LESSON 3

PHONOLOGY

Consonants

We may posit the following (original) consonant phonemes for Young Avestan. The principal allophones are in parenthesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stops</th>
<th>Fricatives</th>
<th>Continuant</th>
<th>Nasals</th>
<th>Sibilants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- voice</td>
<td>+ voice</td>
<td>- voice</td>
<td>+ voice</td>
<td>- voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilabials:</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>(β)</td>
<td>y &lt;mu&gt;</td>
<td>m (m, rη)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labio-dentals:</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>v (?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentals:</td>
<td>θ</td>
<td>(δ)</td>
<td></td>
<td>s</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alveo-dentals:</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
<td></td>
<td>n (η)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alveolar:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(hr ?)</td>
<td>r (?)</td>
<td>ṣ (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alveo-palatals:</td>
<td>č</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td>ṣ</td>
<td>Ī (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palatals:</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>ī &lt;i&gt;</td>
<td>(ā)</td>
<td>Ī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velars:</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>η</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palato-velars:</td>
<td>(ğ)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labio-velars:</td>
<td>x'y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>η'y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharyngeal:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

β δ γ: Post-vocalic and, in some instances, post-consonantic /b d g/ were realized as β δ γ (e.g., baya- “lord, god,” darya “daughter”), except d in the vicinity of r, which was regularly realized as d (huraoxy- “well-shaped” but vadar- “(striking) weapon”).

ẖ: This letter is rarely used in Young Avestan, which has ḫh where Old Avestan has ḫ. It is always followed by ii, e.g., daxiiunqm “of the lands,” namaxiīamahi “we revere.”

x'y: This letter is used in initial position and corresponds to ḫh between vowels (except when it is from ḫ-ky-).

r, hr: /r/ had an unvoiced allophone before p and k written hr, apparently limited to syllables which bore the stress. The original *hrt became ḫ (see next). As the stress shifted, or if the consonant changed, the original r reappears: khrptam - hukraptar, aṣa- - Astuwartarst, mahrka- - amarakstī.

ŋ: /m/ has a special variant—written ŋ—after h, which was perhaps a preaspirated rather than voiceless m (cf. Eng. hum). In the manuscripts we sometimes find only ę <ŋ> for this sound, sometimes ęv <hm>. In many manuscripts the letter ę <ŋ> is not used, however, and hm is simply written ev <hm>.

η: /n/ was realized as ŋ, a nasal of uncertain nature, before consonants except ḫ and y.

ń: Before ḫ and possibly also i, n was palatalized to ṅ, but the letters śand ś <ni> are not consistently used in the manuscripts. When followed by ii some scribes write nii or nii, others nīi, e.g., maniiauš, maniiuš, or mainiiauš. When followed by i (internally) we find spellings such as anīm, anīm, or—commonly—ainim. <ni> is never (?) used alone to express palatal ń when not followed by i or ii. Examples: aniiū šīnī, aniiū šīnī, or ainiū šīnī “other,” maniiauš *ωνός, maniiuš *ονός or mainiiauš *ωνός “spirit”; nitomō šīnī or nitomō šīnī “lowest.” In this manual the forms anīia-, maniia-, nitom-, etc., will be used, but ainim (see Lesson 4).
LESSON 3

\(\gamma\): The velar nasal /\(\gamma/\) has two origins:

1. It is for \(ng\) (nk) in *pant\(\gamma^s\)-ha- “a fifth” < *pang\(\gamma^s\)-a-. In some manuscripts it is used instead of \(ng\) between vowels in words such as a\(\gamma\)\(s\)\(\varepsilon\)ta- = a\(\gamma\)\(s\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\varepsilon\)ta- “finger.”

2. In most instances \(\gamma\)h is the realization of /\(\phi/\) between vowels, e.g., man\(\gamma\)h\(\varepsilon\), gen. sing. of man\(\gamma\)-h-. This change did not usually take place when the \(\gamma\) was followed by i or —less regularly—u: e.g., ahi “you are,” vo\(\gamma\)h “good” neut. sing./plur., but va\(\gamma\)h\(\varepsilon\)h masc. sing.

