

VEDIC ŚĀKHĀS
PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

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Table of contents

GENERAL STUDIES AND TOPICS ON ŚĀKHĀS

On the Current Situation of Vedic Śākhās (<i>Materials on Vedic Śākhās, 9</i>) – MICHAEL WITZEL	1
Négation et complémentarité dans le <i>Veda</i> , à la lumière de Pāṇini (et de Platon) – RADU BERCEA	95
Atirātra – JOEL P. BRERETON	107
Vedic schools in northwestern India – JOHANNES BRONKHORST	119
Some observations regarding the concept of Time in Vedic ritual as reflected in the several Vedic schools – MAITREYEE DESHPANDE	133
From Fuzzy-Edged “Family-Veda” to the canonical Śākhās of the Catur-Veda: struc- tures and tangible traces – JAN E.M. HOUBEN	159
Aspects of continuity of the Vedic tradition – JOANNA JUREWICZ	193
Trends of Standardization and Institutionalization in the Transmission of the Vedas: Examples from Contemporary Maharashtra – BORAYIN LARIOS	211
The Development of the New- and Full-Moon Sacrifice and the Yajurveda Schools: mantras, their brāhmaṇas, and the offerings – NAOKO NISHIMURA	227
Roots and Branches: the Veda as an Inverted Tree? – ALEXIS PINCHARD	251
Donees and their Śākhās in Epigraphical Sources: Orissa – SARAJU RATH	279
Tolerance and Intolerance in Kumārila’s Views on the Vedic śākhā – KIYOTAKA YOSHIMIZU	307

SPECIFIC STUDIES ON ŚĀKHĀS

ṚG VEDA

- Some Salient features of the Āśvalāyana-Saṁhitā
– **B.B. CHAUBEY** **329**
- Les Écoles védiques et la pratique de l'exégèse: le cas de Skandasvāmin
– **SILVIA D'INTINO** **341**
- The power of the printed Veda: on early Indian editions of the Ṛgveda
– **CEZARY GALEWICZ** **359**
- The Kauṣītaki school of the Ṛgveda: A Veda *caraṇa* without a *saṁhitā*
– **THENNILAPURAM MAHADEVAN** **391**
- Two on a Swing: a New Perspective on the Ṛgveda
– **HARTMUT SCHARFE** **431**

YAJUR VEDA

- Indication of Divergent Ritual Opinions in the Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā
– **KYOKO AMANO** **461**
- Cantillation et tonalité – Les deux paradigmes de tonalité dans le Taittirīya-Āraṇyaka
et la Taittirīya-Upaniṣad
– **MICHEL ANGOT** **491**
- Formation of a Śrautasūtra: the influence of preceding texts on the Baudhāyana-Śrau-
tasūtra
– **MAKOTO FUSHIMI** **531**
- A survey of new evidence as to the formation of the Yajurveda and Brāhmaṇa texts
– With special reference to recent Vedic studies in Japan –
– **TOSHIFUMI GOTŌ** **541**
- Formation and Chronology of Some of the Taittirīya Gṛhyasūtras
– **AMBARISH V. KHARE** **559**
- Avakṣayaṇa: Contribution of Yājñavalkya or Śukla Yajurveda to Indian Culture
– **MADHAVI KOLHATKAR** **567**
- Scribes of the Śukla Yajurvedic Manuscripts
– **NIRMALA R. KULKARNI** **573**

Baudhāyanīya Contributions to Smārta Hinduism – TIMOTHY LUBIN	591
The Priests of the Avudaiyar Temple in Tamil Nadu: Promoters of the <i>Āgniveśya-grhyasūtra</i> – S.A.S. SARMA	607
Āpastamba and Other Schools of Vedic Ritual – GANESH THITE	621
 SĀMA VEDA	
Survivals & Revivals: the transmission of Jaiminīya Sāmaveda in modern south India – FINNIAN M.M. GERETY	633
References to ritual authorities and Vedic schools in the Jaiminīya-Śrautasūtra and its commentary, collected and evaluated – ASKO PARPOLA	665
Le <i>Sāmavidhānabrāhmaṇa</i> : le <i>prāyaścitta</i> décrypté: <i>prapāṭhaka</i> I, <i>khaṇḍa</i> 5-8 – ANNE MARIE QUILLET	691
 ATHARVA VEDA	
Attempts towards Preservation and Revival of the Śaunakīya Atharvaveda – SHRIKANT S. BAHULKAR	723
Trayī, triads and the Vedas – DIPAK BHATTACHARYA	737
Vedicizing a post-vedic text: the case of Gaṇeśa Atharvaśīrṣa Upaniṣad – MADHAV M. DESHPANDE	777
Paīṭhīnasi: A Critical Essay and Fragments Collected from Various Sources – JULIETA ROTARU	791
Karmasamuccaya: a Paippalādin Corpus of Domestic Rituals – SHILPA SUMANT	883
 LINGUISTIC STUDIES	
Morphosyntactic change in Vedic: Reassessing the evolution of the Subjunctive – EYSTEIN DAHL	907

Kṣetrasya Pati and Mandhātar – EIJIRŌ DŌYAMA	935
Intrastanzaic Repetition in the Rigveda (Verba and Res): a Final Integration – JARED S. KLEIN	955
The Periphrastic perfect in the Vedic language and Pāṇini's Grammar – JUNICHI OZONO	975
On Brhaspati's name – GEORGES-JEAN PINAULT	993
The language of sūktas and ṛcas shared by the Ṛk, Paippalāda and Śaunakīya Saṁhitās – ELIZABETH TUCKER	1009
Index of Authors	1041
Index of Titles	1048
Index of Words and Subjects	1051

On Bṛhaspati's name

GEORGES-JEAN PINAULT

§1. From the RV onwards, the pantheon of Vedic religion has a god named Bṛhaspati, by taking as basic the form of his name which is recorded in the handbooks.¹ He has actually two names, the second of which is synchronically transparent while the first remains an enigma: *bṛhaspāti-* 'lord of X' and *bráhmaṇas páti-* 'lord of the formulation'. For the latter, compare 'Herr der (dichterischen) Formung' (THIEME 1952, 138). My understanding of the function of this god follows the one prevalent since the study of SCHMIDT 1968 (see below §5). In addition, I may quote a relatively recent definition, with which I agree for the most part:

Der Gott, der über das wirkungskräftige *bráhmaṇ-*, das Wort der priesterlichen Dichter herrscht, der Gott der Priesterschaft und Rede' (WITZEL/GOTŌ 2007, 832).

