

Yasna Haptanghaiti 37: 4 and 5.

The *Yasna Haptanghaiti* is not a part of the Gathas; but it is composed in Old Avestan (as are the Gathas), and these two verses (among others) are close to Zarathushtra's thought, and reflect some of his key ideas. I particularly love verse 4, (which I have quoted in other chapters). The detail here supports my translation in such other chapters, so that you can have confidence that my translation in those chapters has a sound linguistic basis, and therefore supports the conclusions for which I have cited verse 4.

I also think that these two verses are important because they show (once again!) the central role that goodness plays in Zarathushtra's teachings; and that these teachings were loved and well understood.

Parenthetically, these two verses are not in the meter of any Gatha verses. But they are full of the poetry of alliteration and rhythm (which is why I call them 'verses'). I question (with respect) whether it is objective scholarship to inflict our (narrow) definition of what is 'poetry' on a different, very ancient culture.

Here is the GAv. text, with my translation, followed by a brief *Discussion* of these 2 verses; then a linguistic analysis; and I conclude with the translations of these verses in full, by Humbach 1991 and Humbach/Faiss 2010 for comparative purposes, and so that you can see their translation choices in (their perception of) the contexts of the full verses. So far as I am aware, the other linguists in our group have not translated the *Yasna Haptanghaiti*. To avoid repeated citations, I footnote here all linguistic references, translations, and commentaries, that I use in this chapter.¹

aṣəm. aṭ. vahištəm. yazamaidē.

hyaṭ. sraēštəm.

hyaṭ spəntəm. aməṣəm.

hyaṭ raocōṅhvaṭ.²

hyaṭ. vīspā. vohū. •• YHapt.37.4.

vohucā. manō. yazamaidē.

vohucā. x šaθrəm.

vaṅvḥīmā. daēnqm.

vaṅvḥīmā. fsəratūm.

vaṅvḥīmā. ārmaifīm. •• YHapt.37.5.

Geldner 1P pp. 133.

My translation.

'We celebrate, therefore, the true order of existence (which is) most good,
which (is) most beautiful,
which (is) beneficial, non-dying,
which (is) light-filled,
which (is) all good.' YHapt.37.4

'And good thinking we celebrate,
and good rule,
and good envisionment,
and good caring-protection,
and good embodied truth.' YHapt.37.5

* * * * *

Discussion.

Before we consider each of these verses, here are some preliminary observations:

In these 2 verses, truth, its comprehension, its rule, its embodiment, as well as the good envisionment, and caring protection, are all treated as qualities, concepts. So we see that the first four had not yet become entities, angels each of whom looked after a part of the natural world.

Yet these qualities ~ including good envisionment and caring protection ~ are associated with the verb *yazamaidē* ~ a worship that is a celebration. So it would be reasonable to conclude that the author recognized all of them as qualities of the Divine (which by their nature mortals also have, although imperfectly).

Although the word *yazamaidē* itself does not appear in the Gathas, Zarathushtra uses many *yaz-* words in ways that prove that in his mind, 'worship' is a celebration of the Divine, with the (good) ways in which we live our lives ~ a living worship.³ And this is also true of some later YAv. texts. Let us first consider the two terms that are not specifically included in the later collective term *amesha spenta*.

Good envisionment: In the Gathas this is the envisionment of existence governed by truth, its comprehension, its embodiment, its rule. And

Good caring protection: In the Gathas, 'love', 'caring', 'solicitude' are specifically a part of the true order of existence ('truth') and the nature of the Divine;⁴ and the Divine *protects*, helps, with truth and its comprehension, good thinking.⁵

So we see that all the qualities mentioned in these two verses are associated with the true order of existence, but these qualities had not yet been crystallized into a set of 7 (later called *amesha spenta*).

In fact in Avestan, *spənta-* and *aməša-* are both adjectives (Skjaervo 2006). Avestan adjectives can also be used as nouns ~ concepts, things, or people who have the qualities of the adjective. But in verse 4, *spəntəm* and *aməšəm* are two of a string of five adjectives describing truth (*ašəm*). And even though these 2 words are used together as a phrase, (with one *hyaṭ* 'which (is)' for both of them), the *spənta-* word is first, and the *aməša-* word is second, indicating that at the time of this composition, these two words had not yet become the fixed collective term ~ *aməša- spənta-* ~ used for living entities in the later (Younger Avestan) texts. Let us now consider each of these two verses.

Verse 4 celebrates the true (correct) order of existence ('truth' for short), with an epiphany of adjectives ~ *most good, most beautiful, beneficial, non-dying, light-filled, all good*. In the Gathas, many of these descriptions have special meanings that are foundational to Zarathushtra's thought. Their selection by the author of this verse indicates that s/he⁶ understood Zarathushtra's teachings well. These special meanings (from the Gathas), add richness to our understanding of the qualities that this ancient author thought were inherent in the true (correct) order of existence. So let us look at the adjectives with which the ancient author of verse 4 describes truth.

