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Exploring the language layer of the *dānastuti* genre

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The linguistic variedness of the ancient Vedic texts is a well-known fact. This can be observed within the *Ṛgveda* itself, the most ancient collection of hymns, and if one compares the language of the *Ṛgveda* with that of the Atharvaveda. Glimpses of Vedic dialects can be detected in several passages and words, although the poetic language displays a high degree of convention and normalisation. Among the hymns of the Rigveda few specific features can be attributed to the different families of bards, even though one can surmise that they belonged to different regions of the Vedic world. It is also likely that some families or so-called "branches" were linguistically mixed. The hymns resort to different genres of discourse.

The *dānastuti*, lit. 'praise of the gift', marks a distinct part of the poetic competence. The passages in question, which are often limited to a single stanza, although others are more developed, making up a substantial part of the poem, are devoted to praise of the generosity of the patron, who is expected to reward the poet appropriately for his work. A comprehensive survey of these parts of the hymns of the Rigveda was made in the dissertation of Manilal Patel (1929), a student of Karl F. Geldner. This meritorious book describes mostly cultural, historical and ritual features. On the other hand, the familiar, and in cases crude or mischievous, tone of these pieces has been noted by several commentators of the Rigveda. It would be too simple, however, to consider that these parts faithfully reflect everyday speech.

The paper aims to explore the linguistic traits of the *dānastuti*s which contrast with the standard layer of the Ṛgvedic language at all levels: phonology, morphology, syntax, vocabulary. On the level of stylistics and poetics, it will be shown that the phraseology of the *dānastuti*s relies on sophisticated devices derived from the standard phraseology which was used otherwise for the praise of the gods and goddesses in the core of the hymns.

Keywords: Old Indo-Aryan, Ṛgveda, Atharvaveda, sociolinguistics, poetics, nominal derivation, syntax, similes

1.

The *dānastuti* is a well-identified genre of the Ancient Vedic literature, and especially of the oldest collection of hymns, the Saṁhitā of the *Ṛgveda* (henceforth ṚV).[1] The notion

[1] Gonda (1975: 170-171); see also Oldenberg (1885: 83-90) (Anhang: "Ueber Dānastuti-Hymnen und Verwandtes" = 1967: 505-512).

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was defined early in works pertaining to Indian philology and commentary on the ṚV. The term *dāna-stuti-* 'praise of the gift' occurs first in the *Bṛhaddevatā*, which attributes several stanzas of the ṚV to this genre, apparently on the basis of the lists of gifts found therein. The list of these passages overlaps widely with the one given by the *Sarvānukramaṇī*, which adds the following criterion in its preface (II.23): *rājñāṃ ca dānastutayaḥ* "And the *dānastuti*s belong to kings", i.e., not to the gods who are currently praised as bestowing riches to humans in the core of the hymns, but to the kings or princes who act as patrons of the poets. Accordingly, a *dānastuti* ought to mention the patron, and if necessary the patrons, whose gifts are praised by the poet. The name[2] of the poet is not itself an obligatory constituent of a *dānastuti*.

Following these identifications made by the Indian tradition, the standard editions of the ṚV delineate the parts of hymns, or alternatively the whole hymns, which are deemed to be *dānastuti*. These data are taken into account in the reference translations and commentaries on the text, starting with Geldner (1951). The latest full translation of the ṚV by Jamison and Brereton (2014) provides many valuable remarks about the content and the style of the *dānastuti*s, which I have used for the present study. Notwithstanding the interesting nature of the topic, there has been a single monograph about the *dānastuti*s, authored by Manilal Patel (1929), a pupil of Karl Friedrich Geldner (1852-1929). This meritorious essay contains first a comprehensive survey of the parts of the Ṛgvedic text which belong to the *dānastuti* genre, but it does not devote much space to the language and style of these pieces. Its main concern is to describe cultural, historical and ritual features: the references to the poets, their social entourage, the types of gifts which constitute the reward of the poets, the gods mentioned in these stanzas, etc.[3] On these points, there is no need to revise that most meticulous work.

2.

On the basis of several criteria, in addition to those pertaining to the Indian tradition, Patel has given a revised list[4] of *dānastuti* passages: ṚV 1.100.16-19, 1.122.7-15, 4.15.7-10, 4.32.22-24, 5.30.12-15, 5.33.8-10, 5.34.9, 5.36.6, 5.61.10, 17-19, 6.27.8, 6.45.31-33, 6.47.22-25, 6.63.9-10, 7.18.22-25, 7.32.10, 8.1.30-33, 8.2.41-42, 8.3.21-24, 8.4.19-21, 8.5.37-39, 8.6.46-48, 8.19.36-37, 8.21.17-18, 8.24.28-30, 8.25.22-24, 8.33.16-19, 8.34.16-18, 8.46.21-24, 29-33, 8.56.1-4, 8.65.10-12, 8.68.14-19, 8.70.13-15, 8.74.13-15, 10.32.9, 10.33.4-5, 10.62.8-11, 10.93.13-15, 10.100.12 – in sum, 123 stanzas in 38 hymns. To this amount should be added the so-called *dānastuti*-hymns, which are entirely devoted to the praise of the generosity of the patron(s): 1.125 (7 stanzas), 1.126 (idem), 5.18 (5 stanzas),

[2] Pinault (2014), with further references.

[3] Patel (1929): 81 pages; see the titles of the chapters which make up the bulk of the book: 3. "Die Beziehungen zwischen den Dānastuti's und den damit verbundenen Hymnen", 4. "Das historische Element in den Dānastuti's", 5. "Die Dichter der Dānastuti's", 6. "Die Dakṣiṇā der Dānastuti's", 7. "Die in den Dānastuti's genannten Gottheiten".

[4] Patel (1929: 12-28) (chapter 2: "Versuch, die Dānastuti's im ṚV zu bestimmen").

5.27 (6 stanzas), 8.55 (5 stanzas). The ṚV contains several tangent cases, which are better omitted from the corpus, because their identification as *dānastuti* is by no means warranted: 4.24 (allusion to *dānastuti*s),[5] 5.52.17 (resembling a *dānastuti*),[6] 9.58.3-4 (abbreviated *dānastuti*),[7] 9.97.52-54 (dubious),[8] 10.31.11 (pseudo-*dānastuti*, rather a legend imitating the *dānastuti* style).[9] Typically, a *dānastuti* ends a hymn, and consists of several stanzas, rarely only one, often three or four. They are most numerous in maṇḍala VIII, maybe because the structure of the *dānastuti* could conform well with the composition in *tṛca*, i.e., triads of stanzas in the same meter.[10]

3.

The whole corpus amounts, then, to 153 stanzas of the ṚV. There are stray instances of *dānastuti*s in later texts, which ought to be mentioned, even though they would not modify the overall picture. In the *Atharvaveda*,[11] the so-called *kuntāpa* hymns (ŚS 20.127-136)[12] contain a short *dānastuti* in three stanzas, ŚS 20.127.1-3: it praises the gifts of cows, buffaloes, women, jewels, steeds, etc. made by Kaurama among the Ruśama's.[13] In fact, these hymns are assigned by the later Brahmanical literature to the *gāthā nārāśaṃsyaḥ* 'stanzas which sing the praise of men' (*narāśaṃsa-*),[14] i.e., of munificent patrons of sacrifices, a genre (*nārāśaṃsī-*)[15] which succeeded the older *dānastuti*s. The Khilāni of the ṚV contain hymn III.7 (5 stanzas), which is nearly identical to ṚV 8.55 (Vālakhilya 7), a *dānastuti* issued by Praskaṇva, from the Kaṇva family, for his patron Dasyave Vṛka.[16] The following hymn (Khilāni III.8, 5 stanzas = ṚV 8.56, Vālakhilya 8) has the same author and the same addressee, and consists of a *dānastuti*, except for its last

[5] Geldner, ṚV I, 452; Jamison & Brereton (2014: 597).

[6] Geldner, ṚV II, 59 (while the Maruts act as donors); Jamison & Brereton (2014: 728).

[7] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1280).

[8] Geldner, ṚV III, 101; Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1338). About the interpretation of some problematic words, see Pinault (2008: 371-380).

[9] Geldner, ṚV III, 180; Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1425).

[10] Arnold (1905: 234) (§ 245); Gonda (1975: 189).

[11] Gonda (1975: 287, 304).

[12] Bloomfield (1899: 96-97, 101).