The aim of the present paper is not to propose a new theory about Bṛhaspati's original role in the religion of the RV in order to interpret the name *bṛhaspāti-* from an etymological point of view. It would be methodologically wrong to combine the linguistic explanation of the name *bṛhaspāti-* with an interpretation that contradicts the results of the independent investigation of his mythological role. My argument concerns a problem for which a clear solution is still wanting, to wit, the link between the first member of the pseudo-compound *bṛhas-pāti-* and the neuter noun *bráhmaṇ-*.² Bṛhaspati, under one of his two names or under both, is addressed³ in 10 hymns exclusively dedicated to him: RV I.190, II.23, II.24, II.25, II.26, IV.50, VI.73, VII.97, X.67, X.68; one should add the ṛca RV III.62.4-6 which constitutes a hymn to Bṛhaspati, inserted in a composite hymn to various gods; in IV.49.1-6, he is associated with Indra (dvandva *indrā-brhaspati*); the hymn I.40 (8 stanzas) concerns Bṛhaspati in relationship with Indra, who is invoked in stanzas 1, 5, 8. Some stanzas are addressed to Bṛhaspati in the following hymns: I.18 (9 stanzas), X.182 (3 stanzas): to be precise, I.18.1-5, X.182.1.⁴

§2. First of all, let us review the evidence for the two names in question in the RV. They show quite different metrical (and morphological) distributions.⁵ The following account

¹MACDONELL 1897, 101-104 (§36); OLDENBERG 1917, 65-67; OBERLIES 1998, 204-205.

²KEWAi II, 447-448; EWAia II, 232-233.

³Cf. SCHMIDT 1968, 23-24.

⁴All these hymns and parts of hymns are translated and commented in SCHMIDT 1968. They can also be found in RENOUEVP XV (1966), 46-77, with the exception of III.62, for which see notes in EVP XVI, 102-104.

⁵The sign # means boundary of a pāda.

is based on my personal survey as well as on the very useful concordance published by LUBOTSKY in 1997.

2.1. RV *bráhmaṇas páti-*: nom. ... *bráhmaṇas pátiḥ* # 21 x: I.18.4b, I.40.3a, I.40.5a, II.23.17c, II.24.2c, II.24.4a, II.24.5d, II.24.8a, II.24.9b, II.24.11d, II.24.13d, II.25.1d = 2d-5d, II.26.4b, VI.75.17c, X.53.9d, X.65.1d, X.173.3d; nom. # *bráhmaṇas pátiḥ* ... 2 x: X.67.7c, X.72.2a;

voc. # *bráhmaṇas pate* ... 3x: II.23.19a = 24.16a, II.24.15a; differently ... *brahmaṇas pate* # 13 x: I.18.1b, I.18.3c, I.18.5a, I.40.1a, II.1.3c, II.23.1c, 5d, 9a, 11c, IX.83.1a, X.155.2c, X.164.4a, X.174.1c; one exception VII.97.9a # 1 2 3 *brahmaṇas pate* 9 10 11 #;

acc. ... *bráhmaṇas pátim* # 6x: I.38.13b, II.26.3d, V.46.3c, VII.41.1c, VII.44.1c, VIII.27.1c; differently # 1 2 3 *bráhmaṇas pátim* 9 10 11 # VII.97.3b;

gen. # *bráhmaṇas páteḥ* ... II.24.14a, II.26.2d.

This phrase has two variants: for the nominative VII.97.3d # *yó bráhmaṇo devákṛtasya rájā* #, for the vocative VI.16.30c ... *brahmaṇas kave* #.

Except for III.29.15b, VI.52.3a, IX.97.34b, all occurrences of the genitive *bráhmaṇas* (RV 39 x) belong to the phrase *bráhmaṇas páti-* or a variant, in sum 36 occurrences, to which one should add 15 occurrences of the vocative *brahmaṇas pate/kave*. There is a single occurrence of the dvandva, voc. #1 *indrā-brahmaṇaspatī* ... II.24.12c. The more current form (6x) is acc. (1x) *indrā-bṛhaspatī*, voc. (5x) *indrā-bṛhaspatī*, in the same hymn, IV.49, see below.

2.2. RV *bṛhaspāti-*: RV 121x, nom. 53 (counting one for the repeated pāda of identical stanzas X.42.11a = 43.11a = 44.11a), acc. 25, voc. 34 (33 x *bṛhaspate*, 1x *bṛhaspate*), gen. 6 (including IX.80.1c),⁶ instr. 2, dat. 1.

Metrical distribution: nom. 42 x # *bṛhaspātiḥ* ... vs. 11 x differently ... *bṛhaspātiḥ* # I.90.9c, I.105.17c, X.17.13c, X.103.8a, X.109.5c, X.128.7c, X.141.2b, X.161.4c, X.173.5b, much less frequently # 1 2 *bṛhaspātiḥ* 7 8 # IX.5.11c, # 1 2 3 4 *bṛhaspātiḥ* 9 10 11 # I.89.6d.

acc. 20 x # *bṛhaspátim* ... 5 x differently ... *bṛhaspátim* # I.14.3a = X.141.4a, III.62.5a, X.141.3d, 5a.

voc. 33 x # *bṛhaspate* ... The unique pāda-final form of the vocative is due to the reversal of the expected phrase # *bṛhaspate indras ca* (type voc. + nom. *ca*, cf. *váyav indras ca*),⁷ in IV.50.10a *indras ca sómam pibatam bṛhaspate*, under the influence of the vocative dvandva *indrā-bṛhaspatī* in IV.49, where it is mostly pāda-final, *indrā-bṛhaspatī* # 1b, 2b, 3a, 4a, 6a vs. 1x # *indrā-bṛhaspatī* 5a. As shown by ZWOLANEK (1970, 71-72) most of the collocations of the type # nom. *ca* (...) voc. are paralleled by dvandvas whose elements are in the same order.⁸ Note that *bṛhaspāti-* has further occurrences in the hymn IV.50, and all are found in the opening of the pāda: 2b, 2d, 3a, 6c # *bṛhaspate* ..., 1b, 4a, 5c # *bṛhaspātiḥ* ..., 7c # *bṛhaspátim* ...

Other cases, always pāda-initial: gen. 6 x # *bṛhaspáteḥ* ...; instr. 2 x # *bṛhaspátinā* ...; dat. 1 x # *bṛhaspátaye* ... IX.85.6d.

To be complete, there are two occurrences of a compound, filling a repeated pāda, X.97.15c = 19c *bṛhaspāti-prasūtāḥ*, epithet of the plants (*ośadhīḥ*), “von Bṛhaspati

⁶As stated by OLDENBERG, Noten II: 175 and Geldner, RV III: 74; see also SCHMIDT 1968, 79. Recorded as erroneous vocative by Grassmann 914.

⁷Cf. ZWOLANEK 1970, 62-69, 96.

