by the theme of the revenge for Siāvaš. In Ṭabari, where Qāvus makes Ƙosrow king once he has been brought to Iran, the theme of the revenge is incorporated in Ƙosrow’s obligatory speech at his enthronement, and the battles takes place after he becomes king (Ṭabari, I/2, p. 605; tr., IV, p. 8; also Ebn al-Balkī, ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, p. 44; ed. Behruzi, p. 52), while, in Ʀa‘ālebi and the *Šāh-nāma*, the battles are fought while Kāvus is still king, and Ƙosrow becomes king only upon Kāvus’s death (Ʀa‘ālebi, pp. 222- 34; *Šāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, IV, pp. 325-27; ed. Mohl, IV, pp. 214-15; tr., IV, p. 272).

Ṭabari’s narrative of the first engagement with Afrāsiāb involves Ṭus, son of Nowḍar, who is sent with other warriors, including Juḍarz (Gōdarz) and Burzāfera (another son of Kay Kāvus; Ebn al-Balkī: <zr’fh>), but, against Kay Ƙosrow’s orders, kills Foruḍ, another son of Siāvakš and half-brother of the king. Ṭus is chained and shackled and sent with messengers to the king, but Afrāsiāb sends warriors to intercept them, among them Firān son of Visaḡ. A battle follows, but Ṭus is not heard of again (Ṭabari, I/2, pp. 605-7; tr., IV, pp. 8-10; Ebn al-Balkī, ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, pp. 44-45). In the *Šāh-nāma*, Foruḍ is the son of Pirān’s daughter Jarira (ed. Khaleghi, III, p. 31, v. 69); here, too, Pirān is routinely called son of Visa, as he is in other sources (Avestan Vaēsaka, see above).



In the second engagement (Ṭabari, I/2, pp. 609-13; tr., IV, pp. 11-14; Ebn al-Balkī, ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, pp. 45-47; ed. Behruzi, pp. 53-54), Kay Kōsrow entrusts the Kayanid banner (*derafš-e kāviān*; Ebn al-Balkī: *kābiān*) to Gōdarz/Judarz, who kills Pirān/Firān, lamented by the king (Ebn al-Balkī: *benekuhid* “blamed, scorned,” which Behruzi explains as *nik šomord!*). The king himself notices Barvā son of Fašenj (Ebn al-Balkī, ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, p. 46: Parvin, whom Gōdarz seizes), the killer of Siāvakš, alive in the hands of Gēv/Bayy, and has his limbs cut off before he is slain (Ṭabari, I/2, pp. 612-13; tr., IV, pp. 13-14).

*In the Šāh-nāma.* Pirān is killed by Gōdarz, and Kay Kōsrow mourns him and kills Goruy (son of Zera), who is quartered, beheaded (as if a sacrificial sheep), and thrown into a river (*Šāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, IV, pp. 122-23, 154-59; ed. Mohl, III, pp. 580-85, 614-19; tr., IV, pp. 106-9, 126-29).

In the last battle, Afrāsiāb leaves the command of his army to his son Šida, who is killed by Kay Kōsrow (*Šāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, IV, pp. 208-16; Ebn al-Balkī, ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, p. 46; ed. Behruzi, p. 55). Afrāsiāb, after fighting the largest battle ever heard of, but losing, flees to Ādarbāijan, where he hides in the spring Kāsef, before being caught, chained, and given a chance to explain why he had Siāvakš killed. Unable to do so, he is killed (by Bayy); his blood is brought (Bal’ami: by Bayy in a cup) to Kay Kōsrow, who dips his hand in it in blood vengeance (Bal’ami, ed. Bahār, p. 616).

Ebn al-Balkī (ed. Le Strange and Nicholson, p. 47) simply states that he went to Ādarbāijan, where he was captured and killed by Kay Kōsrow, who thus had revenge for his father (*kun-e pedar bāz kvāst*).

