Ritual and ritual text in the Zoroastrian tradition:
The extent of Yasna 41

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Abstract

This article examines the extent of the concluding section (Y 41) of the Yasna Haptaŋhaīti in light of the manuscript evidence and the section’s divergent reception in a Middle Persian text known as the “Supplementary Texts to the Šāyest nē Šāyest” (Suppl.ŠnŠ). This investigation will entertain the possibility of an alternative ritual being described in the Suppl.ŠnŠ. Moreover, it argues that the manuscripts transmit the ritual text along with certain variations and repetitions while the descriptions of the extent of each section preserve the necessary boundaries of the text as a textual composition or unit.

Keywords: Zoroastrianism; Yasna; Avestan; Middle Persian; Rituals

The five Gaḏās and the Yasna Haptaŋhaīti (“Yasna in seven sections”) constitute the core of the Old Avestan (OAv.) sections of the Yasna (Y), a Zoroastrian ritual text commonly divided into 72 hātī (“section, chapter”) and at the centre of many Zoroastrian rituals.1 As Cantera recounts, Scholars have long debated the structure of the Old Avestan texts, examining the age of the divisions of the Gaḏās into hātī.2 In that same article, Cantera questions whether the Yasna Haptaŋhaīti (YH) originally consisted of seven hātī, arguing that despite its name the Yasna Haptaŋhaīti “was not originally divided into seven chapters”.3

1The yaḏā ahū vairīō (Y 27.13) and airīinanam īšiya (Y 54.1) are also composed in Old Avestan. In my view, these constitute together with the yejīhā hātān and the āpīm volū moveable sections of the Zoroastrian ritual texts. Out of convenience, I refer to these sections as prayers. On chronology, dialects and geography of OIr. languages, see P. O. Skjærvø, “The Avesta as source for the early history of the Iranians”, in The Indo-Aryans of ancient South Asia: Language, material culture and ethnicity (Indian Philology and South Asian Studies 1), (ed.) G. Erdosy (Berlin, 1999), Chapter 6, pp. 155–176. For the Zoroastrian hermeneutic treatment of the prayers, see Y. S-D. Vevaina, “Resurrecting the resurrection: Eschatology and exegesis in late antique Zoroastrianism”, Bulletin of the Asia Institute 19 (2004 [2009]), pp. 215–223.
2A. Cantera, “How many chapters does the “Yasna of the Seven Chapters” have?”, Iranian Studies 45(2) (2012), pp. 217–227.
3Ibid., p. 217.
Cantera’s perceptive observations are based on the use of the YH in the ritual as reflected in one manuscript, but are not easily reconciled with the manuscript tradition that preserves a structure suggestive of a division into seven hātī. Here, I will examine the extent of the concluding hātī (Y 41) of the Yasna Haptaḥātī in light of the manuscript evidence and the hātī’s reception in Middle Persian (MP) texts, irrespective of the age and authenticity of the structural divisions. I am delighted to offer this paper to François de Blois in honour of his life’s work.

In his edition of the Avestan texts, Geldner divides Yasna 41 into eight stanzas, while noting that the manuscript “Pt4 reckons 6 Strophes”. Elsewhere, he assumes that the YH ends with Y 41.6. Narten and Hambach posit six stanzas, Kellens and Pirart five, while Hintze follows Geldner positing eight stanzas. By contrast, the exegetical manuscripts of the Pahlavi Yasna (PY) unambiguously assign six stanzas to Y 41, ruling out any additional strophe at the end of Y 41: šās určast sē gāh. Y 41.6 and the concluding instructions of the hātī appear as follows in manuscript o4oo (Pt4):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yeṱḥē hāṭān yāzīnūgīh ỵ̇vāmārūdīg gōvūnī humatātan hīzāmārūdīg gōvūnī yādā ahī vanīū ġāṣṇūmārūdīg} \\
\text{gōvūnī āzām vēhā sīlāmārūdīg gōvūnī yasāwīm šāyām haptaḥātīm āžaunām āžahe rātūm yāzamaide pad yān t abzār t ġaft ġād t aḥlav t aḥlayh t aḥlayh t aḥlayh t aḥlayh t aḥlayh t aḥlayh.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{yeṱḥē hāṭān yāzīnūgīh ỵ̇vāmārūdīg gōvūnī sē sē sē sē sē}
\]