When followed by r, the standard editions write only \(\eta\), e.g., a\(\gamma\)r\(\varepsilon\)-, h\(\gamma\)r\(\varepsilon\)- “a thousand,” Fragras\(\gamma\)-ian-, name of a villain, c\(\gamma\)\(\gamma\)\(r\)\(\gamma\)\(h\)\(\varepsilon\)k- “grazing, following the pastures,” etc. In some manuscripts, however, the spellings a\(\gamma\)\(r\)\(h\)-r\(\varepsilon\)-, h\(\gamma\)r\(\varepsilon\)h\(\varepsilon\)- are also common.

\(\eta\) is only used between vowels and is always followed by h (\(\gamma\)h). The actual spelling alternates between \(\gamma\)h, i\(\gamma\)h, and i\(\gamma\)h, e.g., a\(\gamma\)\(h\)e, ai\(\gamma\)he or ai\(\gamma\)he, or even a\(\gamma\)h\(e\). In this introduction only the spelling \(\gamma\)h is used.

\(\eta\)’ is only used between vowels and always followed by h (\(\gamma\)h’). It corresponds to x’ in initial position. Instead of ﬂh, the scribes frequently wrote \(\eta\)h or just \(\gamma\)h, e.g., a\(\gamma\)h\(e\), a\(\gamma\)h\(e\), or a\(\gamma\)h (thus a\(\gamma\)h can be for a\(\gamma\)h or a\(\gamma\)h’).

\(\mathbf{\check{s}}, \check{\check{s}}, \check{\mathfrak{s}}\): The three sibilants /\(\check{s}/\), /\(\check{\check{s}}/\), /\(\check{\mathfrak{s}}/\) had merged into one sound [\(\check{s}\)] by the time of our earliest manuscripts, but must originally have been separate phonemes. /\(\check{s}/\) must have been the regular alveolar sibilant, e.g. gao\(\mathfrak{s}\)\(\varepsilon\)-, “sound” and /\(\check{\mathfrak{s}}/\) a palatal(ized) sibilant (< *\(\check{\varepsilon}\)j, e.g., \(\check{s}\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\varepsilon\)- “to go,” cf. Olnd. \(\check{s}\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\varepsilon\)-)

The distinctive features of /\(\check{s}/\) (< *\(\check{\varepsilon}\)-rt with stress on the preceding vowel) are uncertain. In the table above it is suggested that it may have been an alveolar sibilant, but it must have had some additional feature, perhaps rhotacization (a sound found in some modern Iranian dialects), but it may have been a retroflex affricate or lateral and later a retroflex sibilant, e.g., ma\(\mathfrak{s}\)h\(\varepsilon\)-, “man, mortal” (cf. Olnd. m\(\varepsilon\)h\(\varepsilon\)-). It may be noted that in the Sasanian (learned) pronunciation there was no distinction between this sound and the sound resulting from Avestan rt and r\(\varepsilon\); they were both written hl and presumably pronounced hl, as well, e.g., m\(\varepsilon\)h\(\varepsilon\), name of the first human, “Adam” < ma\(\mathfrak{s}\)h\(\varepsilon\)- and a\(\varepsilon\)l\(\varepsilon\)h “Orderly” < a\(\varepsilon\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\varepsilon\)u\(\varepsilon\)- and pu\(h\)l “bridge, punishment”< \(\varepsilon\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\varepsilon\)h\(\varepsilon\)-.

