

GÖTZ KEYDANA

# Early Vedic

Morphology – Part 2: Nominal Morphology



# Roadmap

- Nouns
  - Inflectional categories
    - Case
    - Number
    - Gender
  - Stem types and endings
- Adjectives
- Pronouns
- Numerals

# Inflection

- Endings encode multiple  $\phi$ -features
- Endings merge with stem-final vowels
- Endings are part of the grammatical word and of the prosodic word
  - Exceptions: pada-endings, e.g. *mano-b<sup>h</sup>iḥ* (see section 3.1)
- Different allomorphs with different stem classes / different genders

## Case

- 8 cases: NOM VOC ACC INSTR DAT ABL GEN LOC (in the order of Indian grammar)
- Case marking in nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and (some) numbers
- Syncretism is frequent (discrete endings only in the singular of the *a*- and *ā*-stems)
- More on case: Section 4.1

## Case and adverbs

- Case forms can be used as adverbs.

*idā cis áhna idā cid aktóḥ*

‘... now by day, now by night...’ RV 4.10.5

- Adverbial suffixes *-tra* and *-taḥ* occasionally instead of Loc / Abl respectively.

*d<sup>h</sup>iṣvá vájraṃ hásta á dakṣiṇatrā*

‘Place your mace on your right hand /in your hand on the right’ RV 6.18.9

## Number

- Three numbers: Singular, Dual, Plural
- Dual fully productive, both with natural and non-natural pairs
- Duale tantum: *násā* ‘nose’
- Pluralia tantum: *támisrā-* ‘darkness’ (RV), *āp-* ‘water’ (class.)
- Syncretism: formal identity of Dat./Abl. in the plural, formal identity of Nom./Acc., Inst./Dat./Abl. And Gen./Loc. in the dual

## Gender

- Three genders: Masculine, Neuter, Feminine
- Masc. and neutr. distinguished only in Nom.
- Syncretism: no distinction between Nom. and Acc. in the neuter
- Gender is at its core arbitrary. But: Feminines are either lexical or denote individuals of the feminine sex
- Masc. and fem. from identical stem types differ in endings, e.g. acc.pl. masc. *-īn*, *-ūn*, *-ṛn* vs. fem. *-īḥ*, *-ūḥ*, *-ṛḥ* (*i/u/r*-stems)
- Deriving feminines to denote females:
  - *-ī*-stems: *vṛka-* ‘wolf’ : *vṛkī-* ‘she-wolf’, *rājan-* ‘king’ : *rājñī* ‘queen’

## Defective nouns

- *purú-* ‘much’ in masc./neutr. only nom./acc. and (4x) gen.pl., *bahú-* ‘much’ on the other hand frequent in all cases/numbers
  - note that *purú-* and *bahú-* are metrically equivalent!
- *pṛt-* ‘fight’ only loc.pl. *pṛtsú* (31x!)
  - RV 1.129.4 *pṛt-sú-ṣu* with 2<sup>nd</sup> loc.-ending



## Stem classes 1

- Root nouns
  - in C: *tvác-* ‘skin’, *stúb<sup>h</sup>-* ‘praise’ etc.
  - in V: (*mad<sup>h</sup>u*)-*pā-* ‘drinking sweet drinks’, (*saho-*)*dā-* ‘giving power’
  - in *i, u, ṛ*: with additional *t*, e.g. *steya-kṛ-t-* ‘committing theft’, *ab-jí-t-* ‘winning water’
  - in diphthong: *dyáv-* ‘heaven’, *gáv-* ‘cow’, *náu-* ‘boat’
- Consonant stems: still very productive
  - one stem: *-as*, *mánas-* ‘mind’, *-iṣ*, *jyótiṣ-* ‘light’
  - strong and weak stems: *-an*, ACC.SG *rājān-am* ‘king’, DAT.SG *rājñ-e*
  - 3 stems: *-āñc*, ACC.SG *pratyāñc-am* ‘facing’, DAT.SG *pratīc-é*, INSTR.PL *pratyág-b<sup>h</sup>iḥ*

## Strong stems, weak stems, middle stems

- Some consonant stems show ablaut alternations
- Strong stem: nom.sg, acc.sg, loc.sg, nom/acc.du, nom.pl
- Weak stem: elsewhere
- Middle stem: only with certain affixes and endings with initial C
  - *-áñc-* (strong), *-ác-* (middle), *-īc-*´ (weak)
  - *-ánt-* (strong), *-át-* (middle), *-at-*´ (weak)
- Note that stem-ablaut is independent from accent!

