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Ví DAYATE AND *VIDATHA-*

In memory of
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1. There are in Sanskrit at least six different verbal roots *dā-*. Since this fact is not sufficiently recognized, it may be useful to preface this study by a brief survey of these roots, arranged according to the three laryngeals $*H_1$ $*H_2$ and $*H_3$ which are contained in them. The first is *dā-* « to bind » (present, *ā̆, ní, sáṃ, -dyati*), as it stands for PIE. $*deH_1$-. The next root, *dā-* « to cut off (plants) », present *dāti*, is only tentatively put in the second place as it is impossible to determine, on the basis of non-Indo-Iranian evidence, which laryngeal it contains. Johanna Narten, *Die Sprache* 14 (1968) p. 130, has rightly pointed out that this verb is different from 3.*dā-* « to divide, separate », present *áva dyati*, aorist *avádat*. As for this verb, its root must be reconstructed as PIE. $*deH_2$-, on account of Greek *$*δαίω$* « to divide » (in Hom. δαίεται ἦτορ etc.), δῆμος, Doric δᾶμος « district, country, land », ἄδατος· ἀδιαίρετος (undivided) Hesychius, and perhaps of δάνος « gift, present, loan, debt ». The fourth root occurs in the Vedic present *dáyate* « to distribute ». Traditionally 3.*dā-* and 4.*dā-* are considered to be one and the same root. However, even the idea of a remote etymological relationship in Proto-Indo-European is not supported by the evidence and in Sanskrit, at any rate, the presents *-dyati* and *dáyate* must be considered separate verbs. The fifth root *dă-* « to pursue, chase, treat as an enemy » has been detected in SV. JB *abhidāti*, RS. *abhidāsati* [1]. If Greek δήω (from *$*dāsō$*) « to find, meet with » is a cognate, the PIE. root is again $*deH_2$-. The sixth root is the well-known *dā-* « to give » (present *dádāti*, aorist *ádāt*) from PIE. $*deH_3$-. As for 7.*dā* « to clear », it is not necessary for our present purpose to enter into details.

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1. See JOHANNA NARTEN, KZ. 78 (1963), p. 56ff., *Die sigmatischen Aoriste im Veda* (Wiesbaden 1964), p. 140.

See *PW.*, Whitney, *Roots*, p. 72, and Mayrhofer, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch* II, p. 35. Since its etymology is unknown, it is here quoted as an addendum.

From the present stems quoted it appears that homophony is rare: the various verbs are not only differentiated by their present formations but to some extent also by their verbal prefixes.

In other Indo-European languages different formations from the corresponding roots are met with. In this connection attention may be drawn to two *es*-presents. The Indo-Iranian instances of this formation were studied forty years ago, on the basis of a remark of Holger Pedersen's, in *Acta Orientalia* 12 (1934), p. 190ff. At that time it was impossible to explain the difference between the reconstructed presents in *-és-mi* on the hand and Ved. *śās-ti*, 3 pl. *śās-ati* on the other, the latter of which seemed to have no ablaut. Johanna Narten has since shown that *śās-ti: śās-ati* is a proterodynamic present and stands for **śáHs-ti: *śáHs-ati*[2]. Since, on the other hand, Old Persian θātiy, θādiy and Avestan *sātar-* prove that *śāsti* is an *s*-present, the proterodynamic present **kēH-s-ti* can be contrasted with the *-és*-presents, which have zero grade of the root vowel but full grade of the morpheme *-és-* and are, accordingly, hysterodynamic presents.

The latter type is actually met with in Greek. The root **deH₁-* « to bind, tie, fetter », is here represented by a reduplicated present δίδημι and by δέω, which apparently stands for **dH₁-és-mi*, cf. δεσμός « band, bond ». Since the morpheme *-és-* was originally a specific characteristic of the present stem, the future δήσω and the aorist ἔδησα are derived directly from the root. Originally they must have been paradigmatically connected with the reduplicated root present, as in πίμπλημι: ἔπλησα.

