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Éric PIRART



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# PERCEPTIONS OF THE YASNA HAPTANHĀITI

Almut HINTZE

## ABSTRACT

This article examines some Younger Avestan expressions and liturgical passages which highlight their indebtedness to the Older Avesta, in particular to the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti. It argues that the first eight chapters of the Yasna have, like the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti, a concentric arrangement and give special prominence to themes present in the older work. The article also discusses Y 13.4 as an instance of the adaptation of a Gathic phrase to a YAv. context, the common YAv. syntactic combination of a middle form of the verb *vis* ‘to enter, make oneself available’ with a predicative nominative and, finally, a quotation of the Pahlavi version of Y 37.1 in the Bundahišn. Such quotations and adaptations of OAv. material are interpreted as indicating that the YAv. composers had the Older Avesta and earlier YAv. texts in mind and were both able and at liberty either to quote them verbatim or to change and adapt their wording to different and new syntactic contexts.

## 1. Introduction

From the earliest times to the present day followers of the Zoroastrian religion have regarded the five Gathas as the most venerable part of the Avesta. Since Martin Haug scholars have confirmed this view by demonstrating that the Gathas also constitute the *oldest* part of the Avesta. The volume of such ancient texts has considerably increased as a result of Johanna Narten’s demonstration, published in 1986, that the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti (YH) is composed in the same idiom as the Gathas, albeit in a different poetic style. For while the Gathas follow a syllable counting metre with a fixed number of verse lines per stanza, the poetic form of the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti is governed only by the rhythm of words and not by the number of verse lines. As Calvert Watkins has shown, the literary genre of the YH continues an ancient Indo-European form of liturgical poetry with parallels, for instance, in early Latin literature.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Hintze 2007, 2–5 with references.

Today we understand that this composite group of texts, conveniently referred to as Older Avesta, is derived from the culture of oral poetry located in Proto-Indo-Iranian times.<sup>2</sup> Texts continued to be composed in the wake of the Older Avesta, and it has been possible to distinguish different linguistic strata of the post-Old Avestan literature, on both diatopic and diachronic levels. The former is suggested by various dialectal features which do not conform with standard Avestan sound laws<sup>3</sup> and the latter by certain texts in the Younger Avesta which seem to belong to an earlier layer of ritual composition for which Xavier Tremblay proposed the term Middle Avestan.<sup>4</sup> There is no way of dating this group of texts with any degree of certainty, and scholars' opinions differ accordingly, although relative chronology and linguistic features favour the second millennium BC for at least the Older Avesta.

Internal evidence, in particular references in the Younger to the Older Avesta, indicates that the latter was not only present in the minds of the YAv. text composers but also that it was arranged in exactly the same order in which it has survived down to the present day as part of the Yasna.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, numerous quotations and adaptations of OAv. text passages in the Younger Avesta indicate that the former served as fountain head of the latter. In what follows I propose to examine some of the evidence that provides insight into the ways in which the Older Avesta, and the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti in particular, was used by the Younger Avestan poet-priests in their own compositions. I am hoping to show that Younger Avestan liturgical compositions of the Yasna and Visperad are deeply indebted to the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti. Moreover, we shall see that the Younger Avestan text composers were both able and at liberty to modify and adapt Old Avestan passages and phrases to new, Younger Avestan contexts. This practice, which can already be traced in the earliest post-OAv. texts, in particular the Yerjē Hātām prayer,<sup>6</sup> testifies to a living, on-going tradition of oral composition of which different strata are preserved in the multi-layered Avesta.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Hintze 2000 and Skjærvø 2005–06.

<sup>3</sup> Hoffmann & Narten 1989, 77–85.

<sup>4</sup> Tremblay 2006, cf. Kellens 2007, 104–119.

<sup>5</sup> Hintze 2002, 33f.

<sup>6</sup> Narten 1982, 80–86; Kellens 2007, 118.

## 2. The Yasna HaptaŅhāiti and Yasna 1–8

The perhaps most noticeable feature of the Yasna HaptaŅhāiti is its inclusion of seventeen invocation formulae characterized by the verb *yazamaidē* ‘we worship’ in the middle three of its seven chapters, Yasna 37–39. As I have tried to show elsewhere, these formulae are arranged in a concentric fashion around the centre, represented by verses 3–5 of Yasna 38. This is the section in which water is praised as a divine gift sustaining the life of both flora and fauna. The praise of the waters at the centre is preceded, in chapter 38, verses 1–2, by the worship both of the earth and of powers active during the ritual, in particular that of Ahura Mazdā’s ‘noblewomen’ (*gəṇā*). It is then followed in Yasna 39, stanzas 1–2, by the praise of souls, namely those of the cow and her maker (*gəuš uruuan-* and *gəuš tašan-*), of the worshippers, of their domestic animals and harmless wild ones and, finally, of all truthful men and women. The beginning of the *yazamaidē* section, Yasna 37, praises Ahura Mazdā and the Amesha Spentas and both are worshipped again at the end, in Yasna 39.3–4, though in the reverse order, so that Ahura Mazdā and the Amesha Spentas frame the composition, with Ahura Mazdā occupying both the initial and final positions.<sup>7</sup>

In the Younger Avesta, too, invocations start with Ahura Mazdā, and this is usually followed by those of spiritual beings referred to collectively by the name Amesha Spentas. The first eight chapters of the Yasna are a case in point: each of chapters 1–4 (Y 1.1–2, 2.2, 3.1, 4.2, 4.7) and 6–8 (Y 6.1, 7.1, 8.1, 8.3) begins with the praise of Ahura Mazdā and the Amesha Spentas, and this is also the theme of Y 37, the chapter of the Yasna HaptaŅhāiti which is quoted in its entirety in Y 5, at the centre of the first eight chapters.