In the extant manuscripts there is a tendency to write \(\check{s}\) everywhere before i, e.g., ma\(\mathfrak{s}\)h\(\varepsilon\)-, and the distribution of \(\check{s}\) and \(\check{\mathfrak{s}}\) varies from a\(\gamma\)\(s\)\(\varepsilon\)i\(\varepsilon\)r\(\varepsilon\) from scribe to scribe: some commonly use \(\check{s}\) as the normal (default) spelling, others \(\check{\mathfrak{s}}\). When Geldner made his edition of the Avesta, he based himself primarily upon manuscripts where the default spelling was \(\check{s}\), not \(\check{\mathfrak{s}}\), which means that also in his critical apparatus, when a spelling is quoted from several manuscripts, \(\check{s}\) means \(\check{\mathfrak{s}}\) or \(\check{\mathfrak{s}}\).

\(\mathfrak{f}\): The letter \(\mathfrak{f}\) probably represented an unreleased (sometimes called “implosive”) dental stop and was an allophone of /\(\mathfrak{f}/\) / found in final and pre-consonantal position, examples: jan\(\mathfrak{a}\) “he killed,” tka\(\mathfrak{\varepsilon}\)h\(\varepsilon\)- “guidance,” tka\(\mathfrak{\varepsilon}\)h\(\varepsilon\)- “harm.” Between vowel and consonant it alternates with \(\check{s}\): a\(\gamma\)\(k\)- a\(\gamma\)\(k\)- “coat.”

MORPHOLOGY

General remarks

The following survey of morphological categories is not meant to be mastered completely right away, but be used as reference.

The Avestan systems of declensions and conjugations are still of the Indo-Iranian type, involving a variety of stems, genders, numbers, cases, etc. Because of the limited material the forms are not as well known as for Vedic, and the student should keep in mind that some declensions and conjugations are known from only a few forms, sometimes only a single form. In unfavorable instances the manuscript tradition may also be so poor that the correct forms cannot be determined.

14 September 7, 2003
Morphological (inflectional) categories

Groups of words that take the same kind of forms and endings are grouped into separate “inflectional categories.” There are two main subgroups: those words which have forms and endings indicating “time” (past, present, future) and those that do not. “Time-words” are called “verbs.”

The verbs are classified according to the way they function in a sentence. “Transitive” verbs are those that can take a direct object (he kills the dragon, I see you, etc.), while “intransitive” verbs are the others. Intransitive verbs include verbs of state (I live), verbs of motion (I walk), mental processes (I think), and others. Intransitive verbs can usually only take “inner” objects (I live a life, I walk a walk, I think a thought). When transitive verbs are used like intransitive ones they are called “passive” (I am killed, he is seen).

The second subgroup is in turn divided into several subgroups. One of these subgroups contains words that distinguish between different “cases,” that is, forms indicating the function of the word in the sentence (subject, direct object, indirect object, possessor, and other), and those that do not. Words that distinguish cases are nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and numerals. Nouns can be defined as not being adjectives, pronouns, or numerals.

Adjectives are distinguished from nouns by taking different forms depending on the gender of the noun they qualify.

Pronouns are distinguished by “deixis,” that is, references to place or time relative to the position of the speaker (I, you, he/she/it/that; here, there, yonder).

Numerals are a special kind of nouns, adjectives, or adverbs used for counting objects (cardinals); indicating position in a series (ordinals); denoting fractions (one-third), number of occurrences (once, twice); etc.

The last subgroup contain various types of words that do not change forms or take different endings depending on their function in the sentence. This subgroup contains “adverbs,” “prepositions” and “postpositions,” “conjunctions,” and various “particles.”

These categories will be described in greater detail later on. Following is a brief survey for reference. Students without a background in Classical languages, Sanskrit, or linguistics would probably benefit from reading a traditional textbook on theoretical linguistics. Modern linguistic theory and models of description are not very useful for learning Avestan, however.

Nouns

Nouns (substantives) can be “proper nouns,” e.g., Zarathuštra-, Vištāspa-, or “common nouns” (“appellatives”), e.g., mašiia- “man, human being,” puθra- “son,” gāri- “mountain,” maniu- “spirit.”

The part of the noun (or adjective) that remains when the ending is removed is referred to as the “stem” and is marked by a hyphen, as in the examples just cited.