The Greek cognate of 4.*dā-* « to distribute », present *dáyate*, is also an *és*-present, viz. **dH₂-és-/*dH₂-s-* in δαίομαι (for **das-yo-mai*) « to distribute », δασμός « division of spoil, tribute, etc », δάσματα · μερίσματα Hes. In this case the aorist is formed on the basis of the (prehistoric) present stem, viz. ἐδασσάμην. The non-extended root is extant in the denominative present δατέομαι « to distribute », which has been derived from the past participle δατός. The current explanation of the Greek verb forms[3] is plainly incorrect and should be revised.

2. Vedic (*ví*) *dayate* « to distribute » stands for **dH₂-éy-e-toi*. As we have seen, its formation is different from that of Greek δαίομαι with

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2. See *Pratidānam*, p. 15.
3. See e.g., WILHELM SCHULZE, *Kleine Schriften* (Göttingen 1966), p. 350, n. 1, HJ. FRISK, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* I (Heidelberg, [1957-]1963), p. 341f.

which it is usually considered identical. Since *-ay-* is a morpheme of the present stem, the aorist must have been formed direct from *dā-*. While no forms with *vi-dā-* are attested in Vedic, in *Gatha*-Avestan there occurs a noun *vīdāti-* « assigning of shares » (Y 31.19, 47.6). It is particularly interesting because of Vedic *dāti-*, which will be discussed below [4].

Before examining, however, the problem of the aorist of *dáyate*, let me first illustrate the use of *dáyate* by quoting some passages from the *Rigveda:*

a) without *ví*

I.10.6 *índro vásu dáyamānaḥ*, I.68.6 (Agni) *yás túbhyaṁ dāśad yó vā te śikṣāt tásmai cikitvān rayíṁ dayasva*, I.130.7 (Indra) *mahó dhánāni dáyamāna ójasā, víśvā dhánāny ójasā*, II.13.6 (Indra) *yó bhójanaṁ ca dáyase ca várdhanam*, V.49.3 *adatrayā dayate vāryāṇi pūṣā bhágo áditir*, VII.16.7 *yé maghávāno jánānām ūrvān dáyanta gónam* [5], VII.21.7 *indro maghāni dayate viṣāhyé 'ndraṁ vājasya johuvanta sātaú*, VII.84.4 (Varuṇa-Indra) *prá yá ādityó ánṛtā mināty ámitā śūro dayate vásūni*, VIII.2.31 (Indra) *vājāṁ éko vájrahastaḥ, sanād ámṛkto dayate*, VIII.103.6 (Agni) *yó víśvā dáyate vásu hótā mandró jánānām*, X.147.5 (Indra) *pitvó ná dasma dayase vibhaktā.*

b) with *ví*

I.84.7 (Indra) *yá éka íd vidáyate vásu mártāya dāśúṣe*, III.2.11 (Agni) *vaiśvānaráḥ pṛthupājā ámartyo vásu rátnā dáyamāno ví dāśúṣe*, VI.37.4 (Indra) *váriṣṭho asya dákṣiṇām iyartī 'ndro maghónām tuvikūrmitamaḥ, yáyā vajrivaḥ pariyásy áṁho maghā ca dhṛṣṇo dáyase ví sūrín*, VII.23.4 (Indra) *tvám hí dhībhir dáyase ví vājān*, VII.37.2 (Viśve Devāḥ) *ví no rādhāṁsi matíbhir dayadhvam* (cf. 23.4), IX, 90.2 (Soma) *vánā vásāno váruṇo ná síndhūn ví ratnadhā dayate vāryāṇi*, X.23.1 (Indra) *ví sénābhir dáyamāno ví rādhasā.*