~ 'most beautiful' [*sraēštəm*]: I love that in the *Yasna Haptanghaiti* truth is called 'most beautiful'. And the Divine who personifies truth is called 'beautiful' in another verse ("... O Lord Wisdom, beautiful through truth [*ašā.srīrā*], ..." *Yasna Haptanghaiti*, 35:3, my translation) ~ indicating how much the author(s) loved Zarathushtra's core teaching (truth), and his conception of the Divine (truth personified). A love we also find throughout the Gathas. But if Zarathushtra himself used *beautiful* and *most beautiful* to describe truth and Wisdom (as he well may have done), such verses have not survived.⁷

~ The words 'beneficial, non-dying' [*spəntəm aməšəm*]: In the Gathas, 'beneficial' [*spənta-*] and 'truth' [*aša-*] are equated,⁸ and the 'beneficial way of being' [*spənta- mainyu-*] is the true order of existence ('truth'), ~ both the essence of the sacred. The word 'beneficial' [*spənta-*] is used most often for the Divine in the Gathas. And it is equated with the Divine in later texts.⁹ So we see that the author of our verse 4 understood well Zarathushtra's thought that the true order of existence (*aša-*) ~ which the Divine personifies ~ is *spənta-* 'beneficial' ~ a perfected way of being ~ not bound by mortality (*aməša-, amərətāt-*).

~ The word 'light-filled' [*raocōhvaŋt*]: In both the Gathas and later texts (Avestan and Pahlavi), various 'light' words (including 'fire') are used as metaphors for truth (indicating that truth enlightens). And in many YAv. texts 'light-filled' is one of the adjectives used to describe (what we call) 'paradise' ~ the state of being that is truth-possessing (an enlightened existence), ~ the most good existence (another term for what we call 'paradise').

'... (the) most-good existence of the truth-possessing we celebrate, light-filled,
all-good/happiness/enlightenment,¹⁰ ...'.

... *vahištəm ahūm ašaonqm yazamaide raocōhham vīspō.xʷāθrəm* ∴ ...
Visperad, Ch. 23.1.¹¹

Which brings us to the first and last adjectives in this string of adjectives which the author of verse 4 uses to describe truth (the true order of existence *aša-*). The first adjective is 'most good' [*vahištəm*]. The last is 'all good' [*vīspā vohū*]. Since both these terms mean a heightened degree of intrinsic goodness, we have to wonder: Why does the author of this verse use two different descriptions of heightened goodness as the first and last of the adjectives chosen to describe the true order of existence?

Here I think we have more than just two uses of heightened goodness as a crescendo of expression. The fact that these two terms are the beginning and the end demonstrate (to me, at least) that the author understood their foundational significance in Zarathushtra's thought.

~ 'most good' [*vahištəm*]: In the Gathas, 'most good' [*vahišta-*] is used more than once to describe truth; and indeed in later Avestan texts it became a standard epithet for truth ~ *aša- vahišta-*.

But more than that, (forgive the repetition) in the Gathas, Zarathushtra uses 'most good (*vahišta-*)' ~ the superlative degree of intrinsic goodness ~ almost as a code word, or word of art, for the Divine, Its qualities, Its teachings, the mortal words and actions that implement such teachings (even though imperfectly), and the end result of taking that path ~ each of which is also the true (correct) order of existence.

~ 'all good' [*vīspā vohū*]: This term also reflects a pivotal element in Zarathushtra's thought. It reflects his rejection of the deities of his culture who were a mix of 'good' and 'bad' qualities, and therefore (in his view) not worthy of worship. The term 'all good' expresses his new envisionment of the Divine (truth personified) as a being who is not a mix of good and bad qualities, but is wholly good, with no taint of evil in It, and therefore worthy of worship.¹²

To summarize: our verse 4 tells us, that the true order of existence is most beautiful, beneficial, eternal (non-dying); it is an enlightened existence (light-filled), which is the superlative degree of intrinsic goodness (most good); and it is 'all good'. In the Gathas, this is an order of existence that the Divine personifies and that man can attain completely.¹³

How beautiful is that?

Next, verse 5 celebrates various components of truth (nouns here) ~ describing each of them with the adj. 'good'. The adjectives *voḥucā* and *vayvḥīmcā* both mean 'and good'. The different forms simply reflect different grammatical genders of the stem *voḥu-*. This does not mean that verse 5 describes living entities who are male and female.

In Avestan an adj. (like *voḥu-* 'good') has to be in the same grammatical gender as the noun it describes. Here, *voḥucā* (ntr.) 'and good' describes the grammatically ntr. nouns *manō* 'mind/thinking/thought' and *xšaθrām* 'rule'.

And *vayvḥīmcā* (fem.) 'and good' describes the grammatically fem. nouns *daēnqm* 'envisionment', *fsəratūm* 'caring protection', and *ārmaitīm* 'embodied truth'. Here are verses 4 and 5 again, so that we can discuss verse 5 in context.

YHapt.37.4 'We celebrate (*yazamaidē*), therefore, the true order of existence (which is) most good, which (is) most beautiful, which (is) beneficial, non-dying, which (is) light-filled, which (is) all good.'

YHapt.37.5 'And good thinking we celebrate (*yazamaidē*), and good rule, and good envisionment, and good caring-protection, and good embodied truth.'

In the Gathas, all of these qualities are components of the true order of existence which the Divine personifies. All of these qualities are also our path to the Divine (the path of truth); and all of these qualities are the (incremental and eventually complete) end/End result(s) of taking that path (the attainment of truth). Let us consider them.

