



## HAFTÖRANG

**HAFTÖRANG**, the circumpolar constellation Ursa Major (UMa) was already known in Young Avestan literature under the appellative of *haptōiringa-* (only pl. with *star-*, m., “star”), a Bahuvrīhi compound (Duchesne-Guillemin, p. 177, 215) probably signifying “having seven signs,” as assumed by Bartholomae (col. 1767; cf. Justi, p. 320; out of date Spiegel, p. 533) with reference to Skt. *liṅga-* (“mark, spot, sign” etc.). Although Filliozat (p. 326) contested this comparison because *liṅga-* is attested only in Classical Skt., the existence of an OIr. stem *\*ringa-* can be assumed on account of Man. Sogd. *pring* [pr’yŋk] (damask; cf. Man. M-P. *pring* [pryŋg], Pahlavi and Mod. Persian *parand*), which derives from O.Ir. *\*upa-ringa-* (marked, figured), as shown by Henning (“TPS,” 1945, pp. 150-57 = *SP*, 2, pp. 259-66; Gharib, p. 281).

The identification of Av. Haptōiringa with UMa is correct (Khareghat, p. 123), as the Pahlavi and Persian sources confirm, while that with the Pleiades, advanced by Hertel (1931, p. 77; 1936, p. 11) is untenable. The representation of UMa as a constellation of seven stars is attested (e.g. in Vedic literature: *sapta-rṣáyahá* “the Seven Wise Men”), but older and more common in *RV* is the name *r’kṣāhá* (“[the Seven] Bears”; see Khot. *haudarimcha-* “the Seven Bears,” Bailey, p. 498; Cane-vascini, p. 132, n. 66, 285; Qing, pp. 81, 131). For other names and identifications (“Wagon,” “Bear(s),” etc.) in antiquity, see Scherer, pp. 131-40, 178 and *passim*; Göss-mann, pp. 95-97, n. 258; Allen, pp. 419-47; Duchesne-Guillemin, 1986, p. 237; Reiner, pp. 56-58).

The Haptōiringa-stars are only mentioned in the *Yašt*-literature and in the two *Sih Rōzags* (Bartholomae, col. 1767; Khareghat, pp. 122-23; Gray, p. 149), where



they are called (*Yt.* 12, 28; *S.* 1, 13; 2, 13) *bāešaziia-* (healing), *mazdaδāta-* (created [or “given”] by *Mazdā*), *x<sup>v</sup>arə-naṅ<sup>v</sup>haṅt-* “*x<sup>v</sup>arənah*-endowed” (see *FARNAH*), and are worshipped with *Tištrya* (Sirius) and other minor Av. stars or constellations “so as to oppose the *Yātus* and the *Pairikās*” (*Yt.* 8, 12; Panaino, 1990, I, pp. 38, 104-7; idem, 1989, pp. 22-23). Their relationship with the stargod *Sirius* is confirmed by the fact that these stars are worshipped in the *Sīh Rōzag* litany specifically on the day (n. 13) dedicated to *Tištrya* (Hartman, p. 45). According to *Yt.* 13, 60, they are watched over by 99,999 *Frauuāšis*.

In Pahlavi literature *Haftōring* [hp’tw(k)lŋg] is the General of the North (*Ir.* and *Ind. Bundahišn*, II, 7; Henning, 1942, p. 231) and opposes the planet *Ohrmazd* (Jupiter; *Ir.Bd.*, V, 4; MacKenzie, p. 513) or the planet *Wahrām* (Mars; *Škand-gumānīg Wizār*, IV, 32-33; see de Menasce, pp. 52, 53; but a Pāzand variant in the *ŠGW* (IV, 31) opposes *Kēwān* (Saturn) to *Haftōring*, cf. de Menasce, pp. 52, 54 in note; Eilers, 1967, p. 133). According to the *Mēnōg ī Xrad*, XLIX, 15-21 (text: Sanjana, p. 70; trans.: West, 1885, pp. 91-92; Bausani, pp. 155-56) *Ursa Major* protects and takes control over the regular turning of the twelve zodiacal signs, and it moves around hell (located to the north like *Haftōring*) controlling its gate to hold back 99,999 demonic beings with the help of the same number of *Frawahrs*. The kidneys (Pahl. *gurdag*) are the animal sacrificial portion belonging to *Haftōring*, according to *Šāyest na Šāyest*, XI, 4 (cf. Kotwal, pp. 22-23). The name of *Haftōring* is given a paretymological explanation (*haft rag* “seven veins”) in *Ir. Bundahišn*, II, 7; this passage attributes to the stars of the Big Dipper seven ties each one bound to one of the *Kešvars* (continents; Henning, 1942, p. 232, n. 6; Panaino, 1996, chps. 4.0., 4.5.). The reading ‘βt’r’nkty (*Ursa Major*) in a Man. Sogdian fragment remains uncertain (cf. Sims-Williams, p. 61; Sundermann, pp. 30, n. 69, 31, n. 71; Gharib, p. 21).

In New Persian literature *Ursa Major* is called *haft-ōrang*, *h. varang[-e mehīn]* (*UMA*; *H.-e kehīn* being *UMi*); *h. ovrang* (the seven thrones [also *h. tak̄t*]); *h. setāra-ġan* (the seven stars); *h. barādarān* or *h. dādarān* (the seven brothers); *doḡtarān-enaš*, and the Arabic *banāt al-naš*, or *banāt al-naš al-kobrā* [or *al-šoġrā*] (“the daughters of the Bier” [four of the stars are the bier and the remaining three the daughters]) are also both used; *kers-e bozorg* or *dobb-e akbar* (the Great Bear; cf. Horn, p. 196; see *Dehḡodā*, s.v. *haft ovrang*; Eilers, 1976, 13, n. 31; Steingass, pp. 201, 505, 1411, 1503-04; Taqizāda, p. 112).



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