LESSON 5

THE SCRIPT AND THE TEXT

Punctuation

In the manuscripts every word is separated by a point (period). The point is also regularly used to separate members of compounds (see Lesson 6), as well as to mark off preverbs and prefixes (not consistently), enclitic pronouns, sometimes even endings. The enclitic particles -ca and -cit, however, are not separated from the words they are attached to.

It has become tradition to transcribe this point by a period whenever it does not simply mark the end of a word. It is also sometimes used with enclitic pronouns (yā,mē, etc.). This is wrong, however, as the long ē of the enclitic pronouns shows they were considered by the scribes as separate words. If they were genuinely enclitic, they would—by the rules (see below)—have final -e, not -ē, etc.

PHONOLOGY

Sound system. The ā

The phonemic status of Avestan ā is problematic. It is found mainly in the following phonetic contexts:
1. as the regular allophone of a before nasals and before uu followed by i or ī. Examples: hátā “they are” (but sauūaŋt “they curse”), manīaui-, feminine of manīaua “belonging to the world of thought,” sauūištɑ- “most rich in life-giving strength” (< sauū-), rauui- “fast,” see below;
2. as the common anaptyctic vowel, see below.

Final syllables

Not all vowels, diphthongs, or consonants are found in final position.

Final vowels in monosyllables are always written long (except short -e in some late manuscripts), no matter their origins, e.g., mē “(to, for) me,” zi “for, namely,” nō “(to, for) us.”

The only diphthong found in final position is ōi, and even this is rare, e.g., yōi “who (plur.).”

In polysyllabic words ā, ī, ū, ē and diphthongs are not used at the end of words in genuine Young Avestan, only in imitation of Old Avestan.

Conspicuous:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finals:</th>
<th>Monosyllables:</th>
<th>Polysyllables:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short</td>
<td>ā, ī, ū, ō, ā, q, ē, ōi, āi, āu</td>
<td>ā, ī, ū, ē</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long</td>
<td>ā, ī, ū, ē</td>
<td>ā, ō, q, ō</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the exceptions are: Arāduui Sura (possibly influenced by Pahl. Ardwisūr).

The diphthongs ae and ao become -(ii)e and -uuō in final position. The diphthongs themselves reappear before -ca “and” and -cit “even”: -āēca and -āoca, e.g., tē “they,” taēcīt “even they.”

Note that vocative forms never take the enclitics -ca and -cit, and so the original diphthongs do not (usually) reappear in vocative forms.3

Few consonants are found as finals: the two nasals m and n, the dental t and the sibilants s (rare), ñ (common), e.g., barim “I carried,” barim “they carried,” baraŋ “he carried,” hauruutās “wholeness,” manius “spirit(s),” gairiś “mountain(s).”

The consonant r always takes ā as supporting vowel when final, e.g., dātara “O creator!”, ātara “O fire!”

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3 On gau- see Lesson 8.
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The consonant s takes a as supporting vowel when final in sandhi (see Lesson 4), e.g., kasə tē “who for you?”

Vowels in monosyllables ending in consonants basically follow the same rules (or lack of rules) as vowels in other final syllables. In this introduction, short i will be used in words such as im “this (f.)” (not īm), dim, diš.

Modifications of vowels: a + nasal

Among all the vowels, the vowel a is the most prone to change. Its main variants are o before uu/i/u and nasals (n and m) and e when palatalized.

The variant a is in turn very sensitive to its surroundings and regularly becomes i when preceded by palatal consonants (ii, e, and j) and u when preceded by uu.

The combinations -(i)iim, -(u)uum and -(i)inin, -(u)uun are then finally simplified to -im, -um and -in, -un. These finals in turn combine with a preceding -a- to form diphthongs: -aem, -aom, etc.

Note: Sometimes the intermediate stage persists beside the final one, e.g., -aien ~ -aen.

The sound changes listed in the table below can all be derived from these rules.

Mastery of these rules and sound changes is crucial to the students’ ability to analyze Avestan, as they pervade the entire language.