### 2.1. *humata hūxta huuaršta*

Moreover, Yasna 4, which alongside chapter 5 constitutes the second of the two *hāiti* at the centre of the first eight chapters, contains several quotations from and allusions to the YH. Its first words *ima humatāca hūxtāca huuarštāca* recall the beginning of the YH, which starts in Y 35.2 with a declaration of commitment to ‘good thoughts, good words, good deeds’:

<sup>7</sup> Hintze 2007, 6–20.

## Y 35.2

*humatanəm hūxtanəm huuarštanəm*  
*iiadacā aniiadacā*  
*vərəziiannanəmcā vāuuərəzananəmcā*  
*mahī aibi.jarətārō*  
*naēnaēstārō* <sup>+</sup>*yaθənā vohunəm mahī*

Of good thoughts, good words, good deeds  
 both here and elsewhere  
 being done and having been done  
 we are welcomers,  
 not revilers of such good (things) are we.

In the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti the triad occurs twice, in the gen. pl. governed by *aibi.jarətārō naēnaēstārō* in the passage just quoted and in the instr. pl. with the verb *pairijasāmaidē* in Y 36.5, i.e. at the end of the introductory section and just before the beginning of the *yazamaidē* formulae in Y 37.1.<sup>8</sup> The triad, and by means of it presumably the entire YH, has already been mentioned in Y 3.4 alongside the recitation of the Gathas:

## Y 3.4

*vāca humata hūxta huuaršta āiiese yešti*  
*gāθanəmcā sraoθrəm āiiese yešti*  
*huuarštā mąθrā āiiese yešti*

I bring here with worship the well-thought, well-spoken, well-performed words;<sup>9</sup>  
 and I bring here with worship the recitation of the Gathas;  
 I bring here with worship the well-performed mantras.

<sup>8</sup> On YH *humata- hūxta- huuaršta-* as the model for the YAv. formula, see Narten 1986, 87 with references.

<sup>9</sup> Kellens 1996, 56f. and 2006, 49 notes that the *-ca* in *gāθanəmcā* is unexpected. He interprets *vāca* and its three attributes as duals ‘les deux textes bien pensés, bien récités, bien mis en pratique’, the ‘two texts’ according to him comprising the recitation of the Gathas and the well-performed mantras mentioned in the next two lines and connected with one another by an inverse *-ca*. However, the expression *āiiese yešti* which follows *gāθanəmcā sraoθrəm* and *huuarštā mąθrā* respectively and which Kellens does not translate, indicates that in Y 3.4, as elsewhere, each *āiiese yešti* refers to a distinct constituent of the ritual. Such is also the case with the verb phrase *ašaiia dadəmi* in Y 7.4, which runs parallel to Y 3.4. Moreover, in Y 4.1 and 3 the triad *humata hūxta huuaršta* is separated from *gāθanəmcā sraoθrəm* and *huuarštā mąθrā* by a long list of other ritual components. It therefore seems preferable to interpret the ending *-a* of *vāca* as due to influence of the attributes which follow, cf. Y 71.18 *vāca haṅkərəθa yazamaide*. The form *vāca* then stands instead of *vācō*, the nom.pl. of *vac-* ‘word, speech’, in acc. function, as e.g. in Y 71.7 *vispaēca vācō mazdō fraoxta yazamaide* ‘we worship all the words pronounced by the Wise one’, on which see Kellens 1974, 272f. If, as proposed here, the triad *humata hūxta huuaršta* is interpreted as referring to the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti, then the *-ca* in *gāθanəmcā sraoθrəm* connects the two OAv. constituents in the syntactic structure of A Bca.

## 2.2. The verbs in Y 4

In Yasna 4.1 the triad *ima humatāca hūxtāca huuarštāca* introduces a list of ritual offerings, all of which are governed as direct objects by the verbs *pairica dadmahī āca vaēdaiiamahī*:

Y 4.1

(zōt̄ ud rāspī) *ima humatāca hūxtāca huuarštāca*  
 (zōt̄) *imā haomāṣca miiazdāṣca zaoθrāṣca*  
*barəsmāca ašāiia frastarətəm...*  
*ratufritīmca gāθanāṣca sraoθrəm*  
*huuarštā māθrā*  
*pairica dadmahī āca vaēdaiiamahī*

We offer and dedicate

these good thoughts, good words, good deeds,  
 these haomas and food offerings and libations  
 and the straw orderly spread out ...  
 and the ratu-pleasing and recitation of the Gathas,  
 the well-performed manthras.

The formula *pairica dadmahī āca vaēdaiiamahī* ‘we offer and dedicate’, which recurs in Y 4.3, obviously has OAv. as well as YAv. characteristics. The latter include the lenition of intervocalic /d/ in *vaēdaiiamahī* and the former the lengthening of word final vowels and the form *dadmahī* with the cluster -dām- in contrast to the YAv. form with -nm-, which is in fact attested as *dānmahi* in a later chapter of the Yasna, Y 68.1.<sup>10</sup> The phrase is modelled after an expression that occurs at the conclusion of the YH:

Y 41.1

*stūtō garō vahmāṅg*  
*ahurāi mazdāi*  
*ašāicā vahištāi*  
*dadmahicā cīšmahicā ācā [ā]uuaēdaiiamahī*

We offer, assign and dedicate  
 praises, hymns and prayers  
 to the Wise Lord  
 and to the best Truth.

Y 4.1 thus draws on expressions from both the beginning and the end of the YH. In Y 4 the phrase *pairica dadmahī āca vaēdaiiamahī* occurs

<sup>10</sup> See Kellens 1984, 182 and 1996, 41 with fn.6. Kellens rightly points out that the YAv. formula must have been created before the repetition of preverbs was introduced into the Old Avestan texts.

only in Y 4.1 and 4.3 and its verbs govern various nouns denoting ritual components as direct objects.

