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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 Haptanhaiti. It argues that the first eight chapters of the Yasna have, like the Yasna Haptanhaiti, 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 Haptanhaiti (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 Haptanhaiti 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.¹

¹ 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. 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 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. 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. 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 Haptanähäiti 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 Vīsperad are deeply indebted to the Yasna Haptanähäiti. 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 Yejhe Hātām prayer, testifies to a living, on-going tradition of oral composition of which different strata are preserved in the multi-layered Avesta.

2 See, for instance, Hintze 2000 and Skjærvø 2005–06.
5 Hintze 2002, 33f.
6 Narten 1982, 80–86; Kellens 2007, 118.
2. The Yasna Haptaḫāiti and Yasna 1–8

The perhaps most noticeable feature of the Yasna Haptaḫāiti 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’ (gōnā). It is then followed in Yasna 39, stanzas 1–2, by the praise of souls, namely those of the cow and her maker (gūš uruuan- and gūš 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.7

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 Haptaḫāiti 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’:

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 Haptañhāti the triad occurs twice, in the gen. pl. governed by aibī.jarztārō 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 yazamaide formulae in Y 37.1.8 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 huuarṣṭa āīese yeṣṭi
gābāṃqcā sraoṭrāṃ āīese yeṣṭi
huuarṣṭā maṭrā āīese yeṣṭi
I bring here with worship the well-thought, well-spoken, well-performed words;9
and I bring here with worship the recitation of the Gathas;
I bring here with worship the well-performed mantras.

8 On YH humata- hūxta- huuarṣṭa- as the model for the YAv. formula, see Narten 1986, 87 with references.

9 Kellens 1996, 56f. and 2006, 49 notes that the -ca in gābāṃqca 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 āīese yeṣṭi which follows gābāṃqca sraoṭrāṃ and huuarṣṭā maṭrā respectively and which Kellens does not translate, indicates that in Y 3.4, as elsewhere, each āīese yeṣṭi refers to a distinct constituent of the ritual. Such is also the case with the verb phrase aṣṭai daθāmi in Y 7.4, which runs parallel to Y 3.4. Moreover, in Y 4.1 and 3 the triad humata hūxta huuarṣṭa is separated from gābāṃqca sraoṭrāṃ and huuarṣṭā maṭrā 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 haŋkṣṛθā 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 vīpaēca vācō maζdō 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 huuarṣṭa is interpreted as referring to the Yasna Haptañhāti, then the -ca in gābāṃqca sraoṭrāṃ 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 vaēđaiiamahī*:

Y 4.1

(zōt ud rāspī) *ima humatāca hūxtāca huuarštāca*
(zōt) *ima haomāsca miiazaqsc ca zoobrāśca*
*barṣmaca ašaia frastarōtom…*
*ratufritmca gaṇānqmc ca srohbrm*
huuarštā maqbrā
*pairica dadmahī āca vaēđaiiamahī*

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 vaēđaiiamahī* ‘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 *vaēđaiiamahī* and the former the lengthening of word final vowels and the form *dadmahī* with the cluster -döm- in contrast to the YAv. form with -nm-, which is in fact attested as *danmahī* in a later chapter of the Yasna, Y 68.1.\(^\text{10}\) The phrase is modelled after an expression that occurs at the conclusion of the YH:

Y 41.1

*stūtō garō vahmōng*
*ahrūā mazdāī*
*ašācā vahištāi*
*dadmahicā cīšmahicā ācā [ā]uuaēđaiiamahī*

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 vaēđaiiamahī* occurs

\(^{10}\) 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, *āat dīš āwuaēdaiiamahī* ‘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), the only other accusative governed by the verb *āwuaēdaiiamahī* is in Y 4.5 *dīš...frāīehīš*, 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 frauwašībiio*), so that Y 4.1–7 bears traces of a concentric structure:

*āat dīš āwuaēdaiiamahī*

Y 4.2 ahurāica mazdāi
sraošāica ašiīāi
amoašēbiīusca spoençaēbiio
ašāunqmca frauwašībiio etc.

