

The route of Rašnu

Rašnu is a wandering Yazata, who travels all over the worlds, and each time traverses an upper stage in three strides¹. The Yasna-text of Rašnu (Yt 12.9-37) enumerates the (29) stations of the route of Rašnu from the earth up to the throne of Ahura Mazda:

- The seven continents of the earth: Arəzahi, Savahi, Fradaḍafšu, Vīdaḍafšu, Vouru.barəšti, Vouru.jarəšti (Yt. 12.9-15).
- The sea Vouru.kaša, and the tree of the Eagle (saēna) that stands in the middle of the sea Vouru.kaša, that is with good remedies, that is with remedies on high, that is called (the tree) “Of All Remedies” (*vīspō.biš*), on which is placed the seed of all the plants (16-17).
- The *aoda* (‘waters’) of (the river) Raṅhā, and the *sanaka* (‘rise; bank’) of Raṅhā (18-19).
- The borders of this earth, the middle of this earth, and any place of this earth (20-22).

Then Rašnu goes up to the intermediary space between this earth and the heaven, that is the equatorial circle of Harā, the water reservoir Hukairya, and the axle of Taēra which connects earth and heaven (23-25):

- Harā the high, with many returns (or, labyrinthine), luminous, where come neither night nor darkness, no cold wind and no hot wind, no pollution made by the Daēva, and the clouds cannot reach up unto Haraitī the high;
Hukairya the high, covered with all praises, golden, from which Arədvī Sūrā Anāhitā flows down a thousand men in height;
the Taēra of Haraitī the high, around which stars, moon and sun rotate.

Then Rašnu reaches the stars station. In three strides he passes through Vanənt, Tištrya, and Haptō.iriṅga –it seems that they form a half circle (south-east-north?) (26-28):

- The star Vanənt set in place by Mazda;
the star Tištrya, wealthy and fortunate;
these stars that (form the constellation of) Haptō.iriṅga.

He travels among the stars/ constellations with aquatic, terrestrial, and herbal natures (or, having the seed of the waters, having the seed of earth, having the seed of plants) (29-31):

- These stars that are of the nature of waters;
these stars that are of the nature of earth;
these stars that are of the nature of plants.

Then he rises to those three stations corresponding to *humata*, *hūxta*, *hvaršta* (32-34):

- These stars of the Holy Spirit (*spəntō.mańyava*);
the moon that is of the nature of cow (or, containing the seed of animals, *gaociθra*);
the king-sun with fleet racehorses.

And finally he ascends to the paradisiacal world of thought which is itself in three levels (35-37):

- The Endless Light (or, the Day Without Beginning/ End, *anayra raocah*) set in place by itself;

¹ . This reminds Viṣṇu’s three strides. Cf. RV I, 154.

the Best Existence (*vahiṣṭa aṅhu*) of the Truthful, light (or, diurnal) and
providing complete bliss;
the bright House of Song (*garō.nmāna*).

(Raham Asha)