## Stem classes 2

- Stems in *-i, -u*:
  - strong stem in *-i, -u*: acc.sg *agním / śátrum*
  - weak stem in *-ay, -av*: dat.sg *agnáye / śátrave*, gen.sg. *agnéh, / śátroh*, loc.sg *agnáu, śátrau*
- Stems in long vowel (*-ā, -ī, -ū*, historically stems in final H)
  - traces of final H: syllable count, e.g. *usráḥ* 'rosy' RV 8.75.8 (only pada-final, catalectic lines?)
  - *jāyā* 'wife': NOM.SG *jāyā*, GEN.SG *jāyāyāḥ*
  - *devī*-type: NOM.SG *devī* 'goddess', GEN.SG *devyāḥ*
  - *vṛkī*-type: NOM.SG *vṛkīḥ* 'she-wolf', GEN.SG *vṛkyāḥ* (= *vṛkiāḥ*)
- Thematic stems in *-a*: different set of weak endings

## Heteroclitics

- Heteroclitic neuters in *r/n*
  - type 1: *yákr̥t* ‘liver’, GEN.SG *yakn-áh*
  - type 2: *úd<sup>h</sup>ar* ‘udder’, GEN.SG *úd<sup>h</sup>n-aḥ*

## Suppletivism

- One paradigm with 2 stems which are elsewhere independent
- No etymological connection: *i/n*-stems
- *ákṣi-*, *akṣán-* (weak *akṣn-*) ‘eye’, similarly *ást<sup>h</sup>i-* ‘bone’ etc.
- Opaque ablaut variants of the same stem: NOM.SG *pánt<sup>h</sup>ā-s* ‘path’, INSTR.PL *pat<sup>h</sup>i-b<sup>h</sup>iḥ* (from which GEN.PL *pat<sup>h</sup>īnām*) GEN.SG *pat<sup>h</sup>-áḥ* from *\*péntoh<sub>2</sub>-s*, *\*pṛt-h<sub>2</sub>-b<sup>h</sup>ís*, *\*pṛt-h<sub>2</sub>-és*

## Syncretism in detail

- In all stem classes:
  - nom/voc.sg.
  - nom/acc neutr.
  - dat/abl.pl, instr/dat/abl.du, gen.loc.du
- In all stem classes except *a*-stems:
  - gen/abl.sg
- In consonant stems and *ā*-stems:
  - nom/acc.pl
  - but note the different accent in root nouns like NOM.PL *áṇ-ah* 'water' vs. ACC.PL *ap-áh*

## Doublets

- *a*-stem endings:
  - instr.sg *-ena* and *-ā*
  - nom/acc/voc.du *-au* and *-ā*
  - nom.pl *-āḥ* and *-āsaḥ*
  - instr.pl *-eb<sup>h</sup>iḥ* and *-aiḥ*
  - nom/acc/voc. neutr. *-āni* and *-ā*
- In other stem classes to a lesser degree

## The ending-less locative

- The standard ending of the locative in C-stems is *-i*
  - Stems in *i, u* show *vṛddhi* of the stem: *mád<sup>h</sup>au, agnáu* (:agní-!)
- But: Variants without the *i*-ending occur (always strong stem)
  - Mostly with stems in *n* or heteroclitics in *r/n*
  - Almost exclusively with neuters (only with 6 masculine *n*-stems in the RV)



## Adjectives

- Formally not distinguished from nouns
- *mád<sup>h</sup>o pito* voc. ‘honeyed food’ RV 1.187.2
- *somiyám mád<sup>h</sup>u* acc. ‘somial honey’ RV 8.8.4
- Adjective-forming suffixes:
  - *somiyá-* , *sáumiya-* ‘related to S.’, *sómavat-* ‘connected to S.’ (:sóma-)
  - *ápā-ka-* ‘distant’, *sūcī-ka-* ‘having a needle’, nominalized: a biting insect
- Agree with their head, which they typically precede, see examples above