⁸See also KLEIN 1985, 180-181.

angetrieben".⁹

§3. Clearly *bṛ̥has-pāti-* was the form proper to the pāda-initial position, filling the opening with good iambic rhythm¹⁰ # ∘ – ∘ ∘ : 104 of 121 occurrences. Except the special case of IV.50.10a, most other occurrences (16) belong to the later books I and X: I⁴ III¹ IX¹ X¹⁰. The two exceptions are not very significant. The tṛca III.62.4-6 belongs to a Viśve Devāḥ hymn, where the different gods listed are all praised in the same way. The stanza IX.5.11 is the last one of the hymn, probably an appendix with the same enumerative character:

vīśve devāḥ svāhākr̥tim, pāvamānasya ā gata |
vāyūr bṛ̥haspātīḥ sūryo, agnīr indrah sajośasaḥ ||

Ihr Götter alle kommet zur Svāhāsegnung des sich Läuternden: Vāyu, Br̥haspati, Sūrya, Agni, Indra, einmütig! (Geldner, RV III: 14).

Therefore, one can conclude that *bṛ̥has-pāti-* was pāda-initial in the ancient poetic diction.¹¹ By contrast, the phrase *brāhmaṇas pāti-* was favorite for filling the cadence of 12-syll. (rarely 8-syll.) lines, and occurs much less frequently in the vocative, although it is by no means excluded from this function. In the hymns dedicated to Br̥haspati alone, the form *bṛ̥has-pāti-* is much more frequent and always (with the motivated exception of IV.50.10a) pāda-initial. There is no chronological difference between the two names at the stage of the composition of the hymns.

§4. The idea that *bṛ̥haspāti-* and *brāhmaṇas pāti-* referred to two gods, who had merged in a single god at the time of RVic composition, is far from any probability. As a matter of fact, both names are given to the same divine figure, as proved by the alternating naming in the same hymn. It happens in four hymns of the RV.

RV II.23 (jagatī, triṣṭubh for 15 and 19): *brāhmaṇas pāti-* 6x vs. *bṛ̥haspāti-* 13x, in detail: ... *brahmaṇas pate* # 1c, 5d, 9a, 11c, # *brāhmaṇas pate* ... 19a, ... *brāhmaṇas pātīḥ* # 17c vs. # *bṛ̥haspate* ... 2b, 3c, 4d, 6c, 7c, 8c, 10b, 12c, 14d, 15a, 16d, 18d, # *bṛ̥haspātīḥ* ... 13d.

RV II.24 (jagatī, triṣṭubh for 12 and 16): *brāhmaṇas pāti-* 11x vs. *bṛ̥haspāti-* 1x, in detail: *brāhmaṇas pātīḥ* # 2c, 4a, 5d, 8a, 9b, 11d, 13d, # *brāhmaṇas pate* ... 15a, 16a, # *brāhmaṇas pāteḥ* ... 14a, dvandva voc. # 1 *indrā-brahmaṇaspatī* ... 12c vs. # *bṛ̥haspate* ... 1d.

RV VII.97 (triṣṭubh): *brāhmaṇas pati-* 2x vs. *bṛ̥haspāti-* 6x, in detail: # 1 2 3 *brāhmaṇas pāti-* 9 10 11 # (in 3b *suśévam brāhmaṇas pātīm gṛ̥ṇīṣe*, 9a *iyám vām brahmaṇas pate suṛ̥ktīḥ*) vs. # *bṛ̥haspātīḥ* ... 2b, 4b, 7c, # *bṛ̥haspātīm* ... 5d, 8b, # *bṛ̥haspate* ... 10a.

⁹SCHMIDT 1968, 129.

¹⁰Cf. ARNOLD 1905, 150 and 182.

¹¹This fact has been stressed by PRAUST 2004. I did not attend this paper, but the author kindly sent me (in July 2010) his handout, which is quite interesting and full of insights. To be precise, this handout consists of two parts: the main part, 28 pages long, and the survey of the metrical position of *bṛ̥haspāti-* in 3 pages. PRAUST argues rightly that the favorite position of *bṛ̥haspāti-* is certainly related to its origin from the vocative form. I had made this assumption independently, but I am glad to acknowledge this convergence around one result. It cannot be missed as soon as one looks at the concordance of the RV. As it will appear later (§8), however, PRAUST 2004 elaborated a scenario about the origin of Br̥haspati which is quite different from mine. In any case, I wish that his study will be available in printed form in a not too distant future.

RV X.67 (triṣṭubh) : 1x vs. 6x, in detail: 7c # *bráhmaṇas pátiḥ* ... vs. # *bṛhaspátiḥ* ... 3c, 4c, 5c, 8c, 9c, 10c.

Except in the latter hymn (of late period, ‘Cretic’),¹² one should note the contrast of metrical positions and of case: the forms of *bṛhaspáti-* are always pāda-initial, and nearly always in the vocative.

From this evidence, one has drawn the assumption that *bṛhaspáti-* was the original name of the god, and that *bráhmaṇas páti-*, being clearly understandable as ‘the master of the *bráhman-*’ was some kind of commentary or explanation to the preceding.¹³ This leads of course to the religious interpretation.

§5. Bṛhaspati has been interpreted as the ‘priestly god’ or ‘god-priest’ by STRAUSS (1905). This divine figure had been created in order to personify the role of the priest (*brahmán-*, *puróhita-*) as associated with the king (*rájan-*), whose divine equivalent is Indra. Among other things, it would explain the companionship of Bṛhaspati with Indra. This view is close to OLDENBERG’s definition (1917).¹⁴ The second monographic treatment is due to SCHMIDT (1968), and it is much more detailed. Bṛhaspati is identified with other gods, and mostly with Indra in the Vala myth. The specific role of Bṛhaspati is to split open the rock Vala (*valá-*) with the force of the speech, and in the company of the Aṅgiras, mythical priests and singers. According to the Indian tradition, Bṛhaspati (who has also as favorite epithet *āṅgirasá-*) is an (or the chief of) Aṅgiras (*āṅgiras-*), one of the primeval sages provided with sacred speech, that have supported Indra in the opening of this treasure cave or rock (Vala), containing all the goods making life possible. It would explain his second name *bráhmaṇas páti-*, since he uses the power of the *bráhman-*, and of the truth embodied in the recitation of the Aṅgiras. On the other hand, there are numerous indices that point to the generality of his original figure, not completely individualized, so to speak a “divine person in progress”, from an original epithet. Therefore, according to SCHMIDT (1968, 93; 237-240) *bṛhas-páti-* was initially an epithet of the king-priest (= Indra), then an individualized god, that was eventually identified with Indra (and with other gods, Agni, Savitar, Soma), alternatively understood as an independent figure, the priestly double (alter ego) of Indra, and it could even become, in some version of the Vala myth, the divine priest/poet who is the auxiliary of Indra. The existence of the god Bṛhaspati would be due to a functional differentiation in the person of the original sacrificer (*yájamāna-*), both king and priest.¹⁵ The essence of the function of Bṛhaspati lies in the *bráhman-*, the efficient formula. See the dialog of RV X.98.1-3: Bṛhaspati is the god who delivers to Devāpi the word that may produce the rain. X.98.2d *dádhāmi te dyumátīm vácam āsán* “ich lege dir die glänzende Rede in den Mund” (GELDNER, RV III: 309). Bṛhaspati splits open Vala with the *bráhman-* (II.24.3c); he is “invested with power by the formulation” (*iśāno bráhmaṇā*, II.24.15d). He annihilates the wrath of the enemies of the *bráhman-* (*brahmadviśas tápanaḥ*, II.23.4c). He is the supreme king and the creator of the formulations (*jyeṣṭharájam bráhmaṇām* II.23.1c, *viśveṣām íj janitá bráhmaṇām* II. 23.2d). He supports or leads the inspiration of true speech (I.18.7c, II.23.3b, 19ab).