Following are some common examples of sound changes needed to understand the paradigms in this lesson. The student should learn them by heart. A complete table is given in lesson 7.

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
* -am & > & -am \\
* -iam & > & -iəm & > & -im \\
* -aiam & > & -aəm & > & -aem \\
* -auam & > & -aəum & > & -aom \\
* -an & > & -ən \\
* -iən & > & -iən & > & -in \\
* -aiən & > & -aiən & > & -aən \\
* -auən & > & -auən & > & -aon
\end{array}
\]

The voiced fricatives: β, δ, γ

The voiced fricatives are all subject to contextual, possibly also dialectal, changes and variations.

Intervocalic δ alternates with θ in forms of vaēθ- “to know” and the present stem daēθ- of the verb daēθ- “to give, place, create,” e.g., viθuš “knowing,” daθat “gave.”

Intervocalic β further tends to become uu, which in turn is subject to change, cf. aiβi “to” > auui > aoi, viθuusati- “shining far and wide” < *vi-ā-bā- < ẏbā “to shine.” The combination *βi became βi, written βii, which further became ūi, which combined with preceding a > aoi, cf. *añoθiia- “undeceivable”: nom. aṅōsil, but acc. aṅoθuim, *daθiθ- f. “deceptive” > *daṇiuθi- (written daṇiuθi-, daṇiuθi-).

The velar fricative γ is lost in some positions: druvaθi-, cf. OAṽu. dṛuvaθi-; fem. rauaθ- “fast” < rauu- (cf. Skt. laghvi-); Mourum < *Maryum.4

NOUNS

u- and ū-stems

The endings of the nom. and voc. sing. and plur. forms of the u- and ū-declensions and the irregular noun pasu- “small cattle (sheep and goats)” are:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{Sing.} & \text{m.} & \text{n.} & \text{pasu-} & \text{m.} & \text{f.} & \text{ū-decl.} \\
\text{nom.} & -uš & -u & -uš & -uš \\
\text{voc.} & -uṇo & & & & \\
\end{array}
\]

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Plur. nom.-voc. 
-awō, -awuas°
-u
-awō, -awuas°
-awō, -awuas°

Paradigms (ratu- m. “(divine) model,” pouru- “much, many,” tanu- f. “body,” pasu- m. “sheep”; note how the labialization rules work!):

\begin{align*}
\text{u-decl.} & \quad \text{pasu-} & \quad \ddot{u}\text{-declension} \\
\text{m.} & \quad \text{n.} & \quad \text{f.} \\
\text{Sing.} & \quad \text{ratus} & \quad \text{pouruś} & \quad \text{pouru} & \quad \text{pasuś} & \quad \text{tanuś} \\
\text{voc.} & \quad \text{ratauō} & \quad \quad \quad & \quad \quad \quad & \quad \quad \quad & \quad \quad \quad & \quad \quad \quad \\
\text{Plur.} & \quad \text{ratauω̄, paraωuω̄} & \quad \text{pouru} & \quad \text{pasuω̄} & \quad \text{tanaωuω̄} \\
& \quad \text{ratauω̄as°} & \quad \text{paraωuω̄as°} & \quad \text{pasuω̄as°} & \quad \text{tanaωuω̄as°} & \quad \text{tanaωuω̄as°}
\end{align*}

Notes:
In the manuscripts we often find pasuω̄ “normalized” to pasuωuω̄.
ratu- is properly a u²-stem (see Lesson 11).
For the feminine u-stems, see ao-stems in Lesson 8.
The vocative endings of the i-stems (and aē-stems): e (< *-i-e), and u-stems: -uω̄, are for *-aē and *-ao in final position.
After ii the vocative ending is only -ō: maniō < maniūu “spirit,” Vaiiō < Vaiiu-.

