

Intensive Variations

From Metrics to Reptiles to Musical Instruments

In three Books of the Ṛgveda – that is, in the 4th, 6th, and 10th *maṇḍala* –,¹ we find a small but representative group of five predominantly verbal intensives straddling the cæsura of a *triṣṭubh*, or hendecasyllabic metrical line.² Their different reduplication syllables are highlighted by the common circumstance that a semi-incisive cæsura half-separates them from the remainder of the verbal or nominal form.³

The emphasis expressed in this unconventional manner seems to reflect an intensification of the *intensive* sense of these formations, or perhaps rather, a reiteration of their *iterative* meaning.⁴

The following five trimetric verses⁵ occurring in the Song-Cycles Four (1), Six (2), and Ten (2) contain mid-word-cæsura intensives:

¹ I am very grateful to the editors of this Festschrift for having invited me to contribute an article in honor of my dear friend and respected colleague Konrad Klaus. In particular, I thank the editor Peter Wyzlic, who has so kindly given me advice and useful informations, for editing the text of my contribution with admirable care. The following is based on a paper I presented at the 12th World Sanskrit Conference, Helsinki, 13–18 July, 2003. The original version has been considerably improved and elaborated.

² This group of five reduplicated words represents a subtype of the fourth degree of mid-word cæsura, which was treated in a separate section of my unpublished Helsinki paper; see Knobl 2003: 28–34 (= Knobl 2009: 166–172).

³ One of the five forms presently to be quoted and discussed, namely *cārcaram* in the *triṣṭubh* ṚV 10.106.7a, has traditionally been deemed an adjective. But see below for the alternative – and, in my view, preferable – possibility of taking it as a substantive, or substantivized adjective.

⁴ The five forms are, in the order of the Sanskrit alphabet: *cārcaram*, *dauidyot*, *parpharat*, *mārmjatas*, and *rārapīti*. For the Ṛgvedic intensives of the roots *carⁱ*, *dyot*, *phar*, *marj*, and *rap*, see Schäfer 1994: 111, 137, 155, 167–169, and 172–173, respectively.

⁵ The Vedic *Triṣṭubh* (T) and *Jagatī* (J) are trimeters, so called because they are divided into three metrical units: (1) opening, (2) break, and (3) cadence; a cæsura regularly cuts in after the opening of either four or five syllables, sometimes even in the middle

- 4.2.19d *devásya már^vmṛjatas̄ cāru cákṣuḥ* (T)
 6.3.6b *śociśā rā^vrapīti mitrámahāḥ* (T)⁶
 6.3.8b *vidyún ná davi^vdyot s_vvébhiḥ śúṣmaiḥ* (T)
 10.106.7a *pajréva cár^vcaram̄ járam maráyu* (T)⁷
 10.106.7d *vāyúr ná par^vpharat kṣayad rayīnām* (T)⁸

Excursus on *kṣaya-ti*

The present-tense 3rd singular *kṣayad* at ṚV 10.106.7d could equally well be defined as a subjunctive of the second-class verb *kṣé-ti* from the *aniṭ*-root *kṣay/kṣi* ‘to dwell in peace’,⁹ or as an injunctive of the (re)iterative / continuative (and non-

of a word that straddles the *cæsura*; most frequently, the so-called *mid-word cæsura* falls at the seam of a compound, at least 112 times in the Ṛgveda (for the full list, intended to be complete, see Knobl 2003: 6–10 [= Knobl 2009: 144–148]). In the three subdivisions, the distribution of light (*laghú-*) and heavy (*gurú-*) syllables is more or less strictly regulated, least strictly in the first part, where the only restriction rules that the second and third syllable should not both be light; however, hundreds of exceptions to that rule can be met with in the Ṛgveda.

- ⁶ Metrically, this *triṣṭubh* is exceptionally irregular; apart from the *rare* mid-word *cæsura*, an amphibrach (*rapīti*) in the break is *very* rare, and a non-trochaic cadence – ∪ ∪ – (*mitrámahāḥ*) even more so. For the seeming lack of a *cæsura* in this line, see Oldenberg 1987, 743 f.: “Den Mangel der Cäsur durch Umstellung (mit Accentänderung) *rārapīti śociśā* zu beseitigen wäre leicht, aber auch leichtherzig, um so mehr als man nicht allzu gern das Verbum an den Pādaanfang bringen wird und überdies die metrische Struktur des Pāda 8b [= 6.3.8b] ganz ähnlich ist.” If a change of the word order were seriously to be considered, I would prefer tentatively to suggest the reading **śociśā mitrámahā rārapīti**. For the mid-word *cæsura* at the seam of the same compound, that is, of the bahuvrīhi *mitrá-mahas-* ‘he whose might is (like) that of Mitra’ (ṚV 15x, ŚS *1x), compare the two *triṣṭubh* distichs [1] 1.58.8ab *áhidrā sūno sahaso no adyá stotībhyo mitra^vmahaḥ śárma yacha* “O son of strength with the might of Mitra, today hold out unbroken shelters to us, your praisers” (J&B) and [2] 6.2.11ab = 6.14.6ab *áchā no mitra^vmaho deva devān ágne vócaḥ sumatīm ródas_vyoḥ* “O god Agni with the might of Mitra, to us you call the gods, call the grace of the two world-halves” (J&B); in both of these couplets, it is one and the same vocative, the enclitic *mitramahas*, that *stands astride* the *cæsura* – with one leg on the left, the other on the right side of it – in what may be called a metrical *enjambement*.
- ⁷ “Wie zwei *pajrá* (?) (behandelt ihr [Aśvins]? ...) alles Wandelnde, was dem Alter, dem Tod verfällt” (Oldenberg 1912: 329).
- ⁸ As was to be expected, N&H 1994: 609, 620, and 663, in their metrical notes to 4.2.19d, 6.3.6b/8b, and 10.106.7a/7d, respectively, suggested a “rare” *cæsura* after the third syllable for all five of these *triṣṭubh* verses. That undesirable rareness can be avoided, if we accept a *mid-word cæsura* instead, after the 4th (4x) or 5th (1x) syllable of each line.
- ⁹ Vedic *kṣay* < PIE **tkej* “Landbau treiben, siedeln, wohnen” (*LIV* 643–644).

