

Almut Hintze, On the compositional structure of the Avestan Gāhs.

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# On the compositional structure of the Avestan Gāhs

by Almut Hintze

## 0. Introduction

In Zoroastrianism, the twenty-four hour day is divided into five watches, called *asniia- ratu-* ‘the times of the day’<sup>1</sup> in Avestan and *gāh* in Middle and New Persian. In each of these watches, an Avestan text, called a *Gāh*, is to be recited in praise not only of that particular time but also of divine and human beings as well as notions, all of which are associated with it and considered as its co-workers. These texts have been transmitted as part of the Khorde or Smaller Avesta and are recited by both priests and lay members of the community.

Of the literature of the Avesta, the Gāhs belong to those texts that have received least scholarly attention. Like some other Younger Avestan writings, such as the Visperad, they have rarely been studied, the last occasion being about a century ago by the French scholar James Darmesteter.<sup>2</sup> One of the reasons for this may be that the Gāhs appear to be less attractive literary compositions than other parts of the corpus, both linguistically and from the point of view of their content. For example, the Gāhs contain little original text: about a third are simply repetitions of the Yasna. Moreover, the introductory and concluding portions are nearly the same in all of them, the only variation being that of different names, which are substituted at certain points. The most original sections are the central parts. But even they offer little new material because they consist of *yazamaide*-formulae which just mention the names of various entities worshipped, without much about them.

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1. The noun *ratu-*, which is probably derived from the root *ar* ‘to fit’ (Mayrhofer, *EWAia* I 257), is very common in the Avesta. Bartholomae, *AirWb.* 1498-1502 posits three homonymous nouns *ratu-*. The first denotes a period of time, the second a ‘judge’ and the third ‘judgment’. However, as rightly argued by Benveniste, *Noms-d’agent et noms d’action en indo-européen*, Paris 1948, 89, they all belong to one single noun *ratu-* denoting ‘the appropriate time’, for instance for a religious ceremony, and also both the ‘regulation’ and the person who presides over it.

2. Darmesteter 1992-93, vol. I 25-33, II 709-722.

In the present article I shall challenge dismissive assumptions about the literary quality of the Gāhs, and suggest that a close structural analysis reveals interesting ‘horizontal’ features about the intertextual relationships between them. The five Gāhs have parallel structures and form an interconnected set of texts. Moreover, it will emerge that the way they are interrelated provides an insight into the underlying religious system of which these texts are an expression.

### 1. The compositional structure of the Gāhs

All five Gāhs share a common pattern consisting of nine units (see figure 1). Three of the latter comprise the beginning, three the middle and three the end. The pattern according to which these nine units are arranged is that the three central ones (fig.1, nos. 4-6) are separated from two introductory (nos. 1-2) and two concluding ones (nos. 8-9) by a buffer unit on either side (nos. 3 and 7).

Some of these units are identical in all the Gāhs, while others differ to varying degrees. The three sections consisting of repetitions from the Yasna are indistinguishable. Two of them frame the central portion, setting it apart from the introductory and concluding sections. Thus, Y 71.3-4, which constitute stanzas 3-4 of all five Gāhs, is recited between the introductory and central parts, and Y 71.23-24 between the central and concluding ones. Lastly Y 68.11 and 72.9-10 form the finale of all Gāhs.

Moreover, the introductory and concluding formulae are nearly identical. They vary only in respect of the names of the individual Gāh and its co-workers in whose honour the prayer is recited. Let us take the Ušahin Gāh, Gāh 5, as an example. All Gāhs begin with the words *xšnaoθra ahurahe mazdā* ‘by gratification of the Wise Lord’, followed by three *A??m Vohu*-prayers and the first two clauses of the Confession of Faith (Y 12.1):

(1) *frauuarāne mazdaiiasnō zaraθuštriš*  
*vīdaēuuō ahura.ṭkaēšō*

I have made my choice as a Mazdā-worshipper, a Zarathustrian,  
 who rejects the daevas, who follows the teachings of the lord.

After the introductory lines just quoted, the formula of Gāh 5.1 runs as follows:

(2) G 5.1 ušahināi ašaone ašahe raθβe  
 yasnāica vahmāica xšnaoθrāi frasastaiiaēca  
bərəjiiāi nmāniiāica ašaone ašahe raθβe  
 yasnāica vahmāica xšnaoθrāica frasastaiiaēca  
 For the truthful dawn-time of truth,  
 for worship, praise, gratification and glory.  
 For the truthful honour- and house-time of truth,  
 for worship, praise, gratification and glory.