## Gradation

- *-(t)ara-*, *-(t)ama-*: *tavástara-* (: *tavás-* ‘strong’) *purutáma-* (: *purú-* ‘much, many’)
  - with pronouns: *katará-* ‘who of two’, *katamá-* ‘who of many’ (: *ká-* ‘who’)
  - with adverbs: *ápara-*, *apamá-* (: *ápa* ‘away’)
  - with nouns: *vṛtratára-* ‘very great obstacle’
- *-(ī)yāṃs-*, *-iṣṭ<sup>h</sup>a-*: *vásyāṃs-* / *vásīyāṃs-*, *vásiṣṭ<sup>h</sup>a-* (: *vásu-* ‘good’), *tavīyāṃs-*, always from the root
  - with nouns: only *bráhmīyāṃs-* (: *brahmán-* ‘priest’)
  - with verbs: *práti-cyavīyāṃs-* ‘better at thrusting back’ (: *cyav*), *ágamiṣṭ<sup>h</sup>a-* ‘coming gladly’ (: *gam*), with verbal subcategorization

## Personal Pronouns

- All numbers and cases
- No gender distinction
- Massive suppletivism:
  - 1SG.NOM *ahám*, ACC *mām*, DU.NOM *vām*, PL.NOM *vayám*, ACC *asmán*, LOC *asmé / asmāsu*
- Enclitic variants: 1SG.ACC *mā*, 1SG.DAT/GEN *me*, 1PL.ACC/DAT/GEN *naḥ*
- pro-drop

*agním īḷe puróhitamḥ yajñásya devám ṛtvíjam*

‘Agni I invoke, the one placed to the fore, god and priest of the sacrifice’

RV 1.1.1

## 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns

- Special set of endings
- *tá-* (NOM.SG.M *sá*), *etá-*, *tyá-*
- Proximal: *ayám* (with stems *iy-*, *im-*, *a-*)
- Distal: *asáu* (with stems *amú-*, *amĩ-*)
- Clitic: *ena-*, *sīm*
- pro-drop (subject and object)

*adṛṣṭān hanti āyatī át<sup>h</sup>o hanti parāyatī*

‘As she comes, she smashes the no-see-ums, and as she goes away, she smashes them’ RV 1.191.2

- Anaphoric and cataphoric use

## Relative, interrogative, indefinite, reflexive pronouns

- Relative pronoun: *yá-* (cf. complementizer *yád* from neutr.sg.)
- Interrogative pronoun: *ká-* with neutr.nom.acc.sg *kád* and *kím*
- In compounds: *kád-art<sup>h</sup>a-* ‘having what purpose?’ *kim-yú-* ‘desiring what?’
- Indefinite pronoun: *kás-cid*, *kás-ca*, *kás-caná*
- Reflexive pronoun: *svá-* (may be bound from outside its domain)

## Pronominal adjectives

- Words traditionally classified as adjectives, but with pronominal endings
- Note the lack of denotational semantics!
  - *anyá-* ‘other’
  - the quantifiers *éka-* ‘one’, *vísva-* ‘all’, *sárva-* ‘whole’

## Cardinal numbers

- *éka-* ‘one’, *dvá-* ‘two’, *trí-* ‘three’, *catúr-* ‘four’ inflect for number and case throughout
- All other numbers inflect for number and case only in the oblique cases
- Note: *aṣṭá* ‘eight’ forms a nom.acc. *aṣṭáu* (a formal dual!)
- Numbers 1-19 are adjectives and agree with their heads
- The numbers  $\geq 20$  are nouns, e.g. *viṃśatí-* ‘twenty’, *śatá-* ‘hundred’
  - They may be construed with the genitive, e.g. *pañcāśátam... aśvānām* ‘fifty horses’ RV 5.18.1
  - or agree with a following plural in case, e.g. *śaténa hárib<sup>hi</sup>* ‘with a hundred bays’ RV 2.18.6

## Ordinal numbers

- Are formed from cardinals:
  - *dvitīya*- ‘second’, *ṭṛtīya*- ‘third’. *turīya*- ‘fourth’ (TS)
  - *caturthá*- ‘fourth’ (AV), *ṣaṣṭhá*- ‘sixth’ (AV), *saptát<sup>h</sup>a*- ‘seventh’ (RV)
  - *pañcamá*- ‘fifth’ (AV), *saptamá*- ‘seventh’ (VS), *aṣṭamá*- ‘eighth’  
*navamá*- ‘ninth’, *daśamá*- ‘tenth’
- The one exception: *prat<sup>h</sup>amá*- ‘first’



बहवो धन्यवादाः  
Thank you for your attention!