¹²According to ARNOLD 1905, 286.

¹³MACDONELL 1897, 103; SCHMIDT 1968, 24.

¹⁴“Bṛhaspati die göttliche Verkörperung des Priestertums, sofern dieses die Macht und Aufgabe hat, durch Gebet oder Zauberspruch den Gang der Dinge zu lenken” (1917, 65); “Bṛhaspati der göttliche Purohita, der Vertreter des Brahmanentums unter den Göttern, der Inhaber der Zaubermacht des heiligen Worts” (1917, 66).

¹⁵See also BRERETON 2004, 330.

His voice and roar (*ráva*) are powerful (I.190.3-4, VII.97.3 about his *ślóka*-, I.62.4, I.71.2, IV.50.1, 4, 5). One may even assume that he was the prototypical *brahmán*- masc. 'the one provided with the *bráhma*n-': II.1.3c *tvám brahmá rayivíd brahmaṇas pate*, X.141.3d *brahmāṇam ca bṛhaspátim*, at the end of a list of gods. Actually, the internal derivative *brahmán*- and the phrase *bráhmaṇas páti*- are quasi equivalent expressions. Bṛhaspati is identified with the *brahmán*- in relationship with the king (IV.50.8-10).¹⁶ As RENOÙ puts it, "en ce personnage s'unissent les deux domaines du *bráhma*n nt. et du *brahmán* masc." (1949, 20).¹⁷

§6. Bṛhaspati's two names follow a well-known pattern. The phrase *bráhmaṇas páti*- is of the same type as numerous N-gen. *páti*- fixed phrases 'master/lord of N': *vācás páti*- 'master of speech' (*vāc*-), *dhiyás páti*- 'master of reflection' (*dhí*-), *divás páti*- 'master of heaven' (*dyú*-), *pathás páti*- 'master of the way' (*pánthā*-/*path*-), *rāyás páti*- 'master of wealth' (*rayí*-), *bhúvanasya páti*- 'master of the world' (*bhúvana*-), *visás páti*- 'master of the clan' (*vis*-), *satyásya páti*- 'master of the truth' (*satyá*-), *vástos páti*- 'master of the abode/household' (*vástu*-). These phrases may designate individual gods, or they are epithets of gods. Besides, there are pseudo-compounds and (tatpuruṣa) compounds in which the first member is a genitive form, or the equivalent of a genitive form: *rayipáti*-, *vispáti*-, *vánaspáti*-, *sádaspáti*-, *ṛtáspáti*-, *ráthaspáti*-, *gnáspáti*-, *jáspáti*-, (*jáspati*-), etc.¹⁸ Apparently, this pattern is not followed by *sátpati*- (RV 52x), which has been interpreted traditionally as a compound with attributive first member related to *sánt*-: 'starker Gebieter' (Grassmann: 1451), 'wahrer Herr, rechtmäßiger Gebieter' (Geldner). The interpretation and analysis of this word have been much discussed however, and it seems now plausible that the first member is the outcome or the substitute of a genitive form.¹⁹ The peculiar accent of *bṛhas-páti*-, as compared to the other °*ás-páti*- pseudo-compounds, is due to the vocative accent on the first syllable at the beginning of a sentence: *bṛhaspate*, of an original **bṛhás-páti*-, then reshaped with initial accent of the first member (THIEME 1985, 243). This is consistent with the distribution of *bṛhas-páti*:- the prevalent initial position still reflects the initial position of the original vocative form.²⁰ In other words, the name *bṛhas-páti*- continues indirectly a frozen term of address, in the direct speech, while *bráhmaṇas páti*- would reflect the "objective" description of the god, presumably of the same god, according to SCHMIDT (1968) and to most scholars. Therefore, after the model of *visás páti*- (RV 2x) vis-à-vis of *vis-páti*- (RV 33x, Av. *vispaiti*-),²¹ one could reconstruct a phrase **bṛhás páti*- and/or a compound **bṛh-páti*-. But such a root noun **bṛh*- does not exist in Old Indo-Aryan. Nevertheless, it has been currently assumed that this noun **bṛh*- was related to *bráhma*n-, either from origin, or through popular etymology. The problem is complicated by the fact that *bráhma*n- has no clear etymology

¹⁶Commentary by SCHMIDT 1968, 117-118; 215.

¹⁷This is independent from RENOÙ's interpretation (1949) of *bráhma*n- as 'enigma', 'enigmatic formula about sacred correlations'.

¹⁸WACKERNAGEL 1905, 241-243; 246-247. The source of my investigation about Bṛhaspati is precisely the analysis of the phrases and (pseudo-)compounds with *páti*-, which were the topic of several lectures of mine at the EPHE (Paris) during the academic year 2008-2009, see the summary in *École Pratique des Hautes Études. Section des Sciences historiques et philologiques. Annuaire. Résumé des conférences et travaux*, 141^e année, Paris, 2010, pp. 369-370.

¹⁹PINAULT 1996, 45-64, with previous literature.

²⁰Cf. PRAUST 2004, 3-5 of the main handout.

²¹EWAia II, 561.

inside Indo-Aryan or Indo-Iranian, from a root that would be **brah-/br̥h-*.

§7. In most etymological attempts to analyze *bṛhas-páti-* it is assumed that, even if *bṛhas-páti-* and *bráhmanas páti-* designate the same god, they did not have originally the same meaning. One may say that most of the possible connections have been proposed for the root noun **bṛh-*.²² The following list does not intend to be complete, but it shows the main trends.

1) According to Yāska (Nirukta X.11), *Bṛhas-páti-* is the protector (*pā-*) or supporter of the great (*bṛhánt-*). As for *Bráhmanas-páti-*, he is the protector (*pā-*) or supporter of the *bráhman-* (X.12); furthermore, both *bṛhánt-* (I.7) and *bráhman-/brahmán-* (I.8) are linked with *barh-/br̥h-* ‘to make high, strong’.

