



KAYĀNSĪH

KAYĀNSĪH, Pahlavi form of the name of a mythical sea, Av. *K̄saoiia-*. The Avestan word (adj., neuter with *zraiiāh-* “lake, sea” [Yt. 19.66; Witzel, 1984, p. 263, n. 83], feminine with *āp-* “water” [Vd. 19.5; Yt. 19.92]) could be a derivative stem from an unattested proper name *K̄su-* (Bartholomae, 1904, p. 471; Boyce, 1975, p. 274, n. 96; cf. Mayrhofer, 1979, I/59) or simply a *vṛddhi*-formation from Av. *kasu-* “little” (**kāsau-īa-* “which has to do with something small, relative to what is little” or “belonging to the ‘Little one’”; cf. Ved. *kaśú-* as proper name; Mayrhofer, 1989, p. 330). The latter etymology is supported by the geographical *realia* (see below), while the stem-formation corresponds to that of Later Ved. *vaiṣṇavya-*, derived from *viṣṇu-* (like *vaiṣṇavá-* “zu Viṣṇu in Beziehung stehend”; [Wackernagel –] Debrunner, 1954, p. 818, § 656b). Contrariwise, E. Pirart (1992, pp. 88, 117-18) has rejected the existence of the stem *k̄saoiia-* and, on the base of the attested manuscript tradition, suggested a new entry: *k̄saiia-*. Another derivative, from **k̄sauua-* (< *kasu-*), is probably attested in the NPers. river name (in Ferdowsi: Wolff, 1935, p. 657) *Kašaf-rōd* (Monchi-Zadeh, 1975, p. 160, n. 35; cf. Markwart, 1938, pp. 5-6).

The name *K̄saoiia* designates a mythical sea connected with the **Hāmūn** lake (Stein, 1886, pp. 21-23; Gnoli, 2003) in *Sīstān* (*pad sagestān* [M51]/*sīstān* [the rest of the mss] in *Ir.Bd.* 10.16 and *Ind.Bd.* 13.16), where no daēvic animals, in particular snakes and frogs, lived; the same Pahlavi passage includes the *Kayānsīh* among the “little lakes” (*zrēhān ī kēh*; Pakzad, 2005, p. 144). This is a fitting description, because such a lake is an endorheic basin, whose dimensions change continuously according to the quantity of water coming



from the **Helmand** river. The same location is confirmed by the little Pahlavi treatise *Abdīh ud sahīgīh ī Sīstān* “Wonders and Magnificence of Sīstān,” par. 2 (JamaspAsana, 1897, p. 25; Utas, 1983; Cereti, 2000, p. 173; see **ABDĪH UD SAHĪGĪH Ī SAGASTĀN**), where a lake of that name is listed among the natural masterpieces of the Sīstān area (Gnoli, 1967, p. 17). Its waters stem from the Haētumaṅt or Helmand (*Yt.* 19.66: *zraiiō yaṭ kṣaēm haētumatəm*; Pirart, 1992, p. 87; Hintze, 1994, pp. 307-9; Humbach and Ichaporia, 1998, pp. 49, 141; Gnoli, 2004). W. Geiger (1892, I, pp. 106-8) considered possible its identification with the Ābistāde (see **ĀB-E ĪSTĀDA**) river.

We cannot exclude the possibility that the name *kṣaoiia-* was (mis)understood by a popular etymology and connected with the stem *kauui-* “Kavi” (Boyce, 1975, p. 274); its Pahlavi adaptation, *Kayānsīh*, was actually formed with the plural word *kayān*, “the Kavis” or “the Kayanids” (Gnoli, 2004); and the Kavi dynasty is closely linked with this lake already in *Yt.* 19.65-72, in the framework of Zoroastrian eschatology (Gnoli, 1989a, pp. 58-61; 1989b; 1999; Christensen, 1932, pp. 22-23).

According to Later Av. sources it is from the *Kṣaoiia* that the *Saošiiant* *Astuuat.ərəta-* (see **ASTVAT.ĒRĒTA**) will rise (*Yt.* 19.89-92; cf. *Yt.* 19.66; *Vd.* 19.5) and where he will receive the *Kavyan xvarənah-* (see **FARR[AH]**). In particular, the *Saošiiant* will be born in the eastern side of the *Kṣaoiia* (*Vd.* 19.5), a tradition which is probably connected with the image of the rising Dawn (*Ušah*). The three *Sōšyans* are connected with this place again in the *Abdīh ud sahīgīh ī Sīstān* 3 (Gnoli, 1967, p. 25). It is clear from a number of Avestan and Pahlavi passages that the *Kṣaoiia* was, at some time, associated with the *Vourukaša* Sea (Gnoli, 1967, pp. 17-20; on the *Vourukaša* Sea, see **ĀB i**). Both have a mountain in their centers: *Uši.δam/Uši.darəna* (= *Kuh-e Kṣvāja*) in the *Kṣaoiia*, *Us.həṇdauua* in the middle of the *Vouru.kaša*; furthermore, 99,999 *frauuašis* (see **FRAVAŠI**) are present in both places, but it is in the *Kṣaoiia* that they protect the seed of *Zaraθuštra* (*Yt.* 19.92; *Ind.Bd.* 21.7; *Ir.Bd.* 33.43-45; Pakzad, 2005, pp. 372-73; Anklesaria, 1956, pp. 282-83), from which the *Saošiiants* will be born. Both are connected with the *xvarənah* (see the discussion offered by Gnoli, 1967, pp. 18-25). Three lamps (*sē čīray*), corresponding to the seed of the three *Sōšyans*, glow at night at the bottom of the *Kayānsīh* (*Ir.Bd.* 33, 44).



According to the *Ir.Bd.* 11A, 32, Frāsyāb diverted into the Kayānsīh one thousand springs and a number of rivers, which perhaps correspond to those mentioned in *Yt.* 19.67. They are the Hēdōmand *rōd*, the Wātaēnī *rōd*, and six (or seven, according to Gnoli, 1967, p. 17, and Markwart, 1938, pp. 12, 175) rivers (Pakzad, 2005, pp. 156-57; Anklesaria, 1956, pp. 110-11). See also the list of rivers in the *Tāriḡ-e Sīstān* (ed. Bahār, 1935, pp. 15 f.; Gold, 1976, p. 12).

Although there are different opinions about the homeland of Zoroastrianism, the Sīstān region and the Hāmūn-e Helmand area assumed central importance in the Later Avestan period (Nyberg, 1938: pp. 304 ff.; Boyce, 1975, pp. 274, 293; Hintze, 1994, p. 21, n. 39), if not already earlier, because they are part of the wide horizon of the *airyā dañhāuuō*, the “Aryan lands,” where we find also the Airiiana Vaējah (Markwart, 1938, pp. 122, n. 3; 158-59; Gnoli, 1967, pp. 13-14, 38; 1980, pp. 131-36; 2003; 2004; see [ĒRĀN-WĒZ](#)).

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