This opening is the same in all Gāhs except for the different names (underlined) in whose honour the text is recited. For instance, the first stanza of the Hāwan Gāh, G 1.1, runs as follows:

(3) G 1.1 hāuuānē ašaone ašahe raθβe  
 yasnāica vahmāica xšnaoθrāica frasastaiiaēca  
sāuuānḡhē vīsiāica ašaone ašahe raθβe  
 yasnāica vahmāica xšnaoθrāica frasastaiiaēca  
 For the truthful pressing-time<sup>3</sup> of truth,  
 for worship, praise, gratification and glory.  
 For the truthful morning- and clan-time of truth,  
 for worship, praise, gratification and glory.

The introductory section is followed by a formula that gives the names of the so-called co-workers, i.e. deities associated with a particular Gāh (fig.1, no.2). The names and their attributes always appear in the genitive governed by *xšnaoθrāica* ‘by gratification of’. The formula concludes with the words ‘for worship, praise, gratification and glory’ (*yasnāica vahmāica xšnaoθrāica frasastaiiaēca*):

(4) G 5.2 sraošahe ašiiēhe ašiiuatō vərəθrājanō frādaṭ.gaeθahe  
rašnaoš razištahe  
arštātasca frādaṭ.gaeθaiiā varədaṭ.gaeθaiiā xšnaoθra  
 yasnāica vahmāica xšnaoθrāica frasastaiiaēca  
 By gratification of Sraoša accompanied by reward, provided with reward,  
 the victorious one, who promotes the living beings,  
 (and by gratification) of straightest Rašnu

3. The name *hāuuani*- ‘pressing-’ refers to the ritual action of pressing the Haoma in the Yasna ritual, which starts in this morning Gāh. On the names of the five Gūhs, see Hintze 2003.

and of Arštāt who promotes the living beings, who makes the living beings grow,  
for worship, praise, gratification and glory.

As in the initial section, formulae invoking various deities are replaced in different Gāhs, while the syntactic frame, consisting of the expressions ‘by gratification’ and ‘for worship, praise, gratification and glory’, is identical. G 1.2, for instance, runs as follows:

(5) G 1.2 miθrahe *vouru.gaoiiaotōiš*  
*hazaṅrō.gaošahe baēuuarə.cašmanō*  
*aoxtō.nāmanō yazatahe*  
rāmanō *x<sup>v</sup>āstrahe xšnaoθra*  
*yasnāica vahmāica xšnaoθrāica frasastāiiaēca*

By gratification of Mithra, who has wide cattle-pastures,  
who has a thousand ears, ten thousand eyes,  
the venerable one, whose name is uttered,  
(and by gratification) of Peace provided with good pasture,  
for worship, praise, gratification and glory.

The opening section concludes with a set of lines identical in every Gāh and extremely common in all liturgical Avestan texts:

(6) *yaθā ahū vairiīō*  
*zaotā frā mē mrūtē*  
*aθā ratuš ašācēt haca*  
*frā ašauua vīduuā mraotū*

“As he is to be chosen by the Lord”  
the chief priest proclaims to me  
“Thus is the regulation on the basis of truth”  
the knowledgeable truthful one shall proclaim!

The introductory invocation is followed by two verses from Y 71 (fig.1, no.3) praising Ahura Mazdā, Zarathushtra, the choice (*frauuāšī-*)<sup>4</sup> of the latter and the Aməša Spəntas:

(7) G 5.3 (= Y 71.3) *ahurəm mazdəm ašauuanəm ašahe ratūm yazamaide*  
*zaraθuštrəm ašauuanəm ašahe ratūm yazamaide*

4. On *frauuāšī-* see Hintze [2006] ad Y 37.3 no 2 *frauuāšīš* ‘choices’.

*zaraθuštrahe ašaonō frauuašīm yazamaide  
aməšə spəntā ašaonəm yazamaide*

We venerate the Wise Lord, the truthful one, the *ratu-* of truth.

We venerate Zarathushtra, the truthful one, the *ratu-* of truth.

We venerate the choice of truthful Zarathushtra.

We venerate the truthful Bounteous Immortals.