[13] Bloomfield (1897): 197 (translation) and 688-690 (commentary). The proper name *Rúśama-* occurs from ṚV onwards, where it refers to a protégé of Indra and to his offspring (*Ruśáma-*, plural); cf. Mayrhofer (2003: 76) (2.1.424).

[14] ṚV *nárā-śáṁsa-*, see EWAia II, 20-21. See also Horsch (1966: 412-415).

[15] Patel (1929: 9-11); Gonda (1975: 406). This belongs to the list of genres given in ŚS 15.6.4, ŚS 15.6.4, in one of the *vrātya*-hymns: *itihāsá-* 'narrative', *purāṇá-* 'story of antique events', *gāthā-* 'song', *nārāśaṁsī-* 'eulogy of heroes'. About the connection of the related term *nṛśaṁsa-* with Vrātyas, see Horsch (1966: 411) and Falk (1986: 53).

[16] Geldner ṚV II, 377; Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1138). About this proper name, see further § 16.

stanza, containing praise to the god Agni.[17] Therefore, the present inquiry can concentrate on the linguistic data found in the *dānastuti*s of the Ṛ.V.

4.

The "praise of the gift" belonged to the ritualised conventions of the reciprocal exchange between the patron and his employees, be they artisans, poets or priests, according to the notion of hospitality, going back to PIE tradition.[18] In Vedic worship the praise of the gods, accomplished by the poets, is inextricably linked with the offerings prepared by the priests for the enjoyment of the gods. Therefore, the poet celebrates the liberality of his patron, whose riches and prosperity come from the god who has been appropriately worshipped and praised. The fame of the patron is bound with his piety and his expected generosity in performing sacrifices, which are by necessity combined with prayers. The Vedic cult implies as its proper conclusion the sharing of boons and food between the participants of the sacrifice.[19] The key term for the reward of both priests and poets is *dákṣiṇā-* fem. (Ṛ.V +); over time the scope of this noun became restricted to the 'priestly gift', which ought to be given to the priests by the sponsor and beneficiary of the sacrifice, the *yájamāna-* (RV +). In fact, this term does occur in *dānastuti* hymns as referring to the gift of the patron to the poet; see, with demonstrative pronoun of near deixis reference, *iyáṃ dákṣiṇā* in Ṛ.V 1.125.5d and 6.27.8d. Besides, there are of course in the Ṛgvedic language several derivatives of the roots *dā-* 'to give' and *rā-* 'to grant, bestow' which refer to the gifts given to the poets: *rā́dhas-* nt. 'bounty, gift, favour', *rātí-* fem. 'gift, favour', *dā́na-* nt. 'giving, granting' (action noun), *dāná-* masc. 'giving', concrete 'gift'; but those lexemes are not so specific, because they are found in many instances in the Ṛ.V, and are used for the giving of the gods as well as of the patrons. A more specific term is *maghá-* nt. 'gift, reward, bounty, wealth'; it is the basis of *maghávan-*,[20] masc., which designates in the plural the 'generous ones', the patrons, otherwise named *sūrí-*, masc. They receive also the epithet *dákṣiṇāvant-* 'having (and providing) reward, remuneration'. From the diachronic point of view, *sūrí-* was truly the equivalent of *dákṣiṇāvant-*. Ved. *sūrí-* 'patron' can be traced back to a compound **su-Hrí-* 'having (and providing) good reward'. The term **Hri*, cognate with Av. *aši-* (< **árti-*) 'reward'[21] survives only in compounds, having been replaced in free use by *dákṣiṇā-*.[22] The vocabulary of the *dānastuti*s is partly inherited from Indo-Iranian: see OAv. *maga-* and *magauuan-* as matches of Ved. *maghá-* and *maghávan-*.[23] In Old

[17] Scheftelowitz (1906: 94-95); Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1139).

[18] Watkins (1995: 68-84).

[19] Oberlies (2012: 238-239, 240-250).

[20] The literal meaning would be: 'concerned with the gift', hence 'bounteous, liberal, munificent'.

[21] From the PIE root **$h_1$ar-* 'to take, acquire', cf. Gk. ἄρνυμαι, Arm. aor. *arī*, pres. *arnowm*, etc. = root 2.**$h_2$er-* in LIV², 270.

[22] See details in Pinault (2001).

[23] Cf. Schmidt (1991); EWAia II, 289.

Iranian, *magauuan-* refers to the adherents of the ritual community, the munificent sacrificers. The praising of liberality in the *dānastuti*s involves also the verbs *maṁh-* 'to be generous, munificent; to give generously', basis of the adjective *máṁhiṣṭha-*, and *deś-/diś-* 'to show', specifically 'to present something [as a gift] to someone'. For the part of the beneficiary, the favourite root is *san*^{i}*-* 'to gain', found in many verb forms, in compounds with second governing member °*sā́-*, °*sáni-* (with the thing obtained as first member), in the abstract *saní-* (35 x) masc. 'gain, conquest', in *dānastuti*s *saníbhyaḥ* (8.24.28b), *sanīnā́m* (8.5.37a), *saníṃ yaté* (5.27.4c). The latter periphrasis 'going to the gain', 'questing for gain' follows an old syntactic pattern. It is quasi synonymous with the participle of the future/desiderative present *saniṣyánt-* (7×) 'desiring to gain'.

5.

Since the exchange of gifts and the overall notion of reward was so prevalent in the Ṛgvedic ideology, one may wonder why the books of the Saṁhitā do not contain many more *dānastuti* passages belonging to the text of the hymns. The *dānastuti*s exhibit more or less precise ties with the contents and deities of the hymns to which they belong, by means of vocabulary, phrases, and even wordplay, suggesting for instance connections between the addressed god and the patron, or between the boons granted by the patron and the riches obtained by the god in some mythological venture.[24] Contrary to the superficial assumption which has prevailed for some time in Vedic scholarship, the *dānastuti*s are not appendixes added artificially and subsequently to the hymns, such that they would be interchangeable and follow monotonous patterns. On the contrary, they seem to reflect actual scenes of the environment of the poet, and are vividly adapted to the figures of the god(s) and of the patron(s). One should conceive that these concluding compositions were originally an integral part of the Ṛgvedic diction. As the process of improvisation of the hymns in performance was waning before the repetition of more or less fixed oral texts which had been memorised by the poets for the purpose of accompanying given rites, the telling of *dānastuti*s, which was bound to historical and social circumstances, started to decline. In addition, many of the *dānastuti* stanzas were left out, i.e., ceased to be memorised, at the later time when the different collections of hymns were recorded, gathered and arranged for ritual purposes. Along with the evolution and the ongoing systematisation of the different sacrifices, the references to generous lords of the past could be felt superfluous, since they had become mythical figures or had been simply forgotten – or replaced – by later generations, which had become the actual sponsors. The proposed scenario would then be linked with the internal evolution of the textual corpus leading to the ṚV as it was fixed and transmitted. This diachronic reconstruction remains of course hypothetical, and will not be pursued here.

[24] Oldenberg (1885: 84-87).

6.

In addition to the terms referring to granting, rewarding, etc. the *dānastuti*s stand out in that they contain lists of various gifts, which are more or less extensive: several items of cattle, women, gold, jewels, clothes, food. They are also remarkable for the numerals referring to fantastic numbers (thousands, hundreds, dozens) of horses or cows. One finds therein several terms referring to the colour of horses: they may be derived from the technical terminology of the breeders of the time. Simultaneously or alternatively, these adjectives can refer to the gifts as being delivered quickly (*ṛjrá-*, both 'white, bright' and 'swift'), i.e., immediately after the performance of the hymn, or early, at dawn (cf. *aruṣá-*, *aruṇá-* 'reddish'), at the early morning sacrifice, which was the time of delivery of the *dakṣiṇā* to priests and poets.[25] Concerning 'ruddy horses', see also *śóṇa-* ṚV 6×, nom. pl. masc. *śóṇāḥ* # in *dānastuti* passages 5.33.9a and 1.126.4a.[26] Among the alluring traits, one may mention some sexual and erotic vignettes, at the occasion of the gift of women to the poet: 1.126.7, 8.1.34, 8.2.42. Of course, these lively descriptions have been duly commented on. As a further relevant theme proper to the *dānastuti*s it is worth noting the mention of the rivers near which the patrons are living;[27] cf. 1.126.1, 5.52.17, 8.19.37, 8.24.30, 8.74.15. See especially the Gomatī river, whose name (*gomatī́-*) evokes the abundance of cows, in 5.61.19, 8.24.30. Besides the well-known Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sindhu, Sarasvatī, several names of rivers are hapax legomena: ṚV 8.19.37 *Prayíyu-*, *Vayíyu-*, *Suvā́stu-*. These external facts, which are certainly quite intriguing, are not the focus of the present paper.