Decensions

Nouns and adjectives are classified as consonantic and vocalic stems, which constitute the vocalic and consonant “declensions,” or groups of nouns and adjectives characterized by the same or similar endings.

Consonant-decension nouns have a consonant before the ending, most commonly n, r, h, but also p, t, nḫ, ḫ, etc.

Vowel-decension nouns have a vowel before the ending: a, ā, i, ī, u, ū. Depending on the vowel before the ending these nouns are classified as a-stems, ā-stems, i-stems, etc. This vowel is also referred to as the “stem vowel.”

Some stems behave partly as vowel-stems, partly as consonant-stems, e.g., the “diphthong” stems in aē-, ao- and the uu-stems.

The stem vowel a of the a-decension is often referred to as the “thematic vowel” and the a-decension as the “thematic decension,” as opposed to “athematic” decensions.
The same terminology is used for verbs.

Gender
Nouns, adjectives, and pronouns can be of three genders: masculine (masc., m.), feminine (fem., f.), or neuter (neut., n.).

The a-declension contains masculine and neuter nouns and adjectives.
The ā-declensions contains mostly feminine nouns and the feminine forms of a-declension adjectives.
There are a few masculine ā-stems, among them the very common noun mazdā-. Others are rābāštā- “charioteer” and pāṇtā- “road, way.”
The ā-declension contains masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns and adjectives. Nouns in ti- are usually feminine.

The aē-declension contains only masculine nouns, notably kauuaē- “kauui” and haxaē- “companion.”
The u- (and uu-) declension contains masculine and neuter nouns and adjectives.
The ao-declension contains a few masculine nouns (bāzaō- “arm”) and adjectives (e.g., wīra.bāzaō- “having a strong arm”) and a few feminine nouns, notably the common dafhao- “land” and nasao- “carrion, the demoness of carrion.”
The ā-declension has only feminine nouns and adjectives in Young Avestan and the āu-declension only feminine nouns. Exceptions are a few adjectival compounds with so-called root nouns as second member.

Number and case
There are three numbers: singular, dual, plural, and eight cases: nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative, instrumental, locative.

The vocative is different from the nominative only in the singular and only in some declensions.
Feminine and neuter nouns have the same form for the nominative and accusative plural.
Neuter nouns always have the same form for the nominative, vocative, and accusative in the singular, dual, and plural.
In the plural, dative = ablative; in the dual, dative = ablative = instrumental.

Articles
There is no definite or indefinite article.

Nominate and vocative
We start by giving some nominative and vocative forms of nouns and adjectives. Endings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a-decl.</th>
<th></th>
<th>ā-decl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sing.</td>
<td>-ō, -as°</td>
<td>-am</td>
<td>-ā, -ās°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nom.</td>
<td>-ō</td>
<td>-am</td>
<td>-ā, -ās°</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voc.</td>
<td>-ā</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plur.</td>
<td>-ā</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-ā, -ās°</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
The vocative singular of a-stems is the bare stem form.
The expression Amāṣā- Sāpaṭa- “Life-giving Immortal” often has the nom.-voc. plur. Amāṣā Sāpaṭa in the manuscripts.
Paradigms of haoma- m. “haoma,” haņiamaṇa- n. “assembly,” mazdā- m. (in Ahura- Mazdā-, which has no plural forms), pāṇtā- m. “road,” and daēnā- f. (see Vocabulary). Neuter nouns and inanimate nouns in general do not have vocative forms.
LESSON 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a-decl.</th>
<th>n.</th>
<th>ā-decl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>n.</td>
<td>m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nom.</td>
<td>haomō, haomasō</td>
<td>hanjamanom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voc.</td>
<td>haoma</td>
<td>mazdā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plur.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nom.-voc.</td>
<td>haoma</td>
<td>hanjamana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The forms marked with a final ō are found before -ca “and” and -cit “even”: haomasca “and the haoma,” daēnāscit “even the daēnās.”