Furthermore, they also venerate the choices (*frauuaši-*) of the truthful people, the *ratu-* ‘who is best at obtaining’ (*apanōtəma-*)<sup>5</sup> and the gratification of the *ratu-s* (*ratufriti-*):

(8) G 5.4 (= Y 71.4) *ašāunəm vaŋ’hīš sūrā spəntā frauuašaiiō yazamaide*

*astuuatō manahiiāca*

*apanōtəməm raθβəm yazamaide*

*yaētūštəməm yazatanəm*

*haŋhanuštəməm ašahe raθβəm*

*aiβinasqstəməm*

*jaγmūštəməm ašaonō ašahe raθβō*

*ratufritīm yazamaide*

We venerate the truthful, good, strong, bounteous choices of the truthful ones.

Of the material and spiritual (life),

we venerate that one of the *ratu-s* who is best at obtaining,

the most active of the venerable ones,

the most successful of the *ratu-s* of truth,

the one who succeeds most.

We venerate the *ratu-*pleasing of the truthful *ratu-* of truth,

(the *ratu-*pleasing) that is best at arriving.

The middle part, which in all Gāhs begins in stanza 5, is characterized by the verb *yazamaide* ‘we venerate’ and may be divided into three sections (fig. 1, nos. 4-6) each of which takes up and expands on the theme set out in the two initial verses. The first of these central units (no.4) elaborates on the name of the Gāh, which is, in the case of Gāh 5, *ušahina- ratu-*. The second central unit (no.5), which in some Gāhs is the longest section, venerates the two *ratus* associated with a particular Gāh, i.e. here *bərəjii-* and *nmāniia-*. The third part (no.6) is dedicated to the co-workers of the Gāh, in Gāh 5 *Sraoša*, *Rašnu* and *Arštāt*.

5. Kellens 1996, 44.

The central section is separated from the concluding verses by another quotation from the Yasna, Y 71.23-24, which again is identical in all Gāhs (fig.1, no.7). It praises the ritual fire, which is the son of Ahura Mazda, along with other ritual items, namely the libation, the date palm leaf, and the sacrificial straw. Furthermore, it also praises Apəm Napāt, Nairya Saḡha, Upama dāmōiš, the souls of those who have died and the fravashis of the truthful ones:

(9) G 5.8 (= Y 71.23) *θβqm ātrəm ahurahe mazdā puθrəm*  
*ašauuanəm ašahe ratūm yazamaide*  
*hadā.zaοθrəm hadā.aiβiiāḡhanəm*  
*imaṭ barəsmā ašaiia frastarətəm*  
*ašauuanəm ašahe ratūm yazamaide*  
*apqm naptārəm yazamaide*  
*nairīm saḡhəm yazamaide*  
*taxmə dāmōiš upamanəm yazatəm yazamaide*  
*iristanqm uruuqñō yazamaide*  
*yā ašaonqm frauuašaiiō*

We venerate you, the fire, the son of Ahura Mazda,  
the truthful *ratu-* of truth,

(we venerate you) together with the libation, together with the date-palm leaf.

We venerate this sacrificial straw, laid out correctly,  
the truthful *ratu-* of truth.

We venerate Apəm Napāt.

We venerate Nairya Saḡha.

We venerate Upama Dāmōiš, the swift venerable one.

We venerate the souls of the dead,  
the choices of the truthful ones.

Y 71.24 praises the lofty *ratu-*, namely Ahura Mazda, the Zarathushtri-  
an teachings and all good actions that have and will be done. The recita-  
tion concludes with the Yeḡhē Hātəm prayer:

(10) G 5.9 (= Y 71.24) *ratūm bərəzañtəm yazamaide*  
*yim ahurəm mazdaqm*  
*yō ašahe apanōtəmō*  
*yō ašahe jaγmūštəmō*  
*vīspa srauuā zaraθuštri yazamaide*  
*vīspaca huuaršta šiiəθna yazamaide*  
*varštaca varəšiiamnaca*

*yeŋhē hātqm āaṭ yesne paitī*  
*vaŋhō mazdā ahurō vaēθā aṣāṭ hacā*  
*yāŋhqmā tāscā tāscā yazamaide*

We venerate the lofty *ratu-*

Ahura Mazda,

who is the acme of truth,  
 the most advanced in truth.

We venerate all Zarathushtrian teachings.

We venerate all well-done actions,

those which have and those which will be done.

In the veneration of which (male) one of those who exist

the Wise Lord knows, on the basis of truth, what is very good,

and (in the worship) of which (female) ones: we worship these (male) and these (female) ones.

The final section (fig.1, no.8) begins with two *Ahuna Vairya*–prayers which are followed by the praise of the co-workers and concluded by the *Aṣəm Vohu*–prayer.