2) Ved. *barhís-* nt. ‘sacrificial grass’ (Av. *barəziš-* ‘cushion’), and to the root *barh-/br̥h-*. But *barhís-* is probably based on a root **b^helǵ^h-* ‘to swell’²³ that merged in Ir. with **b^herǵ^h-* ‘to become high, rise’.²⁴

3) PIE root noun **b^hǵǵ^h-* ‘height’, cf. OIr. *brí*, Gmc. **burg-*, YAv. *bəraz-* subst. ‘height’, adj. ‘high’.²⁵ This noun functions as adjectival abstract besides other items of a so-called “Caland system”, cf. adj. Ved. *bṛhánt-* ‘high, mighty’, Av. *bərazant-* ‘id.’ < PIE **b^hérǵ^h-ont-/*b^hǵǵ^h-(e)nt-*, first compound member Av. *bərazi.caəra-* ‘having lofty wheels’, *s*-stem abstract Av. *barəzah-* nt. ‘height’.²⁶

4) Relationship with Ved. *-bárhas-* ‘strength’ (*dvi-bárhas-*, *ádri-barhas-*), adv. *barhānā* ‘strongly, firmly’, and Av. *bəraj-*, based on the interpretation of *bṛhas-páti-* as “Herr der Kraft” according to THIEME (1952, 138). While keeping the etymological relationship with Av. *bəraj-*, now taken as meaning ‘praise’, THIEME abandoned this gloss for ‘lord of praise’ (1960, 270).

5) HENNING assumes without discussion that *bṛhaspáti-* contains the weak stem of *bráhman-* (1944, 117), which he interprets as meaning originally ‘form, style, ceremony, rites’. This interpretation is based on the connection of the Vedic noun with OP *brazman-*, MP *brahm*, etc. However, the meaning of the formula OP (XPh 41, 50-51, 53-54) *ṛtācā brazmaniya* is still much discussed, and it allows alternative etymologies.²⁷

Some of these solutions (nos. 1, 2, 3, 5) are formally possible, but without support in the meaning and use of *bṛhas-páti-*. As for the solution no. 4, the meaning of Av. *bəraj-* (6x) remains obscure, despite the insights of several scholars.²⁸ The meaning ‘praise’ is currently assumed, see for instance YH 35.1 (pseudo-OAv.) *bərajā vaṇhəuš ašahe / bərajā daēnaiiā vaṇ^vhiiā māzdaiiasnōiš* “durch Lobpreis der guten Wahrheit, durch Lobpreis der guten mazdayanischen Religion”.²⁹ This interpretation goes back to Geldner, who assumed a connection with RV *bhárǵas-*, itself unclear, albeit currently understood as referring to light.³⁰ In any case, this etymological connection is incompatible with any

²²References in KEWai II, 447-448; EWAia II, 233; SCHMIDT 1968, 16-21.

²³EWAia II, 214; LIV, 73-74.

²⁴EWAia II, 212-213; LIV, 78-79.

²⁵GRIEPENTROG 1995, 91-116; for the Av. word, see KELLENS 1974, 353-355.

²⁶Cf. RAU 2009, 69; 71; EWAia II, 232.

²⁷See among other MAWET 1978; SCHMITT 2009, 167, with further literature. SCHMITT translates as follows: “zur rechten Zeit und mit rechtem Zeremoniell”. As a matter of fact, one may alternatively read *brazmani*, which does not allow a more straightforward explanation.

²⁸See KELLENS 1974, 350-353.

²⁹Text and translation according to NARTEN 1986, 38.

³⁰‘Glanz, Erleuchtung, Licht’, cf. EWAia II, 252.

original relationship with *bráhmaṇ-*. I shall mention some other possibilities. It would be theoretically possible to set up a *s*-stem animate abstract **bṛhás-* ‘greatness, might’, which would be cognate with the adjective *bṛhánt-*, and of the same type as Ved. *jarás-* ‘old age’ besides *járant-* ‘old’, *bhiyás-* (= Av. *biiāh-*) ‘fear’ besides *bhūrú-* ‘fearful’.³¹ This hypothesis would be entirely *ad hoc*, because the relevant adjectival abstract is actually featured by the neuter stem Av. *barəzah-* and Ved. *°bárhas-*, quoted above under nos. 3 and 4. Since the formation of root nouns functioning as action nouns is still moderately productive in Old Indo-Aryan,³² one may imagine that **bṛh-* could be built from any verbal root. It would be much speculative to extract this root from *bráh-man-*, because this noun is totally devoid of relationship to a verbal root. The review of preceding hypotheses leads SCHMIDT to a negative statement about the possibility of etymologizing the first member of *bṛhas-páti-* (1968, 22). With much caution he assumes, taking over a variant of the solution no. 4, that the original meaning of **bṛh-* was ‘praise’, *bṛhas-páti-* meaning ‘lord of praise’, and that the formal likeness, in addition to the link between ‘praise’ and ‘formulation, poem’, allowed a further naming of the god as *bráhmanas páti-* (1968, 239-240). Apparently, SCHMIDT is reluctant to admit a complete semantic independence between the two names, and to assume that the meaning of *bṛhas-páti-* had nothing to do with the function of the god as documented in the texts.

§8. PRAUST (2004) based his scenario on the vocative origin of the name *bṛhas-páti-*, and assumed that **bṛhas* was not a genitive singular, but the vocative singular of *bṛhánt-* ‘high, mighty’. Accordingly **bṛhas pate* meant originally ‘O mighty master’ (in German, ‘Hochwürden!’, dialectal ‘Gnä Herr!’), as a kind of very polite term of address, and could be applied to every god, but especially to Indra as king and powerful god. The connection with the *bráhmaṇ-* would be a secondary creation inside the Vedic sacred language. PRAUST goes so far as to surmise that in the RV “keine eigenständige Götterfigur namens *Bṛhaspati* gegeben haben kann” (2004, 9 in the main handout). It sounds somewhat paradoxical. The idea that the name *bráhmanas páti-* is some kind of artificial construction is not warranted, as far as I can see. To be judged by previous treatments, and especially from SCHMIDT’s book (1968), the connection of *Bṛhaspati* with the *bráhmaṇ-* is not due to a relatively late invention of clever theologians for their own sake. I have also my doubts about the formal aspects of PRAUST’s scenario, and I look forward to the publication of his theory which may show reformulations in the argument. The following remarks are then based on the version which is available to me. 1) This vocative sg. **bṛhas* of *bṛhánt-* would not exist outside of *bṛhas-pate*, and of the frozen stem *bṛhas-páti-* based on it. Actually, such a vocative sg. looks similar to the regular (at the stage of the RV) vocative sg. of masculine stems in *-vant-* or (depending on the vocalism of the preceding stem) *-mant-*, e.g. *harivas* of *hári-vant-*, *dyumas* of *dyu-mánt-*.³³ This type has a match in Iranian, e.g. YAv. *druuō* < **druγuah* from *druuant-*, OAv. *drəguuant-* ‘deceitful’. However, it would be the unique example for a masculine stem in *-ant-*. Since the adjective *bṛhánt-* is quite frequent, the total absence of a vocative **bṛhas* (**bṛhas* at the beginning of sentence or *pāda*) outside of this phrase makes me skeptical. Furthermore, in the stems in *-vant-* (and consequently in *-mant-*), this vocative is itself due to suppletion or reciprocal influence with the stems in *-vas-* (perfect participle), to simplify the matter.³⁴ This pattern could