causative) *-āya*-formation *kṣ-āya-ti* from the *seṭ*-root *kṣā* ‘govern; possess’.¹⁰ It would appear necessary in this context to take *kṣayat* at least in the sense of ‘possesses’ or ‘shall possess’, because the genitive *rayīṅām* needs to be governed. But the verb can also be understood independently, in the sense of ‘shall dwell in peace’. Despite the obscurity and generally alleged or accepted untranslatability of the four stanzas ṚV 10.106.5–8, at least this verse (7d) *does* have a meaning – and may have even more than one – that would seem to make satisfying sense.¹¹

The same ambiguity of the present stem *kṣaya-* has to be acknowledged for the 3rd dual *kṣayatas* in the *jagatī*-distich at ṚV 10.65.8ab *parikṣitā pitārā pūrvajāvarī ṛtāsya yonā kṣayataḥ sāmokasā* ‘[Heaven-and-Earth,] the first-born parents, dwelling all around, are ruling and shall [continue to] dwell in the bosom of truth, [and thus remain] in the same abode (*sām-okas-*).’¹²

Cf. Geldner’s translation (“Die ringsum wohnenden, erstgeborenen Eltern, die Hausgenossen herrschen im Schoße der Wahrheit”)¹³ and his note ad loc.: “*kṣayataḥ* Konj[unktiv] von *kṣi* wohnen, oder Indik[ativ] von *kṣi* ‘sie herrschen’? Im letzteren Falle sind *-kṣitā – kṣayataḥ* Wortspiel”.¹⁴

Three of the five intensives quoted above are finite verb-forms: the indicative *rārapīti* ‘He (Agni) chatters-and-prattles [with his flame (*śociṣā*)]’ at 6.3.6b, the injunctive *dauidyot* ‘He (again Agni) flickers-and-flashes [like a lightning (*vidyún ná*)]’ at 6.3.8b, and the subjunctive *parpharat* ‘will/shall swell’ (‘will/shall bag-and-bulge’) at 10.106.7d.¹⁵

¹⁰ For Vedic *kṣā*, see LIV 297–298: PIE **h₃ekʰ* “ins Auge fassen, erblicken”, note 3, and LIV 618–619: PIE **tekʰ* “zeugen, gebären”, note 1. Cf. Mayrhofer 1992–96: 1.426–427, s.v. *KṢAY*¹ “herrschen, Macht haben, besitzen”.

¹¹ For further discussion of this hymn’s “mysterious” middle part [5–8], see below, footnote 15. For the attempt at a meaningful translation of verse 7a, see above, footnote 7.

¹² Among the eight occurrences of the *bahuvrīhi sāmokas-* in the ṚV, full five are in the dual *sāmokasā*, referring to the Twin-Gods, to Indra-and-Agni, or to Heaven-and-Earth.

¹³ Cf. also J&B: “The two parents born of old, encircling, sharing the same home, rule in the womb of truth.”

¹⁴ In the latter case, these two forms constitute a *wordplay* only insofar as they belong to *different* roots. In order to produce a powerful pun, it would therefore be necessary to know the etymology of the two words involved in the paronomasia; for only then could the possibility be avoided that they are cognates.

¹⁵ According to Oldenberg (1912: 329), this intensive may have to be accented as a participle, **pārpharad* (‘swelling’). Alternatively, in case it is taken as an unaccented *verbum finitum*, the immediately following finite verb, Oldenberg points out, would then start a new clause; it should, in consequence of its initial position, carry the high-pitch tone and be pronounced as **kṣāyad*. The two verses ṚV 10.106.7a and 7d occur in the context of ṚV 10.106.5–8, of four stanzas that have never been successfully translated in their entirety, and are indeed justly considered to be incomprehensible and therefore untranslatable; cf. Geldner ad loc.: “unverständlich und unübersetzbar”. In the view of J&B (3.1569), ṚV 10.106.1–11 is “the ultimate omphalos hymn” whose “mysterious