7.

The study of the language of the *dānastuti*s should ideally survey the facts which belong to all levels of the language: phonology, inflectional and derivational morphology, syntax, stylistics, lexicon and phraseology.[28] This would exceed the limits of the present essay. I have retrieved the hapax legomena from the corpus as defined above (§§ 2-3). There are around 110 hapax legomena as far as nouns, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns and particles are concerned, not counting the proper names which have been identified. To these one may add a dozen verb forms (§ 8), plus a number of nouns which are not hapax legomena in the strict sense, but which are known by few occurrences, all belonging to *dānastuti* passages (§ 9). The exact numbers are not important *per se*, but the total amount corresponds roughly to the number of *dānastuti* stanzas. This suffices to confirm the impression that *dānastuti*s were the domain of rarities and neologisms. In the field of the vocabulary of gift and reward, I would point out derivatives from the root

[25] Oberlies (2012): 172 (connection with Uṣas 'Dawn'), 249.

[26] The adjective *śóṇa-*, which is probably of IE origin, has a secondary retroflex nasal; cf. EWAia II, 656-657.

[27] Oldenberg (1885: 88); Patel (1929: 53).

[28] If not otherwise indicated, all quotations of texts in the following are from the ṚV.

dā- 'to give': *díya-* (8.19.37e), neuter abstract meaning 'gift', in the sentence *vásur díyānām pátiḥ* # "good [is] the lord of gifts", based on the phrase *vásupati- vásūnām* (8×), *vasupátnī vásūnām* (1.164.27a); see also 1.94.13b *vásur vásūnām asi*, 8.44.24a *vásur vásupatiḥ*, 2.6.4b *vásupate vásudāvan*, 1.9.9a *vásor ... vásupatim*. *vásu- díya°* may be based on the analysis and reshaping of the abstract *vasudéya-* (3×, always in the dative); see also *vasu-dā́-* (8.99.4a), *vásudā́van-* (2×), *vásu-tti-* (2×, always in the dative). The abstract *dā́na-* is normally neuter (quoted above § 4), as expected for a stem in *-ana-* accented on the root,[29] but all three occurrences of the plural are masculine, as referring to several individualised and concrete 'gifts', i.e., 'gift-horses' of the patron, cf. nom. pl. *dā́nāḥ* # (5.27.5c, 7.18.23a), # *dā́nāsaḥ* (8.46.24a). The second compound member *°ray-*, referring certainly to 'riches', occurs in the nom. pl. *ṛdhád-rayaḥ* # (8.46.23a) 'following wealth to fulfilment',[30] epithet of ten stallions, and in a single further compound, dat. sg. *bṛhád-raye* # (1.57.1a) 'bringing lofty wealth', epithet of Indra. Both forms occur in the cadence of eight-syllable lines. Because of the acc. sg. # *bṛhad-rayím* (6.49.4b), epithet of Vāyu, it is accepted that *°ri-* is a variant of *rayí-* masc., due to the loss of a laryngeal in composition.[31] One may however consider whether *°ri-* is not a further reflex of the stem **Hri-* 'reward' (found in *sūrí-* 'patron', dat. sg. *sūráye*, nom. pl. *sūráyaḥ*), which has been lost as an independent word (see above § 4). It would have been easy to replace this obsolete term by the nearly synonymous *rayí-* as second compound member, after the model of *sanád-rayi-* (9.52.1a) 'gaining wealth', etc. As epithet of *vástrā*, nt. pl. 'clothes', one finds the compound *ádhi-bhojana-* 'having delights on top' (6.47.23b), besides a further hapax of the same structure, *ádhi-rukma-* (8.46.33c), in the feminine sg., epithet of a girl (*yóṣaṇā*), covered with ornaments. In the same sphere, compare *ádhivastrā vadhū́r iva* (8.26.13b) 'like a bride in her (wedding) dress', *śvetā́m ádhinirṇijas* (8.41.10a) 'white becloaked', epithet of the dawns, as opposed to the nights. From the noun *stár-/stṛ́-* masc. 'star' the core Ṛgvedic language features only the instr. pl. *stṛ́bhiḥ* (8×); the expected nom. pl. ought to be *stā́raḥ*, for which stands *tā́raḥ* in a *dānastuti* (8.55.2b), as a metaphor for a hundred gleaming white oxen. This form without the initial sibilant anticipates of course *tā́rakā-* fem. 'star', found in later language (ŚS +).[32] A precise craft is referred to in the *dānastuti* context by the derivatives from the root *mlā-* 'to fade, wither',[33] from which the ṚV has only stray forms: the negative compound *án-abhimlāta-varṇa-* (2.35.13c) 'whose colour never fades' (Apāṃ Napāt), the verbal adjective *mlātá-* in *cármāṇi mlātā́ni* (8.55.3b) 'tanned hides', and, related to the same technique, *carma-mnā́-* (or *°mná-*?, 8.5.38d, nom. pl. masc. *°mnā́ḥ*), probably dissimilated from **carma-mlā́-* 'hide-tanning'.[34] The compound *balbaja-stuká-* (8.55.3c) is

[29] Debrunner (1954: 185-190).

[30] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1125).

[31] Schindler's teaching transmitted by Widmer (2004: 65). Ved. *rayí-* itself can be traced back to a stem **róh$_1$-i-* or **réh$_1$-i-*.

[32] EWAia II, 755-756. It is then likely that the allomorph *tā́r°* belonged to a Vedic dialect different from the dominant language.

[33] EWAia II, 388.

[34] Scarlata (1999: 395).

used to describe the fleece of a hundred ewes: 'having tufts like the *b°* [grass]'; *bálbaja-* masc. (ŚS+) refers to the plant *Eleusine indica*, and sounds as a popular and foreign word.[35] Based on *stúkā-* fem. 'tuft, curl of hair' (in ṚV only 9.97.17c), there is also *stukāvín-* (8.74.13c) referring to hairy sheep. In addition, I shall mention a few obscure terms, either because their exact meaning is unknown or because of their strange structure: *mukṣī́jā-* (1.125.2d),[36] *yā́durī*, maybe 'copulating' (1.126.6c),[37] *yā́śu-*, maybe 'semen' (1.126.6d, gen. pl.),[38] *lalāmī́ḥ* (1.100.16a, describing a mare),[39] etc. The preceding survey aims to be representative, without pretending to be exhaustive.[40]

8.

The verbs do not present so many remarkable facts. Except for the optative, the use of moods is not restricted: besides the indicative, the subjunctive, the imperative and the injunctive are well attested. The distinction between indicative and injunctive is kept, especially in the aorist of the verb *dā* 'to give'.[41] I have noted some verbal forms which are hapax legomena or nearly so: from *kar-/kṛ-* 'to make', optative aor. *kriyāma* (10.32.9a), besides the precative *kriyāsma*, which is used elsewhere (6.23.6d).[42] The future is quite rare in general: from *stav-/stu-* 'to praise', one finds only *staviṣyase* (8.70.14b) besides once *staviṣyāmi* (1.44.5a). There are reduplicated formations: from *tur-* 'to hasten', desiderative *tū́tūrṣati* (10.100.12d); from *jaṁh-* (?), of debated meaning ('to curve upwards' or 'to move quickly'),[43] isolated intensive mid. *jáṅgahe* (1.126.6b); from *kan*^{i}- 'to find pleasure', pf. imperative **cākanantu*,[44] reflected through haplology by *cākantu* (ṚV 1.122.14d); from *mand-* 'to exhilarate', pl. pf. *amamanduḥ* (5.30.13c); from *raṇ-* 'to rejoice, take pleasure', pl. pf. *arāraṇuḥ* (8.4.21a). The verb *śrath*^{i}- 'to loosen, make slack' occurs once in the meaning of untying cows (4.32.22c), contrasting with the current usage relating to 'loosing' bonds, especially of the sins. As for aorist stems, note *agrabhīṣma* (5.30.12d, 15b, 6.47.22d), from the sigmatic aorist of *grabh*^{i}- 'to seize, grasp' (the boons given by the patron), see otherwise only *grabhīṣṭa* (2.29.5d), *agrabhīt* (1.145.2b)

[35] MW, 724a and EWAia II, 217.