~ *voḥucā manō* 'and good thinking' is the comprehension of the true order of existence, ~ factual truths, and the truths of mind/heart/spirit, all that is good, right. In the Gathas, 'good thinking' is not limited to intellectual functions. It comprehends the full spectrum of consciousness capabilities ~ intellectual, emotional, creative, insightful ~ that are intrinsically 'good'.¹⁴

~ *voḥucā xšaθrām* 'and good rule' is the rule of truth, its beneficial embodiment, its most good comprehension (Y51:4).¹⁵ Good rule is first the way one governs oneself. Indeed, one of Zarathushtra's names for the Divine ~ 'Lord' ~ in the Gathas is used in the sense of one who has obtained Lordship over the qualities that make a being Divine.¹⁶ And the way we govern ourselves affects the way we relate to, influence, govern our various social units and existence as a whole. In the Gathas, good rule is a rule that serves ("... One chooses that rule [*xšaθra-*] of good thinking [*voḥu- manah-*] allied with truth [*aša-*] in order to serve..." Y51:18, Insler1975).

~ *vayvḥīmcā daēnqm* 'and good envisionment' is the envisionment of existence governed by truth, its good comprehension, its beneficial embodiment, its good rule;¹⁷

~ *vayvḥīmcā fsəratūm* 'and good caring-protection': A key concept in Zarathushtra's teachings. A Gatha verse that describes Wisdom's rule starts with this quality, "Where shall there be protection [*fsəratuš*] instead of injury? ..." Y51:4, Insler 1975; which naturally makes us wonder: What does Zarathushtra mean by good caring-protection?

Well, throughout the Gathas, Wisdom protects, through the true order of existence (truth) and its comprehension, good thinking,¹⁸ ("... protect us in accord with truth [*aša-*]." Y34:7, Insler 1975; "What help by truth hast Thou for Zarathushtra who calls? What help by good thinking hast Thou for me, ..." Y49.12, Insler 1975).

Throughout the Gathas, the true order of existence (truth) is a beneficial order (*aša-* and *spənta-* are equated).¹⁹

So 'good caring-protection' means thinking, speaking and acting in a beneficial way ~ a way that is in accord with the true order of existence (truth) and its good comprehension. It means watching out for each other ~ humans, other life forms, existence as a whole ~ in a caring, nurturing way. It is another way of saying mutual, loving help (which is part of the true order of existence).²⁰ Mutual, loving help is necessary ~ a prerequisite ~ to completing spiritual evolution, ~ a teaching that was remembered even in a Pahlavi text,²¹ (but which we have largely forgotten).

In Zarathushtra's thought it is not suffering that is contrary to the true, (correct, good) order of existence. Our sufferings sculpt our souls, they increase our understanding, they enable us ~ freely, from within ~ to change, to eliminate, our wrongful preferences (with mutual, loving help as part of the process of spiritual evolution).

What is contrary to the true order of existence is suffering without the protection of caring, the protection of nurture, the protection of mutual, loving help ~ 'good caring-protection' with all the qualities of the true, good order of existence ~ to see us through the difficulties of the refiner's fire, break repeated patterns of abuse and revenge, and enable spiritual growth.

So we see once again, that by selecting 'and good caring-protection' [*vaṅvḥīmcā fsəratūm*] as one of five key qualities (in our verse 5), the author understood well the key role that this concept plays in Zarathushtra's thought.

~ *vaṅvḥīmcā ārmaitīm* 'and good embodied truth' is a good finish, because it encompasses all of the preceding nouns and adjectives in verses 4 and 5, in that *vaṅvḥīm ārmaiti-* means 'good embodied truth' ~ the true order of existence embodied in thought, word and action ~ truth personified.²² Here in YHapt. 37.5 it is called 'good embodied truth' ~ just as truth is called 'most good' and 'all good' (in verse 4). In the Gathas, *ārmaiti-* 'embodied truth' often is linked with the adj. *spənta-* 'beneficial embodied truth' ~ both these adjectives ('good' and 'beneficial') are simply different ways of expressing the same underlying meaning, and were distilled into the key maxim 'good thoughts, good words, good actions' ~ a guide to use in our day to day lives; a guide that is simple on the surface, but so richly multi-dimensional in Zarathushtra's thought.²³ Why is this little maxim key? Because (like *ārmaiti-*) it expresses the idea of personification. There is no aspect of the true order of existence, and its component parts, that is not a good thought, a good word, or a good action.

So we see that the words and phrases in our two verses (YHapt. 37.4 and 5) are musical variations on the melody of truth (which the Divine personifies, and which we have imperfectly can attain completely). But to understand the richness of these musical variations, we have to know Zarathushtra's teachings in the Gathas ~ how (in multi-dimensional ways) he uses all these adjectives and nouns which appear in our two YHapt. verses.

It is worth noting that in the Gathas, each of the seven qualities of the Divine (later called amesha spenta) also appear along with many other descriptions of the Divine ~ all of which are included in, or are different ways of expressing, these seven qualities; and all of which are also our path to the Divine (and the end result of taking that path).

And we see the same variety of qualities ~ not limited to the wording of the seven ~ mentioned in our 2 verses (YHapt. 36.4 and 5).