While *mármṛjatas* ‘cleansing-and-polishing [the charming eye (*cāru cáksuḥ*) of the heavenly one (*devásya*) = of Agni]’ at 4.2.19d is a present participle, *cárcaram* at 10.106.7a has come to be regarded as an adjectival derivative from the intensive verb-stem *cárcarⁱ-*.¹⁶

The difficulty created by the traditional interpretation is, however, that intensive adjectives of this type are, as a rule, derived with *udāta*-suffix *-á-*. We should, therefore, expect an oxytone **carcará-*, similar to, and in parallel with, forms like the following four:¹⁷

- [1] -caṅkramá- at ŚS 11.9.16a khaḍḍire₂adhicaṅkramám,¹⁸
 [2] -tarturá- at ṚV 1.102.2d śraddhé kám indra carato vitarturám,¹⁹
 [3] -dardirá- at ṚV 8.100.4d ādardiró bhúvanā dardarīmi²⁰
 and at ṚV 10.78.6b ādardirāso ádrayo ná viśvāhā,²¹ or

center [5–8] deliberately defies analysis by being expressed in words that are tantalizingly close to familiar word-types, but whose code cannot be cracked – and rendered all the more frustrating by the presence of real, analyzable words in the midst of the semi-gibberish.” It is all the more surprising that in this puzzling and perplexing maze of well-nigh nonsensical poetry, the above-quoted verse, ṚV 10.106.7d *vāyúr ná par^vpharat kṣayad rayiṅām*, has an almost understandable sense; it presents even *five* “real, analyzable words”!

¹⁶ A finite verb-form of the intensive present-stem *cárcarⁱ-* occurs in the distich ṚVKh 5.9.1“b” (ed. Scheftelowitz 1905: 155) *nīṣ te jihvá carcarīti kṣuró ná bhurījor iva* ‘Out [of the mouth] your tongue [O Rebha] moves-and-moves, as a razor [that is being sharpened moves] between the two ‘arms’ [of a whetting-instrument]’. Cf. ŚS 20.127.4cd and ŚāñkhŚS 12.15.1cd *nāṣte jihvá carcarīti ...*, and Caland 1953: 335.

¹⁷ For the same regular and customary oxytony, see also several *intensive* adjectives of an analogical kind, e.g. ṚV 1.140.3a *vevijá-* ‘quivering-and-quaking’, ‘shivering-and-shaking’, ŚS 8.6.6b (cf. PS 16.79.5b) *rerihá-* ‘licking-and-lapping’, ŚS 7.38.1b (cf. PS 20.31.7b) [*abhi-*] *rurudá-* ‘yelling-and-howling [at ...]’, ŚBM 1.4.3.16 *momughá-* ‘confused-and-bewildered’, or a few further examples that are attested without accent but must have been pronounced with the same final intonation. Cf. W&D 1954: 83–84 §25aa.

¹⁸ “Her that strides upon the *khaḍḍúra*” (Whitney). The commentator (“Sāyaṇa”) interprets *khaḍḍúra-* (ŚS 1x) as a compound in the neuter – that is, as *khadūram* (the *d* without retroflexion!), which means, according to him, *dūrabhūtam kham* – and takes the locative *khaḍḍure* in the sense of *ākāṣe dūradeśe* ‘in empty space, at a faraway place’.

¹⁹ ṚV 1.102.2cd *asmé sūryācandramásābhicákṣe śraddhé kám indra carato vitarturám* “Sonne und Mond wandeln abwechselnd, uns zum Sehen und (an dich) zu glauben, Indra” (Geldner), “For us to look upon (it), to put our trust in (him), the Sun and Moon roam, traversing in regular alternation, o Indra” (J&B).

²⁰ “Als Erbrecher sprengte ich die Welten” (Geldner), “As the one who keeps breaking open (Vala), I keep breaking the worlds” (J&B).

²¹ ṚV 10.78.6ab *grāvāṇo ná sūrāyaḥ sindhumātara ādardirāso ádrayo ná viśvāhā* “Freigegeb [sūri-] wie die sindhugeborenen Preßsteine, wie die Felsen immerdar zerschmetternd” (Geldner), “Like pressing stones, the patrons [sūri-] have a river as their mother; like rocks they always keep pounding” (J&B).

[4] *-namnamá-* at ṚV 10.136.7b *pináṣṭi smā kunamnamā*.²²

The accentuation shift from the last vowel of a regular and expectable but unattested oxytone **carcará-* to that of the first syllable in the actually occurring proparoxytone *cárcara-* of ṚV 10.106.7a *pajréva cárcaram járam maráyu* could, nevertheless, convincingly be explained as reflecting a change of function. Understood in this way, the newly acquired tone would express the fact that the original adjective has secondarily been transformed into a substantive. Together with the altered function of the word, its meaning should be thought to have changed as well, shifting from an adjective ‘beweglich’ to a substantive ‘das Bewegliche’.²³

There exists a noteworthy parallel formation that happens to rhyme with *cárcara-*, and has never been considered anything other than a substantive. That parallel is the controversial *gárgara-* m.,²⁴ occurring once in the ṚV, at 8.69.9ab *áva svarāti gárgaro godhā pári saniṣvaṇat*,²⁵ and twice in the ŚS, at 4.15.12b (≈ PS 5.7.11a) *śvāsantu gárgarā apām varuṇa*,²⁶ and at 9.4.4ab (≈ PS 16.24.5ab) *pitā vatsānām pátir aghnyānām átho pitā mahatām gárgarānām*.²⁷

In an important article, Konrad Klaus was able to determine the meaning of this noun as being only one.²⁸ And he succeeded in *unifying* no fewer than three

²² ṚV 10.136.7ab *vāyúr asmā úpāmanthat pináṣṭi smā kunamnamā* “Vāyu hatte ihm [dem Muni] (den Trank) angerührt, Kunamnamā quetschte (ihn [den Trank]) aus” (Geldner), “Vāyu churned it for him; Kunamnamā kept crushing it” (J&B).