From Y 4.2 onwards the main formula of Y 4, *āaṭ dīš āuuāēḍaiiamahī* ‘we dedicate them’ introduces each of the 48 invocation units, although in Y 4.3 it stands somewhat apart at the beginning of the repetition of Y 4.1. Aside from the direct object *dīš* ‘them’, which probably refers back anaphorically to the various ritual components listed in Y 4.1 (= 4.3),<sup>11</sup> the only other accusative governed by the verb *āuuāēḍaiiamahī* is in Y 4.5 *dīš... frāiiehīš*, literally meaning ‘we make them known as very many’. Otherwise the verb governs the dative to denote either the indirect object (‘we make them known to...’, e.g. in Y 4.2, 4, and 6), or the purpose which in turn governs the genitive denoting the object (‘we make them known for the worship, praise, gratification and glorification of...’, e.g. Y 4.7). The series of four final datives also concludes the formula in which the verb governs the dative of the indirect object in addition (‘we make them known to... for worship, praise, gratification and glorification’, e.g. Y 4.8).

### 2.3. *The quotation of Y 39.3 in Y 4.4 (= 24.9) and Vr 11.12*

In Y 4.1–7 the lists naming those to whom the offerings are dedicated begin and end with Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas in Y 4.2 and 4.7 (with Sraosha intervening in Y 4.2). They are followed and preceded in Y 4.2 and 6 respectively by the Fravashis of the truthful (*ašāunqmca frauuašibiiō*), so that Y 4.1–7 bears traces of a concentric structure:

*āaṭ dīš āuuāēḍaiiamahī*  
 Y 4.2 *ahurāica mazdāi*  
*sraošāica ašiiāi*  
*aməšaēibiiasca spəntaēibiiō*  
*ašāunqmca frauuašibiiō* etc.  
 Y 4.4 *aməšaēibiiō spəntaēibiiō... + YH quotation*  
 Y 4.6 *ašāunqm var<sup>h</sup>hibiiō frauuašibiiō*  
 Y 4.7 *daθušō ahurahe mazdā...*  
*aməšanqm spəntanqm*  
*yasnāica vahmāica xšnaoθrāica frasastaiiaēca*

This impression of a concentric arrangement is reinforced by the fact that Y 4.1–7 encloses a quotation from the YH at its centre:

<sup>11</sup> Cf., for instance, Vr 11.1 *ahurāi mazdāi haomq āuuāēḍaiiamahī* etc.

## Y 4.4

*āaṭ dīš āuuāēdaiīamahī*  
*aməšaēibiiō spəntaēibiiō*  
*huxšaθraēibiiō huδābiiō*  
 (cf. Y 39.3:) *yauuaējibiiō yauuaēsubiiō*  
 (= Y 39.3:) *yōi vaṇhəuš ā manəṇhō šīieṇti*  
*yāscā uiti*

We make them known  
 to the Bounteous Immortals,  
 (who are) of good rule, beneficent,  
 (cf. Y 39.3:) who live forever, who thrive forever,  
 (= Y 39.3:) (the male ones) who are on the side of good thought  
 and (the female ones) who (are) as well.

While the last phrase is a straightforward quotation of Y 39.3, the words *yauuaējibiiō yauuaēsubiiō* in the previous line are only quasi-quotations in so far as they result from the correct transposition into the dat.pl. case in order to denote the indirect object. For in the OAv. passage, from which they originate, the different syntactic construction of the verb *yazamaidē* requires the accusative plural forms *yauuaējiiō yauuaēsuuō*:

## Y 39.3

*āṭ iθā yazamaidē*  
*vaṇhūšcā īṭ vaṇ<sup>y</sup>hīšcā īṭ*  
*spəntəṇg aməšəṇg*  
*yauuaējiiō yauuaēsuuō*  
*yōi vaṇhəuš ā manəṇhō šīieṇti*  
*yāscā \*uitī*

Finally in this way we worship  
 the good bounteous immortals,  
 both male and female,  
 who live forever, who thrive forever,  
 (the male ones) who are on the side of good thought  
 and (the female ones) who (are) as well.

The fact that the YAv. text composers were able to adapt the OAv. passage to the different syntactic context of Yasna 4.4 indicates not only that they had the text of the Older Avesta in mind but also that they were in full command of both Old and Young Avestan languages. Moreover, the proposed structural analysis of Y 4.1–7 suggests that the OAv. quotation was accorded a prominent position, the YAv. formulae being arranged around it, thus creating a concentric structure with the quotation from the YH at its centre. This shows that within one particular *hāiti* a liturgical text may be made up of smaller, internally organized units.

Chapters 3–8 of the Yasna constitute the Srōš Drōn which culminates in the consumption of the sacrificial bread, *miiazda-*, during the recitation of Yasna 8. Parts of the Srōš Drōn are repeated in later sections of the Yasna during the second pressing of the hōm in the Hōmāst which consists of Y 22–27.12.<sup>12</sup> In particular, Y 3, 4, 6 and 7 correspond to Y 22, 24, 25 and 26 respectively. Y 39.3 in its adapted form of Y 4.4 recurs not only in Y 24.9 but is expanded in Vr 11.12, the Karde of the Visperad which is based on and to a large extent identical with Y 24 and replaces Y 24 in the Visperad and Videvdad ceremonies:<sup>13</sup>

Vr 11.12

*aməṣāēibiiō spəntaēibiiō*

*huxšaθraēibiiō huḍābiiō*

(cf. Y 39.3:) *yauuaējibiiō yauuaēsubiiō*

*yōi vohu*

*yōi vohunqəm dātārō*

(= Y 39.3:) *yōi vaṇhəuš ā manəṇhō šīieṇti*

*vaṇhəuš ā zī ā manəṇhō šīieṇti*

*yōi aməṣā spənta huxšaθra huḍāṇhō*

*adāt māta adāt būta haca vaṇhaot manəṇhat*

(We make them known)

to the Bounteous Immortals

(who are) of good rule, beneficent,

(cf. Y 39.3:) who live forever, who thrive forever,

who (are) good,

who (are) the creators of what is good,

(= Y 39.3:) (the male ones) who are on the side of good thought.