Y 4.4 amoašēbiio spoençaēbiio... + YH quotation

Y 4.6 ašāunqm vaŋ‘hibīio frauwašībiio

Y 4.7 daθusō ahurāhe mazdā...
amoašanqm spoençašanq
yasnāica vahmāica xšaΘbrāica frasaθaθiaēca

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:

11 Cf., for instance, Vr 11.1 ahurāi mazdāi haomq āwuaēdaiiamahī etc.
Y 4.4

\[\text{äæt } \text{dīš } \text{āwāædāiamahī}\]
\[\text{am̑šaēibi īo spəntaēibi īo}\]
\[\text{hux̑šaθraēibi īo hudoθibi īo}\]

(cf. Y 39.3:) \[\text{yauuaējībīiō}\]
\[\text{yauuaēsubīiō}\]

(= Y 39.3:) \[\text{yōi vaŋhūš ā manan̑hō šiieṇti}\]
\[\text{yāscā uīti}\]

We make them known
to the Bounteous Immortals,

(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 \[\text{yauuaējībīiō}\]
\[\text{yauuaēsubīiō}\] 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. pas-
sage, from which they originate, the different syntactic construction of
the verb \[\text{yaŋamaidē}\] requires the accusative plural forms \[\text{yauuaējīiō}\]
\[\text{yauuaēsuuō}\]:

Y 39.3

\[\text{āi iīhā yamahaŋaide}\]
\[\text{vaŋhūścā iī vaŋhīścā iī}\]
\[\text{spəntəŋ am̑šəŋ}\]
\[\text{yauuaējīiō}\]
\[\text{yauuaēsuuō}\]
\[\text{yōi vaŋhūš ā manan̑hō šiieṇti}\]
\[\text{yāscā uīti}\]

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. quo-
tation was accorded a prominent position, the YAv. formulae being
arranged around it, thus creating a concentric structure with the quota-
tion from the YH at its centre. This shows that within one particular \[hāitī\]
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. 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:

Vr 11.12

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{amōxāēbijiō spōntaēbijiō} \\
\text{huxšatraēbijiō huďāhiō} \\
\text{(cf. Y 39.3:) yauuaēbijiō yauuaēsubiō} \\
yōi vohu \\
yōi vohunām dātarō \\
\text{ (= Y 39.3:) yōi vaŋhōuś ā maŋhō ŝieĩnti} \\
\text{vaŋhōuś ā zī ā maŋhō ŝieĩnti} \\
yōi amōxā spōnta huxšabra huďāhiō \\
aďāt mātā aďāt būtā haca vaŋhōať maŋhāt
\end{align*}
\]

(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 vohunām dātarō which follow the datives yauuaēbijiō yauuaēsubiō, adapted in Y 4.4 from Y 39.3, extend the

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12 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.

13 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 Spenta-s. By contrast, the words following the verbatim quotation of Y 39.3 yōi vanhāuš ā mananāhō śīieṇti (minus the final yāsca uiti), give the impression of an Avestan commentary on the YH passage.

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: niuavādaiemi haŋkāraiemi ‘I announce, I celebrate’
Y 2: āiise yešti ‘I bring here with worship’
Y 3: āiise yešti ‘I bring here with worship’
Y 4: pairica dādamaḥ āča vaēdaiamahī ‘we offer and dedicate’, āaŋ dīš niuavādaiamahī ‘we dedicate them’
Y 5 = Y 37
Y 6: yazamaide ‘we worship’, otherwise = Y 2
Y 7.1–23: ašāiai dāqmi ‘I offer with the appropriate rite’, otherwise = Y 3, Y 7.24–25 = Y 41.5–6
Y 8: ašāiai dāqmi (Y 8.1), ritual consumption of the drōn (xvaara 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 Haptanāhīti, Y 37, the theme of which, the praise of Ahura Mazdā and the Amesha Spentas, is resumed

---

14 The form vohu functions as nom.pl.m. but is obviously ungrammatical, cf. Bartholomae 1904, 1398, 1399 note 12.
15 Cf. Kellens 2010, 97, who regards both additions as “fragments de commentaires”.
16 The verb āiise 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 hāti of Y 1–4 and 6–7. The concentric arrangement is reinforced by the 1st person plural forms pairica dadomahi āca vaēdaiiamahi and āuuāēdaiiamahi 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 1st person plural. By contrast, those in Y 1–3 and Y 7 are in the 1st person singular. Yasna 4, 6 and 7 each conclude with the Yeēbhē Hātām prayer (Y 4.26, 6.21, 7.27), another feature shared with the Yasna Haptaŋhāiti.

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 āat diš āuuāēdaiiamahe to yazamaide, the verb characteristic of the central three chapters of the YH, Y 37–39:

Y 4.25

\[
\text{amāzā spontā} \\
\text{huxšahrā hudāŋhō yazamaide}
\]

We worship the good-ruling, beneficent Bounteous Immortals.