²³ Cf. Oldenberg (1912: 329), who renders *cárcaram* at 10.106.7a as a substantivized adjective: “alles Wandelnde”; for his translation of the whole verse, see above, footnote 7.

²⁴ The noun *gárgara-* may be based on an adjective **gargará-* ‘voraciously devouring (with a gurgling sound)’, in perfect parallel to *cárcara-* from **carcará-*.

²⁵ “Es ertöne die Trommel (?), laut klinge der Handschutz” (Geldner), “The Gargara(-instrument) will gurgle downward, the Godhā(-vīṇā) will keep resounding all around” (J&B). For my own translation (“The *gárgara-* shall sound down [from above], the *godhā-* shall sound-and-resound all around”) and the original meaning of the two nouns, see below.

²⁶ “Let the gurgles of the waters puff, O Varuṇa” (W&L) and “Zischen sollen die [mit] Wasser [gefüllten] Bälge, Varuṇa!” (Klaus 2000: 189).

²⁷ “Father of calves, lord of the inviolable [kine], also father of great gulfs (*gárgara-*)” (W&L) and “[Er ist] der Vater der Kälber, der Gatte der Kühe und auch der Vater großer [Butter enthaltender] Tierbälge” (Klaus 2000: 188–189).

²⁸ In his paper “Zu den Śrautasūtras”, Klaus discusses the several, seemingly different masculine nouns *gárgara-*, traditionally thought to be mere homonyms, in their respective contexts, and posits “Tierbalg” (‘animal’s hide’, fashioned into a hose, or leather bag) as the unitary meaning of ultimately one single word. This is how the author himself summarizes the result of his discussion: “*gárgara-* m. Balg, Schlauch (lautnachahmend: etwa ‘der Gurgeler’), als Behälter für Flüssigkeiten (Milch bzw. Butter: AtharvavedaS 9,4,4 usw., SatyāśāḍhaŚS 1,7,25; Wasser: AtharvavedaS 4,15,12) und als Musikinstrument (RgvedaS 8,69,9) verwendet” (Klaus 2000: 189). However, the semantic link between ‘animal’s hide’ and ‘musical instrument’ – or rather, the meaning *transition* from one to the other – remains to be clarified.

disparate meanings that had been posited in previous scholarship.²⁹ Karl Hoffmann, in an early publication of his, expressed the view that *gárgara-* m. – apparently in sharp contrast to the rhyming intensive noun *cárcara-* n. ‘the mobile one’ – is an onomatopoeic formation. If it were an intensive, the argument seems to go, it would have to be a regularly reduplicated **járgara-* (< ***jargará-* ?).³⁰

The following four Sāṃhitā passages are variants of one and the same, somewhat bawdy, Ásvamedha *mantra* which is recited by the Adhvaryu after the sacrificial horse has been slain and the *máhiṣī-*, the king’s first and principal wife, or queen-consort, has lain down at the stallion’s side (as if) to have sex with him – the stallion, that is, not the king.³¹

KSAśv 5.4.8:165.7 *āhatam gabhe paso ni jalgalīti dhānikā*
TS 7.4.19.3 *āhatam gabhé páso ni jalgulīti dhānikā*
VS 23.22cd *ā hanti gabhé páso ni galgalīti dhārakā*

MS 3.13.1:168.4 *āhatam páso ni calcalīti*

Among these four diverse versions,³² the MS variant is most at variance with the others. It diverges from them not only by the absence of the locative *gabhé* ‘at the vulva’ and of the nominative *dhānikā/dhārakā* ‘the vagina’ – and, as a result of that double absence, by the conversion of two verses with two sentences³³ into a

²⁹ See, for example, Mayrhofer 1992–96: 1.471–472 s.vv. *gárgara-*¹ “rauschender Wasserstrom, Wasserstrudel”, *gárgara-*² “ein Musikinstrument”, *gárgara-*³ “Butterfaß”. Cf. also B&R (2.696), who had already posited three different meanings (1. “Strudel, gurges”, 2. “ein best[immtes] musikalisches Instrument”, and 3. “Butterfass”), though under one and the same lemma *gárgara-*.

³⁰ Cf. Hoffmann 1952: 254–264 = Hoffmann 1975–76: 1.35–45. A reference to regularity does not sound as convincing to the sceptic ear as it would to the naively trusting one. Doubt is among the most effective motors of scientific research; even a small fraction of it will still prove potent enough to set us in vigorous motion and make us move towards having a closer, and more *intensive*, look at some of the texts that must be taken into account.