In these passages the following words occur as objects of *dáyate:* *maghā(ni)*, *vásu*, *vásūni*, *vásu rátnā*, *dhánāni*, *rayím*, *rādhāṁsi*, *vājān* and *vāryāṇi* (apart from those in II.13.6 and VII.16.7, which passages have a special character). Some of these words are also sometimes (but not frequently) the object of *dádāti* « to give », e.g., *vásūni*, *vásu*, *vājam* and *rayím*. Most of them, however, including *vāryam*, *vāryāṇi*, occur as the object of the verbal forms *dāti*, *dātu*, e.g., V.48.5 *yáto bhágaḥ savitā dāti vāryam* (cf. in the following hymn V.49.3 *dayate vāryāṇi pūṣā bhágo áditir*), VII.15.11 *bhágaś ca dātu vāryam*, 12 *deváś ca savitā bhágaḥ,*

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4. LAv. *viδātu-* « decomposition, dissolution » seems to be related to Vedic *ava-dyati* « to separate » and has, therefore, been left out of consideration.

5. For *dayanta* see Karl Hoffmann, *Der Injunktiv im Veda* (Heidelberg 1967), p. 258, n. 296.

ditiś ca dāti vā́ryam, VII.42.4 (Agni) *sá viśé dāti vā́ryam*, VI.24.2 *vājī stutó vidáthe dāti vā́jam*, IV.8.3 (Agni) *dāti priyā́ṇi cid vásu*. Since in all these passages the form *dāti* is used without the verbal prefix *ví*, one may hesitate to which of the roots 4.*dā-* and 6.*dā-* it should be assigned. Geldner clearly formulates the problem in a note on his translation of I.10.7. He here draws attention not only to the object *vā́ryam* but also to the past participle *-dāta-* in *tvā́-dāta-* and to the verbal nouns *-dāti-* (in *havyádāti-*, *dā́tivāra-*) and *dā́tu-*. From these various forms he infers that *dāti* is a root present of *dā-* « to distribute », which is synonymous with *day-*. Actually, however, as we have seen, *dayate* is the very present of this root and *dāti* must accordingly be interpreted as the subjunctive of the aorist (see above V.48.5: 49.3). As for the verbal noun *-dāti-*, Geldner's explanation is confirmed by Avestan *vīdāti-*, which has indeed the verbal prefix that often characterizes *dayate* in the *Veda*.

The correctness of the assumption that *dāti* is a subjunctive form is, it seems, proved by a parallel form in *Gatha*-Avestan. In Zarathustra's idiom injunctive forms of the type *dāt̰* can still be distinguished from subjunctive forms such as *dāti*, because the former stood for **daHt* and were monosyllabic, whereas the latter stood for **daH-ati*. Although the Vulgate text reads *dāitī* [dāti] with contraction, the metre shows unequivocally that Zarathustra still pronounced a hiatus [a‘a]. Such a form occurs in Y. 51.6bc

   . . . .   *at̰ ahmāi akāt̰ ašyō*
yā hōi nōit̰ vīdāitī   *apāmē aṅhǝuš urvaēsē*

which may, in a rough reconstruction of Zarathustra's language, be transcribed as follows:

   . . . .   *āt ahmāi akāt ašyah*
yah hai nait vida‘ati   *apamai ahauš vraisai*[6]

« but the worse than bad to him who will not distribute to him at the last turning-point of the world ». As this reconstruction shows, Bartholomae's interpretation of *vīdāitī* as a subjunctive of *vid-* « dienend ehren » (*Altiran. Wörterbuch*, col. 1320) is phonetically impossible. An additional objection is that Vedic *vidh-*, on which Bartholomae based his assumption of Avestan *vid-*, is certainly not of Proto-Indo-Iranian origin[7]. Hanns-Peter Schmidt has long since rightly explained *vīdāitī* as a subjunctive: « wer ihm nicht verteilen sollte »[8]. He, however, connected *vi-dā-* with Vedic *vi-dhā-*. More probably the Avestan form [vida‘ati] is the counterpart to Vedic *dāti*, with the verbal prefix added which is omitted in Vedic. In that case the two verbal forms Av. *vīdāitī* and Ved. *dāti* can be paralleled with the verbal nouns Gathic *vidāti-*: Vedic *dāti-*.