(11) G 5.10 *yaθā ahū vairiio ... (2)*

*yasnəmca vahməmca aojasca zauuarəca āfrīnāmi*  
*sraošahe aṣiiehe aṣiuuatō vərəθrājanō frādaṭ.gaeθahe*  
*rašnaoš razištahe*  
*arštātasca frādaṭ.gaeθaiiā varədaṭ.gaeθaii?*  
*aṣəm vohū vahištəm astī ...*

As he is to be chosen by the Lord ... (twice)

I bless the worship, the praise, the strength and swiftness

Sraoša accompanied by reward, provided with reward,

the victorious one, who furthers the world,

of straightest Rašnu

and of Arštāt who furthers the world, who makes the world grow.

Truth is the highest good ...

All five Gāhs end with more quotations from the Yasna, namely Y 68.11 and Y 72.9–10 (fig.1, no.9). They are followed by the Pāzand text *Kerba mazd* and again close with the *Aṣəm Vohu*–prayer.

## 2. The sequence of the Gāhs

In the manuscripts of the Khorde Avesta, the Hāwan Gāh usually stands at the beginning. Such is the case, for instance, in the manuscript E1, where the Gāhs start on folio 422v. In his edition of the Avesta, Karl Friedrich Geldner (1889–1896, vol. II 51) followed the manuscripts, and since then, the Hāwan Gāh is usually referred to as “Gāh one”.

However, in both Avestan and Pahlavi texts, itemizing of the Gāhs sometimes begin with Hāwan (Geldner’s Gāh 1) but sometimes with Ušahin (Geldner’s Gāh 5). For instance, in Nerangestān 46–51, which describes the time span covered by each Gāh, the first *ratu-* is *ušahina-*. By contrast, in the Yasna, the list of the ‘daily times’, *asniia-* *ratu-*, starts with *hāuuani-* (Y 1.3–7 and Y 17.2). The same situation is found in the Pahlavi texts. In the Dēnkard, *ušahin* stands at the beginning of the Gāhs,<sup>6</sup> but in the Bundahišn it is *hāwan*.<sup>7</sup> This indicates that there was uncertainty as to which Gāh was the first

This variation in the Avestan and Pahlavi texts seems to reflect liturgical practice.<sup>8</sup> Before the beginning of any ritual, the appropriate Gāh is supposed to be recited. There is one ceremony, the Vendidad, which starts during the watch of the Ušahin Gāh, at midnight, and goes on for about nine hours.<sup>9</sup> At the beginning of this longest and most solemn of all Zoroastrian liturgies, the Ušahin Gāh is to be recited. However, not only the Yasna, but most religious ceremonies begin and are performed in the watch of the Hāwan Gāh, when the sun rises. As Kotwal and Boyd put it, the Hāwan Gāh is considered to be “the ideal time, [when] the fire temple is filled with activity, people coming in with offerings”.<sup>10</sup> This may have been the reason why the Hāwan Gāh acquired the status of the first watch of the 24-hour day.

However, while Ušahin and Hāwan could not both take the position of the first Gāh, the internal structure of the Gāh texts suggests that they were composed with a view to Ušahin being the first Gāh, as was rightly observed by Darmesteter.<sup>11</sup> It will emerge from the following hori-

6. Dk 9, ch. 8.5, Sanjana 1874–1928, vol.17, pp. 14–5 (text) and 13–4 (translation).

7. Anklesaria 1956, 44–5, paras. 21–2.

8. Cf. Darmesteter 1892–93, vol.I 10 n.16.

9. Cf. K.F. Geldner, “Awestalitteratur”. *Grundriss der Iranischen Philologie*, ed. W. Geiger and E. Kuhn, Stuttgart 1896–1904, pp.10–12; Darmesteter 1892–93, vol.I, p.LXVII.

10. Kotwal/Boyd 1982, 64f.

11. Darmesteter 1892–93, vol. I 27, 32–33; cf. Kellens 1996, 66.

zontal analysis that only when the Ušahin Gāh is considered as the first one, does the structure of the texts exhibit a regular pattern according to which there is a development from smaller to larger units and from the abstract to the concrete. Such a progressive structure would not be observed if the list started with Hāwan.