[36] EWAia II, 360; Jamison (1987: 90).

[37] EWAia II, 411.

[38] EWAia II, 412.

[39] Cf. *lalā́ma-* (ŚS +) 'having a mark or spun on the forehead'; see MW, 898b and EWAia II, 475.

[40] A discussion of all retrieved items would exceed the size of the present paper.

[41] Hoffmann (1967: 228-235).

[42] About the rarity of optative forms and their distribution, see Jamison (2009a).

[43] The latter meaning is recorded in MW, 407c; for the former, cf. Schaefer (1994: 122-125). This verb is known only in this intensive form, otherwise found in ŚS and PS with preverb *ví*. The interpretation is bound with other hapax legomena in the same stanza, and especially with the name of some animal. Compare Jamison & Brereton (2014: 292): 'keeps stinking like a mongoose', which would imply a word play with the root of *gandhá-* 'smell, odour'. Further literature in EWAia I, 563.

[44] Kümmel (2000: 131, 132).

in different contexts. Further present stems are: from *dhāv-* 'to run', part. pres. mid. *dhā́vamāna-* (8.3.21d *úpeva diví dhā́vamānam*, compare *dhāvate diví* # 1.105.1b, 6.48.6b); from *ramb-* 'to hang down',[45] part. pres. mid. *avarámbamāṇa-* (8.1.34b), about the penis, otherwise only 3rd sg. mid. *rámbate* (10.86.16a, 17c); from *sā-* 'to bind', rare nasal present *ut-sinā́ti* (ṚV 1.125.2d 'to bind up'),[46] cf. otherwise *sinītháḥ* (7.84.2b). The infrequent root *gadh-* 'to squeeze, seize'[47] gives an isolated verbal adjective, attested twice with two different preverbs in the same line: *ā́-gadhitā pári-gadhitā* (1.126.6a), said of a female partner.

9.

In the area of the lexicon, one can circumscribe *dānastuti* words, which are found often or even exclusively in *dānastuti*s: *ayúta-*, a very large number (6×, 4× in *dānastuti*); *úṣṭra-* masc. 'camel' (5×, but in the plural 4×, always in *dānastuti*); *práṣṭi-* masc. 'side-horse',[48] instr. pl. in 1.100.17c, *práṣṭi-mant-* in 6.47.24a; *śatā́śva-* (8.4.19a, 10.62.8c) 'having horses by hundreds'; *vadhū́mant-* (1.126.3b, 6.27.8b, 7.18.22b, 8.68.17b)[49] 'provided with brides', i.e., 'girls'; *ánasvant-* (1.126.5d, 5.27.1a), derived from *ánas-* 'cart',[50] for carrying goods; *hiraṇín-* (5.33.8b, 6.63.9c) 'provided with gold', see further below § 11; *kṛ́śana-* 'pearl', which occurs otherwise in late hymns (1.35.4a, 10.68.11a, 10.144.2c), is the basis of derivatives describing the harness of horses, *kṛśanā́vant-* (1.126.4c), *kṛśanín-* (7.18.23b); *káśāvant-* 'furnished with a whip' (8.25.24a, 8.68.18c); *smád-abhīśú-* (8.25.24a) 'along with the reins', *sv-abhīśu-* (8.68.16b, 18c) 'well provided with reins';[51] *grāma-ṇī́-* 'leading the group' (10.62.11a, and in 10.107.5b, in a hymn to the *dakṣiṇā*); *surā́dhas-* (14×, 4× in *dānastuti*) 'having nice presents'; *smád-diṣṭi-* (4×, 3× in *dānastuti*: ṚV 6.63.9c, 7.18.23b, 10.62.10b) 'along with the allotted (gear)'. The latter pertains to the phrases involving the root *deś-/diś-* in the meaning 'to present' (see above § 4).

Several of these terms belong as expected to the technical vocabulary about horses and riding. It is striking that in the list of granted animals there appear kinds of cattle which are not in the centre of poetic invention, by means of metaphors and similes, in the core of the hymns, as are currently cows, bulls and horses: the goat, more precisely the nanny goat (fem. *ajā́-*, hapax legomenon in ṚV 8.70.15c),[52] and the camel, *úṣṭra-*,

[45] Besides the younger and better attested variant *lamb-*; cf. EWAia II, 436-437.

[46] Jamison (1987: 90) and Jamison & Brereton (2014: 290).

[47] Discussion of the meaning in EWAia I, 480-461.

[48] Sparreboom (1985: 32, 52, 135-136); EWAia II, 185-186.

[49] This adjective occurs also in the list of gifts of the *kuntāpa*-hymn, ŚS 20.127.2; it was prudishly understood by Bloomfield as referring to the females of the twenty (*dvirdaśá* 'twice ten') 'buffaloes' (actually 'camels', *úṣṭrāḥ*) which are mentioned at the beginning of the stanza: 'together with their cows' (1897: 197). In the similar lists from the ṚV, the reference to real women is unmistakable.

[50] Sparreboom (1985, 122); EWAia I, 71.

[51] Compounds with *abhīśu-* masc. (ṚV +), usually plural, 'reins', cf. Sparreboom (1985: 131); EWAia I, 93.

[52] This unique form occurs in a satirical passage, mocking a cheap gift from the patron; see Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1163). The masculine *ajá-* 'billy goat' (= Av. *aza-*, etc., inherited IE term, cf. EWAia I, 51) is well attested in the ṚV, in ritual and mythical passages.

see references above. The latter noun is well-attested later and has a match in Iranian, Av. *uštra-* masc., OP *uša-*, YAv. fem. *uštrā-*, the masculine being found also in proper names, among them in *Zaraθuštra-*.[53] This noun has no IE etymology and belongs most probably to the Indo-Iranian substratum.[54] One should not doubt that camels were part of the wealth of householders from Indo-Iranian times on, but this animal was largely absent from the elevated phraseology.[55] This single observation would confirm again, if necessary, that poetic discourse does not reflect faithfully the social and economic reality.

10.

The noun formation shows interesting peculiarities. The *dānastuti*s have a significant number of *-ka*-derivatives. This suffix has a variety of nuances (diminutive, deprecatory, pejorative, etc.) depending on the base noun,[56] but it was first of all a marker of colloquial and informal speech in the oldest stages of Indo-Aryan and Iranian. While it proliferated in the intermediate periods of the two branches, Middle Indic and Middle Iranian, its representation was restricted in genres of highly dignified literature, where it was reserved for marked circumstances, and often associated with speech by and about women.[57] The proper name *sómaka-* (4.15.9c) certainly has some antiquity,[58] since it is based on *sóma-* (with parallels in Iranian), the designation of the sacred beverage. The *dānastuti* where it occurs alludes then to *sóma-*, which is present earlier in the hymn (4.15.6b). The adjective *arbhaká-* (6×, in *dānastuti* 4.32.23b) reinforces the meaning of the adjective *árbha-* 'little, small', which is somehow diminutive itself. In the *dānastuti*, it is associated with another *-ka*-derivative: *kanīnaké* (4.32.23a),[59] dual feminine form based on the expressive derivative from *kanī́na-* masc. 'young boy, lad', cf. the masculine *kanīnakáḥ* (hapax, 10.40.9a), which is nearly synonymous with *kumāraká-* (8.30.1b, 8.69.15a), from *kumārá-*, masc.; it is actually qualified once by *arbhaká-* in a simile (8.69.15a).

The passage is effectively connected with the female sex, although one may hesitate between two women offered to the poet, or the two breasts of a single woman, which would be referred to by the 'two brown ones' (*babhrū́*), immediately before and afterwards:

[53] Literature in EWAia I, 237.

[54] Cf. Lubotsky (2001: 307, 313), minus the initial laryngeal, for which there is no cogent proof.

[55] This observation would lead to the notion that this phraseology reflects the archaic pastoral environment of IE ancestry which was anterior to the encounters of Indo-Iranian speaking people with herds of camels in Central Asia, and probably in the Oxus region.

[56] Debrunner (1954: 515-518).

[57] See in general Jamison (2009b). About the prevalence of *-ka*-forms in speech of women and about women, see Jamison (2008: 155-159).

[58] Mayrhofer (2003: 104) (2.1.588).