All of which generate in me a great love for those ancients who understood so well, Zarathushtra's beautiful good envisionment (*vaṅvḥī- daēnā-*), and tried to distill it in such simple and beautiful ways ~ ways that even little children can understand. (I wish I had that gift!).

A final thought. Why does the author of our two verses (YHapt. 37.4 and 5) say that we worship/celebrate *qualities* ~ the true order of existence (in verse 4), and qualities in verse 5 which are components of this wholly good, true, order of existence? Perhaps because in the Gathas, these qualities (truth and its components) are the qualities that make a being Divine ~ expressing Zarathushtra's new envisionment that it is not *who* a being is that makes It Divine (witness his rejection of the deities of his culture who were a mix of good and bad qualities).

It is *what* a being is ~ Its nature, its qualities ~ that make a being Divine, worthy of worship.²⁴

Now it is true that in the later texts (including other parts of the YHapt.) all kinds of living things (and even some things we think of as inanimate) are 'worshipped/celebrated' using Old Av. *yazamaidē*; and YAv. *yazamaide*.

So did the religion of these later texts devolve into some sort of nature worship?

I used to think so (automatically following the views of eminent writers about the religion). But now that I have a better understanding of Zarathushtra's thought in the Gathas (corroborated by certain later texts) I think this was not nature worship at all, but rather the worship/celebration, of the Divine in all that exists.²⁵

* * * * *

Linguistics.

Here is a linguistic analysis of the words and their syntax (how they are put together). The syntax of these two verses is simple. Implied words are added only in accordance with Avestan usage, and are in round parentheses indicating that they are not in the Avestan text. In Avestan, forms of the verb *ah-* 'to be' ~ sometimes alone, and sometimes with a relative pronoun ('which', 'that', 'who'), often are implied, and in verse 4 the context requires that we frequently imply do so.

YHapt. 37.4 *ašəm at vahištəm yazamaidē*

hyaṭ sraēštəm

hyaṭ spəntəm aməšəm

hyaṭ raocōṇhvaṭ

hyaṭ vīspā vohū.

'We celebrate, therefore, the true order of existence (which is) most good,
which (is) most beautiful,
which (is) beneficial, non-dying,
which (is) light-filled,
which (is) all good.'

Let us start with the verb.

yazamaidē 'we celebrate'.

yazamaidē is 1p pl. indicative (present tense) of the verb stem *yaz-* (Skjaervo 2006). Linguists have variously translated this verb as 'to worship' and 'to sacrifice'. But there are no 'sacrifices' or 'rituals' described in the Gathas, as a way to worship Wisdom. Indeed in the Gathas, even 'fire' (which later became the central part of most rituals) is always associated with 'truth'.²⁶ In the Gathas fire is never described as the component of any ritual. So to translate *yaz-* words as 'sacrifice' inserts into Zarathushtra's thought, an idea that is absent from his teachings. Based on the ways in which *yaz-* words are used in the Gathas, its meaning is a form or worship that is a celebration of the Divine.²⁷ I was happy to see that in their 2010 translation of the

Gathas, Humbach/Faiss have expanded their translations of some *yaz-* words to include 'to celebrate' (although they also continue to translate *yaz-* words also as 'to sacrifice' and 'to worship').

aṣəm the 'true order of existence'.

aṣəm (in Old Av.) is nom./acc. sg. of the ntr. noun *aṣa-* (Skjaervo 2006). Here it is acc., because it is the object of the verb *yazamaidē* 'we worship'. The meaning of *aṣa-* has been explored in depth in another chapter.²⁸

aṭ 'therefore'

Skjaervo 2006 shows a GAv. particle *aṭ* which he says means 'then, so, thus, but'. Here I take *aṭ* as 'therefore' (used in the sense of 'thus'), because in the preceding verse 3, Wisdom is worshipped/celebrated 'with (His) ... names [*nāmānī*]', and of course, His names are His qualities (as the *Hormezd Yasht* demonstrates),²⁹ which in our two verses are the true (wholly good) order of existence (*aṣa- vahišta-*) and some its components.

vahištəm 'most good'

The grammatical value of this adj. (acc. sg.) is the same as that of the noun it describes *aṣəm*. Its meaning is 'most good' ~ the superlative degree of *vohu-* 'good'.

Thus, *aṣəm aṭ vahištəm yazamaidē ...* 'We celebrate, therefore, the true order of existence (which is) most good, ...'

hyaṭ sraēštəm 'which (is) most beautiful',

hyaṭ has 2 different grammatical values and meanings, which have been discussed in some detail in *Part Six: Yasna Hapt. 35.2 and 3*, so I will not repeat all that information here.

In the context of verse 4, it introduces a number of adjective/phrases, and therefore functions as a rel. pronoun nom./acc. sg. ntr.

sraēštəm is nom./acc. sg. ntr. of the adjective stem *sraēšta-* 'most beautiful' ~ the superlative degree of the adj. *srīra-* 'beautiful' (Skjaervo 2006). In this context, its grammatical value is acc. sg. ~ the same as that of the noun it describes, *aṣəm*.