### 3. The horizontal analysis

#### 3.1. The introductory part

Horizontal analysis entails a comparison of equivalent parts of the various Gāhs, and reveals which terms and names are substituted in the corresponding sections. In the invocation of the *ratu*-s in section 1, the five watches are correlated with the territorial and social structure of the Iranian lands. It starts in Ušahin Gāh (Gāh 5) with the smallest unit, the house, *nmāna*-, moves on to the clan, *vis*- in Gāh 1, the tribe, *zaṇtu*-, in Gāh 2, the land, *daṅiiu*-, in Gāh 3 and culminates in *zaraθuštrōtəma*- in Gāh 4.<sup>12</sup>

The names associated with the territorial divisions are also interconnected. The *ratu*-s of Gāhs 2, 3 and 4 progress in so far as there is a movement from animal to human being and eventually to all good life. Thus, the time of midday of Gāh 2, *rapiθβin*, is associated with *frādaṭ.fšū*- ‘who promotes cattle’, and that of the afternoon, *uzērin*, with *frādaṭ.vīra*- ‘who promotes men’. Finally, the evening Gāh, *ēbsrūs-rīm*,<sup>13</sup> is associated, in the most general way, with the time ‘which promotes all good life’.

The *ratu*-s of Gāh 5 and 1, in contrast, are different. In Gāh 5, *bərəjīia*-, the *ratu*- associated with the house, *nmāna*-, refers to the welcome, honour and esteem offered to a truthful being. The noun *bərəjīia*-lexicalizes the idea of the respectful and welcoming spiritual attitude that characterizes the relationship between Ahura Mazdā and those of his creatures that have chosen to side with the Wise Lord. This intimate and personal allegiance is associated with the smallest territorial and social unit, the house, *nmāna*-, and results from each individual’s choice, *frauuāši*-. The *ratu*- *sāuuāṅhi*-, connected with the clan (*vīsiia*-) and praised in Gāh 1, characterizes the sunlight rising from the east and

12. Darmesteter 1892-93, vol. I 27–30.

13. On the Avestan name *aīβisrūθrima*- *aībigaiia*- ‘the time of chanting characterized by attentive listening’, see Hintze 2003.

is appropriately associated with the morning watch.<sup>14</sup> The rising sun epitomizes the natural, cosmic event which brings light and life every morning and thus exemplifies the good functioning of the physical creations.

On the basis of this interpretation, we may establish the following interconnected links between this set of *ratu-s* of the five Gāhs: *bərəjīia*-characterizes the good spiritual attitude of respect and esteem between an individual person and Ahura Mazdā, while *sāuuuəḡhi* represents the benefit for physical life derived from the sunlight. The two terms thus refer, respectively, to the spiritual and physical worlds, whose proper functioning brings prosperity to animals and human beings in particular and to all good life in general. In other words, the prosperity of the animal, human and entire living world depends on the effective operation of the spiritual and the physical worlds.

### 3.2. The central part

#### 3.2.1. The first section of the central part

The central section of the Gāhs is characterized by the verb *yaza-maide*. The first unit (fig.1, no.4) praises the constituent parts of the Zoroastrian ritual. It begins, in Gāh 5, with the divine beings Ahura Mazdā and his spiritual creations, the Aməša Spəntas. G 5.5 venerates Ahura Mazdā and four Aməša Spəntas: Good Mind, Best Truth, Desirable Rule and Bounteous Right-mindedness. The Hāwan Gāh praises the two remaining Aməša Spəntas, Wholeness and Immortality, and begins with the praise of texts: the Ahurian question, the Ahurian teachings and the Yasna Haptaḡhāiti. The Rapiθβin Gāh continues by praising the five Gathas, which are listed individually, while the Uzērīn Gāh extols the eight classes of priests, each mentioned by name. Finally, Gāh 4 praises the implements used in ritual, namely the fire, various utensils and the ritual water and plants.

The movement across the fourth section of the Gāhs is from the spiritual world to the physical one. The spiritual creations, i.e. the Aməša Spəntas, are linked to the physical ones, represented by the priests and ritual implements, by means of the sacred texts, referred to in G 1.5 and 2.5. Correspondences between the physical (G 3.5, 4.5) and spiritual (G 5.5, 1.5) realms may be established in so far as the priests correspond to

14. The noun *sāuuuəḡhi*- is a vḡddhi-derivative from *\*sauuah-* ‘morning, east’ attested in the name of the eastern clime *sauuahī*, see Bartholomae, *AirWb.*1572, 1562; Witzel 2000, 299f.

Ahura Mazdā, the ritual fire to Truth (*aša-*), pestle and mortar to Best Rule (*xšaθra- vairiia-*), libation (*zaoθra-*) to Good Mind (*vohu- man- ah-*), water to Wholeness (*hauruuatāt-*), and plants as well as sacrificial straw to Immortality (*amərətāt-*).