³¹ For a discussion of these verses in their context, see Jamison 1996, 65 ff.: “Sexuality and Fertility: The Ásvamedha. 1. The Dead Horse and the Queens”. One might entertain the prudish hope that what follows is a purely symbolical act, but that hope must be disappointed, for this is decidedly not the case.

³² Their diversity could be understood as the result of either misunderstanding or conscious deformation due to burlesque and tabuistic tendencies, as Hoffmann (1975–76: 2.570) explained: “Es liegt wohl in der Natur der Sache, daß Textstellen obszönen Inhalts in der vedischen Literatur schlecht überliefert sind: sie wurden entweder scherzhaft entstellt oder aus tabuistischen Gründen verundeutlicht und dann wohl auch sehr frühzeitig nicht mehr genau von den Textüberlieferern verstanden.”

³³ The three parallels are apparently made up of *two* verses: the first verse, almost identical for all three versions (KS *āhatam* and TS *āhatam* vs VS *ā hanti*), is heptasyllabic; the

single verse with a *single* sentence³⁴ –, but also, and more importantly, because its intensive *calcalīti* belongs to a root other than that of the three parallel formations. In consequence of this divergence, and in agreement with the different semantics of the intransitive verb *carⁱ/calⁱ* ‘to move (about), to patrol, to make a circuit, etc.’, the syntax of the sentence has also changed.³⁵

For their part, the first three distichs (KS, TS, VS) all seem to present variant intensive forms of the same verbal root, which in these contexts appears as *galī/gulī*.³⁶ The only unexceptionably regular third singular of the intensive is KS *jalgalīti*. On account of its root showing a different ablaut-form, the zero-grade *gulī*, TS *jalgulīti* is slightly irregular.³⁷ And what shall we say of VS *galgalīti*? Will it be necessary for us to conclude that this is an onomatopoeic formation, merely because its reduplication syllable, *gal-* instead of *jal-*, does not comply with grammatical norm?

I do not think so. If TS *jalgulīti*, in spite of its slight irregularity, is an acceptable intensive, then the nonce-form VS *galgalīti* should also be recognized as such. Although the reduplication syllable *gal-* has in fact *derailed* from the regular *jal-*, it is only by the smallest of phonological steps.³⁸ A parallel – and unimpeachably

second, partly different in wording but not in meter, represents a regular (octosyllabic) *anuṣṭubh*.

³⁴ In the context of MS 3.13.1:168.1–9, where all the other lines are more or less metrically regular – they consist of (octosyllabic) *anuṣṭubh*-verses, which occur, predominantly, in pairs (lines 1–3 and 5–8) or, just once, in a single verse (line 9) –, *āhatam páso ní calcalīti* (line 4) makes exception. *A la rigeur*, the decasyllabic line 4 could be read either as a typically catalectic *trīṣṭubh* (T¹⁰) or as a *dvīpadā virāj*, which is a meter that counts 5+5 syllables. However, in the two pentads of this prosodic scheme, the third syllable is normally light, so that the first pentad, *āhatam páso* – with its heavy *taṃ p* (*thumping* on the *tympānum*, or eardrum) – would not exactly agree with your metrist’s or metrician’s refined sense of metrical regularity.

³⁵ The scabrous meaning of this phrase appears to be: ‘Struck at [the slit], the penis totters-and-tumbles down into [it]’.

³⁶ For the *seṭ*-root *galⁱ* = *garⁱ* ‘to swallow, to devour’, which forms the 6th-class present **gir-á-ti* (AV [+]) = **gil-á-ti* (ŚB [+]), see Mayrhofer 1992–96: 1.469–470 s.v. *GAR*¹² ‘verschlingen’. And for the PIE *Urform*, see *LIV* 211–212 s.v. **g^herh₃* ‘verschlingen’.

³⁷ As root-syllable of the intensive 3rd singular, the full-grade *galī* (KS and VS) is regular, the zero-grade *gulī* (TS) irregular.

³⁸ Similar derailments (*Entgleisungen*) can be met with in the intensives of other roots, too. As intensive of the root [1] *kraṇd/kraḍ* ‘to roar’, for example, *kāni-kraṇd-ti* is well attested, in the ṚV (37 x) and the AV (ŚS 1x), whereas the regular and expected **cāni-kraṇd-ti* does not seem to occur at all in Vedic. Cf. also the intensives of the root [2] *gam/gm* ‘to go’: *ganīganti* at ṚV 6.75.3a and *gānigmatam* at ṚV 10.41.1b on the one hand and, on the other, ṚVKh *jaṅgama-*, or of the root [3] *skand/skad* ‘to skip’: *kāniṣkan* (injunctive [from **kāni-ṣkand-ti*]) at ṚV 7.103.4c *maṇḍúko yád abhivṛṣṭaḥ kāniṣkan* side by side with *cāniṣkadat* (subjunctive) at ṚV 8.69.9c *piṅgā pári cāniṣkadat*, or of the root [4] *han/ghn* ‘to strike’: the two participles *ghāniḥnat* (ṚV 9.90.6b) and

regular – intensive, such as MS *calcalīti*, could have exerted a derailing influence. Also, VS *galgalīti* itself *sounded* more ‘iterative’ and ‘intensive’ than the fully, but less completely, reduplicated TS *jalgalīti*. And indeed, onomatopoeia may have played a sportively supportive role at this – apparently latest – stage of intensive word-(de)formation.³⁹

Now, if the intensive noun ṚV *cárcara-* is based on the intensive verb **car-carīti* = MS *calcalīti*, then the noun ṚV *gárgara-* may depend on a verb-form like **gargarīti* = VS *galgalīti*, at least from the viewpoint of morphology.