About the endings
The a-, i-, and u-declensions originally (= in Indo-European) had the same ending in the nominative singular, namely -s, as in Greek θεός theos “god,” πίστις pístis “faith” and ἰχθύς ikhθhūs “fish,” Latin dominus, civis, sinuus, but in the Indo-Iranian mother language s became h after a and ā but ū after i or u according to the “ruki” rule, which states that s became ū after r, u, k [Iran. x], i). The Indo-Iranian forms were therefore *-ah, *-iś, *-uś.
In addition, in Avestan final *-h was lost causing rounding of the preceding vowels: *-ah > -ō, *-āh > -ā.

ADJECTIVES

Feminine and neuter forms
Feminine forms of adjectives of the a-declension are usually declined according to the ā-declension, occasionally according to the i-declension, e.g., sura- “rich in life-giving strength,” f. surā; spōntā- “life-giving,” f. spōntā-, but zaraṃaṇa- “made of gold,” f. zaraṃaṇī-, maniūuwa, f. maniūuui-. Note the fem. nom. sing. naire < *nairīia of nairīdā “manly, heroic.”
Feminine forms of other adjectives are declined according to the i-declension, e.g., vāγhū- “good,” vāγhi- f.; pouru- “plentiful, many,” paoiřī- f.; dāriu- “poor,” dīrīu- f. (note the phonetic changes).
Neuter adjectives are declined like neuter nouns, e.g., nom.-acc. sing. surām, āhuīrī “belonging to/related to Ahura (Mazdā),” vohu.

Adjectival compounds in -i and -ī
There are a few adjectival compounds ending in root nouns in -i and -ī, e.g., yauuaēği- “living forever” and yauuaēsē- “vitalized forever” (see Lesson 12: laryngeal stems). These stems are declined like ā-stems, but few forms are actually attested.
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Sing.
nom.       *yauwaējiš       *yauwaēsuš
Plur.     nom.-acc. *yauwaējiō       *yauwaēsuuō

PRONOUNS

Personal pronouns in the nominative
The personal pronouns have the following forms in the nominative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sing. nom.</td>
<td>azēm “I”</td>
<td>tum “you, thou”</td>
<td>hō, hasō; huaō “he”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plur. nom.</td>
<td>vaēm “we”</td>
<td>yuēm “you, ye”</td>
<td>tē “they”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: hascēf, but hō + ca > hēca in hēca iō astu “and he (Sraoša) shall be here” (Y.27.6, Vr.12.1).

VERBS

Imperfect-injunctive active 1
Depending on their shape, the Avestan verbs are divided into groups of verbs with similar characteristics. There are two main groups: “thematic” verbs, in which the stem ends in a, and “athematic” verbs, in which the stem does not end in a. These two groups are further divided into subgroups called “present classes.” We have already seen examples of imperative forms of athematic verbs ending in consonants or vowels and thematic verbs with stems ending in -a-, -ia-, and -iia-. These will be discussed in greater detail later.

To express past tense (past action, state, etc.) Young Avestan employs a form of the verb which here will be referred to as the “imperfect-injunctive.”

The endings of the imperfect-injunctive are called “secondary” (i.e., as opposed to the “primary” endings of the present indicative, see Lesson 8). As the secondary endings are less exposed to phonetic changes than the primary ones—although there are several—we shall discuss them first.

Note: Because many forms are not (well) attested in the Avesta, it is impossible to give complete paradigms. To make it easier on the students I have as far as possible used the same verb throughout the paradigms, although these particular forms may not be attested, and I have sometimes included forms that are strictly speaking only attested in Old Avestan.

In the athematic verbs, the endings vary according to the final of the stem.

Paradigm (athem.: mrao-/mrū- “to say,” stao-/stu- “to praise,” daśā-/daś- (daθ-) “to give, place”; them.: vaēna- “to see,” tauruuiapia- “to overcome”):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sing.</th>
<th>Athematic</th>
<th>Thematic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-m, -om daśym</td>
<td>mraom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>*-h, ĕ daśā</td>
<td>mraoš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ī daśāt</td>
<td>mraōt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-ma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-tā</td>
<td>daśta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-om</td>
<td>daśm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Note:
Of ah- "to be" only the 3rd sing. is found: as or ās "(he/she/it) was." No 3rd plur. form is attested, but ās is sometimes used (Yt.14.46).

mraom "I said" is < *mraiəm.
tauruailama "we overcome" is from *tauruailama.
In dasta "you give", -dst- has become -st-.