### 3.2.2. The second section of the central part

The second section of the central part elaborates on the two *ratu*-s associated with the individual Gāhs (fig.1, no.5). Gāh 5.6 praises the *ratu*-s ‘belonging to honour’ and ‘to the house’, *bərəjiiia-* and *nmāniia-*, and gives more information about what *bərəjiiia-* means. It is worshipped through a respectful attitude towards truth and the Mazdayasnian faith:

(12) G 5.6 (= Y 35.1) *bərəja vaṇhəuš ašahe*  
*bərəja daēnaiiā vaṇhuiiā māzdaiiasnōiš*  
 with esteem for good Truth,  
 with esteem for the good Mazdayasnian vision.

These words are taken from Y 35.1, the YAv. passage inserted between the last stanza of the Ahunavaitī Gatha, Y 34.15 and the first of the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti, Y 35.2. In the corresponding passage of Gāh 1, the *Airyaman Išya*-prayer is commended as the prayer which overcomes all hostilities (G 1.6). G 2.6 elaborates on the *ratu*- that promotes the animals by praising the cattle breeder’s manthra (*fšūša- maθra-*), which comprises Y 58. Furthermore it also praises rightly spoken words, three of Ahura Mazdā’s physical creations (water, earth and plants), the spiritual Yazatas and the Aməša Spəntas. After venerating both the *ratu*-that promotes men, *frādaṭ.vīra-*, and the *ratu*- of the country, G 3.6-7 praise the physical creations. They include the stars, sun and moon, the ageless lights, good life, the realization of what is right, the ‘later teaching’, and again the *ratu*- of the country, *zaṅtuma*.

G 4.6-9 is the longest of all the central portions. After the *ratu*- ‘that promotes all well-being’, *frādaṭ.vīspaṇ.hujiiāiti-*, it praises Zarathushtra, the beneficent formula (*maθra- spənta-*), the soul of the cow, Zarathushtrōtəma and again Zarathushtra (G 4.6), the three social classes, namely priest (*āvrauuān-*), warrior (*raθaēštar-*) and herdsman (*vāstriia-fšuiiant-*), and finally the lords (*paiti-*) of the four territorial divisions: house, clan, tribe and land (G 4.7). G 4.8 venerates the truthful youth of good thoughts, words, deeds and vision (*daēnā-*), as well as a number of praiseworthy activities such as marriage within one’s family (*x’aētuuadaθa-*), travelling both inside one’s own country and abroad. The praise of

a range of female beings begins with the lady of the house (*nmānahe nmānō.paθnī-*) and continues in G 4.9 with truthful women, Bounteous Right-mindedness and the noble ladies of Ahura Mazda. The latter passage is a Younger Avestan quotation from the Yasna Haptaṅhāiti, Y 38.1 *yāscā tōi gənā ahurā mazdā*. As convincingly argued by Narten, the ‘ladies’ refer to the personifications of ‘fat-offering’ (*ižā-*), ‘vitalization’ (*yaošti-*), ‘perfection’ (*fərašti-*) and ‘right-mindedness’ (*ārmaiti-*).<sup>15</sup> Finally, Zarathuštrōtəma is again venerated, along with the truthful man.

It appears that the second central part is dedicated to the spiritual and practical life of all Mazda-worshippers, both priests and laypeople. Gāhs 2-4 are especially linked in so far as each of them again praises the *ratu-* of the territorial and social division at the end of the section. This suggests that the longish central portions elaborate on the *ratu-s frādaṭ.fšu-*, *frādaṭ.vīra-* and *frādaṭ.vīspaṃ.hujiāiti-*, after which the other *ratu-* (*zaṅtuma-*, *daxiiuma-*, *zaraθuštrō.təma-*) associated, respectively, with each of Gāh 2–4 is mentioned a second time.

### 3.2.3 The third section of the central part

The third central section (fig.1, no.6) is dedicated to the co-workers of each Gāh and thus takes up the theme of the second stanzas, with which this section is virtually identical, apart from the grammatical case. Being governed by the verb *yazamaide* ‘we venerate’, the names of the co-workers occur here in the accusative, while they are in the genitive in stanza 2.

### 3.3. The concluding part

After the repetition of verses from the Yasna, Y 71.23–24 (fig.1, no.7), the formula of stanzas 2, praising the co-workers, is repeated in the concluding section of the Gāhs (fig.1, no.8). This is followed by further quotations from the Yasna (fig.1, no.9).