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6. For the decision to write *vr-*, rather than *rv-*, see IIJ. 8, p. 76, n. 3.
7. For Vedic *vidh-* as the result of a specific Indian development see PAUL THIEME, *Untersuchungen zur Wortkunde und Auslegung des Rigveda* (Halle/Saale 1949), p. 36 and KARL HOFFMANN, *Die Sprache* 15 (1969), pp. 1-7.
8. See IIJ. 1, p. 167.

For the occurrence of an active aorist *dāti* by the side of the middle present *dáyate* in the *Rigveda* cf. *pádyate: padāti, vártate: ávṛtat, syándate: ásyān.* See Delbrück, *Altindische Syntax*, p. 235.

3. Middle aorist forms are, however, also attested. They occur by the side of the Yajurvedic present (*nír*) *avadayate* « to give (Rudra or another god) his share in order to get rid of him, to appease, satisfy ». Semantically this verb is clearly parallel to *ava-yaj-* « to get rid of, or remove, by means of a sacrifice ». In the Rigveda *avadayate* is only attested in the aorist form in II.33.5 *áva stómebhī rudrám diṣīya*, which Geldner translates « ich möchte den Rudra mit Lobliedern abfinden ». Grassmann listed the form under *dā-* « to give » but Geldner (ad locum) rightly remarks: « *ava-dā, nir-ava-day* ist das Verb für die Abfindung bes. des Rudra durch Opfer » (with quotations from the *Yajurveda*). Apart from the fact that Geldner, as we have seen, failed to recognize the identity of his roots *dā-* and *day-*, he was no doubt fully right in referring *áva diṣīya* to *avadayate*. In the *Yajurveda* forms of a root aorist occur in *áva rudrám adīmahi* (VS.), *ávāmba rudrám adimahi* (MS. KS. TS.), which are the middle counterparts to Rigvedic *dāti* discussed above. Besides *ava... adāstha* is attested in ĀpGS. These forms, and their relation to the *s*-aorist, are amply discussed by Johanna Narten, *Die sigmatischen Aoriste im Veda*, p. 138ff. However, like PW. III, col. 578, she does not keep them separated from *ávadyati*, aor. *avādāt* (3.dā-) «to separate ». Not only is this semantically and formally different from *avadayate* but the verbal prefix has a different meaning as well: in *áva-dyati* it means « (to separate one thing) from another », whereas in *avadayate* it means « (to give a share to a god in order to remove him) from oneself ». The same difference of relation to the subject is found in Latin *dē-secāre* « to cut off » versus *dē-precārī* « to pray that a thing may not happen », Greek ἀπο-τέμνειν versus ἀπ-εύχεσθαι, German *ab-schneiden* versus *ab-bitten*. While Roth, *PW*. III, col. 519, rightly recognized the same verb in AS. XVI.7.11 *tásmād enam áva daye* « from that I try to avert him », Whitney ignored Roth's interpretation and translated « from that do I cut him off », which is for formal reasons impossible.

Another compound of *dáyate* occurs in AS. XIX.57.6 (5) *duṣvápnyaṁ sárvaṁ dviṣaté nír dayāmasi* « we give away all our evil-dreaming to him who hates us ». Cf. XVI.7.8 *āmuṣyāyaṇé... duṣvápnyaṁ mṛje* « on him of such-and-such lineage I wipe off (my) evil-dreaming ».

Most of the passages for which Roth (l.c.) assumed a semantic development « zutheilen » > « als seinen Theil haben, besitzen » (Grassmann: « verfügen über ») are now interpreted in a different way. There remain one or two passages which, as far as I can see, are still obscure. In II.33.