[59] The text has *kanīnakéva*, which is due to the special treatment of *iva* after some finals, even though the Padapāṭha has restored *kanīkakā́*; cf. Grassmann (1872-1875: 312) and Geldner: ṚV I, 462.

4.32.23: *kanīnakéva vidradhé, náve drupadé arbhaké* |
babhrū́ yā́meṣu śobhete ||
"Like two little-baby-dolls on a post – the two little ones, undressed – the two brown ones go in beauty on their travels."[60]

I would personally assume that *babhrū́* in 22a and 24c can simultaneously refer to two horses,[61] which are a commonplace gift to the poets. In some sense, this formal ambiguity condenses the usual list of boons, which includes cattle and women.

It has been duly noted that the *-ka*-derivatives tend to appear in clusters in the context of marked speech, especially in this *dānastuti* to the patron Citra, who is exalted even more highly than Indra:

8.21.18: *cítra íd rā́jā rājaká́ id anyaké, yaké sárasvatīm ánu* |
parjánya iva tatánad dhí vṛṣṭyā́, sahásram ayútā dádat |
"Citra is the only king; the other petty little ones who (live) along the Sarasvatī are only kinglets – for like Parjanya with rain, he will thunder [/stretch forth] as he gives a thousand ten thousands."[62]

The pronominal derivative *anyaká-* is recent, cf. 8.39.1 and refrain, gen. pl. *anyakéṣām* 6× in ṚV 10.133 (refrain); *rājaká-* and *yaká-* (rare example of a derivative from the relative pronoun) are hapax legomena. The sexual reference is certainly present in further passages. The *dānastuti* of Kakṣīvant, ṚV 1.126, alludes to the grant of women in the third stanza (3b *vadhū́manto dáśa ráthāsaḥ* 'ten chariots carrying brides', before a thousand and sixty cows, 3c) and the two obscene last stanzas refer first to a sexual partner compared to a mongoose (?), *kaśīkā́* (1.126.6b),[63] and second to another one who speaks about herself in crude words:

1.126.7cd: *sárvāhám asmi romaśā́, gandhā́rīṇām ivāvikā́* ||
"I am entirely hairy, like a little ewe of the Gandhāris."[64]

This derivative of *ávi-*, masc. 'sheep', fem. 'ewe', is also a hapax legomenon in the ṚV.

It happens often that the reference of these marked terms is not entirely clear at first reading:

8.33.19: *adháḥ paśyasva mópári, saṃtarā́m pādakaú hara* |
mā́ te kaśaplakaú dṛśan, strī́ hí brahmā́ babhū́vitha ||

[60] Jamison & Brereton (2014): 609 (translation) and 607 (commentary).

[61] See Jamison (2009b: 319) and implicitly Geldner: ṚV I, 462.

[62] Jamison & Brereton (2014): 1073 (translation) and 1071 (commentary).

[63] About this animal, referred to by a hapax, and identified with some hesitation (EWAia I, 330), see discussion by Jamison (1987: 89), with further references.

[64] Jamison & Brereton (2014): 292 (translation) and 291 (commentary).

> "Keep your eyes to yourself: look below, not above. Bring your two little feet closer together: do not let them see your two little "lips" [?]. For you, a brahmin, have turned into a woman!" [65]

Two terms are in the dual masculine, which could refer to two animals, as usual in *dānastuti*s, but this part of the stanza is rather a satire[66] using the codes of the *dānastuti*: *pādakaú* (8.33.19b), dual of *pādaká-* 'little foot', hapax legomenon, is of course based on *pā́da-* masc. 'foot' (ṚV +), but the second dual, from *kaśaplaká-*, masc., remains quite unclear.[67] The analysis as governing compound *kaśa-plaká-* with thematic derivative as second member (of the type *ap-savá-* 'giving water', *vājam-bhará-* 'carrying off the prize', *dhanaṃ-jayá-* 'winning the booty')[68] leads nowhere, because **plaka-* is non-existent, neither is there any root **prak-* or **plak-*.[69] From the mere formal point of view, it seems safer to analyse this word as a diminutive of **kaśapla-*,[70] consistent with the former diminutive: *kaśaplaka-* would be based on *kaśaplá-**, vulgar variant and thematic match of **kaśa-prā́-* 'filling the whip' (of the owner of the beasts and of the cart),[71] cf. *kāma-prá-* (ṚV +) 'fulfilling the desire'. See also *káśāvant-* 'provided with a whip' (2×, a *dānastuti* word, s. above § 9), the derivative based on the usual form *káśā-* fem. 'whip' (ṚV+). This would primarily refer to the hinder part of beasts of burden,[72] here diverted to a sexual application for humans. The sexual interpretation has already been entertained, independently of any etymological analysis, as pointing to female genitalia.[73] I would propose an alternative, being perfectly compatible with the formal analysis which has been claimed. The whip can be understood as a metaphor for the strong penis. The first counsel (19b) of the poet to his adversary would bear on joining the feet and the legs, so as to conceal the testicles, and the next (19c) would be to avoid presenting one's two buttocks, in the position for passive sodomy. Then the following statement ('you have become a woman') would be the logical conclusion: the mocked person has been deemed as unmanly, and thus humiliated.

[65] Jamison & Brereton (2014): 1098 (translation).

[66] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1096). I agree on this point, while interpreting the images somewhat differently.

[67] EWAia I, 329, with previous literature.

[68] Wackernagel (1905: 174-178); Debrunner (1954: 92-97).

[69] *Pace* Grassmann (1872-1875: 320), who connected Lith. *plakù*, inf. *plàkti* 'to beat, whip, thrash'; cf. ALEW: 785-786, with further literature about other IE languages.

[70] Thus Oldenberg (1912: 105).

[71] The governing compounds with *-prā́-* 'filling' as second member are well attested in the ṚV; see complete list and references in Scarlata (1999: 330-335): *antarikṣa-prā́-*, *rodasī-prā́-*, *carṣaṇi-prā́-*, *ratha-prā́-*, *kakṣya-prā́-*, etc.

[72] As assumed by Grassmann (1872-1875: 320), with the gloss 'parts struck by the whip'; see also MW, 265a.

[73] Thus, PW IV, 1183 ("verborgene Theile (des Weibes)"); and with additional arguments Jamison (2008: 159; 2011: 3-4); see also Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1096).

11.

The derivatives with possessive suffixes are used in specific ways in the *dānastuti* context. The first case in point is the adjective *hiraṇín-* (2×), 'provided with gold', 'characterised by the possession of gold', i.e., golden ornaments, harness, etc., hence 'gold-bedecked'.[74] In both occurrences, the mention of horses remains implicit. This adjective is derived according to the productive pattern of °*in-* possessive derivatives from thematic stems, cf. *vājín-* 'provided with the victory prize' (hence 'victorious, conquering'), based on *vā́ja-* 'victory prize'.[75] Compare in the same sphere of the listing of goods *sahasrín-* (49×) based on *sahásra-* 'thousand', *śatín-* (14×) based on *śatá-* 'hundred'. Note that *hiraṇín-*, epithet of horses, contrasts with *híraṇya-vant-* (13×), which has likewise basic possessive meaning: the latter is actually an epithet of the person 'provided with gold' (8.32.9b, 9.112.2d) and of the wealth (*vásu*) 'consisting in gold'. Accordingly, it is substantivised as nt. *híraṇyavat* 'wealth in gold', parallel to *gómat* 'wealth in cows', *áśvāvat* 'wealth in horses', *ráthavat* 'wealth in chariots', *vā́javat* 'wealth in victory-prizes', etc.[76] The basis of *hiraṇín-* is evidently *híraṇya-* nt. 'gold', much present in the description of riches. Hence *hiraṇín-* stems from **hiraṇyín-*, which implies a genuine phonological development, although rarely attested in Ṛgvedic language; for later examples, see *caturmāsin-* based on *caturmāsya-* (Vt. 5 ad A 5.1.94), *śākāyanín-* (ŚBM) based on PN Śākāyanya-, etc.[77]

12.

The *dānastuti*s feature *-vant*-adjectives such as *vājínī-vant-* (1.122.8c, 5.36.6a, 8.24.28c) and *vṛ́ṣaṇ-vant-* (1.100.16c, 8.68.18a), which have some traits in common.[78] Both are used as epithets of gods, when they are not used for qualifying the patrons: *vājínīvant-* is said of the Aśvins, and mostly, in the feminine, of Uṣas and of Sarasvatī; *vṛ́ṣaṇvant-* is said of Indra, of the wind, and of the chariot of the gods.