## 4. Conclusion

It emerges from this analysis that the praise of the time sections, *ratu-*, alternates with that of the co-workers. There are two sections dedicated to *ratu-s* (fig.1, nos. 1 and 4–5). The first is followed by one unit prais-

15. On *gənā-* ‘noble lady’, see Narten 1986, 189-194; Hintze [2006] ad Y 38.1 no.1 *gənā-* - ‘lady’.

ing the co-workers (no.2), the second by two (nos. 6 and 8). Each praise of *ratu*-s and co-workers is followed by quotations from the Yasna (nos. 3, 7 and 9), thus forming three large blocks of text. While neither the praises of co-workers nor the quotations from the Yasna are original compositions, those of the *ratu*s are. The structure of the Gāhs is a ring-composition in so far as the most original parts are at the centre.

The association of a time-section with a territorial and social division follows a regular pattern. We have seen that, from Gāh 5 through to Gāh 4, there is a progression from the smallest unit, the house, to the largest one, the country, finally culminating in the priest, *zaraθuštrōtama*-. This structure points to the idea of the all-pervading presence of the Mazdayasnian religion in both time and space. The Gāhs presuppose that the Zoroastrian religion was widespread and that the priests were at the head of the social and spiritual hierarchy. Furthermore, I have argued that the second group of *ratu*-s associated with a time division also follows a pattern. The latter consists in the good functioning of the spiritual (denoted by *bərəjiiā-*) and physical (*sāuuuāṇhi-*) worlds and guarantees the prosperity of cattle (*frādat.fšū-*), men (*frādat.vīra-*) and all well-being (*frādat.vīspəm.hujiāiti-*). The main central parts invoke religious life on two levels: priestly ritual in the first section, and the religious life of laypeople in the second. This arrangement expresses the idea that the five-fold division of the day pervaded the lives of both priests and laypeople.<sup>16</sup>

This analysis suggests that the five Gāhs form an interconnected unit of text. The constituent parts of each Gāh are composed with regard to the equivalent passages in the other Gāhs. Such a thoughtful arrangement indicates that the priests who created these texts had a good command of the Avestan language. The compositional structure of the Gāhs is both an expression of and pointer to an underlying and coherent religious system, which must have been fully developed at the time of their composition.

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16. Both priestly and lay ritual are represented, respectively, by the names of the morning (*hāuuani-*) and evening (*aībisrūθrima- aībigaiia-*) Gāhs, while the names of the other day sections derive from either natural phenomena (*ušahina-*, *uzaiieirina-*) or human custom (*rapiθβina-*), see Hintze 2003, 143, 154.

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Figure 1: Compositional Structure of the Gāhs