10 *árhann idáṁ dayase víśvam ábhvam* the translations stick to the traditional interpretation: Geldner rendered in the first edition « mit Fug und Recht besitzest du diese ganze Riesenerscheinung » (cf. *Vedische Studien* 3, p. 119) but in the second « mit Fug und Recht verfügst du über all diese Gewalt », and Renou, *Etudes védiques et pāṇinéennes* 15, p. 41, has « posséder par répartition ». This leaves us with a semantic crux, just as in I.120.3 *prárcad dáyamāno yuvákuḥ* « ayant des parts à lui allouées » (EVP. 16, p. 22). Neither the formula « posséder par répartition », nor « zur Verteilung bereit machen » > « verfügen über » (Grassmann) does actually explain how a meaning « distribute » can develop into « possess ». Perhaps *dayase* in II.33.10 means « thou destroyest » (as Oldenberg, *Noten* ad VII.100.1 suggests), but this is not a meaning one would expect in connection with *árhan*. It does, however, suit the object *ábhvam* and Renou, EVP. 15, p. 159, translates accordingly « tu détruis ».

For VII.100.1 *nú márto dayate saniṣyán yó víṣṇava urugāyáya dáśat* most diverse interpretations have been proposed: « Reue empfinden » (Roth, Grassmann), « wird belohnt (?) » (Geldner), « wird zunichte (?) » (Oldenberg). The fact that the metre invites to scan *daïyate* does not help. Oldenberg refers without any comment to MS. IV.13.8 (210,5), KS. XIX.13 (16,3) *návena pūrvaṁ dáyamānāḥ syāma purāṇéna návam* (= *rakṣantaḥ, kusūlādiṣu sthāpayantaḥ*, comm. on TB. III.6.13.1, but cf. also *dáyamāne* VS. 28.16, VSK. 30.16, TB. II.6.10.3).

4. While *dāti* « to cut off » is generally (but wrongly) connected with *dyati* « to divide, separate », and the latter again with *dáyate*, we have actually to do with three different verbs. To make confusion worse confounded, there occurs in the *Rigveda* another present *dáyate* « to destroy » which also optionally takes the verbal prefix *ví* and in formal respect cannot be distinguished from *(ví) dayate* « to distribute ». The following quotations from the *Rigveda* may illustrate its use:

VI.6.5 *kṣātír agnér durvártur bhīmó dayate vánāni*, X.80.2 *agnír vṛtrāṇi dayate purūṇi* and, with *ví*: III.34.1 (Indra) *vidádvasur dáyamāno ví śátrūn*, IV.7.10 (Agni) *sthirā cid ánnā dayate ví jámbhaiḥ*, VI.22.9 *dhiṣvá vájraṁ dákṣiṇa indra háste, víśvā ajurya dayase ví māyáḥ*. See also Geldner, *Glossar*, p. 79 for TB. II.8.8.2 *kó máṁ ánnaṁ manuṣyò dayeta*.

This verb has generally been regarded as identical with *(ví) dayate* « to distribute ». Cf., e.g., Roth and Grassmann s.v. *day-*, Renou, *EVP*. 15, pp. 41f. 159, who assumes « assigner, répartir > mettre en pièces » and « 'détruire', d'après *ví-day-* » respectively. Similarly Mayrhofer vol. II, p. 21. For Wilhelm Schulze's divergent opinion see below. It should be noted that virtually all attemps to explain the alleged identity of the two verbs are based upon a confusion of 3.*dā-* and 4.*dā-*: they start from a meaning « to divide », which is supposed to have developed into « destroy ». In fact, *áva dyati* « to divide » is an entirely different verb. The

real problem is whether in the text a semantic link can be found between « to distribute » and « to destroy ». This, however, does not exist.

There are, besides, reasons to suppose that *dáyate* « to destroy » represents an entirely different type of formation. Pāṇini VI.4.63 gives a rule concerning a root *dī* (present *dīyate*), which according to the Dhātupāṭha has the meaning *kṣaye* « zu Grunde gehen » (PW. III, col. 641). With this verb *dīyate* Böhtlingk (l.c.) connected *dīná-* « scarce, scanty, weak, feeble, miserable, wretched ». Although this word is seemingly isolated in Sanskrit, it cannot well be analyzed in any other way but as *dī+ná-*, a verbal adjective from a root *dī-*, and in view of Skt. *kṣíṇa-*, Greek ἀλαπαδνός « weak », the derivation from *dī-* « to destroy » is semantically quite possible. If so, *dīyate* stands for *diH-ye-toi*. Only in passing it may be observed that AS. XII.4.3 *kāṇáyā dīyate svám* can be interpreted as « by a one-eyed (cow) his possessions are ruined » but since *dīyate* may be a corruption of *jīyate* (ASPaipp. XVII.16.3) it has no evidential value. Whitney's and Bloomfield's interpretations of the passage are improbable.