Nominative plurals in -ānō

Sometimes masc. a-stems take the ending -āgnō (-āghanō) in the nom. plural. This ending corresponds to OPers. -āha and Skt. -āsah. There is no difference in meaning from the regular form.

VERBS

General remarks

The Young Avestan verb, is—like other old Indo-European verbal systems—a multidimensional system containing the categories “tense,” “mood,” and “voice,” in addition to “number,” “person,” and “gender.”

The part of the verb that remains when the personal endings are removed, is referred to as the “stem” and is marked by a hyphen, e.g., šauva- “go,” hiṣta- “stand,” bāndaiia- “bind.” The part of the stem that remains when the prefixes and suffixes that form the stem are removed, is called the “root,” e.g., šau-, īstā-, bānd- (see Lesson 11).

Conjugations

Like nouns, verb stems are classified as vocalic or consonantic, also referred to as “thematic” and “athematic” conjugations. Thematic verbs are verbs with stems ending in -a, while athematic verbs have stems ending in (original) consonants or semi-vowels (i, u). In practice, stems in long ā and diphthongs are athematic. Thematic verbs can also be described as “regular” or “weak,” while athematic ones are “irregular” or “strong.”

The endings are basically the same in the two classes, but in the athematic conjugation frequent changes take place as a result of the various historical developments of the consonant groups resulting from the combinations of final consonant of the stem plus the initial consonant of the ending.

Some forms of the verb function as adjectives (“participles”) or nouns (“infinitives”).

Tenses

The tenses are present: “he does, he is doing”—imperfect: “he did, he was doing”—aorist: “he did, he has done”—perfect: “he has (always) seen.”

In Young Avestan the imperfect tense is mostly expressed by the inherited present injunctive forms, more seldom the imperfect forms (= injunctive + augment). In this manual this form will be called the “imperfect-injunctive.”

The use of the aorist indicative (see below) is limited in Young Avestan, but some modal forms are relatively common.

The perfect is used in old Young Avestan in its old functions. Its modal forms also have important uses. A “periphrastic” perfect formed by the perfect participle in -ta plus the verb “to be” (similar to German Ich bin gewesen and French je suis allé) is seen occasionally.
LESSON 3

Moods
There are five moods: indicative: “he does, he is doing”—subjunctive: “(that) he (should) do”—imperative: “do!”—optative: “may he do, he should do, (I wish) he would do”—and (present, aorist) injunctive: “(do not) do!”

Voices, passive
There are two “voices”: active and middle: act. “he does (for others)”—mid. “he does for himself.”
The passive (“it is done, he is killed”) can be expressed by middle forms or by a special present stem in -ita-.

On terminology
Students without a background in Latin, Greek, or Sanskrit are likely to be confused by the many meanings of terms such as “injunctive,” “active,” and “middle.” It should be carefully observed that these terms sometimes refer to forms, sometimes to functions or meanings. Thus verbs with “middle” endings can have “active,” “passive,” or “middle” meaning. The normal function of the “injunctive” of the present stem is “imperfect,” while “imperfect” (augmented) forms are very rare in Avestan.

The imperative
As with the nouns, we shall start with the simplest forms of the verbs: those of the 2nd person singular and plural imperative active.

The following table shows the endings of the thematic verbs with the imperative active forms of jasa- “to come,” bandaita- “to bind,” and dāiia- “to give, grant.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Endings</th>
<th>Examples:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sing. 2nd pers.</td>
<td>-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plur. 2nd pers.</td>
<td>-ata</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the imp. sing. of thematic stems ends in -a, which is, like the voc. sing. of a-stem nouns, the bare stem.

“To be”
The common verb “to be” has the following forms in the present indicative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present indicative</th>
<th>Examples:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sing. 1</td>
<td>ahmi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ahi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>asti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plur. 1</td>
<td>mahi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>stā</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>hoṇti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
The 2 plur. stā is not found in Young Avestan, only Old Avestan.
The verb “be” is used with the dative to express possession: nōit mē asti “I have no ...”
LESSON 3

SYNTAX

Uses of the nominative
The main functions of the nominative are the following:

1. Subject
It is the case of the subject of a verb: intransitive (e.g., “I am, she goes”), transitive (e.g., “the men kill enemies”), or passive (e.g., “the women are abducted”).