	<i>Ušahina ratu</i> midnight to sunrise Gāh 5 stanza	<i>Hāuuanu ratu</i> sunrise to midday Gāh 1 stanza	<i>Rapiθβina ratu</i> midday Gāh 2 stanza	<i>Uzaiieirina ratu</i> midday to sunset Gāh 3 stanza	<i>Aiβisrūθrima</i> sunset to midnight Gāh 4 stanza
<b>1. Ratus</b> <i>yasnāica vahmāica</i> etc. + dat.	<i>ušahina ratu</i> <i>bərəjīia</i> ‘respectful’ <i>nmāniia ratu</i> ‘house-’	1 <i>hāuuanu ratu</i> <i>sāuuuq̄hi</i> ‘morning-’ <i>vīsiia ratu</i> ‘clan-’	1 <i>rapiθβina ratu</i> <i>frādat.fsu</i> ‘promoting cattle’ <i>zaṅtuma ratu</i> ‘tribe-’	1 <i>uzaiieirina ratu</i> <i>frādat.vira</i> ‘promoting men’ <i>dāxiiuma ratu</i> ‘land-’	1 <i>aiβisrūθrima aibigāiia ratu</i> <i>frādat.viṣpaq̄m.hujiiāiti</i> ‘ promoting all well-being’ <i>zaraθuštrōtōma ratu</i> ‘most Z.-like’
<b>2. Co-workers</b> <i>xšnaoθra yasnāica vahmāica</i> etc. + gen.	Sraoša Rašnu Arštāt	2 Miθra Rāman	2 Aša Vahišta <i>ātar- ahurahe mazdā</i>	2 Apam Napāt <i>āpō mazdadātā</i>	2 <i>ašāunq̄m frauuašaiiō</i> <i>γonā virō.vq̄θβā</i> <i>yāiriā hušiti-ama-</i> <i>vərəθraγna-uparātāt-</i>
3. quotation from Yasna		3-4	3-4 <b>Y 71.3-4</b>	3-4	3-4
<b>4. Ratu, Priestly high ritual</b> <i>yazamaide</i> + acc.	<i>ušahina ratu ušā-, ušah-</i> Ahura Mazdā (= Y 16.3.) Vohu Manah Aša Vahišta Xšaθra Vairiia Spəntā ārmaitī	5 <i>hāuuanu ratu</i> (= Y 71.12.) Hauruutāt Amərətatāt Ahurian question Ahurian teaching Yasna Haptaṅhāiti <i>Āsnatar</i> -priest	5 <i>rapiθβina ratu</i> (= A 2.3.) Ahunavaitī Gatha Uštavaitī Gatha Spəntā.mainyu G. Vohuxšaθrā Gatha Vahištōišti Gatha	5 <i>uzaiieirina ratu</i> Eight classes of priests: <i>Zaotar</i> <i>Hāuuanan</i> -priest <i>Ātrauuaxša</i> -priest <i>Frabərətar</i> -priest <i>Ābərət</i> -priest <i>Raēθβiškara</i> -priest <i>Sraošāunarəz</i> -priest	5 <i>aiβisrūθrima ratu, aibigāiia ratu</i> Ritual implements: fire, the son of Ahura Mazdā pestle and mortar made of stone pestle and mortar made of metal libation and cord sacrificial straw ( <i>barəsmān-</i> ) water and plants
<b>5. Ratu, Spiritual and practical life of all Mazdayasnians</b> <i>yazamaide</i> + acc.	<i>bərəjīia nmāniia ratu</i> esteem ( <i>bərəj</i> ) for good Truth, for the good Mazda- yasnian vision	6 <i>sāuuuq̄hi vīsiia ratu</i> Airiiman Išiia that overcomes all hostilities	6 <i>frādat.fsu zaṅtuma ratu</i> <i>fšūšəm maθrəm</i> rightly spoken word water, earth, plants spiritual <i>yazatas</i> Amaša Spəntas Frauuāšis 7 heights of Best Truth assembly of Amaša Spəntas in the heights of heaven Zaṅtuma	6 <i>frādat.vira dāxiiuma ratu</i> stars, moon, sun ageless lights well-being ( <i>xvāθra-</i> ) truthful one making 7 real later teaching ( <i>apara-tkaēša-</i> ) truthful existence 8 making real Daxiiuma	6 <i>frādat.viṣpaq̄m.hujiiāiti</i> Zaraθuštra <i>maq̄θra spənta</i> <i>gōuš uruuan</i> Zaraθuštrōtōma Zaraθuštra priest ( <i>āθrauuan-</i> ) 7 warrior ( <i>raθaēštar-</i> ) herdsman ( <i>vāstriia- fšuiiānt-</i> ) lord of the house lord of the clan lord of the tribe lord of the land truthful youth 8 marriage within one’s family travelling inside one’s own country travelling abroad ( <i>pairijaθna-</i> ) lady of the house truthful woman 9 Spəntā ārmaitī noble women ( <i>gənā-</i> ) of Ahura Mazda truthful men Zaraθuštrōtōma
<b>6. Co-workers</b> <i>yazamaide</i> + acc.	Sraoša Rašnu Arštāt	7 Miθra Rāman <i>vīsiia- ratu-</i> Miθra Rāman	7 <i>aša vahišta ātar</i> , the son of Ahura Mazdā 8	9 Apam Napāt <i>ap- mazdadāta-</i>	10 <i>ašāunq̄m frauuašaiiō</i> <i>γonā virō.vq̄θβā</i> <i>yāiriā hušiti-ama-</i> <i>vərəθraγna-uparātāt-</i>
7. quotation from Yasna		8-9	9 <b>Y 71.23-24</b>	9-10	11-12
<b>8. Co-workers</b> <i>yasnəmca vahməmca</i> etc. <i>āfrīnāmi</i> + gen.	Sraoša Rašnu Arštāt	10 Miθra Rāman <i>vīsiia- ratu-</i> Miθra Rāman	10 <i>aša vahišta</i> Fire of Ahura Mazdā 12	11 Apam Napāt <i>ap- mazdadāta-</i>	13 <i>ašāunq̄m frauuašaiiō</i> <i>γonā virō.vq̄θβā</i> <i>yāiriā hušiti-ama-</i> <i>vərəθraγna-uparātāt-</i>
9. quotation from Yasna’			<b>Y 68.11</b> <b>Y 72.9-10</b>		