yeṱḥē hāṭān is to be recited once in the manner of worship. humatātan is to be recited two times. yādā ahī vanīū is to be recited four times. āzām vēhā is to be recited three times. We sacrifice to the strong Yasa in Seven Sections, the orderly ratū of aṣa. We worship through the powerful Worship of Seven Sections, which is righteous (and) the authority of righteousness.

yeṱḥē hāṭān is to be recited once in the manner of worship. Six stanzas, three verse lines.

\footnote{K. F. Geldner, Avesta. The sacred books of the Parsi (Stuttgart, 1886–96) Vol. I–III, Vol. I, p. 138, fn. 8.2. \footnote{Ibid., p. 31. For an overview of the various attempts to define the boundaries of the YH, see J. Narten, Der Yasna Haptaḥātī (Wiesbaden, 1986), p. 17 with references. \footnote{Narten, Der Yasna Haptaḥātī, p. 17. \footnote{H. Hambach, The Cathâds of Zanathushtta and the other old Avestan texts (Heidelberg, 1992) Vol. I–II. In collaboration with J. Ellenbein and P. O. Skjærvø, Vol. I, p. 150. In the introduction, Hambach, ibid., p. 7, considers the YH as encompass Y 35.3–41.7, viewing Y 41.8 as Yav. \footnote{J. Kellens and É. Pirart (eds.) Les textes vieil-avestiques. Introduction, texte et traduction (Wiesbaden, 1988), Vol. I, p. 140. For a discussion of their position, see A. Hintze, A Zoroastrian liturgy. The worship in seven chapters (Iranica 12) (Wiesbaden, 2007), pp. 32ff. \footnote{Hintze, A Zoroastrian liturgy, p. 325. \footnote{Counting the stanzas of a hātī, or extent descriptions, is a feature found in the manuscripts of the so-called Iranian family of the Pahlavi Yasna. I refer to these manuscripts as the exegetical manuscripts of the Yasna and discuss them in a forthcoming paper on editing the Pahlavi Yasna. \footnote{I quote this passage verbatim from o4oo, but leave the stanza untranslated as it is not discussed in this article. \footnote{0400 reads . I have emended it to ‘LH based on the other manuscripts’ reading.}
The brief description of Y 41 in the *Supplementary texts to the Šayest nē Šayest* (Suppl.ŠnŠ) agrees with this count of the stanzas:

**Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.22**

\[
\text{stūū ḏaṛō āl wačast humatanām dō āl huxsatīrotemānī āl āl būdan ā pusārān ā zarduχišt nāy}
\]

stūū ḏaṛō has six stanzas, humatanām (is to be recited) two times (and) huxsatīrotemānī three times on account of the existence of Zarduχišt’s sons.

The priestly tradition, however, ostensibly contradicts itself when defining the extent or boundaries of the YH in an earlier paragraph:

**Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.16**

\[
\text{yasn bun kardag nō wačast u-š bun humatanān u-š sar humatanān}
\]

The beginning section of the Yasna has nine stanzas. Its beginning is humatanān and its end is humatanān.

Based on this passage, Kotwal\(^{15}\) views humatanān (Y 35.1) as the first and final stanza of the YH, thus positing seven stanzas for Y 41.\(^{17}\) This view is thus in disagreement with Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.22 and the number six given in the extent descriptions in the manuscripts.