Other examples of verbs with "contracted" forms (bao- "become," jaišia- "implore," srāuailia- "recite"):

Sing. 1 baom < *bauuam     *jaišim < *jaišlam     srāuailam < *srāuailam
Plur. 3 baon (< *bauuam)     *jaišin (< *jaišian)     srāuailen or srāuailen

Syntax

Use of the imperfect-injunctive

āat jasat Zarathustrā "Then came Zarathustra."

sriro me saaialat Yimā "Yima seemed beautiful to me."

āat mraof Ahurō Mazdā ūniius spūñštō "Then spoke Ahura Mazda, the most Life-giving spirit."

āat him jaišiaat borzaaišī Vištāspō āat him raatiaštārā jaišīn "Then Vištāspa, who saw in high places, implored her; then the charioteers implored her."

ādīs paoiri fra.tacat "Much water flowed forth."

urwarā uxšin zairī gaonā baon paoirīsa "The plants grew; they became green and many."

yō as varərajugstomō "(Zarathustra), who was the most obstruction-smashing." (Y.9.15)

moṣu tat ās nōt daryam (yat) "It was soon, not long (= it was not long) (before)." (Yt.5.65)

yāba kabaca tē ās zaoštō "However was your pleasure." (Yt.19.82)

Verbs with preverbs

Verbs such as paiti.mraof- "to answer" and paiti.aauwaa.jasa- "to come down hither to" consist of a main verb and "preverbs," that is words which are sometimes used alone, e.g., as a preposition or an adverb, but often only exist together with a verb. There are similar words used with nouns, in which case they are called prefixes.

The scribes sometimes did and sometimes did not separate the preverb from the verb by a period. In this introduction the period is commonly used, except where sandhi changes have taken place (e.g., āi- < ā-ai-, āuara- < ā-baru-).

Sometimes the preverb is separated from the verb and placed (usually) at the beginning of the sentence. Compare and contrast the following examples:

paiti.mraof yō Zarathuṣtrō "He, Zarathustra, spoke back (answered)."

paiti šē mraof Ahurō Mazdā "Ahura Mazda said back to him."
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ājasat Varəraynə ahuratre
“Varərayna, established by Ahura Mazdā, came (flying).”
ānō jasa awadāhē “Come to our assistance!”
paiti dim parasat Zarathustrē “Zarathustra asked him in turn.”

A verb can have several preverbs:

āīō paiti.aunua.jasa Arāduīi Sura Anāhite
“Come! Come down to (us), O Arāduīi Sura Anāhita!”

When a verb with a preverb is repeated in a sentence, instead of repeating the whole verb, the preverb may be repeated without the verb (cf. Lesson 3), e.g.:

paiti tē Haoma dašam paiti vō āpō paiti tē ātaro
“I presented to you, O Haoma, (I presented) to you, O waters, (I presented) to you, O fire ...”

EXERCISES 5

1. Write in transcription and Avestan script the nom. sing. and plur. (where appropriate) forms of the following nouns and adjectives:


2. Write in transcription and Avestan script the imperfect-injunctive forms of the following verbs:

āi-, ā.kasa-, isa-, kərəna-, gouruaia-, ðərəsa-, hərəjaia-, zauu-, zhaiia-.

3. Transcribe and translate into English:
Note: In the following passage note the forms ašaum, voc. sing. of ašauan-, and ašahe “of Order” gen. sing. of aša-.