Thus, by quoting from and alluding to the Yasna Haptaŋhāiti, chapter 4 prepares the ground for the recitation of the entire chapter 37 of the Yasna Haptaŋhāiti 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 Haptaŋhāiti, Y 41.5 is to be recited twice in Y 7.24:

Y 7.24 = 41.5

\[
\text{hīat mīždəm }^*\text{mauwaitim fradadjhā} \\
\text{daēnābiō mazdā ahurā (du bār )}
\]

Y 7.25 = 41.6

\[
\text{ahīā huuō nā dāiđi} \\
\text{ahmāicā ahuiē manaćiicā} \\
\text{taś ahīā}
\]

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 sarām ašaixiācā
viśpāi 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 aētōm miiazdom ‘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
ušāca sxaēśa haumāqām dāmanqām
vasō āpō vasō uruuarā
vasō viśpa vohū ašacībra
šxaiaiamnām ašauuamnām dāiia a
axšaiaiamnām druuaia dēm

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 Haptañ̄hāiti 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 ahurēm mazdam
yē gāmcā ašēmcā dāt
apascā dāt uruuarāscā vauhiś
raocāscā dāt būmēmcā
vīspācā vohū
37.2 ahītā səsrəcā mazənəcă haunapənhəišcă

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 Haptanəhāti, in Y 41.2. In the latter passage the worshippers ask both for Ahura Mazdā’s everlasting rule and for a good ruler:

Y 41.2

vohū səsrəṃ töi mazdā ahurā
apaēnă vīspāi yauuē
huxsəhrəstū nū
nā vā nārī vā
səsrətū ubōtū anhuuō
hūṃ hudəstomō

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 woman, while no such distinction is made in Y 8.5, where only the masculine form is used.18

The formula vasasca of Y 8.5–7 occurs six times in the Yasna19 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 Aftaŋgān dəmān (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)

18 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.
19 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 Haptaŋhāiti in praise of Ahura Mazda and the Amesha Spentas. The verbs taken from the YH with their forms in the 1st person plural, the Yeŋhe Hātām prayers at the end of each of Y 4, 6 and 7, the three Hātī arranged around Yasna 5 (= Y 37), further strengthen the link with the YH at the centre of Yasna 1–8.20 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 YA, passage:

Y 13.4 (= Y 14.2, Vr 5.2)

\[
pairi və ams̄ą spr̄t ā
\hux̄ăbr̄ă hudoŋhō daq̄m̄i
\]

(= Y 33.14:) *tanuwaŋčī x’ašiiā uštəm*

\[
pairi (cf. Y 33.10:) višpā huijtiįō
\]

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:

20 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

\[ \text{višpäš.} \text{tōi hujūtaīō yā zī āŋharā yāscā hōŋti} \]
\[ \text{yāscā mazdā bauwaiŋti ðβuhtmī hīš zaošē ābaxšō.} \]

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\textsuperscript{nd} 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\textsuperscript{nd} pl. enclitic pronoun vē ‘to you, O Bounteous Immortals’. Accordingly, in the Y 13.4 quotation viṣpā hujūtaīō, the enclitic personal pronoun tōi is omitted, with the result that the Gothic 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 Fravarēnē 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

\[ (zōt) \text{visāi vē amxā spēntā} \]
\[ \text{staotā zaotā zhātā yaštā framartā aibijartā} \]

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

Narten suggests that the form aibijartā recalls the opening verse of the Yasna Haptaŋhāti (Y 35.2) or perhaps some other liturgical introduction while Tremblay regards the words visāi to aibijartā as the quotation of a lost Gothic 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. \footnote{21 Narten 1986, 90; Tremblay 2006, 273f. with note b; Kellens 2007, 112.} The YH passage in question, which is followed by the requests quoted above, p. 63, runs as follows:

Y 41.5

\[ ðβōi staotarascā maθranascā ahurā mazdā \]
\[ aŋomadaēcā usmahićā viṣamađaēcā \]

We are declaring ourselves, are aspiring and making ourselves available to be your praisers and chanters, O Wise Lord.
Y 41.5 is in turn to be seen in connection with the Gothic passage Y 50.11 which, like Y 41.5, occurs at the conclusion of a hāiti.22

Y 50.11

\[ \textit{at vē staotā aojāi mazdā anhācā} \]
\[ \textit{yauaŋ ašā tauuăcă isācă} \]

