



## ZAMYĀD YAŠT

**ZAMYĀD YAŠT** or *Yašt* 19, the last in sequence of the great pieces of the *Yašt* hymn collection of the Younger Avesta; it is followed by two short and insignificant pieces, *Yt.* 20 (*Hōm Yašt*), a name shared with the major text of *Yasna* 9-11.15) and *Yt.* 21 (*Vanand Yašt*).

The text honors Zamyād Yazad, the divinity (of the) Munificent Earth, the protective divinity of the 28th day of each month. The Middle Persian name of the divinity is transmitted with instable quantity of the vowel of its first syllable. Whereas the Pāzēnd introduction to *Yašt* 19 as rendered in Geldner's edition writes *zamyāt yazat*, the Pahlavi commentary on the *Sīh-rōzag* has *zāmyād* (written *z'my't*) as also found in Manichean Middle Persian (*z'my'd*). The instability mirrors the ablaut difference between the Avestan genitive *zəmō huδāṅhō yazatahe* and the corresponding accusative *zəm huδāṅhəm yazatəm* as listed in parallel in the catalogues of the thirty day-names, *Sīh-rōzag* 1.28 and 2.28. The former runs: "(day) of the Munificent Yazata Zamyād—these places, these regions—of Mount Uši.darəna ..., of all mountains ... and of the Kavyan Glory and of the Unseized Glory" (*zəmō huδāṅhō yazatahe—imā asā imā šōiθrā—garōiš uši.darənahe ... vīspaēšqmca gairinqm ... kāuuaiieheca xvarənanhō ... axvarətahe xvarənanhō*). In *Sīh-rōzag* the attribute *yazata* "divinity" is also found with Miθra (S. 16) and Vāta "wind" (S. 22).

*Zā/āmyād yazad* is the correct phonetical development from earlier *\*zā/ām-huyād yazad* < *\*zā/ām huδād yazad*, in which *huδād* has replaced the



phonetically weak *huδā(h)* < Av. *huδāṛh(ō/əm)*. The development is obscured by the priestly tradition, which kept to the division of the elements, thus translating Av. *zəmō huδāṛhō* and *zəm huδāṛhəm* into the common Pahlavi *zamīg hudā(ha)g* (written *hwd'k* or *hwd'hk*), thus producing a sort of historicism.

The existing *Zamyād Yašt* consists of two parts. The first is the geographical fragment, a list of the eminent mountains of the Young Avestan world (secs. 1-8), whose tops are, as it suggests itself, closest to the celestial bodies, to heaven and paradise. A prominent place is held by Mount *ušaδā ušidarəna* (sec. 2), from which the eschatological Saošyant (future Savior) will arise (according to sec. 66, there without *ušidarəna*; on the other hand, *ušaδā* is lacking in *Y.* 2.14, *S.* 1.28, etc., but note *Yt.* 1.14: *uši.dəm uši.darənəm* both with Old Av. *d*). The second part is the so-called Kayān Yasn, which celebrates the Glory of the Kavi rulers or Kayanids (*kavaēm xʷarənō*; see [FARR\[AH\]](#)), taking this term in a much broader sense, including also prophet Zarathushtra and the Saošyant (secs. 9-96).

As already was seen by Darmesteter (1892), but not taken notice of by recent editors before Humbach and Ichaporia (1998), the list of mountains of the geographical fragment is mirrored by the quite similar list of mountains in the Pahlavi *Bundahišn* 9. The latter, however, is just the first chapter of a geographical treatise; it is continued in *Bundahišn* 10 (seas), 11 (rivers), and 12 (lakes), which certainly mirror Avestan originals as well. The four *Bundahišn* chapters are evidence of a lost Avestan pre-*Zamyād Yašt*. This lost original included a list of regions starting with the phrase *imā asā imā šōiθrā* “these (are) the places and regions,” which has survived like a strange erratic block as a clumsy quotation in *Sīh-rōzag* (see above). The lost list was similar to, but not identical with, that in *Vidēvdād* 1 (Pahlavi version in *Bundahišn* 31), which starts with *paoirīm asanḥəmca šōiθranəmca* “the first of places and regions” (Pahl. *fradom az gyāgān ud rōstāgān*).