They are clearly possessive: 'provided with (rich in) prizewinning mares' (*vājínī-*) and 'provided with (accompanied by) bulls' (*vṛ́ṣaṇ-*). Both coexist with compounds in °*vasu-*: *vājínī-vant-* (17×) vs. *vājínī-vasu-* (22×), *vṛ́ṣaṇ-vant-* (5×) vs. *vṛ́ṣaṇ-vasu-* (18×); besides, this coexistence is met only with *ṡácī-vant-* (17×) vs. *ṡacī-vasu-* (3×), which are built on *ṡácī-* fem. 'power, ability'. The adjective *ṡácīvant-* 'endowed with power', mostly (13×) used in the vocative sg. *ṡácīvas* (Indra, Agni, Soma), has nearly the same meaning as *ṡácī-páti-* (16×) 'master of power' (Indra). The compound *ṡácīvasu-* 'whose good is power' is found only in the vocative: singular, addressed to Agni (8.60.12c), or dual, addressed to the Aśvins (1.139.5a, 7.74.1c), both at the end of pāda. The

[74] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 699, 862).

[75] Debrunner (1954: 328-330).

[76] Debrunner (1954: 872-873).

[77] Debrunner (1954: 328).

[78] In the hymn 1.122, the latter occurs also before (3b *vṛ́ṣaṇvān* #) the *dānastuti*, which uses *vājínīvān* # (8c).

distribution shows that the °*vasu*-compounds are used mostly, and almost exclusively, in the vocative dual °*vasū*, and always at the end of the pāda: *vṛ́ṣaṇvasū* # (17×), always addressed to the Aśvins, and *vājinīvasū* #, 19× addressed to the Aśvins, once (1.2.5b) to Vāyu and Indra.

The use of these compounds is then highly frozen and formulaic. This form stands for the expected dual °*vantā* based on the -*vant*-stem, which is never used for the adjectives in -*vant*- as epithets of possessors of wealth, but cf. *śáśvantā* (1×) for *śáśvant*- 'continual, perpetual', no more felt as possessive. By contrast, the corresponding -*vant*-derivatives are found in *dānastuti*s, for describing wealth; see also the adj. *gománt*-, *áśvāvant*-, substantivised nt. *gómat* 'possession of cows', *áśvāvat* 'wealth in horses', etc. It seems likely that the *dānastuti* language reflects in that case the basic use of the -*vant*-derivatives, while the compounds in °*vasu*- belong to a more sophisticated register. The latter reflect however a genuine process bound with the formation of possessive compounds. There has been some hesitation about the interpretation of *vṛ́ṣaṇ-vasu*-,[79] but it is safer to interpret it as a bahuvrīhi with second member *vásu*- nt., exactly parallel to *vājínī-vasu*- and *śácī-vasu*-.[80] The point of departure resided in possessive compounds of the type **vṛ́ṣaṇ-vat-vasu*- 'provided with good consisting in possession of bulls'. The first member was built according to the model of the substantivised neuters of possessive adjectives, of the *áśvāvat* type. Then, this compound underwent the ellipsis of the possessive suffix of the first member, hence *vṛ́ṣaṇ-vasu*-, according to the archaic process found in the so-called double possessive compounds.[81] The vocative sg. masc. *vṛ́ṣaṇ-vaso* was formally close to the voc. sg. masc. *vṛ́ṣaṇ-vas* of the corresponding -*vant*-stem. As a consequence, the vocative dual *vṛ́ṣaṇ-vasū*, providing a correct final with iambic rhythm, could be used instead of the form **vṛ́ṣaṇ-vantā*, and similarly for *vājinī-vasū* instead of **vajinī-vantā*. The alternative forms were excluded from the cadence of any metric type. In that case, the *dānastuti* language shows the expected and ordinary possessive forms, while the current poetic and ritual language has developed the °*vasu*-compounds for the requirements of the address to pairs of deities.

13.

In the area of syntax and phraseology, the *dānastuti*s use a very large array of devices. Some of them consist in reusing old material in a new shape. One finds a wordplay based on the phonological variation -*h*- vs. -*gh*-, thus associating the root *maṁh*- 'to be generous', the noun *maghá*- 'gift, bounty' and the adjective *mahā-/máhi-/máh*- 'great, big', etc.; see

[79] Compare 'tüchtig wie Stiere' with question mark (Grassmann 1872-1875: 1345), 'possessing or bringing great wealth' (MW, 1012c), left untranslated by Geldner (ṚV I, 481); see also Wackernagel (1905: 235), but cf. Nachträge (Debrunner 1957: 68).

[80] However, this does not imply by necessity a metaphorical interpretation of *vṛ́ṣan*-, as per Jamison and Brereton (2014), who render it consistently by 'bullish' or 'bull-like'; see 'you who have bullish goods' (: 635), 'you who bring bullish goods' (: 1083, 1084, 1169, 1183), 'o you whose goods are bull-like' (: 756, 758). Bulls in fact constituted a valued item of riches.

[81] Schindler (1986: 395-396, 398-399).

máhi-magha- hapax (1.122.8a) "having (and providing) great present(s)" and the following stanza of self-exhortation of the poet Medhyātithi, who enumerates his patrons:

8.1.30b-d: *máṁhiṣṭhāso maghónām* |
ninditā́śvaḥ prapathī́ paramajyā́ |
maghásya medh(i)yātithe ||
"They are the most bounteous of bounty among your bounteous ones: Ninditāśva, Prapathin and Paramajyā, o Medhyātithi."[82]

These associations make a reflex of some piece of Indo-Iranian phraseology, bound with alliteration and paronomasia, cf. OAv. *mazōi magāi* (Y. 46.14), *mazōi magāi.ā paiti.zānatā* (Y. 29.11).[83]

The poets who compose the *dānastuti* like to show that they have a perfect mastery of high poetry. The author, Bharadvāja Bārhaspatya, concludes his poem, after the listing of the goods granted by the patrons, with a transposition of their acts into the mythical sphere:

6.63.10d: *hatā́ rákṣāṁsi purudaṁsasā syuḥ* ||
"Slain may the demons be, o you two of many wondrous deeds." (to Indra and Agni)

This appears to be an imitation of the epic style of the 'song of victory',[84] proper to the praise of the exploits of Indra, who has slain (*han-*) the demons, and especially Vṛtra; compare also the celebration of victory by the same poet in

6.59.1cd: *hatā́so vām pitáro deváśatrava índrāgnī jī́vatho yuvám* ||
"Slain are your fathers whose rivals were the gods, but, o Indra and Agni, you are (still) alive."[85]

The same phrasing occurs in a later hymn, of Atharvanic character:

10.155.4cd: *hatā́ índrasya śátravaḥ, sárve budbudáyāśavaḥ* ||
"Slain are all the rivals of Indra – with their ejaculations ["spurts"] (dissipated) like bubbles."[86]

As a common device of these passages, the verbal adjective in the nominative plural masc. is fronted, before the mention of the enemies which have been killed. The construction with verbal adj. *hatá-* as predicate replaces the rare passive forms of *han-*, used mostly in the negative absolute phrase *ná hanyate* (3.59.2, 5.54.7, etc.).[87]

[82] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1024).

[83] See EWAia II, 286, 289, with further references.

[84] Watkins (1995: 513-515, 544).

[85] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 655).

[86] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1639).

[87] Watkins (1995: 514 n. 8).

The practice of taking over and recycling old material may lead to some odd reinterpretation. The core of Ṛgvedic poetry resorts to the frequent metaphorical phrase *sáhasas putrá-*, *sáhasaḥ sūnú-* 'son of strength', about gods. The genitive case does not express the actual descent, but the reference to the essence of the being in question. This device was reused in a *dānastuti*, while using a further kinship term: *naptī́-* (6×) 'granddaughter', fem. of *nápāt-* 'grandson', more generally 'offspring, descendant'. But the poet made a special use of this noun and of the genitival phrase: 8.2.42b *ráṇasya napt(í)yā* 'two daughters of delight' (alias Fr. *filles de joie*), referring to two loveable girls offered to the poet, or the two breasts of a single woman (cf. *payovṛ́dh-ā* 'milk-strong', 42a).[88] The innovative phrase *ráṇasya naptī́-* is some kind of learned periphrasis for the superlative of *raṇvá-*, *ráṇya-* 'delightful, pleasant'.