While the first clause of Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.16 undoubtedly discusses the first section or chapter of the YH (*yasn bun kardag*), the referent of the following clause (*u-š bun ...*) is grammatically ambiguous. It could refer to the YH as a whole or to Y 35. Both interpretations are grammatically permissible. Since the following paragraphs of Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 describe the individual kardag of the YH, one may be inclined to take the second clause as referring to Y 35 and not the whole of the YH. However, with only nine strophes assigned to Y 35 in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.16 and at the end of the kardag in the exegetical manuscripts of the *Yasna*, it would be difficult to justify another stanza after Y 35.9. In fact, such a strophe, i. e. another humatanān (Y 35.1), is not attested in any of the examined manuscripts as a stanza or as a repetition.\(^{18}\)

Moreover, according to Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.51 the YH comprises 40 stanzas: *ud yasn ēheh wačast ud haru wačast-ē ē gāh “And the *Yasna* has forty stanzas and each stanza three lines*”. The number forty, however, can only be accounted for if the YH starts at 35.1 (humatanān) and ends at 41.6. Therefore, if Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.16 does not constitute an otherwise unattested tradition, which would repeat Y 35.1 at the conclusion of the first kardag, we would have to concur with Kotwal that Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.16 refers to the end of the YH. Indeed, as mentioned above and in Table 2, the repetition instructions at the end of Y 41.6 indicate that Y 35.1 is to be recited twice at the conclusion of the YH. These repetitions, however, are not constituent

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\(^{13}\)I quote the Suppl.ŠnŠ according to F35, published by K. M. Jamaspasa and M. Nawabi (eds.), *Manuscript F35. Šayest-nē Šayest (incomplete Pahl. text) Afin-i Zartuχast, Čim-i Dirun* (The Pahlavi Codices and Iranian Re- searches 34) (Shiraz, 1976), pp. 143–147. The manuscript was collated only indirectly by F. M. Kotwal, *The supplementary texts to the Šayest Ne-Šayest* (København, 1969), p. 10. I have preserved the MS’s rendering of the Av. words.

\(^{14}\)Kotwal, *The supplementary texts to the Šayest Ne-Šayest*, p. 47, has stūū garō valūnd. *Huxsatīrotemānī* refers to Y 35.4 and is written *huxsatīrotemānī* throughout the manuscript in the extent description at the end of Y 35.4. The number of the repetitions for Y 35.4 agrees with the number stated in Wd 10.7–8 and the instructions at the end of Y 35.4.

\(^{15}\)Kotwal, *The supplementary texts to the Šayest Ne-Šayest*, p. 103, fn. 25.

\(^{16}\)As we shall see, the Zoroastrian manuscript traditions assign nine stanzas to Y 35. Therefore, I count Y 35 from 35.0 instead of the more common 35.1 to accommodate the correct number of stanzas. On this, see A. Zeini, *Zoroastrian scholasticism in late antiquity: The Pahlavi version of the *Yasna Haptahpāttī* (Edinburgh, 2020), pp. 13–14.

\(^{17}\)These are 1780 0400 (P34) 0410 (M9), 1813 0415 (F2), 1815 0418 (R413), 1842 0420 (T6), 1865 0450 (E7); 1323 0500 (J2) 0510 (K5), 1734 0530 (M1).
stanzas of a hātti and are not counted in the extent descriptions. Thus, the question emerges as to how we can explain the contradiction within the same text and exegetical tradition.

Four more paragraphs follow the description of Y 41 (Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.22), before Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 moves on to Y 43, the next OAv. hātti within the Yasna:

Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.22 stūh Yašt šād wuzāst humatanām dō jār huzuṭatōremāi sē jār būdan ī pusarān ī zarzudāt rāy (23) avāhidā aat sārē dō jār sāyānī ī ahāyān ī ud zānīn ī dān ī rāy
(24) yešt hātān dō jār sāyānī ī omāzād ud amahraspānān ud zānīn ī gāmāk mēnāy wušdāgan ī rāy
(25) Ḟbī statanāsī sāyānī ī yazīn ī ud mīzād(25) rāy (26) āṭrōmca dō ēdī sāyānī ī ādū ī farīdāy ānācī ī wāzišt rāy
(22) stūh Yašt has six stanzas, humatanām (is to be recited) two times (and) huzuṭatōremāi three times on account of the existence of Zarzudāt’s sons. (23) avāhidā aat sārē two times for the praise of righteousness and the smiting of the demon. (24) yešt hātān two times for the praise of Omāzād and the Amahraspānān and the smiting of the Evil Spirit (and) the daevic creatures. (25) Ḟbī statanāsī for the praise of the worship and the reward. (26) āṭrōmca two times for the praise of the Farīdāy fire (and) the fire Wāzišt.