*azəm mazdaiasnə aham “I am a Mazdayasnian”
*Ahurō Mazda bayō asti “Ahura Mazda is a god”.
*Ardūuī Sura Anāhita sīra asti “Arduūī Sura Anāhita is beautiful”

2. Predicate noun or adjective
It is the case of the predicate noun or adjective of the verb “to be” and some other verbs (e.g., “to seem”):

Examples with “to be”:
*azəm mazdaiasnə aham “I am a Mazdayasnian”
*Ahurō Mazda bayō asti “Ahura Mazda is a god”.
*azəm aham Zarathustrō tum Jāṁaspō ahi “I am Zarathustra, you are Djamaspā.”
*vaēm mazdaiasnə mahi “we are Mazdayasnians.”
*yuēm daēuīa stī dūsāstra “you are demons, with bad command”

ime hāntī paōrīlo. dāta paōrīlo. fraō̄śarāsta “these are those first brought forth, first fashioned forth.”
*yōi hāntī haōma surā spōnta “... which are the life-giving haomas, rich in life-giving strength.”

The verb “to be” is sometimes omitted. Clauses with a subject and predicate noun or adjective but without a verb are called “nominal clauses” or “noun clauses.” In Avestan, relative clauses that characterize nouns are frequently noun clauses:

*azəm yō Ahurō Mazda tum yō Zarathustrō “I who (am) Ahura Mazda, you who (are) Zarathustra.”

Note also the following construction, which is quite common in Avestan (see Lesson 11):

*yā āpō baēšarīā “the healing waters” (lit. which (are) the healing waters)
LESSON 3

3. Appositions to a noun in the nominative

Appositions to a noun in the nominative are themselves in the nominative:

*azm ahmi Ahuró Mazdá manlius spáništô*  
“I am Ahura Mazda, the most Life-giving Spirit.”

Use of the vocative

The vocative is used only when addressing someone and is often used together with an imperative.

*azm ahmi Zarathustra Haomô duraôštô*  
“I am, O Zarathustra, Haoma the death-averting.” (Y.9.2)

*tum ahi Ahura Mazda yazató mazištô*  
“You are, O Ahura Mazda, the greatest god.”

*vasô.xšaôštô ahi Haoma*  
“you are in total command, O Haoma.” (Y.9.25)

Use of the imperative

The imperative is used to express a command or an exhortation, as in English, “come!,” “stop!.” The person the command or exhortation is addressed to is frequently in the vocative.

Examples:

*srihe Anãhitê mošu jasa* “O beautiful Anãhitê, come quickly!”

*taš nó dâištô yazata mazištaca vahištaca*  
“Give (grant) that to us, O gods, both greatest and best!” [Note: taš here is acc. as direct object = nom.]

Number

When a subject consists of several nouns (not a person) the verb usually agrees with the nearest noun.

Examples:

*aētaš asti yasnacca vahmasca* “this is the sacrifice and hymn.”

Repetition of verbs

Instead of repeating a verb in the sentence, like in English, Avestan prefers repeating nouns, pronouns, and preverbs, example:

*imaš baya dâištô imas vispe yazata*  
“Give this, O gods, (give) this, O all beings worthy of sacrifice!” [Note: imas is acc. direct object = nom.]