14.

On the other hand, it is to be admitted that the syntax of the *dānastuti*s reveals in certain cases some borderline phenomena, which point to everyday speech. See for instance the brusque introduction of direct speech inside a *dānastuti*:

10.33.4: *kuruśrávaṇam āvṛṇi*, *rā́jānaṃ trā́sadasyavam* |
máṁhiṣṭhaṃ vāghátām ṛ́ṣiḥ ||
"I choose Kuruśravaṇa of Trasadasyu's line as my king, most liberal to his cantors – I a seer."

Kuruśravaṇa was the former patron of the poet, who now wants to be protected by his son, while using the same lavish praise; see the following:

10.33.5: *yásya mā haríto ráthe*, *tisró váhanti sādhuyā́* |
stávai sahásradakṣiṇe ||
"(Saying,) 'He whose three tawny (horses) convey me on this chariot along the straight way' – I shall praise him at a (sacrifice) with a priestly gift of a thousand (cows)."[89]

In this latter stanza, note the disconnected complex sentence. See also 8.24.30, quoted below in § 16.

The āmreḍita of verb forms[90] is extremely rare in the ṚV. The single instance taken by the tradition as a true āmreḍita would be the following:

2.11.11a: *píbā-pibéd indra śūra sómam*
"Drink, drink (or: Drink over and over) the soma, o hero Indra."

[88] Cf. Jamison & Brereton (2014): 1026 (commentary), 1028 (translation).

[89] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1429).

[90] Cf. Klein (2003: 775, 792, 793).

This is unanimously analysed as *píba-pib*ā *(/pib*ă) + *íd*. One may add one further instance, against the Padapāṭha analysis (*stuhí stuhí*),[91] and precisely in a *dānastuti*:

8.1.30ab: *stuhí stuhī́d eté ghā te máṁhiṣṭhāso maghónām* |
"Praise, praise, indeed! These are for sure the most liberal ones to thee."[92]

15.

A specific area of poetic art in the Ṛgvedic diction consisted in the construction of similes. Some interesting traits of similes are precisely found in *dānastuti*s. The following passage contains a simile with monosyllabic reading of the particle *iva*, according to the so-called "Verschleifung":

10.62.9: *ná tám aśnoti káś caná*, *divá (i)va sā́nu ārábham* |
sāvarṇ(i)yásya dákṣiṇā, *ví síndhur iva paprathe* ||
"No one succeeds in taking hold of him any more than the back of heaven. The priestly gift of Sāvarṇya spreads out like a river."[93]

The sequence of 9b is based on the reshaping of a commonplace *upamāna*, by replacement of the normal (and older) particle *ná* (in the core Ṛgvedic language) by *iva*, while keeping the same number (5) of syllables; compare 1.58.2d, 9.16.7a # *divó ná sā́nu*, 10.70.5a # *divó vā sā́nu*, 5.60.3b # *diváś cit sā́nu*, 7.2.1c *div(i)yáṃ sā́nu*. The particle *ná* was normal and expected after °*as* (yielding °*o ná*), while *iva* was found after some consonants and after long final vowel °*ā* and short final vowel °*a* (yielding °*eva*).[94]

A major issue lies in the relationship between simile and comparative compound, the former being the analytic version of the latter. Two instances are found in the *dānastuti* of the same hymn to the patron Bṛbu, who is praised in a hyperbolic fashion:

6.45.31: *ádhi bṛbúḥ paṇīnā́ṃ*, *várṣiṣṭhe mūrdhán asthāt* |
urúḥ kákṣo ná gāṅg(i)yáḥ ||
"Bṛbu has stood upon the highest head of the niggards [/Paṇis];
(he) is as broad of girth as the Ganges."[95]

Geldner's translation (ṚV II, 142) does not make much sense as a simile: "Hoch erhaben über den Paṇi's steht Bṛbu wie das weite Dickicht an der Gaṅgā". It is certainly preferable to see here the body part *kákṣa*-, masc.[96] It meant originally 'armpit', 'girth',

[91] Lubotsky (1997: xii).

[92] Compare Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1024): "Praise (them)! Just praise (them)! They are the most bounteous of bounty among your bounteous ones."

[93] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1479).

[94] Cf. Pinault (1997: 356-359), with previous literature.

[95] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 831).

[96] See Jamison (1987: 81-91).

and became a slang word for 'crotch, groin'. Its derivative *kakṣyà-* (ṚV 4×) referred to some piece of horse tackle, 'related to the armpit' > 'girth'. The homophonous noun *kákṣa-* 'thicket, wood' (RV 10.28.4 +) was an independent word in synchrony, albeit perhaps ultimately related.[97] The phrasing of 6.45.31c is based on an otherwise unattested compound **urú-kakṣa* 'having broad girth', but its existence can be assumed with some safety. Compare the poet's name *śrutá-kakṣa-* (8.92.25) 'having a famous armpit', hence 'famous for his armpit' (or groin). See also *sukakṣa- āṅgirasa-* as poet of ṚV 8.92 and 8.93 according to the Anukramaṇī.[98] There are numerous compounds with *urú-* as first member, some yielding names, cf. *uru-kṣáya-*, epithet and name of the poet of ṚV 10.118, *uru-cakri-*, name of the poet of ṚV 6.69-70. Note that this interpretation requires us to surmise the position of *ná* before the *upamāna*, which is rare in the ṚV, but probably archaic.[99] The regular position of the comparative particle (*ná*, *iva*, and rarely *yathā*) is immediately after the *upamāna*, or after the first term of the *upamāna*. The instances of *ná* before the *upamāna* point to negative parallelism, which was at the source of the reinterpretation of *ná* as comparative particle. In the present case, one can restore the original simile as follows: "His girth [is] broad, not the Gaṅgā river [is] (as broad)."

The next (and penultimate) stanza of the same hymn contains a further simile, which is not formulated in the most straightforward way:

6.45.32: *yásya vāyór iva dravád, bhadrā́ rātíḥ sahasríṇī* |
sadyó dānā́ya máṁhate ||
"(He) whose propitious gift in the thousands, at a speed like the wind's, is ready for giving all at once."

The adverb *dravát* (7×) is based on the pres. part. act. *drávant-* 'running', which appears in clear possessive compounds: *dravác-cakra-* (8.34.18b) 'having speeding wheels', *dravád-aśva-* (4.43.2c) 'having speeding horses', *dravát-pāṇi-* (2×) 'having speedy forefeet'. The phrase in fact mixes alternative constructions of similes for speed, having as referent the wind, the falcon, the mind, etc.: 'speeding like x', 'with the speed of x'.[100] See the compounds: *vā́ta-raṁhas-*, *vā́ta-jūta-*; the phrases *vā́tasya pátman*, *vā́tasya dhrā́jyā*, *vā́tasya ánu dhrā́jim*; the particle simile *vā́to ná jūtáḥ*, etc. There are parallel constructions with the falcon or the bird as reference: *śyená-jūta-*, *śyená-patvan-*, *ví-patman-*; *śyenásya jávasā* (once *śyenó javásā*); *śyenó ná taktáḥ*. The text of ṚV 6.45 shows also the use of *vāyú-* in the meaning of *vā́ta-* 'wind', and not as god's name, as in most occurrences. Accordingly, the poet knows this whole repertoire and relies on the competence of his audience.

[97] EWAia I, 288, with alternative hypothesis. About the relationship of *kakṣyà-* to *kákṣa-*, see already *Nirukta* II.2 (of which I was kindly reminded by Tiziana Pontillo).

[98] Mayrhofer (2003: 146) (2.2.507).

[99] Pinault (1985: 112-116, 132-137).

[100] Pinault (1985: 138-142).

16.