³¹Cf. STÜBER 2002, 40; 71-73; 83-84; 254; RAU 2009, 74; 133.

³²DEBRUNNER 1954, 11-14.

³³MACDONELL 1910, 193 and 195; WACKERNAGEL-DEBRUNNER 1930, 255-259.

³⁴WACKERNAGEL-DEBRUNNER 1930, 258. This point falls out of the present context, but I

not apply to an adjective such as *brhánt-*. 2) The language of the RV does not have any univertation of a phrase adjective (epithet) + *páti-*,³⁵ and the construction with genitive, singular or plural, is normal, and very well attested. As a matter of fact, the equivalence of *bṛhaspáti-* with *bráhmaṇas páti-* presupposes, at least in my opinion, that *bṛhas°* had been reinterpreted, whichever was its ultimate source, as a genitive, after the model of other pseudo-compounds with *páti-* as second member. Logically, PRAUST assumes that this equivalence is false.

§9. The synchronic connection of the figure of Bṛhaspati with *bráhmaṇ-*/*brahmán-* should make us pause. RENOÜ mentions the following possibility: “*bráhmaṇas pátiḥ* réduit à *bṛhaspátiḥ*” (EVP XV, 47 ad I.18.6). A similar idea was also expressed in passing by HENNING (1944, 117). How should one understand this “reduction” of “shortening”: as a phonological process or as the lexical substitution of a noun by a shorter one? I agree with the original meaning of the nt. *bráhmaṇ-* as being ‘correct formulation’, compare ‘richtige Formulierung, Formung, Gestaltung’ (THIEME 1952, 102); “›Dichterwort‹, richtig formulierte dichterische Rede, die sich verwirklichen läßt” (WITZEL/GOTŌ 2007, 831). Its inflection is well established: RV *bráhmaṇ-*, sg. nom.-acc. *bráhma*, instr. *bráhmaṇā*, dat. *bráhmaṇe*, gen. *bráhmaṇah*, loc. *bráhmaṇ*, *bráhmaṇi*, pl. nom.-acc. *bráhmā*/*bráhma*, *bráhmāni*, instr. *bráhmabhīḥ*, gen. *bráhmaṇām*. The stem in *-man-* has been generalized in the weak cases before vowel, as in all nt. *-man-* stems of roots ending in consonant.³⁶ The neuters with suffix **-men-* followed originally, in Proto-Indo-European, the proterokinetic inflection, as schematized by strong stem R(é)-S(ø)-E(ø) vs. weak stem R(ø)-S(é)-E(ø).³⁷ The languages have normally leveled the root ablaut in favor of the strong stem, accented on the root syllable: Ved. *ájman-*, *ján(i)man-*, *dáman-*, *dháman-*, *stháman-*, *vásman-*, *mánman-*, *dhárman-*, *yáman-*, *várman-*, *vésman-*, etc.³⁸ This pattern is followed by *bráhmaṇ-*, although it is not related to any Indo-Iranian verbal root. It is not necessary to review the extremely abundant literature about the etymology of *bráhmaṇ-* nt.³⁹, because we do have now a convincing proposal, which fits with the semantic definition mentioned above: nt. **b^hrég^h-m(e)n-* from a root meaning ‘to formulate, set in specific form’ of OIcel. *bragr*, masc. ‘poetic skill’ (Icel. *bragur* ‘Ton, Weise; Gedicht, Melodie’) < Gmc. **braga-* < **b^hróg^h-o-*, OIr. *bricht* ‘magical spell’, Gaul. *brictom* < **brikto-* < **b^hrǵ^h-to-*, see further OIcel. *Bragi*, name of a divine poet, counselor and poet of Odin (OIcel. *Óðinn*, OS *Wōdan*, OHG *Wuotan*, OE *Wōden*) < Gmc. **bragan-* masc.⁴⁰ This seems acceptable from a semantic point of view. Actually, my scenario would work with any neuter **-men-* stem from a root of the same shape. The ultimate Indo-European etymology plays only an auxiliary role in my argument. Be that as it may, it is certain that Ved. *bráhmaṇ-* is an inherited word, so that it can have had some archaic features. Before

shall refer to the discussion by Jamison 1991, 87-100, that gives the best account so far of the complex relationships between these paradigms of *-vant-*, *-vas-* and *-as-* stems. The simple *-ant-* stems, such as *brhánt-*, are definitely out of the picture.

³⁵Leaving aside the somewhat vexed issue apropos of *sát-pati-*, see above §6.

³⁶MACDONELL 1910, 206-210.

³⁷SCHAFFNER 2001, 91-93, with references to Schindler’s papers.

³⁸DEBRUNNER 1954, 755-759; 762-763.

³⁹KEWAi, 452-456; WENNERBERG 1981, 132-137; EWAia II, 236-238.

⁴⁰SCHAFFNER 2001, 325 n. 333. Some years before, MCCONE (1985) proposed an etymological connection with OIr. *broimm*, MW *bram* ‘fart’, but he later abandoned it, cf. STÜBER 1998, 82 and n. 62. This latter noun is better related to Lat. *fragmen*.

proceeding further, I mention in passing that Lat. *flāmen* ‘sacrificial priest’, which has been repeatedly connected with Ved. *bráhman-/brahmán-*, has also found now a plausible etymology, from a PIE root **b^hlah₂-* ‘to call, to invoke’.⁴¹