Kotwal makes a number of observations on Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.22–26. Firstly, that the numerological interpretation of Y 41 is missing in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.22 and that the paragraphs 13.22–26 are descriptions of those YH stanzas that are repeated more than once.20 Secondly, that 13.25, a reference to Y 41.5, has possibly been dislocated, as it occurs after the paragraph on Y 41.6’s yešt hātān in 13.24,21 finally, that mīzād refers to the drōn ceremony.22 However, the expectation of a numerological reading of Y 41 in 13.22 is not compelling as the first hātti of the YH (Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.16) also lacks a numerological speculation. The assumption that the text is describing stanzas of the YH with multiple repetitions is contradicted by the fact that two stanzas with two repetitions, namely Y 39.4 & 41.3, are not mentioned in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13. Therefore, the text does not merely list stanzas of the YH with multiple repetitions, unless we presume that the latter were mistakenly omitted. Furthermore, the manuscripts do not support Kotwal’s assumed disturbances in the text. His critical apparatus, for instance, does not indicate an omission in 13.22, and no text appears to be missing in F35 either. In my view, the question is whether Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 describes the OAv. corpus as a text or whether the exegesis follows the course of a ritual?

In the manuscript F35, Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 begins with the slightly indented words čim ī gāhān ēn “The meaning of the Gādās is this”, with the rest of the text following immediately.23 Accordingly, this chapter is concerned with the interpretation of the Gādās, at times describing individual stanzas, which, contrary to the subject matter, are not exclusively OAv. The description of the individual stanzas resembles the repetition instructions found in the manuscripts of the PY with the addition of a numerological interpretation. That Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 describes a ritual emerges from the frequent references made to passages from the Wiserad (Wr). In fact, Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.15 explicitly mentions the Wisperad ritual and interprets the ritual

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19F35 reads ܣܘܪ titleLabel.
20Kotwal, The supplementary texts to the Šaēst Nēr-Šaēst, p. 104, fn. 36.
21Ibid., p. 104, fn. 40.
22Ibid., p. 104, fn. 41.
23Kotwal, ibid., p. 41, renders čim ī gāhān as the title, taking ēn as the first word of 13.1.
action connected with the Ahumadaiti Gaθā. Likewise, Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.9 refers to ritual actions. The fact that the text does not mention passages from the Widēvdād, suggests that Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 describes the Wisperad rather than the Widēvdād ritual. As Table 1 shows, with the exception of Wr 14, the intercalation of the Wisperad passages described in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 is identical to the scheme laid out by Geldner.

Thus, Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.26 largely agrees with the intercalation of the Wisperad ritual, where Wr 16 is inserted between Y 42 and Y 43. The text ignores Y 42 because it is not part of the OAv. corpus and links Wr 16 (ātrōma) to the YH by associating it with the fire Wāzišt. With Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.27 the text moves on to Y 43 and consequently mentions Wr 18–21 & 23, which are inserted at the end of each of the succeeding Gaθās that the Suppl.ŠnŠ analyses. It appears, therefore, that the content of Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 is not confined to a textual discussion of the OAv. corpus, but follows the course of the Wisperad ritual. If this is indeed the case, then Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.25 is not dislocated, as Kotwal suggests, but refers to Y 41.5 as one of the stanzas recited at the end of the YH. Moreover, rather than representing the dhōn ceremony, mizd in that same paragraph refers to Y 41.5c where the reward (Av. mūždam) is explicitly mentioned: ē mizd o maŋgān ūaz dalhē “May you give my people the reward”. The paragraph only seems dislocated in comparison with the corpus, where Y 41.5 precedes the yeŋhe ʰāṭam.

It is noteworthy that certain strophes positioned after Y 41.6 in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.22–26 are not mentioned in the manuscripts in the repetition instructions at the end of the chapter. As Hintze points out, the sequence and repetition mentioned in the final section of the YH agree with those in Nērāngestān 47.41: humatanām (Y 35.1) to be recited two times.