The *yašt* texts were customarily subdivided into chapters called Kardehs (Pahl. *kardag*). In the case of the existing *Zamyād Yašt*, these do not include the geographical fragment, from which we must infer that this first chapter of the pre-*Zamyād Yašt* was added to Kayān Yasn at a relatively recent time, but early enough to transfer its own name to the latter. The addition possibly is the

result of a scholarly effort to obtain conformity with the tradition laid down in the *Sīh-rōzag*, in which Mount Ušidarəna and the Glory of the Kavi rulers are mentioned as it were in one breath.

*Contents of Kayān Yasn.* Kardeh 1-3 (secs. 9-24). The Kavyan Glory is in possession of Ahura Mazdā, the Aməša Spəntas, and the other divinities.

Kardeh 4-6 (secs. 25-44). The Kavyan Glory associates with the Pēšdādian rulers: Haošyaṇha Paradāta ([Hōšang](#)), Taxma Urupi (Tahmuraf) and, finally, Yima Xšaēta (Jamšīd). From Yima Xšaēta the Glory flew away, in immediate consequence of a heavy sin committed by him (sec. 34). The flight of the Glory is triplicated; it is compared with the flight of a falcon, which customarily returns to its falconer; thus two returns to Yima are implied. The first time, the Glory is taken hold of by Miθra (sec. 35), the second time, by Θraētaona (secs. 36-37), the third time, by Kərəsāspa (secs. 37-38), whose mention occasions an extensive digression into the legend of that hero (secs. 39-44). Since neither the triplication nor the digression fit in the course of events as planned by the author of the poem, they are unlikely to be an original part of it. They are inserted, rather, by some minstrel in order to extend the recitation and to show his acquaintance with the range of subjects of heroic poetry. On the other hand, the Old Avestan spellings *g* (for *γ*) and *ə'u* (for *ao*) in *draogəm*, *mərəgahe*, *də'ušmanahiiāi* in the critical sec. 34 let the reader catch a glimpse of the Old Avestan prehistory of the Yima legend.

Kardeh 7-9 (secs. 45-69). After Yima's downfall, the Glory is no longer in the possession of a legitimate holder; it is *axvarəta* "unseized" (Pahlavi *agrift*). Azhi Dahāka tries to take hold of it, but, owing to the support by Ahura Mazdā's Fire, he does not succeed; the Glory is able to take refuge in the Vourukaša Sea. The next aspirant is the Turanian scoundrel Fraṇrasyan (see [AFRĀSIĀB](#)), from whom the unseized Glory flees to the region of the Kānsaoya Sea and Mount Ušaḍā (on which, see above).

Kardeh 10-11 (secs. 70-77). The Glory of the Kavyan dynasty, i.e., the Kavyan Glory in its proper sense, associates with the rulers from Kavi Kavāta up to Kavi Haosravah.



Kardeh 12-15 (secs. 78-96). The Glory favors Zarathushtra and his patron, Kavi Vištāspa. It likewise favors the Saošyant when he appears at the end of time and accomplishes the *Frašō.kərəiti* (the “brilliant-making”)—the Renovation of the World.

The text of Kayān Yasn shows some notable corruptions not sufficiently taken notice of by its previous editors. Thus the manuscript F1, the pillar of our Yašt tradition, describes the rise of the Saošyant by the verb *fraxšaiieite* in sec. 66, but by the verb *fraxštāite* in the corresponding sec. 92. It is evident that the former must be corrected after the latter. The correct reading preserved in oral tradition is reflected in the readings of the secondary manuscripts B27, J18, and R15 unearthed but not made use of in this case by Hintze (1994).

The *Frašō.kərəiti* is attributed in secs. 11-12 to the efficiency of the creations of Ahura Mazdā, but in the parallel secs. 89-90 it is described as the work of the eschatological Saošyant. The text, which contains some strange corruptions, is the same in the two passages (except for verb number), but it is given in full form only in the former, whereas it is abbreviated in the latter passage. In view of the usual compositional procedure, this gives the erroneous impression of the latter being a repetition of the former, but everything points to the reverse: the latter must be the original passage. Kayān Yasn does not simply celebrate the legendary rulers of Iran; it also celebrates the history of salvation of the Iranians from the very beginning up to its anticipated fulfillment.

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