§10. Let us assume that in Proto-Indo-Aryan the neuter *bráhman-* had originally ablaut, according to the proterokinetic type, as normal in neuters in **-men-*: nom.-acc. sg. **b^hréǵ^h-mṇ* > Ved. *bráhma*; in the weak stem, the root had zero grade, and the original genitive sg. ought to be **b^hṛǵ^h-mén-s*, cf. the outcome of the final sequence **-mén-s* > Indo-Iranian **-māns* > OAv. *-mānǵ* in the genitive sg. of nt. *man-*stems. This allomorph has been replaced in Old Indo-Aryan by **-mn-as* < **-mn-é/ós*, after the model of other inflectional types (hysterokinetic and amphikinetic). Actually, the weak allomorph of the suffix was inherited in the instrumental sg. **-mn-éh₁*, that had replaced **-mén-h₁*. In the other cases of the singular, we expect also the full grade: dat. **-man-ai* > OAv. *-mainē*, Ved. *-mane*, loc. **-man(-i)* > OAv. *-mainī*, Ved. both *-man* and *-mani*. In Old Indo-Aryan the allomorphs of the suffix before endings beginning with vowel have been distributed according to the final shape of the stem: *-man-V* after consonant < **-mṇn-V*, e.g. *kármaṇā*, *kármaṇas*, *kármaṇe*, *kármaṇi* vs. *-mn-V* after vowel, e.g. *dhámnā*, *dhámnas*, *dhámnne*.⁴² Besides, there are reflexes of a former situation, where the inherited sequence *-C-mn-V* underwent simplification of the consonant cluster. The Proto-Indo-European evolution **-C-mn-* > **-C-n-*, assumed by J. SCHMIDT (1895, 87-159), has been newly formulated by NUSSBAUM (2010). Example: from **h₂ék-mon-* ‘stone, sharp object’, masc. (Ved. *ásman-*, Av. *asman-*, Gk. ἄκμων, the paradigm⁴³ is as follows: Ved. nom.sg. *ásmā*, acc. sg. *ásmānam*, loc.sg. *ásmāni*, instr. pl. *ásmabhiḥ*, but beside the regular-looking instr. sg. *ásmānā*, abl. sg. *ásmānaḥ*, there are archaic forms instr. sg. *áśnā*, gen.-abl. sg. *áśnaḥ* < **h₂akn-eh₁*, **h₂ak-n-e/os*, from **h₂ak-mn-eh₁*, **h₂ak-mn-e/os* respectively. This evolution is also reflected in Iranian, cf. YAv. ‘stone; heaven’ nom. sg. *asma*, acc.sg. *asmanəm* (OP *asmānam*), but gen. sg. *ašnō* (frequently attested) = Ved. *áśnas*. Let us apply this scheme to the prototype of *bráhman-*, the genitive sg. of which was originally **b^hṛǵ^h-mén-s*, that had been replaced by **b^hṛǵ^h-mn-é/ós*: this form ought to yield **b^hṛǵ^h-n-é/ós* > Ved. gen. sg. **bṛhnás* (> **bṛhnás*) according to the rule of nasal cluster simplification. The outcome of the later normalized and leveled paradigm was of course *bráh-man-as*.

§11. Then, the expected genitival phrase ‘lord of formulation’ was initially **bṛhnás páti-*. I assume that the vocative **bṛhnas pate* has been treated as allegro form with metathesis **bṛñhas pate*. It underwent a Prākṛit-like evolution *-hn* > *-nh-* as later in Middle Indic for the clusters *-hñ-*, *-hn-*, *-hm-*, *-hy-*, *-hv-*,⁴⁴ e.g. Skt. *aparāhṇa-* > Pali *aparaṇha-*, Pkt. *avaraṇha-*, Skt. *brāhmaṇa-* > Pkt. *bāmhaṇa-* (Aśoka, Girnār), etc.⁴⁵ This should not come to surprise. First of all, there are traces of Prākṛit-like evolutions in Vedic dialects that are already reflected at the stage of the RV.⁴⁶ Second, terms of address are the

⁴¹SCHAFFNER 2010. I prefer to state overtly that this connection, which was anyway quite dubious, should be left out definitely. Despite the obvious difficulties, DUMÉZIL never abandoned the alleged relationship Lat. *flāmen*: Ved. *bráhman-/brahmán-* even though he modified greatly the theory proposed in 1935; see for instance 1949, 26-29; 1987, 95-96; 221 et passim.

⁴²WACKERNAGEL-DEBRUNNER 1930, 267-269.

⁴³This noun follows the amphikinetic (or holokinetic) inflection, cf. SCHAFFNER 2001, 81-83.

⁴⁴Cf. v. HINÜBER 2001, 190, §245.

⁴⁵PISCHEL 1900, 226.

⁴⁶Cf. v. HINÜBER 2001, 39-41 with further examples and literature.

place for “progressive” (or dialectal) phonetic evolutions, as well as ritual interjections, e.g. *váṣaṭ* (RV +) < verb **váṣat*;⁴⁷ interjection of address *bhoḥ* < **bhavaḥ*, vocative of the polite term *bhávant-* (ŚB +) ‘your honor, your lordship’ (nom. sg. *bhāvān*, fem. *bhāvātī*, etc.), allegro form for *bhágavant-*.⁴⁸ After this phonetic process, the form **bṛ̥m̥has* looked problematic, when compared with the other N-gen. *páti-* phrases, since there was no root noun **bṛ̥m̥h-* ‘formulation’, or ‘speech’. The form **bṛ̥m̥has* was then replaced by *bṛ̥has*, which re-established somehow the link with the “root” of *bráhman-*, at synchronic level. By which channel ?

§12. This was made possible because another root, that had close semantic connections with the root *brh-*, featured a similar allomorphy between *Cṛ̥m̥h-* and *Cṛh-* in the zero grade. The form **bṛ̥m̥h-* came to be linked with the root *barh-/brh-* ‘to make strong, solid’, mentioned above (§7), because of the parallel and quasi synonymous root *darh-/drh-* (Av. *dərəz-*) ‘to strengthen, firm up’, pres. *dṛ̥m̥hati*, *-te*, *dṛ̥m̥hayati*, nom. ag. *dṛ̥m̥hitár-*, verbal adj. *dṛ̥dhá-*, *dṛ̥m̥hitá-* ‘firm, strengthened, strong, sharp’.⁴⁹ Later, the verb *dṛh-* has influenced the verb *brh-*, hence from ŚB onwards (*pári-*)*bṛ̥m̥hati* ‘to strengthen around’, remade after *dṛ̥m̥hati*, nasal-infixed present.⁵⁰ Therefore, these two roots have the same shapes, i.e., *Drh-/Dṛ̥m̥h-*, *D* being a voiced stop. The semantic link was the image of the strong and sharp speech (the *bráhman-*), that can split open (*ruj-*, *bhid-*) obstacles, such as the rock/prison of (equal to) Vala, and destroy opposite forces, through a formulation ‘strong as stone’ (RV *ádri-barhas-* X.63.3b, said of Aditi, the incarnation of justice, and truthful behavior). Actually, in the Vala myth, in order to make the rock open, the usual weapon (*vájra-*, sometimes named *ádri-* ‘stone’ or *párvata-* ‘rock’)⁵¹ of Indra (vocative *adrivah* ‘provided with the stone’ 49x) is effectively replaced by the *bráhman-* of Bṛhaspati. This tool is even more ‘strong, firm’ than the strongholds of the enemies or mean holders of wealth, that receive often the epithets *dṛ̥dhá-* (49x), *dṛ̥m̥hitá-* (7x):⁵²