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24In his notes, Kotwal, ibid., p. 4, frequently refers to the Wisperad ritual, but does not seem to interpret the text as a description of the same ritual or a variant thereof.

25On the intercalations and the rituals, see K. E. Geldner, ‘Avestalitteratur’, in Grundriss der iranischen Philologie, (eds.) W. Geiger and E. W. A. Kuhn (Strassburg, 1896–1904), Vol. II, pp. 11–12, and A. Hintze, ‘Avestan literature’, in The Literature of pre-Islamic Iran (A History of Persian Literature 17), (eds.) R. E. Emmerick and M. Macuch (London, 2009), pp. 36–39. For a table comparing the various intercalation schemes, see A. Cantera, ‘The sacrifice (Yasa) to Mīzdāt. Its antiquity and variety’, in The Zoroastrian flame. Exploring religion, history and tradition, (eds.) A. Williams, S. Stewart and A. Hintze (London, 2016), p. 68.

26Geldner, Avesta, Vol. II. Geldner’s numbering of the Wr, used by Kotwal in the Suppl.ŠnŠ, is currently under review by Corpus Avesticum Benelicens (https://cab.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/). In Table 1, I use Geldner’s numbering scheme to maintain consistency with Kotwal’s edition.

27Kotwal, The supplementary texts to the Šāyest Nē-Šāyest, p. 105, fn. 42.
Table 2: Extent descriptions in Suppl.Šnš & Y

| Suppl.Šnš 13 | Repetition instructions after Y 41.6 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ø            | yēphē hātan (2x)                     |
| 22           | Y 35.1 (2x)                          |
| 22           | Y 35.4 (3x)                          |
| 23           | Y 35.7 (2x)                          |
| 24           | yēphē hātan (2x)                      |
| 25           | Y 41.5 (1x)                          |
| 26           | Wr 16 (2x)                           |

28Hintze, A Zoroastrian liturgy, p. 325.

29I have examined the following manuscripts: IrYS 0020 (ML15284); InYS 0100 (B3) 0230 (L17) 0231 (Bh5) 0234 (G26); IrPY 0400 (Pt4) 0410 (Mf4) 0415 (F2) 0418 (R413) 0420 (T6) 0450 (E7); InPY 0300 (Ia) 0510 (K5) 0530 (M1); InSkY 0680 (T7); IrWrS 2010 (G18b); IrWrS 2230 (K8); IrWdS 4210 (B2) 4240 (T46) 4400 (G106) 4410 (B4) 4420 (G112) 4510 (ML630). The Wstâp Yâh manuscripts 5020 (K4) and 5102 (DY1) omit the extent descriptions but agree in the repetition scheme with the other manuscripts: yēphē hātan (2x), humatañan (2x), yēphē hātan (4x), ažm vohī (3x) and yēphē hātan (1x). Some of the manuscripts offer a slight variation from the commonly recurring pattern given in Table 2: InYS 0231 (Bh5); IrPY 0400 (Pt4) and IrWdS 4400 (G106) 4410 (B4) 4510 (ML630) record one initial yēphē hātan instead of two, although a marginal note by a second hand corrects this in 0400 to two repetitions. InPY 0300 (Ia) and IrWdS 4420 (G112) omit Y 35.1. InPY 0415 (F2) has yēphē hātan (1x), humatañan (1x), yēphē hātan (1x), ažm vohī (3x) and yēphē hātan (1x).

30Cantera, ‘How many chapters does the “Yasna of the Seven Chapters” have?’, pp. 218–219. While Cantera initially maintained that the yēphē hātan was repeated four times only in the Ahunamañi Gâhâ, he corrected his position in A. Cantera, ‘Repetitions of the Ahuna Vairia and animal sacrifice in the Zoroastrian long liturgy’, Estudios Iranios y Turanios 1 (2014), p. 25. Cantera, ‘How many chapters does the “Yasna of the Seven Chapters” have?’, p. 219, also suggests that certain chapters of the YH are closed by one or two yēphē hātan, which I cannot confirm. I believe the instructions at the end of those hâtis, which are usually in the form yâzîydâhâ xwûrûnyânhî/bûhûrûnyânhî gôrwûn, signify the number of repetitions for the hâti. For further relevant observations, see also Á. Cantera, ‘The Old Avestan texts in the Vîddvârdî and the Visparad ceremonies’, in Le sort des Gâhâs et autres études Iraniennes in memoriam Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin (Acta Iranica 54), (ed.) É. Pirat (Leuven, 2013), pp. 25–48.