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 \textit{maθrān-}, the nouns are agent nouns in -\textit{tar}, of which \textit{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, \textit{aoj} ‘to declare oneself’ and \textit{ah} ‘to be’ are combined with one agent noun, \textit{staotar-}, while in Y 41.5 the syntactic frame consists of three verbs (\textit{aoj} ‘to declare oneself’, \textit{vas} ‘to wish’ and \textit{vis} ‘to make oneself available’) and two agent nouns ‘praiser’ and ‘chanter’, and in Y 14.1 of one verb (\textit{vis}) and six agent nouns. The only grammatical difference lies in the number and mood of the verbal forms, which are in the 1\textsuperscript{st} sg. subj. in both Y 50.11 and Y 14.1, but in the 1\textsuperscript{st} pl.ind. in Y 41.5. Moreover, while both Y 50.11 and Y 41.5 address Ahura Mazdā, 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 Gothic 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 vē, \textit{aibijarēt} and visāi. 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 amša spēntā. One may then regard the Y 14.1 passage as Middle Avestan.23

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 14.1.24

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24 In addition, the YAv. section of Y 14.1 is extended in Vr 5.1.
Vr 5.1
više vō amaša spaṅta
staota zaota zbāta yašta framaraṭa aibijaraṭa

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. vō. By contrast, the 1sg.subj. pres. mid-
dle form viśāi of Y 14.1, with the OAv. ending -āi, is replaced in Vr 5.1
not with the expected YAv. equivalent višāne, but with the 1sg. ind. pres.
middle form više.25 The action of ‘making oneself available’ is thus pre-
sented 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, maḥrān-, which occurs
with vis in Y 41.5.26 Moreover, the penultimate noun framarataraṭ-
‘reciter’ of Y 14.1 and Vr 5.1 is replaced by the morphologically trans-
parent 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 Mazdā:

Yt 3.1
… spitama zaraṭuṣṭra
staotaraṭca zaotaraṭca zbātarca maṭhranaca
yaštarca āfrītarca aibijaraṭca…
… 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 Mazdā in this passage. In terms of factual
statement, the agent nouns in Yt 3.1 thus correspond to the indicative
mood of više in Vr 5.1. Moreover, the noun at the centre of the list in
Yt 3.1, maḥrān-, 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.

25 Following a suggestion by E. Pirart, however, Kellens 2007, 113f. considers viṣāi,
like više, to be 1sg.ind.pres.mid.
The passages just quoted from the Gathas, YH, Middle and YAv. Yasna, Vesperad 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 Mazdā. The particularly long list of agent nouns in Yt 3.1 presents Zarathushtra as Ahura Mazdā’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 Mazdā 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, 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 Mazdā assigned to Yima:

Vd 2.4
āa† mē višāi gaēθanąm
brātāca harštāca aiβiâxštaca

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

Vd 2.5
azm tē višāne gaēθanąm
brātāca harštāca aiβiâxštaca

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 hāxt gōwēd huwaršt warzēd. dēwân mā yazēd* TD2 102.2–3, Anklesaria 1908). The story goes that their first thought

27 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’ gwbšn’ ZNH gwpt’ 'YK ‘whrmzd d’t’ MY’ W zmyk W
’wlwl W gwšnd stl W m’h W hwšyt W hwšp ‘p’tyh MNW MN ‘hl’dyh
pyt’kyh YMRRWN-yt’ bwn W bl

u-šan nazdist govišn ěn guft kū Ohrmazd dād āb ud zamīg ud urwar ud
gōspand star ud māh ud xwarśēd ud harwisp ābādhī kē az ahlāyiḥ pay-
dāgīḥ 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 dif-
fer, 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 gen-
eral, 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 37.1.28

It has been noted that one of the characteristics of the Yasna
Haptaŋhāti is the absence of any obvious mention of Evil.29 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 pre-
sents the Yasna Haptaŋhāti 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

28 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 Haptaŋhāti, in which he also studies the latter’s reception
in the wider Pahlavi literature.

29 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 Y2 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 Haptaŋhāiti chapter, Y 37, in Y 5. Moreover, I have highlighted the fact that the theme of Y 37 (= Y 5), the praise of Ahura Mazdā and the Amesha Špentas, appears at the beginning of each of Y 1–4 and 6–7. We have also seen that the phrases humatāca hūxtāca hūuarštāca and pairica dādahā 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 Mazdā addresses Zarathushtra, correspond to the indicative mood of više in Vr 5.1. Moreover, the noun maqrān- 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 Haptaŋhāti 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.

7. Abbreviated references