According to Ṭa’ālebi (pp. 229-34) and the *Šāh-nāma*, toward the end of the fight, Afrāsiāb takes refuge in China (Šin) in the Kang-dež. When Kay Kōsrow pursues him, the *fağfur* (emperor) of China and the other kings in the area aid him with supplies, but, when he arrives at the Kangdež Afrāsiāb disappears like quicksilver into the earth. According to Ferdowsi, he escapes through a secret passage and allies himself with the *fağfur* of China. Eventually, the *fağfur* severs relations with Afrāsiāb, who leaves and crosses the sea to the Kang-dež, as does Kay Kōsrow, who continues to Siāvašgerd, and then returns to Kangdež (*Šāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, IV, pp. 223-306; ed. Mohl, IV, pp. 90-187; tr., IV, pp. 186-254).

Kay Kōsrow returns to Fārs, seeking the enemy everywhere, and finally



receives word that he has been observed near Ādarbāijan. Kāvus and Ƙosrow go there and pay homage at the Ādargošasp fire and praise god in its presence, and perhaps god will guide them. Here, Hum, a pious hermit devoted to god, discovers Afrāsiāb in a cavern, overcomes him, and ties him up with a noose. Afrāsiāb, by the rest of his magic, arouses Hum’s pity and, freed of the noose, escapes into a lake. Hum alerts Gudarz, who has already captured Afrāsiāb’s brother Karsivaz and now tortures him until Afrāsiāb sticks his head above the water and discourses with his brother, upon which Hum throws a noose about his neck, pulls him out, and binds him. He is led before Kay Kāvus and Kay Ƙosrow; the latter, feeling some compassion, quickly cuts him in half with his sword (*Šāh-nāma*, ed. Khaleghi, IV, pp. 305-25; ed. Mohl, IV, pp. 187-209; tr., IV, pp. 254-69; on the formula “lead bound,” see Humbach and Skjærvø, 1983, pt. 3.2, p. 93). Differently, in Ṭabari (I/2, p. 602; tr., IV, p. 5), Ṭus is said to have killed Afrāsiāb’s brother Kidar shortly after the killing of Siāvakaš.

Having ordered his realm, Kay Ƙosrow becomes an ascetic, and the nobility, despairing of the king, ask him to appoint a successor, and he chooses Lohrāsb, who happens to be present. Kay Ƙosrow’s end is described variously, but all the sources are agreed that he withdrew to devote himself to worshipping god, after which he disappeared (Bal’ami, tr. Zotenberg, p. 474, has “in the mountains”). Ṭabari simply states that he disappeared, though he knew other stories, while Bal’ami says nobody knew (Ṭabari, I/2, p. 618; tr., IV, p. 19; Bal’ami, ed. Bahār, pp. 617-18; Ebn Meskawayh, p. 26).

According to Mas’udi (sec. 555), Kay Ƙosrow conquered lands as far as China and built a city there named Kank-dez (i.e., Kang-dež), later inhabited by several Chinese kings.

According to Ta’ālebi (p. 243), having brought order to the earth, worrying that he might be subjected to hubris like several of his predecessors, Kay Ƙosrow withdrew from the world. After having appointed his successor, Kay Lohrāsb, he left to wander throughout the world, and no one heard any more from him.

In the *Šāh-nāma*, after settling his affairs and taking leave, Kay Ƙosrow goes into the mountains accompanied by eight companions. Arriving at the mountaintop, they are greeted by a throng of Iranians begging him not to leave. Five companions continue with the king. They come to a spring, where the king bathes and recites the *Zandavesta*, bids his companions farewell, and disappears during the night. The companions perish in a snowstorm looking for him (ed. Khaleghi, IV, pp. 365-69; ed. Mohl, IV, pp. 242-75; tr., IV, pp.



291-310). Gēv is also one of the five heroes who accompanied Kay Ḳosrow on his journey into the wilderness until Kay Ḳosrow met Sorōš and disappeared, according to the local tradition, in a cave called Ġār-e Kay Ḳosrow on a mountain pass called Mella-ye Bižan or Mella-ye Bizend in the Sisakt area of Kohgiluya (Fasā'i, II, p. 1472; Enjavi, II, pp. 271-97, III, pp. 173-74; see [GOSTAHAM](#)).

Biruni reports a story in his description of the festival Tiragān (p. 206), according to which the Persian habit of washing in spring water on that day went back to the time when Kay Ḳosrow, returning from battle with Afrāsiāb, stopped at a spring on a mountain in the area of Sāva. Terrified by the appearance of an angel, Ḳosrow swooned, but was revived by Vižan b. Judarz, who sprinkled water from the spring on his face.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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