Humbach 1991 translates it here as 'most beautiful';

Humbach/Faiss 2010 as 'most majestic' ~ without explanation, justification, or even comment, revealing (in my view) their opinion of what Zarathushtra should have said, rather than what he actually said.

hyaṭ spəntəm. aməṣəm. 'which (is) beneficial-sacred, non-dying,'

The words *spəntəm. aməṣəm* are acc. sg. ntr. of the adj. words *spənta-* and *aməṣa-* (Skjaervo 2006). As adjs., their grammatical value is the same as that of the noun they describe, *aṣəm*.

There is general agreement that *aməṣa-* means 'undying' (or perhaps more literally 'non-dying' or 'non-mortal'). But linguists vary widely in translating *spənta-*. These differences, and the meaning of *spənta-* based on all the ways in which Zarathushtra uses the word in the Gathas, is detailed in another chapter, in which I conclude that its meaning is 'beneficial' ~ the essence of the sacred.³⁰

Humbach 1991 translates *spənta-* words as 'prosperous'. By 2010 he had changed his mind (one can only respect such integrity).

Humbach/Faiss 2010 translate *spənta-* words as 'beneficent' ~ which I think is closer to its meaning based on the ways in which the word is used in the Gathas.

hyaṭ raocōṅhvaṭ. 'which (is) light-filled'

raocōṅhvaṭ is nom./acc. sg. ntr. of the adj. stem *raocōṅhvaṇt-* (Skjaervo 2006). Here, its grammatical value is acc. sg. ~ the same as that of the noun it describes, *aṣəm*.

Skjaervo 2006, Humbach 1991 and Humbach/Faiss 2010 translate *raocōṅhvaṭ* as 'full of light'.

In both Vedic and Avestan, adjectives which end in *-vaṇt* indicate possession.³¹ So more literally, *raocōṅhvaṇt-* means 'possessing light', or more fluently 'light-filled'. Whichever English equivalent we may prefer, the most accurate choice needs to convey the idea that the true, good order of existence is wholly light ~ its personification is a wholly enlightened state of being.

hyaṭ vīspā vohū

vīspā an adj., means 'all';

vohū an adj., means 'good'.

In this context, both words are acc. sg. ntr. of their respective stems, ~ having the same grammatical value as the noun they describe *aṣəm*. (*vohū* is also the form for other declensions,³² but they do not fit this context).

Thus,

aṣəm aṭ vahištəm yazamaidē hyaṭ sraēštəm hyaṭ spəntəm aməṣəm hyaṭ raocōṅhvaṭ hyaṭ vīspā vohū.

'We celebrate, therefore, the true order of existence (which is) most good, which (is) most beautiful, which (is) beneficial, non-dying, which (is) light-filled, which (is) all good.' YHapt. 37:4.

* * * * *

YHapt. 37.5 *vohucā manō yazamaidē*

vohucā x ṣaθrəm

vaṅvḥīmcā daēnqm

vaṅvḥīmcā fsəratūm

vaṅvḥīmcā ārmaītīm.

'And good thinking, we celebrate,
and good rule,
and good envisionment,
and good caring-protection,
and good embodied truth.'

Although the word *yazamaidē* 'we celebrate' appears only with the first noun and its adj. (*vohucā manō yazamaidē* 'And good thinking, we celebrate'), each subsequent noun and its adj. are also acc. sg. and therefore objects of the verb *yazamaidē* 'we celebrate'.

And (as you can see) each noun is described by the adj. 'and good'.

Now, you may be puzzled about why the GAv. word for 'and good' is *vohucā* (twice), and *vaṅvḥīmcā* (3 times).

Well the forms *vohucā* and *vaṅvḥīmcā* are simply different grammatical genders of the same stem ~ *vohu-* or, as Skjaervo 2006 prefers, *vahu-*).

In Avestan an adj. ~ like 'good' ~ has to be in the same grammatical case and gender as the noun it describes. The (grammatical) gender of *vohucā* 'and good' is acc. sg. **ntr.**, because it describes the grammatically **ntr.** nouns *manō* and *x ṣaθrəm*.

The (grammatical) gender of *vaṅvḥīmcā* 'and good' is acc. sg. **fem.**, because it describes the grammatically **fem.** nouns *daēnqm*, *fsəratūm*, and *ārmaītīm*.

Let us now consider the linguists of each phrase in this verse 5.

vohucā manō yazamaidē 'and good thinking we celebrate'.

yazamaidē. The grammatical value and meanings of *yazamaidē* have been discussed above.

vohucā manō. The *-cā* 'and' tacked on to *vohu* simply means that this phrase is a continuation of the preceding verse 4 in which truth is celebrated.

Both the noun *manō* and its adj. *vohucā* are acc. sg. ntr., (Skjaervo 2006), the objects of the verb *yazamaidē*. A linguistic discussion of the meaning of *vohu- manah-* is detailed in another chapter.³³ Its meaning is not limited to intellectual functions, but includes the full spectrum of conscious (awake) capabilities ~ intellectual, emotional, creative, insightful, etc.

In addition, (as Insler 1975 has pointed out p. 118), there are many GAv. words which are used in 3 ways, and *manah-* is one of them. It is used as 'mind' (the faculty), 'thinking' (its process), and 'thought' (its object). Insler most often translates *manah-* words as 'thinking' (process) and I agree, because it is the dynamic process of thinking (evolving to the 'most good truth') that is a core teaching of Zarathushtra.

vohucā x šaθrām 'and good rule'.