31Cantera, ‘How many chapters does the “Yasna of the Seven Chapters” have?’, p. 219.
If we take Y 35.1 and the second yeṣḫī hāṭan as a frame of agreement between the two sources, then it is likely that the stanzas mentioned in Suppl.ŚnŚ were substitutions for the prayers mentioned in the repetition instructions of the canonical manuscripts, thus representing a variant of the instructions perhaps for a variant ritual.

| Suppl.ŚnŚ 13 | Gaθās |
|--------------|-------|
| 13.1–2       | Introduction |
| 13.3–4       | Y 28–30 |
| 13.5         | Wr 13 |
| 13.6         | Y 31 |
| 13.7         | Y 32 |
| 13.8         | Y 33 |
| 13.9         | Ritual action in Y 33.11 |
| 13.10        | Y 34 |
| 13.11        | Y 34.15 (4x) |
| 13.12        | Concluding Y 28.1 (2x) |
| 13.13        | yaθa aḥa vairīn (4x) |
| 13.14        | Interpretation of Y 28 |
| 13.15        | Interpretation of the ēṛāṃ for all Gaθās |
| 13.16–25     | YH |
| 13.26        | Wr 16 |
| 13.27        | Y 43 |
| 13.28        | Y 44 |
| 13.29        | Y 45 |
| 13.30        | Y 46 |
| 13.31        | Y 43–46 & 46.15 |
| 13.32        | Concluding Y 43.1 (2x) |
| 13.33        | Wr 18 |
| 13.34        | Y 47–50 |
| 13.35        | Interpretation of Spṛṇtamaiiati Gaθā |
| 13.36        | Concluding Y 47.1 (2x) |
| 13.37        | Wr 19 |
| 13.38        | Y 51 |
| 13.39        | Concluding Y 51.1 (2x) |
| 13.40        | Wr 20 |
| 13.41        | Wr 21 |
| 13.42        | Y 53 |
| 13.43        | Interpretation of Y 53 |
| 13.44        | Interpretation of line numbers for Y 53 |
| 13.45        | Interpretation of line numbers for Y 53.6 |
| 13.46        | Concluding Y 53.1 (2x) |
| 13.47        | Wr 23 |
| 13.48        | Y 54 (aṛiīaman iliia) (4x) |
| 13.49        | aṛiīaman iliia |
| 13.50–51     | Y 58 |
|              | Extent descriptions of the Gaθās |
Recent scholarship has brought into focus the complex structure of Zoroastrian rituals.32 Karanjia, for instance, has shown the complexity of the Bāj-Dhārnā ritual, otherwise also known as the Drōn Yašt.33 Recently, Cantera has advanced the idea that the transmitted Avestan texts do not represent a rigid ritual structure.34 To the contrary, he argues, the intended ritual could trigger certain variations and combinations of the texts which are not always transmitted in the extant manuscripts, so for instance the lists of the textual ratu which could differ according to the type of ceremony.35 The manuscripts, however, do not record these variations. Elsewhere, Cantera notes the Wisperad Gāhānbār of Y 60.12 as one example, where the yaθā ahū vairiō is repeated ten times rather than the prescribed four.36 More importantly, Cantera regards the Wisperad ritual as “the basis for the celebration of other variants of the [long] liturgy”.37 Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 claims to explain the meaning of the Gāθās. It does this by including the YH as part of the Gāθās and intercalating them with material from the Wisperad. In doing so, the text sets the OAv. corpus within the context of a ritual in which it is then interpreted. In this light, the disagreements between the repetition instructions and N 47.41 on the one hand and the Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 on the other, do not constitute inconsistencies, but rather Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 could refer to a different ritual with an alternative sequence of prayers at the end of the YH. That the YH might have played a significant role in this hitherto unknown ritual emerges from the fact that the major differences noted here relate to the sequence and repetitions of this text’s stanzas at the end of Y 41. The exact nature and textual structure of this ritual, however, remain elusive and the question arises as to whether the omission of Wr 14 after Y 34 is an error or a deliberate part of this alternative ritual. We may also ask as to why Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 does not mention Y 27 and Wr 12?