For they are on the side of good thought,

(they,) the Bounteous Immortals who (are) of good rule, beneficent,

being both formed and risen from good thought.

The quotation from Y 4.4 is here expanded in two different ways. The relative clauses *yōi vohu yōi vohunqəm dātārō* which follow the datives *yauuaējibiiō yauuaēsubiiō*, adapted in Y 4.4 from Y 39.3, extend the

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Kotwal & Boyd 1991, 94 fn.89. During the recitation of Y 11.10 the zōt drinks the first pressing of the hōm, i.e. the *parāhōm*, prepared by the rāspī, but he does not drink the second pressing, prepared by himself. Instead, at the end of the ceremony half of it is poured into the well and the other half given to whoever commissioned the ritual, see Kotwal & Boyd 1991, 129 with fn.154. Cf. Kellens 2010, 75 with fn.64 for a speculative interpretation of the significance of the second hōm pressing.

<sup>13</sup> Y 39.3 in its adapted form of Y 4.4 also recurs in Vr 9.4, which in the Visperad and Videvdad ceremonies is recited between Y 21 and Y 22. I am grateful to Alberto Cantera for kindly having given me access to his unpublished tables of the two ceremonies. Manuscript views are available on the website of Alberto Cantera's Avestan Digital Archive.

composition by adding two more characteristics of the Amesha Spentas.<sup>14</sup> By contrast, the words following the verbatim quotation of Y 39.3 *yōi vaṅhāuš ā manañhō šīieṅti* (minus the final *yāasca uiti*), give the impression of an Avestan commentary on the YH passage.<sup>15</sup>

Both the compositional structure and the way the YH is quoted and adapted to different syntactic contexts suggest that Y 1–8 was composed at a time when the Avestan language was not only understood but also actively used for new compositions. Moreover, some indication of the internal relative chronology of YAv. texts can be gleaned from the fact that the expanded version in Vr 11.12 is based on the YAv. adaptation of Y 4.4 = Y 24.4, rather than on the OAv. source of Y 39.3. The Vr 11.12 passage must therefore have been composed later than Y 4.4 = 24.4.

#### 2.4. *Parallelism and ring-composition in Y 1–8*

In the dedications extending from Y 4.8 to Y 4.22 the ratus of the periods of the day, month, seasonal festivals and year together with the various co-workers and sacred beings (*yazatas*) associated with them are listed in the same sequence as in Y 1.3–17, 2.3–17, 3.5–19, 6.2–17 and 7.5–19, so that these six sections run parallel, but differ from one another by the verbs employed and the cases governed by them:

Y 1: *niuuāēḍaiiemī haṅkāraiēmī* ‘I announce, I celebrate’

Y 2: *āiiese yešti* ‘I bring here with worship’

Y 3: *āiiese yešti* ‘I bring here with worship’<sup>16</sup>

Y 4: *pairica dadāmahī āca vaēḍaiiamahī* ‘we offer and dedicate’,  
*āaṭ dīš āuuāēḍaiiamahī* ‘we dedicate them’

Y 5 = Y 37

Y 6: *yazamaide* ‘we worship’, otherwise = Y 2

Y 7.1–23: *aṣāiia dadāmi* ‘I offer with the appropriate rite’, otherwise =  
Y 3, Y 7.24–25 = Y 41.5–6

Y 8: *aṣāiia dadāmi* (Y 8.1), ritual consumption of the drōn (*xʷarata* Y 8.2),  
presentation of requests (*vasasca* Y 8.5–7).

The above list shows that, flanked by chapters 1–4 and 6–8, the central chapter, Y 5, is from the Yasna Haptanḥāiti, Y 37, the theme of which, the praise of Ahura Mazdā and the Amesha Spentas, is resumed

<sup>14</sup> The form *vohu* functions as nom.pl.m. but is obviously ungrammatical, cf. Bartholomae 1904, 1398, 1399 note 12.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Kellens 2010, 97, who regards both additions as “fragments de commentaires”.

<sup>16</sup> The verb *āiiese yešti* is the same in the two hāiti, but governs the acc. in Y 2.3–18, and the dat. and gen. in Y 3.5–23.

at the beginning of each of the *hāiti* of Y 1–4 and 6–7. The concentric arrangement is reinforced by the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural forms *pairica dadəmahī āca vaēḍaiiamahī* and *āuuāēḍaiiamahī* in Y 4 and *yazamaide* in Y 6, all of which have their counterparts in the YH, where most verbal forms are also in the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural. By contrast, those in Y 1–3 and Y 7 are in the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular.<sup>17</sup> Yasna 4, 6 and 7 each conclude with the Yejhē Hātaṃ prayer (Y 4.26, 6.21, 7.27), another feature shared with the Yasna Haptaṃhāiti.

The movement from the YAv. Y 4 to the OAv. Y 5 is marked in Y 4.25 by both the lengthening of word-final vowels and the change from the formula *āaṭ dīš āuuāēḍaiiamahī* to *yazamaide*, the verb characteristic of the central three chapters of the YH, Y 37–39:

Y 4.25

*aməšā spəṇtā*  
*huxšaθrā huḍāṅhō yazamaide*

We worship the good-ruling, beneficent  
Bounteous Immortals.