Both words are acc. sg. ntr. The meanings of 'good rule' have been detailed in another chapter.³⁴

Here, Humbach 1991 translates *vohucā x šaθrām* as 'and good power', without comment on *x šaθrām*.

But 'power' and 'rule' are not the same in meaning.

Humbach/Faiss 2010 translate *vohucā x šaθrām* as 'and good power/rule', without comment.

vañvāhīmā daēnqm 'and good envisionment'.

Both words are acc. sg. fem. The stem is *daēnā-* means 'envisionment' (as in a mental perception). Some linguists have translated *daēnā-* as 'conscience', but that cannot be its meaning because in the Gathas, there is 'good' *daēnā-* and 'bad' *daēnā-*, whereas a person's conscience is the voice within which tells us what is 'good', 'right'. There can be no such thing as a conscience that is 'evil' or bad. In addition, 'conscience' does not fit all instances of the use of *daēnā-* in the Gathas. The meaning of this word has been explored in another chapter.³⁵

Humbach 1991 translates *vañvāhīmā daēnqm* as "and the good Mazdayasnian religion" without comment ~ clearly an interpretive translation.

Humbach/Faiss 2010 translate this phrase as "good view/religion", without comment.

vañvāhīmā fsəratūm 'and good caring-protection'

vañvāhīmā 'and good' is the acc. sg. fem. form of the adj. stem which Skjaervo 2006 shows as *vahu-*, (and Insler 1975 shows as *vohu-*).³⁶

fsəratūm Grammatical value: Skjaervo 2006 shows that *fsəratūm* is acc. sg. of the conjectured fem. noun stem *fsəratū-*.³⁷ Jackson 1892 shows that for fem. *ū-* stem nouns, the *-ūm* inflection in GAv. is acc. sg. (§271, p. 80), which accords with Skjaervo's view.

Meaning: Linguists differ widely regarding the meaning of *fsəratū-* words, which appear only four times in all surviving Old Avestan texts ~ in 2 Gatha verses and in 2 verses of the *Yasna Haptanghaiti*.

Skjaervo 2006 hazards a guess that *fsəratū-* means " *power of awareness(?)" ~ (the question mark is his), without showing any Ved. cognate(s).

Humbach 1991 translates *fsəratūm* as 'joy' in our verse (YHapt. 37.5), and in YHapt. 39.5, as well as in the 2 Gatha verses in which *fsəratū-* words appear. He comments that *fsəratū-* 'enjoyment, joy', parallels Ved. *psáras-* 'enjoyment, delight'; and that *fsəratū-* "seems to be due to a feminine personification of a masc.

fsəratu- formed from the root *fšar-/fsr-* "comparing "Khot. *ššar* 'to exhilarate'." This meaning (in my view) is not a good contextual fit in the 2 Gatha verses in which *fsəratū-* words are used (shown below).

Humbach/Faiss 2010 give a different meaning. They think that *fsəratū-* "is feminized from *fsəratu-* m. [masc.] a derivation from the verb *fsar-*" and that it means "(personified) refecation" (the dictionary defines 'refecation' as "refreshment by food or drink, a meal especially a light one."); They compare this (conjectured) stem to Ved. *psāras-* "feast/enjoyment". These flavors of meaning do not fit the context of the 2 Gatha verses in which *fsəratū-* words are used (shown below).

Reichelt 1911 gives an entirely different meaning for the stem *fsəratū-*, which he says is a fem. noun meaning "recompense for", which not a good contextual fit in either of the 2 Gatha verses in which *fsəratū-* words are used (shown below).

Insler 1975 translates *fsəratū-* words in the 2 Gatha verses as 'protection'. He offers no linguistic explanation except to say that *fsəratuš* 'protection' is "equiv. to Ved. *sārman* (p. 313).

My take? Well, *fsəratū-* words appear in only 2 Gatha verses, so let us look at the context in which they are used.

"Where shall there be protection [*fsəratuš* nom. sg.] instead of injury? ..." Y51:4, Insler 1975. Here the *fsəratū* word is used in the sense of a caring protection ~ the opposite of injury.

"Rise up to me, Lord. ... receive ... protection [*fsəratūm* acc. sg.] through (our) good thinking." Y33:12, Insler 1975. At first thought this protection may not seem 'caring'. But a moment's reflection makes it clear that it is, because in the Gathas, 'good thinking' is the reason based comprehension of the true (correct, wholly good) order of existence (which the Divine personifies) which includes such qualities as friendship, loving kindness, generosity, etc.³⁸ So in this Gatha verse, our good thinking protects the Divine from being perceived through extrapolating on to the Divine our own shortcomings and wrongdoings, such as anger, violence, torturing (in hell), harming etc. In addition, both the Divine and man are called (metaphorically) pastors, who by definition, care for, protect, those in their charge.