Semasiology, however, is a different matter. For in order to make the dependence of *gárgara-* on **gargarīti* (= VS *galgalīti*) semantically convincing, we would have to show that the original meaning of the noun, if it is ‘leather bag’, can reasonably be connected with that of the root *garⁱ* = *galⁱ* ‘swallow, devour’.⁴⁰

The only possible connection between the two that I am able, at the moment, to imagine⁴¹ is this: Since the leather bag called *gárgara-* is made of *animal hide* (“Tierbalg” [Klaus]), could it perhaps be fabricated from the skin of a snake for

ghánighnate (ṚV 1.55.5d) as against more frequent *jañghanti*, etc. (ṚV 13x). For the four intensives just mentioned, see Schaefer 1994: 109–110 (√*krand* ‘wiehern, brüllen’), 113–114 (√*gam* ‘gehen’), 199–200 (√*skand* ‘hüpfen’), and 203–205 (√*han* ‘schlagen’). See also Schaefer 1994: 55–71 § 3.3.2 “Der zweisilbig reduplizierte Typ IV.”

³⁹ The juicy translations of TS *jalgalīti* and VS *galgalīti* by, respectively, Caland (1928: 250): “[die Vagina] verschluckt gurgelnd” and Dumont (1927: 179): “[la dhārakā (vulva)] l’engloutit, en faisant un bruit de gargouillement” seem judiciously chosen. Not only because they take the original meaning of root *galⁱ/gulⁱ* “verschlucken” (Caland) or “engloutir” (Dumont) into due account, but also because they pay tribute to the shady onomatopoeic side of these – yes, more (VS) or less (TS) derailed – intensive formations, by adding a word (“gurgelnd”) or a phrase (“en faisant un bruit de gargouillement”) apparently meant to render the ‘gurgling’ sound produced by voracious swallowing, and to render it almost audible, at that.

⁴⁰ For *gárgara-* m. in the sense of ‘eddy, whirlpool, maelstrom’ – should it ever prove to have this meaning – a detailed etymological justification is scarcely needed. Together with the Greek cognate βόρβορος ‘bog, mud, swamp, quagmire’, Vedic *gárgara-* may be supposed to derive from a common source, the agent-noun PIE **g^hórg^horh₃o-* ‘voracious swallower’. This noun is based on the root PIE **g^herh₃* ‘verschlingen’ (see LIV 211–212 s.v.), from which stems the Vedic *set*-root *galⁱ* = *garⁱ* ‘swallow’; cf. also the cognate Latin verb *vorāre* ‘devour’.

⁴¹ To be sure, Klaus (2000: 189) makes a direct connection between the meaning of the root (‘voraciously swallow [with a gurgling sound]’) and that of the agent-noun *gárgara-* ‘hose, skin bag’, which is used as a container for liquids (milk, butter, or water), by suggesting for it the onomatopoeic sense ‘the gurgler’ (“der Gurgeler”); see above, footnote 28. Cf. also J&B’s interesting translation of ṚV 8.69.9a *áva svanāti gárgaraḥ* “The Gargara(-instrument) will *gurgle* downward”, where the verb vicariously reflects the etymological meaning of the noun understood as ‘the gurgler’ and directly connected with the instrument; but see for the alternative of an *indirect connection* that I would prefer to suggest in what follows immediately.

which the voracious deglutition of its prey is characteristic? And are we not, once this possibility is envisaged, instantly reminded of the well-attested snake-name *aja-gar-á-*, an agent-noun which literally means ‘goat-swallower’,⁴² and apparently designates a huge serpent, one that would be comparable in size and strength to a python, or anaconda, or boa constrictor, for example?⁴³ As we are exclusively concerned with India – and the boa and anaconda only occur in the Americas – the goat-swallowing *ajagará-* is likely to be the python.

Excursus on *ajagará-*

That *ajagará-* may mean a giant ‘water snake’ is suggested by the substantivized adjective *apsavyā-* occurring together with our noun at KS 35.15: 61.4 in the contracted form *ajagarēṅāpsavyāṣ*.⁴⁴ These two words stand in a lengthy sequence of phrases, each of which presents an *instrumental* singular followed by a *nominative*, plural (more often) or singular (less often).

The section starts at 35.15: 61.1 with *agninā tāpo ’nvābhavat*, and in every subsequent phrase, including the one that concerns us here, the imperfect of the verbal compound *anv-ā-bhū* (‘successively come into existence’)⁴⁵ has to be supplied, either in the singular or in the plural, in necessary grammatical agreement with the number of the respective nominative.