Thus, by quoting from and alluding to the Yasna Haptaṃhāiti, chapter 4 prepares the ground for the recitation of the entire chapter 37 of the Yasna Haptaṃhāiti in Yasna 5. Also elsewhere in the Yasna OAv. (quasi-)quotations in a YAv. context are particularly frequent before a longer recitation of OAv. texts such as, for instance, in Yasna 27, just before the beginning of the Ahunavaiti Gatha.

## 2.5. *The requests in Y 7–8*

Yasna 7 concludes the invocation formulae with the presentation of requests by means of a wholesale quotation of Y 41.5–6. As in the Yasna Haptaṃhāiti, Y 41.5 is to be recited twice in Y 7.24:

Y 7.24 = 41.5

*hiiṭ mīždam \*mauuaiθīm fradadāθā*  
*daēnābiiō mazdā ahurā (du bār )*

Y 7.25 = 41.6

*ahiiā huuō nā dāidī*  
*ahmāicā ahuiiē manaḥiiāicā*  
*taṭ ahiiā*

<sup>17</sup> For the contrast between sing. and plur. verbal forms in the first eight chapters of the Yasna cf. Kellens 1996, 42. For possible 1sg. forms in the YH (Y 35.8 *ādā* and 38.5 *auuā*) see the discussion in Hintze 2007, 91–93, 253–255 with references.

*yā taṭ upā jamiiāmā  
tauuacā sarəm aṣāxiiācā  
viṣpāi yauuē*

Y 7.24 = 41.5 The prize which you have allocated to someone like me for the sake of our beliefs, O Wise Lord:

Y 7.25 = 41.6 You, there, give us from this (prize) for both this and the spiritual life, (give us) this from this (prize) by which we shall attain the following: union with you and Truth for all time!

In Yasna 8 text and ritual action coincide in so far as the consumption of the food-offering (*miiazda-*), which occurs during the recitation of these verses, is also referred to in the text (Y 8.2 *x'arata narō aētəm miiazdəm* 'eat, O men, this food-offering'). This is followed in Y 8.5–6 by the presentation of requests, a theme that has already been introduced at the end of Yasna 7. In Y 8.5, the petitions include the wish that Ahura Mazdā may both rule over his own creations and may provide a truthful man to rule over the worshippers but that the deceitful one may be made powerless:

Y 8.5

*vasasca tū ahura mazda  
uštāca xšaēša hauuanəm dāmanəm  
vasō āpō vasō uruuarā  
vasō viṣpa vohū aṣaciθra  
xšaiiamnəm aṣauuanəm dāiiaata  
axšaiiamnəm druuantəm*

O Wise Lord, may you rule over your own creatures at will indeed and according to wish; (may you rule) at will over the waters, at will over the plants, at will over all that is good, originating from truth. Make the truthful one powerful, (but) the deceitful one powerless!

This passage draws on the Yasna HaptanĤāiti in so far as water, plants and all that is good are also listed in the same order in the slightly longer enumeration of Y 37.1:

Y 37.1

*iθā āt yazamaidē ahurəm mazdəm  
yē gəmčā aṣəmčā dāt  
apasčā dāt uruuarāscā vaṣ'hīš  
raocāscā dāt būmīmčā*

*vīspācā vohū*

37.2 *ahiiā xšaθrācā mazdānācā hauuapaṅhāišcā*

In this way we now worship the Wise Lord,  
 who has created the cow and truth,  
 (who) has created the waters and the good plants,  
 (who) has created light and the earth  
 and all that is good  
 by his rule, greatness and skills.

Moreover, the requests presented in Y 8.5, at the end of the first section of the Yasna, echo those presented at the close of the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti, in Y 41.2. In the latter passage the worshippers ask both for Ahura Mazda's everlasting rule and for a good ruler:

Y 41.2

*vohū xšaθrām tōi mazdā ahurā*

*apaēmā vīspāi yauuē*

*huxšaθrastū nā*

*nā vā nāirī vā*

*xšaētā ubōiiō aṅhuuō*

*hātqm hudāstāmā*

May we obtain, O Wise One,  
 your good rule for all time!  
 May a good ruler,  
 a man or a woman,  
 rule over us in both existences,  
 O most beneficent of those who exist!

A notable difference between Y 8.5 and 41.2 is that in the YH passage the request for a good ruler specifies either a man or a women, while no such distinction is made in Y 8.5, where only the masculine form is used.<sup>18</sup>

The formula *vasasca* of Y 8.5–7 occurs six times in the Yasna<sup>19</sup> and always as part of a section's conclusion:

Y 8.5–7 at the conclusion of the first eight chapters of the Yasna

Y 11.12–15 (= Y 8.5–8) at the conclusion of the Hōm Stōm

Y 52.5–8 (= Y 8.5–8) at the conclusion of the first four Gathas

Y 60.8–10 at the conclusion of the Afrīngān dahmān (Y 60.2–7)

Y 68.16–19 (= Y 8.5–8) at the conclusion of the *āb zōhr* 'ritual of the waters' (Y 62.11–70)

<sup>18</sup> Another instance where the explicit reference to the female has been dropped in a YAv. adaptation was noted above, p. 60–61 with regard to Vr 11.12.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Schlerath 1968 II 13f.

Y 71.26–28 at the conclusion of the entire Yasna, following the quotation of verse lines from Y 35.4 and 48.6.

The first eight chapters of the Yasna thus exhibit the features of a self-contained liturgy, characterized by an invocation and invitation to the divine beings and all that is needed for the performance of the ritual at the beginning in Yasna 1–2, and the presentation of the requests at the end in Yasna 7 and 8. It comes to a head at the centre with the recitation of one entire chapter of the Yasna Haptanhāiti in praise of Ahura Mazdā and the Amesha Spentas. The verbs taken from the YH with their forms in the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural, the Yeñhē Hātəm prayers at the end of each of Y 4, 6 and 7, the three Hāiti arranged around Yasna 5 (= Y 37), further strengthen the link with the YH at the centre of Yasna 1–8.<sup>20</sup> The first unit of the Yasna, consisting of chapters one to eight, thus follows the concentric structural pattern of the YH and contains numerous echoes of this more ancient text, which served as its compositional model.