A *fsəratū-* word also appears in YHapt. 39.5, in which the good protection [*vañhuyā fsəratvō*] which there also is given by us to the Divine, is associated with good truth ~ the good, true order of existence (an order that includes within it friendship, loving-kindness), and its good embodiment in thought word and action (*ārmaiti-*). 'Thee we attend with the relationship of a good family, of good truth, of good caring-protection [*vañhuyā fsəratvō*] of good embodied truth [*vañhuyā ārmatōiš*].' YHapt. 39:5, my translation.³⁹

I therefore take the *fsəratū* words in our YHapt. verse 37:5 to mean 'caring-protection'.

vañvhīmcā ārmaitīm 'and good embodied truth'.

vañvhīmcā 'and good' is acc. sg. fem of the adj. stem *vohu-* (Skjaervo 2006 shows the stem as *vahu-*)

ārmaitīm is acc. sg. of the fem. noun stem *ārmaiti-* (Skjaervo 2006). The meaning *ārmaiti-* has been variously translated by eminent linguists in ways that cannot be reconciled. Based on the ways in which it is used in the Gathas, the only meaning that consistently fits each use is 'thoughts, words and actions that embody the true (good) order of existence', or 'embodied truth' for short. This has been detailed in another chapter.⁴⁰

* * * * *

Let us now compare my translation of these two verses (YHapt. 37 verses 4 and 5), with their full translations by Humbach 1991, and Humbach/Faiss 2010.

YHapt. 37:4 *aṣəm at vahištəm yazamaidē hyaṭ sraēštəm hyaṭ spəntəm aməṣəm hyaṭ raocōṅhvaṭ hyaṭ vīspā vohū.*

YHapt. 37:5 *vohucā manō yazamaidē vohucā xšaθrəm vaṅvḥīmcā daēnəm vaṅvḥīmcā fsəratūm vaṅvḥīmcā ārmaīīm.*

My translation.

YHapt. 37:4. 'We celebrate, therefore, the true order of existence (which is) most good, which (is) most beautiful, which (is) beneficial, non-dying, which (is) light-filled, which (is) all good.'

YHapt. 37:5. 'And good thinking, we celebrate, and good rule, and good envisionment, and good caring-protection, and good embodied truth.'

Humbach 1991.

YHapt. 37:4. "We worship the best truth which (is) most beautiful, which (is) prosperous and immortal, which (is) full of light, which (encompasses) all good (things)."

YHapt. 37:5. "And we worship good thought, and good power, and the good Mazdayasnian religion, and good joy, and good right-mindedness."

Humbach/Faiss 2010.

YHapt. 37:4. "We celebrate best truth, which is most majestic, beneficent (and) immortal, full of light and encompassing all good (things)."

YHapt. 37:5. "And we celebrate good thought, good power/rule, good view/religion, good refection, and good right-mindedness."

* * * * *

¹ Skjaervo 2006 Old Avestan Glossary which is no longer available on line, but hopefully will be posted soon on <https://harvard.academia.edu/POktorSkjaervo>

Humbach 1991 for YHapt. 37:4 Vol. 1, p. 146; (he offers no separate comment on this verse 4 in Vol. 2). For YHapt. 37:5, Vol. 1 p. 147, and Vol. 2 p. 124.

Humbach/Faiss 2010 for YHapt. 37.4 p. 108 (they offer no separate comment on this verse). For YHapt. 37.5, pp. 108, with commentary on p. 179. And they offer some general comments on p. 26 under their section 17.10 of their text which precedes their translations of, and comments on, the Gathas and the Yasna Haptanghaiti.

² Geldner prefers the word spelled *raocōṅhvaṭ* which is supported by one ms. (Pt4). Humbach 1991 and Humbach/Faiss 2010 prefer the word spelled *raocōṅhvaṭ* which is supported by 3 (or more) mss. and is the preference of Skjaervo 2006 as well. The different spellings do not affect the meaning.

³ Detailed in *Part One: Worship & Prayer*; and in *Part Two: The Puzzle of Worship*.

⁴ Detailed in *Part One*:

Truth, Asha;

The Nature Of The Divine; and

Love.

⁵ Detailed in *Part One: Worship & Prayer*.

⁶ That these two verses may have been composed by either a woman or a man is a reasonable conclusion in light of the fact that women and men are treated equally in the Gathas, both were disciples of Zarathushtra, and both were priests and teachers of the religion. Detailed in *Part One: Gender Equality*.

⁷ Hermippus who lived in the 3d century BCE, claimed to be an exponent of two million verses composed by Zarathushtra (Humbach 1991 Vol. 1, p. 24). If indeed Zarathushtra did compose two million verses, none of them has survived except for the Gathas as we know them today. Nor have any verses, or commentaries, survived in ancient Greek.

⁸ Detailed in *Part One: Truth, Asha*.

⁹ Detailed in *Part One: The Beneficial-Sacred Way Of Being, Spenta Mainyu*.

¹⁰ There is no one word equivalent which accurately captures the meaning of Avestan *x^vāθra-* words, so I have used a combination of three words 'good/happiness/enlightenment' in an attempt to capture in English its full Avestan meaning. In the compound word *vīspō.x^vāθrəm*, the word *vīspō* of course means 'all'; giving us 'all-good/happiness/enlightenment'. If you are interested, see the explanation of *x^vāθra-* (and the compound word *aša.x^vāθra-*) in *Part Two: Light, Glory, Fire*.

¹¹ From *Visperad*, Ch. 23.1; the translation is mine, the Avestan words are from Geldner 2P p. 30.

This description of the state of being that is paradise is found in many other YAv. texts as well, detailed in a ft. in *Part Three: Heaven in Other Avestan Texts*.