According to the logic and overall drift of this sequence of instrumentals and nominatives, the former always denotes a specific representative of the general concept expressed by the latter. Fire, for instance, represents heat (*tāpas-* n.); Sun, the sting of heat (*téjas-* n.); Indra, the gods; Yama, the fathers; Gāyatrī, the meters;

⁴² If *aja-gará-* were transposed into Ancient Greek, the exact (etymological) homologue would be *αἰγόβορος.

⁴³ The following are all the (17) Samhitā occurrences of *ajagará-* m. “*sarpa-viśeṣa-*” (Vishvabandhu): ṚVKh 2x (2.14.2a & 3a); ŚS 3x (4.15.7b & 9c, 11.2.25a); PS 3x (1.96.4b, 5.7.6b, 16.106.5a); VSM 1x (24.38); VSK 1x (26.8.3); MS 1x (3.14.19:176.10); KS 4x (35.15:61.4, 40.5:139.7, KSAśv 3.4:159.8, 7.4:180.3); TS 2x (5.5.14.1, 7.3.14.1).

⁴⁴ For the characteristic water-connection of the Indian Tiger Python, which is called *ajgar* (= *ajagara-* ‘goat-swallower’) in Hindī and other vernaculars, see, e.g., Wikipedia (12 August 2020, at 14:09 [UTC]) s.v. Python molurus, behavior: “They are excellent swimmers and are quite at home in water. They can be wholly submerged in water for many minutes if necessary, but usually prefer to remain near the bank.” See also the accompanying photos “An Indian python swimming at the Keoladeo Ghana National Park in Bharatpur, Rajasthan” and “An Indian python swallowing an axis deer”. Cf. *gettyimages*, “Python Devours Goat Whole”!

⁴⁵ In this verbal compound, the adverb (“preverb”) *ānu-* is used in a distributive sense (*vīpsāyām*): one representative being or entity after another (Fire, Sun, etc.) performs the same verbal action of *ā-bhū* ‘come into existence’.

Tiger, the forest-dwelling animals; Falcon, the birds of prey; *Ficus religiosa*, the trees; or [the Snake whose name is] “Cross-Line” – *tiráści-rāji*- m. literally, ‘the one with lines [that run] across’ (ŚS 7x [+]) – symbolically stands for serpents in general.

In that same line of thought, our gargantuan, ‘goat-swallowing’, boa-constrictor-like, ana-conda-esque kind of snake seems to exemplify all *aquatic* animals. These are called with the generic term *apsavyà-*, which constitutes a “decasuative” formation that is derived, by means of the (‘independent’) *svarita*-suffix *-yà-* (*yaT* in Pāṇini’s Grammar, according to Aṣṭādhyāyī 5.1.2 *u-gavādibhyo yat*), from the locative plural *apsú* of the ‘water’-word *áp-/ap-* f. (nom. pl. *ápas*, acc. pl. *apás*).

Excursus on *apsavyà-*

For a list of all available *av-yà*-derivatives based on *u*-stems, of more than twenty items enumerated in connection with a newly found word, the adjective *jatrayya-* (**jatrayyà-*) ‘affecting the collarbone(s)’ derived from Vedic *jatrá-* m. (n.) ‘clavicle’⁴⁶ – this new derivative was recently discovered at PS 7.15.7b *maṇayo *yakṣmāj *jatrayyāt* “the necklace-beads [must protect you] from *yákṣma* at the collar-bones” (Griffiths 2009: 408) ≈ “die Hals[-Glas]perlen(ketten)⁴⁷ [sollen dich schützen] vor dem *yákṣma*- der Schlüsselbeinknochen” (Knobl 2007: 55)⁴⁸ –, see Knobl 2007: 35–55, especially 45–46, “Exkurs 2” (on *-av-yà-*), and 47–53, “Exkurs 3” (on *jatrá-* m./n. ‘clavicle’).⁴⁹

Because the case-form *apsú* – which also occurred as first member (*apsu-* [or *apsú-*]) in several Early Vedic compounds (e.g. *apsu-kṣít-* ṚV 1.139.11c; *apsu-já-* ṚV 8.43.28b, ŚS 10.4.23b; *apsu-jít-* ṚV 8x; *apsu-yogá-* ŚS 10.5.5c; *apsu-śád-* ṚV 3.3.5b, ŚS 12.2.4d, 16.1.13a; *apsú-samśita-* ŚS 10.5.33b) – was treated as a (secondary) *u*-stem, the new noun-stem *apsavyà-* could be derived from it.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ ṚV 8.1.12b = ŚS 14.2.47b ≈ PS 18.11.7b; ŚS 11.3.10 ≈ PS 16.53.6; VSM 25.8 = MS 3.15.7: 179.11 = KSĀśv 13.6: 188.17 = TS 5.7.16.1; ŚB 12.2.4.11, JB 2.57: 181.11, GB 1.5.3: 116.1–2, etc.

⁴⁷ For *maṇi-* m. (ṚV 1x, ŚS very frequent) in the sense of ‘bead’ (G. “Glasperle”, a doubly misleading term, because a bead is not a pearl, nor is it made of glass), see Knobl 2007: 43 “Exkurs 1” with reference to JB 3.73:1–74:1, JB 2.245:1, and PB 20.16.6. Often enough, *maṇi-* means ‘(stringed) necklace of beads’ worn as an *amulet* around the neck.