### 3. Quotation and adaptation of Gathic passages: Y 13.4

The Younger Avesta also abounds in quotations from the Gathas. Y 13.4 shows that such quotations were open to alteration and could be adapted to the different syntactic context of the YAv. passage:

Y 13.4 (= Y 14.2, Vr 5.2)

*pairī vā aməšā spəntā*  
*huxšaθrā hudañhō dadəmi*  
 (= Y 33.14:) *tanuuascēt xʷaxiiā uštanəm*  
*pairī* (cf. Y 33.10:) *vīspā hujītaiiō*

I dedicate to you, O, good ruling, beneficent  
 Bounteous Immortals,  
 the life of one's own body,  
 (I) dedicate all good things of life (to you, pl.).

While Gathic words from Y 33.14 are quoted unaltered, the second source, Y 33.10, is slightly different:

<sup>20</sup> These structural considerations, according to which Yasna 8.1–8 form the conclusion to the first section of the Yasna, are supported by the manuscripts. Y 8.9, which all mss. assign to Yasna 8, seems to be a transitional section as some mss., in particular Pt4 and Mf4, give the title of the Hōm Stōm at the beginning of Y 8.9 but clearly mark Y 9.1 as the beginning of a new section, cf. Geldner 1889–1896 I 38 note 1 on Y 8.9. Kellens 2006 suggests a different segmentation. He lets the first section of the Yasna end with Y 7.23 and regards Y 7.24–8.1 as “zone de transition” so that the repetition of the *vasasca* in Y 8.5–7 and 11.12–14 “encadre le Hōm Stōm” (2007, 14).

Y 33.10

*vīspās.tōi hujītaiiō yā zī āṅharē yāscā həṅtī*  
*yāscā mazdā bauuainīti θβahmī hīš zaošē ābaxšō.huuā*

All your things of good living, which have been and which are  
 and which will be, O Wise One, apportion them at your pleasure!

Here the 2<sup>nd</sup> sg. pronoun *tōi* ‘of you’ refers to Ahura Mazdā. However, such a pronoun would not fit the context of Y 13.4 because there at the beginning of the verse the Amesha Spentas are addressed by the OAv. 2<sup>nd</sup> pl. enclitic pronoun *vā* ‘to you, O Bounteous Immortals’. Accordingly, in the Y 13.4 quotation *vīspās hujītaiiō*, the enclitic personal pronoun *tōi* is omitted, with the result that the Gathic passage is thus adjusted to the different syntactic context.

#### 4. The verb *vis* ‘to make oneself available’

After the first eight chapters of the Yasna, the Hōm Stōm in Y 9–11, the Fravarānē in Y 12 and the address to ratus and the OAv quotations in Y 13, the Staota Yesnya start in Yasna 14.1 with the words:

Y 14.1

*(zōt) vīsāi vā amāžā spəṅtā*  
*staotā zaotā zbātā yaštā framarətā aibijarətā*

I shall make myself available, O Bounteous Immortals,  
 as your praiser, priest, invoker, sacrificer, reciter, welcomer.

Narten suggests that the form *aibijarətā* recalls the opening verse of the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti (Y 35.2) or perhaps some other liturgical introduction while Tremblay regards the words *vīsāi* to *aibijarətā* as the quotation of a lost Gathic verse, although he does note the similarity between “la rhétorique” of Y 14.1 and that of Y 41.5. Kellens also affirms Y 41.5 as “la source d’inspiration” of Y 14.1.<sup>21</sup> The YH passage in question, which is followed by the requests quoted above, p. 63, runs as follows:

Y 41.5

*θβōi staotarascā maθranascā ahurā mazdā*  
*aogəmadaēcā usmahicā vīsāmadaēcā*

We are declaring ourselves, are aspiring and making ourselves available  
 to be your praisers and chanters, O Wise Lord.

<sup>21</sup> Narten 1986, 90; Tremblay 2006, 273f. with note b; Kellens 2007, 112.

Y 41.5 is in turn to be seen in connection with the Gathic passage Y 50.11 which, like Y 41.5, occurs at the conclusion of a *hāiti*.<sup>22</sup>

Y 50.11

*aṭ vā staotā aojāi mazdā aṅhācā*  
*yauuaṭ aṣā tauuācā isāicā*

Thus I want to declare myself as and be your praiser, O Wise One,  
as much as I can and am able by means of truth.

The three passages share the syntactic structure of a variable number of verbs combined with a variable number of nouns in predicative function. Apart from *maqθrān-*, the nouns are agent nouns in *-tar*, of which *staotar-* ‘praiser’, the only one in Y 50.11, always occurs at the head when there are several. The differences between the three passages are predominantly lexical. Thus, in Y 50.11 two verbs, *aoj* ‘to declare oneself’ and *ah* ‘to be’ are combined with one agent noun, *staotar-*, while in Y 41.5 the syntactic frame consists of three verbs (*aoj* ‘to declare oneself’, *vas* ‘to wish’ and *vis* ‘to make oneself available’) and two agent nouns ‘praiser’ and ‘chanter’, and in Y 14.1 of one verb (*vis*) and six agent nouns. The only grammatical difference lies in the number and mood of the verbal forms, which are in the 1<sup>st</sup> sg. subj. in both Y 50.11 and Y 14.1, but in the 1<sup>st</sup> pl.ind. in Y 41.5. Moreover, while both Y 50.11 and Y 41.5 address Ahura Mazda, Y 14.1 is directed to the Amesha Spentas.