Admittedly, the exegesis of the Gāθās in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 is enigmatic. While the text approaches a ritual text from an exegetical and numerological vantage, its reading of the text does not appear systematic at first. As a result, Kotwal makes frequent references to misplaced passages within Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.38 Although dislocation and loss of content must remain a distinct possibility, I would like to propose that Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 follows the course of a hitherto unknown ritual or a manuscript with a set of variations in its repetition instructions. At this point, it might be instructive to visualise the manner by which Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 approaches the gāhān and their hāiti (see Table 3).

32For an example, see M. Stausberg (ed.), Zoroastrian rituals in context (Numen Book Series 102) (Leiden, 2004).
33See R. P. Karanjia, ‘The Bāj-dhārnā (Drōn Yašt) and its place in Zoroastrian rituals’, in Zoroastrian rituals in context (Studies in the History of Religions 102), (ed.) Michael Stausberg (Leiden, 2004), pp. 403–423, and R. P. Karanjia, The Bāj-dhārnā (Drōn Yašt). A Zoroastrian ritual for consecration and commemoration (Mumbai, 2010).
34See A. Cantera, ‘Die Staota Yesniia der textuellen ratu des Visparad’, in Zarathushtra unter l’Inde et l’Iran. Étudesindo-iranienes et indo-européennes offertes à Jean Kellens à l’occasion de son 6ème anniversaire (Beiträge zur Iranistik 30), (eds.) É. Pirart and X. Tremblay (Wiesbaden, 2009), pp. 17–26, and A. Cantera, ‘Rituales, manuscritos y ediciones del Avesta: Hacia una nueva edición de los textos avésticos de la liturgia larga’, Boletín de la Sociedad Española de Iranología 1 (2010), pp. 29–42.
35Cantera, ‘Die Staota Yesniia der textuellen ratu des Visparad’, p. 18.
36Cantera, ‘Rituales, manuscritos y ediciones del Avesta’, p. 38. For the number four in the Yasna of Wisperad with the ašuunam of Gāhānbār, see B. N. Dhabhar, The Persian Rixayats of Hormazyar Framarz and others (Bombay, 1932), p. 13.
37A. Cantera, ‘Talking with god: The Zoroastrian ham.parstī or intercalation ceremonies’, Journal Asiatique 301(1) (2013), p. 85. Text in the brackets is my addition.
38Kotwal, The supplementary texts to the Šāyest Nē-Šāyest.
The text shows a thorough understanding of the structure of the \( \text{gāhān} \), their ritual as well as numerological significance. The discussion of the \( \text{gāhān} \) is not strictly limited to the \( \text{Gaθās} \), but includes the YH, \( \text{airiūmaŋ išīa} \) and Y 58. The final two paragraphs (50 & 51) of the text offer statistics on total numbers of stanzas, lines, words and syllables in the \( \text{Gaθās} \). They also define the first and final stanzas of the \( \text{Gaθās} \). The extent of the individual \( \text{Gaθās} \) are clearly defined, each by a reference to the concluding twofold repetition of its first stanza. The \( \text{Ahu-} \)numaūmār \( \text{Gaθā} \) (Y 28–34) is the only exception, as two more paragraphs (13.13 & 14) interpret its content and one (13.15) discusses ritual actions for all the \( \text{Gaθās} \) after the concluding Y 28.1. Unexpectedly, Wr 14 does not follow Y 34 in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13. Likewise, despite mentioning Wr 20–23, Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 is silent on the second YH, which is typically recited after Wr 20. As already pointed out, the numerological interpretation of some passages is missing in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13. For instance, the manuscripts mention the repetition of Y 33.14 but not Suppl.ŠnŠ 13. If we eliminate the possibility of unsystematic exegesis and missing or misplaced passages, then these perceived inconsistencies appear as features of an unknown variant of a \( \text{Wisperad} \) ritual. Although it is very unlikely, these could also have been characteristics of a manuscript that must have formed the basis for the exegesis in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13, a chapter that is preceded (Suppl.ŠnŠ 12) and followed (Suppl.ŠnŠ 14) by discussions of ritual matters. Perhaps the references to the \( \text{nōzūd} \) and \( \text{nūvar} \) ceremonies in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.2 are not the results of a misplacement, as Kotwal suggests, but somehow the context of the ritual described and interpreted in Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.41