EXERCISES 3

1. Write in transcription and Avestan script the nom. and voc. sing. (only “living” things) and plur. forms (not proper names!) of the following nouns and adjectives:

*baya- mazištâ-, yazata- vahištâ-, maštia- acûštâ-, daênâ- spântâ-, xšaôrâ- vərəvərəgəstôma-, aksa- yânsa-; Pâuruua- nauvûza vîfrô tôma-, Anûhitô- vahmištâ-.*

2. Write in transcription and Avestan script the sing. and plur. imperative forms of the following verbs:

*xâra-, yâsa-, taca-, hištâ-, bandâitia-, xâfša-.
3. Transcribe and translate into English:

4. Translate into Avestan:

1. Rise, O man! Rise, O men!
2. Sleep long, O man! Sleep long, O men!
3. Illnesses, run away!
4. Demons, get lost!
5. Destructions, run away!
6. Foes, run away!
7. Come to our help, O Miōra!
8. I am on Ahura Mazda’s side.
9. Sraosha is a well-shaped deity.
10. Aṣi is the greatest and the best.
11. The daēuas are the worst.
12. They have bad power.
13. The gods have good power.
14. We are men.
LESSON 3

VOCABULARY 3

Note: nouns ending in -a- are masculine unless marked n. (neuter), and nouns ending in -ā- are feminine, with the few known exceptions.

acīṣta-: superlative of aka-: most evil
aśoitoia-: who cannot be deceived
ahurašāta-: established (put in its proper place) by Ahura Mazda
aiž.draoxōa-: who may be deceived, cheated
aka-: bad, evil
amaraōti-: absence of destruction
aniiia-: other
angūšta-, aṣpūtia-: finger
apa.duura-: to run away
apa.nasiiia-: to get lost
Astuua.ara-: lie through whom Order will have bones (= be permanent), name of the last Revitalizer (saošiianat), son of Zarathustra
aṣaiaia: in Orderly fashion, according to the ritual Order
akā- = aška-: coat
āpō: waters; nom. plur. of āp- f.
ātarā: O fire; voc. of ātar-
bašaaz- n.: healing, medicine
bašaaziiia-: healing, medicinal
bašaaziiia.tama-: most healing; superlative of bašaaziiia-
bašaaziiia-
baya-: lord, god
baṇḍaiia: < ṃhānd: to bind, tie
bažao- m.: arm
-ca: and
-ca ... -ca: both ... and
daraγam: for a long (time)
daiaia: to give, grant
duγšār- f.: daughter
duššašra-: having with bad, evil command
gairi- m.: mountain
gaoša-: ear
hakaia- m.: companion, friend
hazara- n.: a thousand
hišta- < višta: act to stand (up), take up position; mid.: to stand
hukarapta-: well-shaped
huraōa-: well-shaped
hurāia: having with good chariots
huraspa-: having with good horses
huxšašra-: having with good power
imāt: neut. nom.-acc. sing. < imaim: masc. nom.-acc. plur. < imam
kaτ: nom. sing. n. of ka- how, what
ekauuaē- m.: kauui; mythical poet-priests, some of them were Zarathustra's competitors
karap-: kahap-: f.: form, shape
kō, nom. sing. m. of ka-: who? what? how?
mahrka-: destruction
maniaiuia-: fem. of maniaua-
mazīšta-, superlative of mazānt-: great
niτama-: lowest
nō: to/for/of us
nōiit: not
paitiiaia-: adversary
paŋiia-ha- n.: a fifth
paorioi.dāta-: first established
parat- m.: ford, bridge
puira-: son
šauua-: to go
uγra.bázao-: strong-armed
uruuarā-: plant
usahišta- < višta: to get up, rise
uzdāta-: past participle of uzdā-: set up
vadar- n.: (striking) weapon
vahma-: hymn
vahmiia-: worthy of hymns
vasi.šašra-: having with command at will, in complete command
varaŋrajaia: most obstruction-smashing, most victorious
vispe nom. plur. of vispa-: every, all
Vištāspā: proper name, last of the great kauuis who fought the powers of evil
vō: to/for/of you (all)
x′aiaiaiaia < √x′ap: to go to sleep
yasika-: illness
yasna- n.: sacrifice, ritual
yesniia-: worthy of sacrifice
yōi, plur. nom. masc. of ya-: who
zarathing: nom. sing. of zarathing: son of Zarathustra, (who is) in the tradition of Zarathustra