Thus, in Y 14.1 the same compositional techniques are employed as in the two OAv. passages. Rather than being the *verbatim* quotation of a lost Gathic verse, Y 14.1 may therefore be more appropriately regarded as an original composition which follows an OAv. model, Y 41.5 in particular. The morphological and phonetic features of the language of the Y 14.1 passage are distinctively Old Avestan. They include long word-final vowels and the forms *vā*, *aibijarətā* and *vīsāi*. Possible indications of a later date for its composition as compared to the OAv. passages are the accumulation of agent nouns and, especially, the word order *amāṣā spəntā*. One may then regard the Y 14.1 passage as Middle Avestan.<sup>23</sup>

In the extended liturgies of the Visperad and Videvdad ceremonies the Younger Avestan version of the beginning of Y 14.1 is recited in Vr 5.1 after Y 13.8 and instead of Y 14.1:<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup> On the two OAv. passages see Narten 1986, 298f.; Hintze 2007, 317f.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Tremblay 2006, 247f., 273.

<sup>24</sup> In addition, the YAv. section of Y 14.1 is extended in Vr 5.1.

## Vr 5.1

*vīse vō aməša spənta  
staota zaota zbāta yašta framarəta aibijarəta*

I am making myself available, O Bounteous Immortals,  
as your praiser, priest, invoker, sacrificer, reciter, welcomer.

This passage exhibits not only short word-final vowels, which most obviously distinguish YAv. from OAv., but also the YAv. form *vō* ‘of you’ which corresponds to OAv. *vā*. By contrast, the 1sg.subj. pres. middle form *vīsāi* of Y 14.1, with the OAv. ending *-āi*, is replaced in Vr 5.1 not with the expected YAv. equivalent *visāne*, but with the 1sg. ind. pres. middle form *vīse*.<sup>25</sup> The action of ‘making oneself available’ is thus presented here, as in Y 41.5, not as being intended but as already happening.

The Vr 5.1 list of six agent nouns is further extended in Yt 3.1 by the insertion at their centre of a further agent noun, *maqθrān-*, which occurs with *vis* in Y 41.5.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the penultimate noun *framarətar-* ‘reciter’ of Y 14.1 and Vr 5.1 is replaced by the morphologically transparent but unique *āfrītar-* ‘blesser’. The seven nouns are correctly formed vocatives and function syntactically as appositions to the name Zarathushtra, who is being addressed by Ahura Mazda:

## Yt 3.1

*... spitama zaraθuštra  
staotarəca zaotarəca zbātarəca maθranaca  
yaštarəca āfrītarəca aibijarətarəca...*

... O Spitama Zarathushtra,  
praiser, priest, invoker, chanter,  
sacrificer, blesser and welcomer, ...

While the agent nouns occur here without a verb, the action of ‘making oneself available’, denoted by the middle voice indicative of the verb *vis* ‘to enter’, is implied because it represents the prerequisite condition for Zarathushtra being able to bear the seven ritual titles ascribed to him by Ahura Mazda in this passage. In terms of factual statement, the agent nouns in Yt 3.1 thus correspond to the indicative mood of *vīse* in Vr 5.1. Moreover, the noun at the centre of the list in Yt 3.1, *maqθrān-*, its only YAv. attestation, further connects the passage not only with the YH, but also with the Gathas, where it occurs five times and clearly characterizes Zarathushtra in Y 50.6.

<sup>25</sup> Following a suggestions by E. Pirart, however, Kellens 2007, 113f. considers *vīsāi*, like *vīse*, to be 1sg.ind.pres.mid.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Kellens 2007, 113 fn.45.

The passages just quoted from the Gathas, YH, Middle and YAv. Yasna, Visperad and Yashts show that the syntactic combination of a predicative agent noun with a middle voice form of the verb *vis* was a productive device for expressing the idea of making oneself available for a specific task assigned by Ahura Mazda. The particularly long list of agent nouns in Yt 3.1 presents Zarathushtra as Ahura Mazda's ideal priest who has made himself available for all these roles and whose example priests of later generations will subsequently follow.

In this respect Zarathushtra contrasts with Yima, about whom Vd 2 relates that Ahura Mazda had invited him earlier but he did not make himself available for the task that was later assigned to Zarathushtra. Although the relevant passage in Vd 2.3–4 poses textcritical, grammatical and interpretive problems, which Antonio Panaino discusses in detail elsewhere,<sup>27</sup> in Vd 2.4 and 5 the verb *vis* is unequivocally construed with the nom.sg. of agent nouns, which denote the alternative roles that Ahura Mazda assigned to Yima:

Vd 2.4

*āaṭ mē vīsāi gaēθanqm*  
*θrātāca harətāca aiβiiāxštaca*

Then you will make yourself available as my living beings'  
protector, preserver and lookout.

Vd 2.5

*azəm tē vīsāne gaēθanqm*  
*θrātāca harətāca aiβiiāxštaca*

I shall make myself available as your living beings'  
protector, preserver and lookout.