The preceding observations lead us to the synchronic analysis of compounds, of which the composers of *dānastuti*s seem to have been particularly fond. See for instance 5.18.3c *árisṭo yéṣāṃ ráthaḥ* "whose (= you, the patrons) chariot speeds away (*ví … īyate*) undamaged", cf. *árisṭa-ratha-* (hapax, 10.6.3d) "having a chariot remaining undamaged", epithet of the devotee of Agni, the chariot being a metaphor for the sacrifice. The poet's name *pajrá-sāman-*, lit. 'having a solid melody', is effectively given by the text in an analytic version: *pajrā́ya sā́mne* # 8.4.17d, 8.6.47c "for Pajrasāman".[101] In the latter example, the two parts of the broken name have undergone case levelling. In further examples, the poets resort to various devices for the surface rendering of compound names: **dasyu-vṛka-* '(being) a wolf for the Dasyu(s)', **dásyu-sahas-* 'having (hence opposing) strength to the Dasyu(s)', always attested with independent first member in the dative sg.: *dásyave vṛ́kaḥ* # (8.51.2d, 8.56.2b, vocative *dasyave vṛka* # 8.55.1c, 8.56.1a), *dásyave sáhaḥ* # (1.36.18d).[102] The proper name **járat-karṇa-* 'having an old donkey', is recorded by the Anukramaṇī as *jaratkarṇa-*, poet of ṚV 10.76. This involves of course a play with *karṇá-* AV + '(long-)eared' > 'donkey' through metonymy.[103] The name is delivered to the audience through an alternative gloss, playing with the basis noun *kárṇa-* 'ear', in 10.80.3a *agnír ha tyáṃ járatаḥ kárṇam āva* "Agni helped this Jaratkarṇa". The underlying phrase was '[having] the ear of an old [donkey]'.

With these premises in mind, one may attempt to settle the bizarre case of the proper name Varo Suṣāman,[104] occurring three times in the same set of hymns, among them twice in *dānastuti*, always in the dative sg. of the second term:

8.23.28ab: *t(u)váṃ varo suṣā́m(a)ṇe, (á)gne jánāya codaya* |
"O Agni, give the impetus to generosity to Varo Suṣāman and to his people."[105]

8.24.28: *yáthā* ***varo*** *suṣā́m(a)ṇe, saníbhya ā́vaho rayím* |
v(í)yaśvebhyaḥ subhage vājinīvati ||
"Just as you conveyed wealth to Varo Suṣāman for this gain and to the Vyaśvas, o well-portioned (Dawn) rich in prizewinning mares."

8.24.29: *ā́ nār(i)yásya dákṣiṇā, v(í)yaśvāṁ etu somínaḥ* |
sthūráṃ ca rā́dhaḥ śatávat sahásravat ||
"(Even so) let the priestly gift of Nārya come to the Vyaśvas, who provide soma, as well as substantial generosity in hundreds and thousands."

8.24.30: *yát tvā pṛchā́d ījānáḥ, kuhayā́ kuhayākrte* |
eṣó ápaśrito ***való****, gomatī́m áva tiṣṭhati* ||

[101] Mayrhofer (2003: 52) (2.1.286).

[102] Mayrhofer (2003: 43) (2.1.227, 228).

[103] R. Schmitt *apud* Mayrhofer (2003: 37) (2.1.184).

[104] See Mayrhofer (2003: 103) (2.1.583) for previous literature, but without explanation.

[105] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1078). The noun for 'generosity' (*rātí-*) occurs in fact in pāda c. Note that the related noun *rā́dhas-* is the key word of the hymn 8.24, to be quoted later.

"When the sacrificer will ask you: 'Where (is he), you where-actor?' (you will answer): 'This *Vala* [= the patron Varo Suṣāman), who is set apart, is descending toward the Gomatī (River) [/pen full of cows].'"[106]

8.26.2: *yuvám varo suṣā́m(a)ṇe, mahé táne nāsat(i)yā* |
ávobhir yātho vṛṣaṇā vṛṣaṇvasū ||
"O Nāsatyas, to Varo Suṣāman for his great extension do you drive with your help, you bull who bring bullish goods."[107]

The form *varo*, otherwise not attested, has been seemingly taken by the Padapāṭha as the vocative sg. of a stem **varu-*, which was possibly deemed as a doublet of *vará-* masc. 'suitor' (?). This is theoretically possible, but this word does not have any function in the context. If it were a real nominal stem, it could have been adapted to the context, as **varáve suṣā́mne*, somehow comparable to *pajrā́ya sā́mne*, discussed above. The Padapāṭha analysis was probably supported by the superficial resemblance with the proper name *suṣā́man-*, lit. "having (and providing) a good melody" (?), which may refer to a different person, instead of featuring an abbreviation of the same name:

8.25.22c: *ráthaṃ yuktám asanāma suṣā́maṇi*
"We have gained a yoked chariot at Suṣāman's."[108]

This is not to be confused with the epithet *suṣāmán-*, occurring once in 8.60.18a *śárman ... suṣāmáṇi* "in the shelter made of good melody".[109] In any case, the univerbated form **varosuṣā́mṇe* would be wrong for the sandhi. The *dānastuti* of ṚV 8.24 obviously plays with the distant and mutual echo of the forms *varo* (28a) and *való* (30c), nom. sg. of *valá-*, through paronomasia. The underlying idea is that the patron, Varo-suṣāman, is an unlimited source of goods, as was the mythical cave, *valá-* masc. (personified as demon, lit. "restrainer", variant of *vará-*),[110] where the cows and other goods were shut in, before it was opened by Indra (alternatively by Bṛhaspati) with the help of mythical singers, the Aṅgiras. I leave aside the option of the adaptation of a foreign name. As a matter of fact, all components of this name belong to Indo-Aryan. Due to the exchange between the suffixes *-man-* and *-van-*,[111] one may consider an alternative to the interpretation involving *sā́man-* nt. 'melody'. Let us assume a name **vasu-ṣā́-van-*, doublet of **vasu-ṣā́-* 'gaining good, riches', cf. the numerous governing compounds with this second member,[112] e.g. *go-ṣā́-* (6×), *paśu-ṣā́-* (2×), *vāja-sā́-* (6×, plus 10× superlative), *śata-sā́-* (6×), *sahasra-sā́-* (14×) and *su-ṣā́-* (8.78.4). The second compound member ending in °*ā́-* is often enlarged with a further suffix of agent, cf. °*dā́-van-* besides

[106] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1080).
[107] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1082).
[108] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1082).
[109] Jamison & Brereton (2014: 1145).
[110] EWAia II, 524.
[111] Debrunner (1954: 768) (§ 609.e).
[112] Scarlata (1999: 577-585).

°*dā́*- 'giving', °*prā́van*- besides °*prā́*- 'filling', etc.[113] The variant **vasu-ṣā́man*- was further intensified with an elative prefix, meaning 'better, best, excellent', based on the adverb *váram* (ṚV 28×) 'according to the wish' and 'better, preferable': **vara-vasu-ṣā́man*-, meaning 'gaining goods better (than anyone)' or 'following one's wish, unlimited', cf. *vará-śikha*- (6.27.4-5), name of a ruler,[114] and the adjective *vara-dá*- (ŚS +) 'granting wishes'. Now, the current use of names in the vocative gave occasion for some further evolution: vernacular and allegro form *varosu*° < **varavasu*°, in **varavasuṣāman*. See the contraction *ava*- > *-o*- in the vocatives *bhagos* (< **bhagavas*), allegro *bhoḥ* (ŚBM +) which becomes later a standard particle of polite address. There existed so-called "Prākritic" forms at the Vedic stage.[115] The form *varosuṣāman*, maybe originally in the vocative, remained frozen, and no more understood, so that the stem *varosuṣā́man*- was kept, until its mistaken analysis. This example confirms that the *dānastuti* language may reflect current and low-level speech.

Conclusion

The *dānastuti* language layer was not significantly more recent than the language of the average Ṛgvedic poetry, nor less sophisticated. It was not "popular", neither was it vulgar by essence. But it was closer to the colloquial and vernacular speech of the times, and hence prone to integrate some "progressive" forms, or alternative formations from various Vedic dialects, and even from neighbouring, maybe non Indo-Aryan, languages.

Abbreviations and symbols

A – Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*; Av. – Avestan; IE – Indo-European; ṚV – Saṁhitā of the *Ṛgveda*; OAv. – Old Avestan; OP – Old Persian; PIE – Proto-Indo-European; PN – proper name; PS – *Atharvaveda, Paippalāda-Saṁhitā*; ŚBM – Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa (*Mādhyaṃdina* rec.); ŚS – *Atharvaveda*, *Śaunakīya-Saṁhitā*; Y. – *Yasna*; YAv. – Young Avestan; Vt. – Vārttika; # – limit of pāda

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[113] Debrunner (1954: 894-895) (§ 716.a).

[114] Mayrhofer (2003: 80) (2.1.440).

[115] Further data in von Hinüber (2001: 39-42).

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