¹² Detailed in *Part One: The Nature Of The Divine*.

¹³ Detailed in *Part One: Completeness & Non-Deathness, Haurvatat, Ameretat*.

¹⁴ Detailed in *Part One: Good Thinking, Vohu Manah*.

¹⁵ Detailed in *Part One: Good Rule, Vohu Xshathra*.

¹⁶ Detailed in *Part One: The Nature Of The Divine*.

¹⁷ Detailed in *Part Three: Daena*.

¹⁸ Detailed in *Part One: Worship & Prayer*.

¹⁹ Detailed in *Part One: Truth, Asha*.

²⁰ Detailed in *Part One: The Nature Of The Divine*, and throughout the chapters of this web-book.

²¹ Detailed in *Part Two: Asha & The Checkmate Solution*.

²² Detailed in *Part One: Embodied Truth, Aramaiti*.

²³ Touched on in a short piece *Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds*, on the Home Page of this website.

²⁴ Detailed in *Part One: The Nature Of The Divine*, and *The Identity Of The Divine*.

²⁵ Discussed in *Part Two: A Question Of Immanence*.

²⁶ Discussed in *Part One: Truth, Asha*.

²⁷ Discussed in a ft. in *Part Two: The Puzzle Of Worship*.

²⁸ Detailed in *Part One: Truth, Asha*.

²⁹ The *Hormezd (Ormazd) Yasht* shows that the names of the Divine are his qualities (at that time collectively called *amesha spenta*. But they had not yet become separate entities, to be worshipped, which is shown by the fact that they are called the 'Word'),

"What ... Holy **Word** is the strongest? ... the most glorious? ... the best healing? ... What destroys best the malice of Daevas and Men? ... What makes the material world best come to the fulfillment of its wishes? ... What frees the material world best from the anxieties of the heart?"

Ahura Mazda answered: 'Our Name, O Spitama Zarathushtra! who are the Amesha-Spentas...' " Yt. 1.1 - 3, Darmesteter translation. SBE 23, pp. 23 - 24.

Notice the plural 'Our' describing the sg. 'Name'. In the Gathas, Zarathushtra frequently alternates between the sg. and the pl. in referring to the Divine (detailed in *Part Two: The Puzzle Of The Singular & The Plural*).

Darmesteter calls this Yasht *Ormazd Yasht*, whereas Geldner, based on his compilation of mss. calls it *Hormezd Yasht*. Both titles are the Pahlavi for Avestan *ahura- mazdā-*. Although all the Yashts are in YAv. their titles are in Pahlavi, because during Pahlavi times, when these Yashts were recited as part of the ritual, they were identified by their Pahlavi titles.

³⁰ Detailed in *Part One: The Beneficial-Sacred Way Of Being, Spenta Mainyu*.

³¹ Macdonnel in *A Vedic Grammar for Students*, § 86, p. 63, says that adjective stems formed with the suffix *-mant-* *-vant-* both mean *possessing*. Jackson expresses the same opinion for similar Avestan adjectives. Speaking of stems that end in consonants, Jackson says, "This subdivision of consonant stems includes: ... (ii) possessive adjective stems in *mant*, *vant*. ..." Jackson 1892, § 289, p. 84.

³² *vohū* is the form for (1) instr. sg. masc./ntr. , (2) nom./acc. sg. ntr. and (3) nom./acc. pl. ntr.

³³ Detailed in *Part One: Good Thinking, Vohu Manah*.

³⁴ Detailed in *Part One: Good Rule, Vohu Xshathra*.

³⁵ The meanings of *daēnā-* in the Gathas, and as it evolved in the later texts, is discussed in detail, in *Part Three: Daena*.

³⁶ Insler 1975 Glossary, p. 358.

³⁷ Skjaervo 2006 shows that the conjectured fem. noun stem *fsəratū-* appears in the following declensions in GAv. texts.

fsəratuš nom. sg. Y51:4;

fsəratūm acc. sg. Y33:12; and YHapt. 37:5 (our verse).

fsəratvō gen. sg. YHapt. 39:5.

³⁸ Detailed in *Part One*:

Truth, Asha,

Good Thinking, Vohu Manah, and

Love.

³⁹ Here is YHapt. 39:5 which is in GAv., together with a brief explanation of its translation.

"Thee we attend with the relationship of a good family, of good truth, of good caring-protection, of good embodied truth." YHapt. 39:5 my translation.

vanhəuš xʷaētəuš xʷaētātā vanhəuš ašahyā θwā pairijasāmaidē vanhuyā fsəratvō vanhuyā āmatōiš• Geldner 1P p. 135.

"Thee we attend [*θwā pairijasāmaidē* 3p pl. verb]

with (the) relationship [*xʷaētātā* instr. sg.]

of a good family [*vanhəuš xʷaētəuš* gen. sg. masc.],

of good truth [*vanhəuš ašahyā* gen. sg. ntr.],

of good caring-protection [*vaṅhuyā́ fsəratvō* gen. sg. fem.],
of good embodied truth [*vaṅhuyā́ ārmatōiš* gen. sg. fem.].⁴⁰ YHapt. 39:5, my translation.

⁴⁰ Detailed in *Part One: Embodied Truth, Aramaiti*.