4. Translate into Avestan:

1. We are not Turanian enemies. We are Aryan charioteers, having good horses and good chariots.
2. The young woman is poor. There is no guardian for her, no protector.
3. Yima walked forth. He said:
4. Go forth, and go wide and far, O men; go wide and far, O animals, both great and small!
5. Then both the men and the animals went forth and wide and far and became many.
6. Then my daēnā came. (She) seemed to me both beautiful and Life-giving.
7. She said to me: I am (she) who is (your) own daēnā. Come to me, O Orderly Mazdaian.
8. Then we went forth, both I and my daēnā.

VOCABULARY 5

Aibigāia-, see Aiβisruθrīma-
Aiβisruθrīma Aibigāia-: geniuses of the night
akō.dā-: who gives bad (gifts); akō. dām, nom.-acc. plur.
apa.tac- < \vtak/tac: to run away
apam: away(?), henceforth(?)
ā.jasa- < \vjam: to come
ā.kasa- < \vkas: to look (at)
barā-: part, section
bauua- < \vbauc/bu: to become
barajaiia- < \vbaraj/barj: to exalt (empower) by praise, extol(??)
barzaaiθ- m.: seeing in high places; < bāraza- + di-buirī-: plentiful, many
dim m. encl. pron. acc.: him
driyu-: poor
dušmaniιu-: enemy
arāzu-: straight, upright
fra.cara- < \vcar: to go forth
fra.spara- < \vspar: to jump away
frasperaθa-: blossom
fra.śusa- < \ś(ii)ə/ś(ii)u: to go forth
fra.τac- < \vtak/tac: to flow forth
gauuuaiia- < \vgrab/garb: to grasp, take hold of
ha-. ta-.: personal/demonstrative pronoun
Hāuuani-.: Hāuuani, the genius of the time of the haoma pressing (in the morning)
hē encl. pron. gen.-dat.: to/he for him/her
him (hīm) f. encl. pron. acc.: her
hudaēnā-: having a good daēnā
isa- < \vačs: to be able, have command of (+ gen.)
kairīa-. n.: work (to do)
kaθa: how?
nairiia-.: manly, heroic
nasao- f. (nom. našu): (demoness of) carrion
pairi.dās- /daθ- < \vdaθ: to lay out, present
paiti.parasa-: to ask in return
pascaθa-.: afterward
pasu-: (small domestic) animal, especially sheep and goats
pasu-: (small domestic) animal, especially sheep and goats
pata- > vi.pata-
pāiüu-: guardian
parasa- < ṭpars/ṛas: to ask
pouru.mahrka-: full of destruction
Rapiṭbina-: Rapiṭbina, genius of noon-time
raziṣta-: straightest; standing epithet of Rashnu
Sāuuaŋhaē-, voc. Sauuaŋhe: Sāuuaŋhi, genius of the late morning
staora-: (large domestic) animal, cattle and horses
śe ensl. pron. gen.-dat.: to/for him/her
tafṣa- < ṭtap: to become hot
tarṣita-: frightened
tauruuaia- < ṭtur: to overcome
tē: 1. of/to/for you, your; 2. they
ṭāḥaraṣa- < ṭāḥars: to fashion (like a carpenter)
uti: thus
upa.duura-: to come running (daēuas, etc.)
uparō.kairiia-: whose work is above; epithet of Vaiiu
upāi-/upaē- < ṭaē/i: to go over (to), approach
Uṣahina-: Uṣahina, genius of dawn
uxśiia- < ṭvaxś/uxś: to grow, wax
Uzaiieirina-: Uzaiieirina, genius of the evening
vaṇa-: to see
vastra- n.: garment
varōrajasōma-, superlative of varōrajan-: the most obstruction-smashing, most victorious
viś = vi-
vi.pata-: to run away (used of evil creatures)
xāisa- < ṭxāaēd: to begin to sweat
yaṭa-: as, like, when
yauuaēji- adj.: living forever
yauuaēsō- adj.: life-giving/vitalized forever
yātu-: sorcerer
zaieri.gaoa-: green
zaŋtu-: tribe
zaōṣa-: pleasure
zauu- < ṭzu: to curse
zbaiia- < ṭzbē: to invoke
zī: for, because