If we thus accept that Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 describes an alternative ritual, possibly an alternative intercalation of the \( \text{Yasna} \) with the \( \text{Wisperad} \), then we can also reevaluate Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.16: \( \text{yasaŋ hun kardag nō vačast u-š hun humatanaŋ u-š sar humatanaŋ} \). I subscribe to Kotwal’s interpretation of the passage, that \( \text{humatanaŋ} \) refers to the beginning and end of the YH. However, in view of the fact that Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.22 differs from the repetition instructions found in the extant PY manuscripts, I would like to leave open even the possibility that Suppl.ŠnŠ 13.16 represents a ritual tradition that repeated Y 35.1 at the end of the text’s first chapter. Moreover, the discrepancies between the manuscripts of the \( \text{Yasna} \) and Suppl.ŠnŠ 13 reveal how the exegetes approached the OAv. corpus. As we have seen, the extant \( \text{Yasna} \) preserves a ritual text that was subject to a certain degree of variation, even if the extant manuscripts do not attest these clearly and widely. In the ritual, it was possible to add prayers in various positions, and stanzas or parts thereof reoccur in other passages. Indeed, the \( \text{Yasna} \) is the proverbial example of this practice. Y 58.8, for instance, quotes Y 36.6 verbatim, while Y 68.23 only quotes Y 36.6b. Similarly, Y 5 anticipates Y 37, causing its abbreviation in many of the manuscripts at its original place between Y 36 and 38. In addition, the prayers occur throughout the \( \text{Yasna} \). In a tradition that permitted such modifications for ritual purposes, it was essential to keep track of the “original” text. This is not surprising as already in

\[39\] The manuscripts have \( \text{z̥ry̥h} \).

\[40\] Kotwal, The supplementary texts to the Śāyen Nī-Śāyen, p. 101, n. 5.

\[41\] I have consulted F. M. Kotwal, “Initiation into Zoroastrian priesthood: Present Parsi practice and an old Pahlavi text”, in A green leaf. Papers in honour of Professor J. P. Assmussen (Acta Iranica 28), (eds.) J. Duchesne-Guillemin, W. Sundermann and F. Vahman (Leiden, 1988), pp. 209–307, and J. J. Modi, The religious ceremonies and customs of the Parsees (Bombay, 1937) on the \( \text{nīvar} \) ceremony without further leads.

\[42\] Kotwal, The supplementary texts to the Śāyen Nī-Śāyen, p. 103, n. 25.
the YAv. Yasna and in the Wisperad, the OAv. corpus and particularly the YH were viewed as sacrosanct texts. Defining the extent of the OAv. corpus, allowed the priests to rearrange the text for the ritual without risking disturbances in the transmission of the texts. Therefore, descriptions such as šaš učast še gāh, were crucial in maintaining the boundaries of the text. In this way, the exegetes could accommodate their desire to conclude the YH with its initial stanza (Y 35.1), an attempt at constructing a compositional cycle, while the borders and extent of what was regarded by the priestly tradition as the original composition were still maintained by counting the stanzas. The manuscripts thus transmit the ritual text along with variations and repetitions while such descriptions of the extent of the text preserve the necessary boundaries. In this way, the Zoroastrian tradition maintained a distinction between ritual performance and ritual text.