⁴⁸ The name *yákṣma-* m. (ṚV 12x, ŚS very frequent) designates the wasting disease (G. *Auszehrung* or *Schwindsucht*), otherwise called consumption or phthisis.

⁴⁹ And for *decasuative derivation*, see Knobl 2009: 125–132, “Excursus 2”, with many examples of “new noun-stems from case-forms”.

⁵⁰ According to B&R, s.v. *apsavyà* “im Wasser befindlich”, the only place where the word occurs is in Patañjali’s commentary on Kātyāyana’s *Vārttika* “6” (and 7–8) *ad* Pāṇini Aṣṭādhyāyī 6.3.1 *alug uttarapade* (Mahābhāṣya [ed. Kielhorn] III 142.8). Obviously,

More regular – and attested earlier as well as more frequently – is the *ya-* or *iya-* derivative *ápya-* ‘belonging to the water’ (ṚV 15x, ŚS *3x), because it is based, as is usual in derivation, on the weak or *oblique* stem *ap-* of the feminine ‘water’-word *áp-/ap-*.

For the meaning ‘musical instrument’, see the revealing co-occurrence of *gár-gara-* m. together with *godhá-* f. at ṚV 8.69.9ab *áva svarāti gárgaro godhá pári saniṣvaṇat* ‘The *gárgara-* shall sound down [from above], the *godhá-* shall sound-and-resound all around’. Lüders 1942 (= 1973) follows Sāyaṇa’s interpretation of the former noun as *vādyā-viśeṣa-*, and he himself intimates that also the latter is the name of a – not necessarily stringed, I may add – musical instrument.⁵¹

Since *godhá-*, as Lüders convincingly suggests, originally designated the *monitor*,⁵² a lizard of the genus *Varanus* (G. *Waran*),⁵³ whose hide would be used for covering the body or sound-box of a (possibly) stringed musical instrument,⁵⁴ we may in turn consider it likely that a *gárgara*’s skin could serve the same or a similar purpose.

Thus, the connection between the name of the musical instrument called *gárgara-* and the root this noun is based upon would not be as immediate as one may imagine – a drum, for instance, might make a ‘gurgling’ sound; cf. the meaning ‘gurgler’ suggested by Klaus (2000: 189) for *gárgara-* in the sense of ‘hose, skin bag’ filled with liquid (milk or water) making a *gurgling* sound –, but rather, the connection would be indirect, that is, mediated by the name of a giant snake, the Indian Tiger Python, *gár-gara-* ‘swallower’, also called *aja-gará-* ‘goat-swallower’, whose hide could apparently be used as cover of the instrument.

the compilers of the *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch* were not yet acquainted with the earlier *apsavyā-* attestation at KS 35.15: 61.4.

⁵¹ Cf. Lüders 1942: 23–81 = Lüders 1973: 490–548, esp. 40 ff. = 507 ff.

⁵² B&R s.v. *godhá* f. posit. or postulate, four different meanings: (1) “Sehne”, (2) “Saite”, (3) “ein am linken Arm befestigtes Leder vor dem Schlag der Bogensehne zu schützen”, and (4) “eine grosse Eidechsenart”. The last, meaning indication (4), is close enough to the Monitor lizard.

⁵³ For a description of the reptile whose scientific name is *Varanus varanus*, see, for instance, Wikipedia (29 September 2020, at 12:58 [UTC]) s.v. Monitor lizard. There, we find the interesting remark: “The skin of monitor lizards is used in making a Carnatic music percussion instrument called a *kanjira*.” The animal itself is called *go-dhá-* ‘cow-sucker’, because of its (nocturnal) ‘cow-sucking’ habit: **yád gām dháyati tasmāt sá godhá*.

⁵⁴ Or of a percussion instrument (drum, tympanum), as the one that is mentioned in the previous footnote (53).

Abbreviations

B&R = Böhtlingk, Otto, und Rudolf Roth. 1855–75. *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*. 7 Bände. St. Petersburg: Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften.

EWAia = *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen*.

Geldner = Geldner, Karl Friedrich. 1951. *Der Rig-Veda. Aus dem Sanskrit ins Deutsche übersetzt und mit einem laufenden Kommentar versehen*. 3 Bände. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

J&B = Jamison, Stephanie W., and Joel P. Brereton. 2014. *The Rigveda. The Earliest Religious Poetry of India*. 3 vols. New York: Oxford University Press.

LIV = Kümmel, Martin, und Helmut Rix. 2001. *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben. Die Wurzeln und ihre Primärstambildungen*. 2. Auflage. Wiesbaden: Reichert.

N&H = van Nooten, Barend A., and Gary B. Holland. 1994. *Rig Veda. A Metrically Restored Text with an Introduction and Notes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

PIE = Proto-Indo-European

W&D = Wackernagel, Jacob, und Albrecht Debrunner. 1954. *Altindische Grammatik*. Band II 2: *Die Nominalsuffixe*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

W&L = *Atharva-Veda Samhitā*. Translated with a critical and exegetical commentary by William Dwight Whitney, revised and brought nearer to completion and edited by Charles Rockwell Lanman. 2 vols. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1905.

ZDMG = *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*.

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