## 5. YH Quotation in the Pahlavi literature

The extent to which the YH continued to be present in the minds of later generations of priests emerges from the Pahlavi literature. For instance, in the episode of the first human couple Mašya and Māšyānē, related in the Bundahišn, Ohrmazd is said to have required them to perform good thoughts, good words and good deeds and not to worship the demons (*humat menēd hūxt gōwēd huwaršt warzēd. dēwān mā yazēd* TD2 102.2–3, Anklesaria 1908). The story goes that their first thought

<sup>27</sup> Panaino (forthcoming); cf. also Cantera 2012, 45–48.

was that they were human, their first deed that they started moving, but their first words were the following:

IrBd 14.14 (TD2 102.6–8)

'P-š'n' nzdst' gwbsn' ZNH gwpt' 'YK 'whrmzd d't' MY' W zmyk W  
'wlwl W gwsṗnd stl W m'h W hwłšyt W hwłšp 'p'tyh MNW MN 'hl'dyh  
pyt'kyh YMRRWN-yt' bwn W bl

*u-šān nazdist gōwišn ēn guft kū Ohrmazd dād āb ud zamīg ud urwar ud  
gōspand star ud māh ud xwaršēd ud harwisṗ ābādīh kē az ahlāyīh pay-  
dāgīh gōwēd bun ud bar.*

And as the first word they said this that Ohrmazd created the water and the earth and the plant(s) and cattle, the star(s) and the moon and the sun and all prosperity, which (is) from the manifestation of righteousness; one calls (it) the substance and the fruit.

Although the words denoting the individual creations of Ohrmazd differ, the first speech spoken by the first couple recalls the beginning of the *yazamaidē*-formulae in Y 37.1, quoted above, p. 64, particularly in its Pahlavi version. For it shares not only the compositional structure according to which a list of individual creations is concluded by a general, all-encompassing term ('all prosperity' in the Bundahišn passage, 'all that is good' in Y 37.1), but also the concluding expression *bun ud bar*, which occurs in the Pahlavi version of Y 37.1.<sup>28</sup>

It has been noted that one of the characteristics of the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti is the absence of any obvious mention of Evil.<sup>29</sup> If the first words spoken by the first human couple in the just quoted Bundahišn passage are indeed intended to recall Y 37.1, then the episode also presents the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti as belonging to an Evil-free state. For at the stage in the narrative when the couple recite these words their thoughts are still free from Evil. It is only afterwards that Evil attacks and enters their thoughts, as described in IrBd 14.15, the passage that immediately follows.

## 6. Conclusion

The quotations from both the Gathas and the YH in the Younger Avesta discussed here show that the liturgical Younger Avesta is deeply

<sup>28</sup> On *bun ud bar* in Sasanian legal terminology, see Macuch (forthcoming). Arash Zeini discusses the expression in detail in his forthcoming SOAS PhD thesis on the Pahlavi version of the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti, in which he also studies the latter's reception in the wider Pahlavi literature.

<sup>29</sup> The only possible instance is Y 36.1, see Hintze 2007, 118 with references.

indebted to the Older Avesta. We have seen that YAv. text composers were not only linguistically able but also felt free to adapt OAv. passages to different YAv. contexts fully, partially, or not at all and to expand the extent of such quotations further by composing additional text.

I hope to have shown in this article that the first eight units of the Yasna have both a parallel and a concentric structure. While the *ratu*-invocations in the six *hāiti* of Y 1–4 and 6–7 run parallel to one another, they also mirror each other in so far as Y 6 corresponds to Y 2 and Y 7 to Y 3. They thus form a frame which in a concentric fashion encloses Y 4–5 and the quotation of the entire Yasna Haptanĥāiti chapter, Y 37, in Y 5. Moreover, I have highlighted the fact that the theme of Y 37 (= Y 5), the praise of Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas, appears at the beginning of each of Y 1–4 and 6–7. We have also seen that the phrases *humatāca hūxtāca huuarštāca* and *pairica dadmahī āca vaēdaiiamahī* ‘we offer and dedicate’ in Y 4.1 (= 4.3) draw on expressions from both the beginning and the end of the YH. Furthermore, like the YH, Y 1–8 concludes with a presentation of requests both in Y 7, where Y 41.5–6 of the YH is quoted, and in Y 8 (*vasasca*). I have also argued that within one particular *hāiti* the liturgical texts may be made up of smaller units which, like larger ones, are internally structured. Thus, Y 4.1–7 has a concentric arrangement and encloses a quotation and adaptation from the YH (Y 39.3) at its centre in Y 4.4, thereby giving it a prominent position. Y 4.4 (= Y 24.4) also provides an example of internal YAv quotation and adaptation as Y 4.4 is in turn quoted and extended in Vr 11.12, thus testifying to a living tradition of recomposition of old textual material.

We have also looked at instances of a syntactic structure in which various predicative agent nouns are combined with a variable number of verbs, in particular middle voice forms of *vis* ‘to make oneself available’. Interpreting the introduction of Y 14.1 and its YAv. adaptation in Vr 5.1 as compositions following an OAv. model, Y 41.5 in particular, I have argued that in terms of factual statement the agent noun vocatives in Yt 3.1, by which Ahura Mazda addresses Zarathushtra, correspond to the indicative mood of *vīse* in Vr 5.1. Moreover, the noun *maqθrān-* at the centre of the Yt 3.1 list further connects the passage not only with the YH (Y 41.5), but also with the Gathas, where in Y 50.6 it clearly refers to Zarathushtra.

The passages analysed in this paper are merely *examples* of a phenomenon deserving further systematic study. They imply that the Avesta is a multi-layered text corpus which is made up of chronologically succeeding strata from a literary as well as a linguistic point of view. For

while it has long been recognized that the language of the Gathas and the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti is more archaic than that of the rest of the Avesta, we are now beginning better to understand the extent to which the OAv. texts also provided the literary model for later priestly compositions. The passage from the Bundahišn quoted above illustrates that such was the case even far into the Middle Iranian period. Moreover, the example of Vr 11.12 shows that the compositional technique of quoting passages and adapting and expanding them in a new and different literary context was applied not only to Old Avestan but also to Young Avestan texts. Such a practice points to the diachronic depth of chronologically succeeding strata even within the Younger Avesta. The fact that in quotations the wording of Old and YAv passages could be changed indicates that, on the one hand, the texts were petrified in their original loci, but, on the other, that they were also open to being altered, adjusted and expanded in a new and different literary composition.

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