RV II.24.3 *tád devánāṃ devátamāya kárt(u)vam, ásrathnan dṛ̥lhá ávradanta vīṭitá /*

úd gá ājad ábhinad bráhmaṇā valám, ágūhat támo v(i)y acakṣayat s(ú)vaḥ //

“Das war zu tun für den Göttlichsten unter den Göttern: / Das Feste lockerte sich, das Harte wurde erweicht, / er trieb die Kühe heraus, den Vala zerbrach er mit dem Gedicht, / verbarg das Dunkel, und ließ den Sonnenschein erscheinen.” (WITZEL/GOTŌ 2007, 389).

RV II.15.8ab (Indra) *bhinád valám áṅgirobhir gṛ̥ṇānó, ví párvatasya dṛ̥m̥hitán(i)y airat /*

“Er spaltete den Vala, von den Aṅgiras besungen, / die Festen des Berges machte er sich zerfallen.” (WITZEL/GOTŌ 2007, 376).

⁴⁷NARTEN 1964, 240 n. 725.

⁴⁸WACKERNAGEL-DEBRUNNER 1930, 259; EWAia II, 254.

⁴⁹EWAia I, 706-707.

⁵⁰GOTŌ 1987, 215.

⁵¹RV I.61.7, I.168.6, VI.22.6, VII.104.19.

⁵²Both adjectives are combined in VIII.14.9b: *dṛ̥lháni dṛ̥m̥hitáni ca*. The notion applies to the weapon, cf. I.130.4ab “Die Keule in seinen Händen festhaltend (*dādṛ̥hānó vájram índro gábhastyoḥ*), schärft Indra (sie) scharf wie ein Vorlegemesser vollständig zum Wurf” (WITZEL/GOTŌ 2007, 243).

The powerful speech receives also the epithet *ḍṛḍhá-* ‘strong, firm’, cf. the phrase *ḍṛḥám vad-* (III.30.5b, Indra), *ḍṛḥá vad-* (X.48.6d, Indra) ‘to speak tough, sharply’. One may then trace the following scheme of parallel items, nouns and verbal roots:

stone (metaphor) = correct formulation (*bráhma-*)

ḍṛḥá-, *ḍṛṛhitá-* ≈ **bṛṛh-* → *brh-*

To put it differently, the awkward form **bṛṛh-* for a root noun was replaced by *bṛh-* under the influence of the alternation *ḍṛh-/ḍṛṛh-* in a root of the same semantic sphere. In addition, this analogical form allowed some paronomasia with the root syllable of *bráh-man-*.

§13. Final step: the allegro form **bṛṛhas pate* of the vocative was remade as *bṛhas pate*. As seen above, the initial accent was extended to the whole paradigm, hence *bṛhas-páti-*. The well-known case of a god’s name based on a vocative form is of course Lat. *Iuppiter/Iūpiter* issued from the PIE vocative **d(i)iéu ph₂ter*, cf. Gk. Ζεῦ πάτερ, Umbrian *Iu pater*, Ved. *dyáuṣ pítar* (first term contaminated by the nominative), nominative Gk. Ζεὺς πατήρ, Ved. *dyáuṣ pitá*.⁵³ While the vocative *bṛhaspate* and the name *bṛhaspáti-* were archaic and frozen forms that belonged originally to the ritual language, in the meantime the inflection of the nt. *bráhma-* had been leveled, and the modernized and regularized naming phrase was *bráhmanas páti-*, that had replaced the original **bṛhṇás páti-*. Except a vague relationship of the root lexeme, the form *bṛhas-* had no longer any formal connection with *bráhma-*.⁵⁴ In any case, *bráhmanas páti-* kept as manifest the meaning that underlay the concept of this god, and it could be used as second name, and even as a kind of gloss, of *bṛhaspáti-*. To conclude, the bards were ignorant of the original pedigree of the first name when they gave to *bṛhaspáti-* a transparent second name, *bráhmanas páti-*, but from a semantic point of view they were absolutely right. Religious and mythological thoughts do not go at the same pace as the language.

⁵³Cf. STRUNK 1982. The example itself is found in many handbooks.

⁵⁴If my argument is accepted, its side result would be the discovery that Old Indo-Aryan had still kept two different allomorphs of the noun ‘formulation’, reflected by nom.-acc. sg. *bráhma* and gen. sg. **bṛhṇás*. This fact is by no means new, since another inherited *-man-* stem has left two allomorphs in the language of the RV, to wit *ātmán-*, masc. and *tmán-*, from an original paradigm with amphikinetic inflection, cf. EWAia I, 164-165 and SCHAFFNER 2001, 81.

Abbreviations

- EVP=RENOU, Louis. *Études védiques et pāṇinéennes*. I-XV. Paris: Institut de Civilisation Indienne, 1955-1969.
- EWAia=MAYRHOFER, Manfred. *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen*. 3 vols. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1986-2001.
- Geldner, RV=GELDNER, Karl Friedrich. *Der Rigveda. Aus dem Sanskrit ins Deutsche übersetzt und mit einem laufenden Kommentar versehen*. I-III. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 33-34-35), 1951.
- Grassmann = GRASSMANN, Hermann. *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda*. Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1872-1875 (5., unveränderte Auflage. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1976).
- KEWai = MAYRHOFER, Manfred. *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*. I-III. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1956-1976.
- LIV = *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben. Die Wurzeln und ihre Präsensstambildungen*. Zweite, erweiterte und verbesserte Auflage bearbeitet von Martin Kümmel und Helmut Rix. Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2001.
- MW = MONIER-WILLIAMS, M. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899.
- Noten = OLDENBERG, Hermann. *R̥gveda. Textkritische und exegetische Noten*.- I. Erstes bis sechstes Buch.- II. Siebentes bis zehntes Buch. Abhandlungen d. königl. Gesellschaft d. Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philol.-hist. Klasse. Neue Folge, Bd. XI, Nro. 5 and Bd. XIII, Nro. 3). Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1909-1912.
- PW = BÖHTLINGK, Otto and ROTH, Rudolf. *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch*. 7 Teile. St. Petersburg: Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1855-1875.
- RV = Samhitā of the R̥gveda. Text after Barend A. VAN NOOTEN and Gary B. HOLLAND (eds.), *Rig Veda. A metrically restored text with an introduction and notes*. Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University Press (Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 50), 1994.

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