Long ago it has been pointed out that *dīná-* can as well be connected with Ved. *dáyate* « to destroy » and further with Greek δειλός « vile, worthless, miserable, wretched »[9]. As Wilhelm Schulze has shown, in all but three of the Homeric occurrences *δεελός can be read for δειλός. His explanation of δειλός from *dwey-elós*, however, cannot be correct. Frisk, who curiously still sticks to it[10], did not consider, first, that the meaning « cowardly », virtually only post-Homeric and mostly attested in Attic, has obviously developed from « vile », instead of the other way round (cf. the similar development in κακός); second that Homer δειλός, in contrast with δεινός, shows no trace of an old initial cluster [dw]: in E 574 τὼ μὲν ἄρα *δεελώ the long last syllable of ἄρα should be explained as in ὑπεὶρ ἅλα, ἐρείομεν (Chantraine, *Grammaire homérique*, p. 101); and third, that -*eye*- has been contracted in pre-Homeric Greek τρεῖς, κεῖνος so that *δεελὸς must stand for *$deiH_1$-lós*, with the same representation of the laryngeal as in Hom. γενετή[11].

From this analysis it follows that *dáyate* « to destroy » stands for PIE. *$déiH_1$-e-toi*. In morphological respect, accordingly, it is entirely differ-

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9. See Kuiper, ZII. 8 (1931), p. 251ff. Cf. Böhtlingk, PW. III, col. 645 « *Das Wort wird als partic. von der sonst unbelegten Wurzel 4. dī angesehen* » and col. 642 sub 4. *dī-* « zu Grunde gehen » (with a reference to Pāṇini 8.2.45), and Whitney, *The Roots, Verb-forms and primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language* (Leipzig 1885), p. 72, where *dīná-* is listed under 3. *dā, di* « bind ».

10. See Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* I, p. 367.

11. See in general R.S.P. Beekes, *The Development of the PIE. Laryngeals in Greek*, p. 228f., who, however, does not discuss δειλός.

ent from *dáyate* « to distribute », which must be analyzed as **dH₂-éy-e-toi*. The present *dīyate*, still known to Pāṇini, apparently outlived the Rigvedic form *dáyate* and is the corresponding passive form **diH-ye-toi*. That in the Rigveda *dáyate* itself could function as a passive (Oldenberg, *Noten* II, p. 66 n. 1) is most unlikely. Also the proposed connection with Greek δάηται [12] must given up.

In conclusion a few words must be said about the hapax *ádyu-* in VII. 34.12 *ádyuṁ kṛṇota śáṁsaṁ ninitsóḥ*. Its meaning is uncertain but Geldner translates « machet die (üble) Rede des Tadelsüchtigen unschädlich! » and refers to Avestan *aidyu-*, to which he also assigns the meaning « unschädlich, harmlos ». Geldner's translation makes good sense in the Vedic and Avestan passages, much more so than « sans éclat » (Renou, *EVP.* 4, p. 93), which does not fit the Avestan passages. Although Geldner presented his interpretation with some diffidence, apparently because he could not give an etymological justification for it, it has since been pointed out that *á-dy-u-*, if actually meaning « harmless », can be connected with *dáyate* « to destroy » and *dīná-* [13]. If so, the Vedic word has lost its laryngeal in composition, in accordance with the general rule [14], but Avestan *aidyu-* (for **a-diH-u-*) must have been trisyllabic in the Gathic dialect.

5. A third present *dáyate* « to pity » is remarkably rare in the older literature. Cf. RS. VII.23.5, AS. XX.12.5 (Indra) *éko devatrá dáyase hí mártān* « thou alone amongst the gods pitiest the mortals », AS. VIII.1.5 *tvám mṛtyúr dayatām* « death shall pity thee », VIII.2.8 *imáṁ dayasva* « pity him ». The earliest occurrence of *dayá-* « pity » is in the *Bṛhad-Ār.-Up.*, but *adayá-* in RS. X.103.7 *adayó vīrāḥ śatámanyur índraḥ* apparently means « pitiless »: the variants *adāyó* TS., *ādāyó* MS. are clearly corruptions. The verb is mostly considered identical with *dáyate* « to distribute ». Cf., e.g., Mayrhofer II.20: « teilt zu, hat Anteil, nimmt Teilnahme, ist mitleidig », and Renou, *EVP.* 15, p. 42. I see no possibility of connecting it with *dáyate* « to distribute ». Its rare occurrence in Vedic (RS. X, AS.!) is rather due to stylistic reasons, since the traditional word in the Vedic poetic idiom was *mṛḷáti*. The original meaning of *dáyate*, which is probably an old verb, may have been wider. Cf. Class. Skt *dayita-* « beloved » and *rakṣati* in Sāyaṇa's commentaries.

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12. See WILHELM SCHULZE, KZ. 29, p. 258 = *Kleine Schriften*, p. 363.
13. See KUIPER, *Museum 59* (Leiden 1954), col. 118.
14. Like *ábhva-*, see *Lingua* 11, p. 225ff. See further IIJ. 15, p. 199.

6. Agni is said to be *sudátra-* (VII.8.3) and *suvidátra-*. This raises the question as to whether the epithets are synonymous. As for the former, it is mostly taken in the sense « well-giving » [15] and it would be attractive to interpret the second in the same way. The deceased Fathers are called *suvidátra-* (X.14.10, 15.3, cf. 17.3), which reminds us of AS. XVIII.3.70, where it is said of the dead « that he may sit in Yama's abode, announcing distributions of wealth (*vidátha-*) » [16]. As for *durvidátra-*, it is the epithet of *Nírṛti*, the detaining regressive force of nether world (X.36.2), and of the inauspicious detaining power of « Not-giving », *Aráti-* (X.63.12). Geldner's translation « leicht aufzufinden » and « unzugänglich » for *suvidátra-* and *durvidátra-* respectively is far from self-evident. Still, Renou follows him in rendering « agréable à trouver », respectively « funeste à rencontrer ». In EVP. 15, p. 58, it is true, he prefers « qui donne ou distribue de manière heureuse », but on p. 108 he returns to « agréable à trouver » and in 16, p. 125 he derives *suvidátra-* from *vid-* « to find ». As far as I can see, « well-dispensing », respectively « ill-dispensing », are the only meanings that suit the context. In that case Renou's dilemma « qui donne ou distribue » can easily be solved, since (with the sole exception of a variant reading in one recension of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, I.13.39 Gorresio) *vi-dadāti* does not occur in Sanskrit. So *-vidátra-* can only be derived from *ví dayate* and must be analyzed as *vi-d(H)-átra-*. Cf., e.g., *r(H)-átna-*, *dh(H)-ána-*. Agni's epithet *suvidátra-* may accordingly be compared with III.2.11, where the same god is said to be *vásu rátnā dáyamāno ví dāśúṣe*.

7. This leads us, in conclusion, to a consideration of *vidátha-*. Conjectures as to its meaning have been based on different etymologies, which have aptly been summarized by Minard [17]: from *vid-* « to know », *vid-* « to find », *vidh-* « to adore » and *vidh-*, *vi-dhā-* « to distribute ». There seems now to be a consensus about its meaning being « distribution of wealth » but derivation from *vidh(ā)-*, although now generally accepted, is impossible. As Max Müller, SBE. 32 (1891), p. 350, has argued with good arguments, and Wackernagel, *Altindische Grammatik* I (1896), p. 128, states as a rule, an aspirate in the root morpheme never loses its aspiration before *-(a)tha*. Cf. *prothátha-*, *sadhástha-*, *avabhṛthá-* [18]. This was obvi-

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15. Vedic *dátra-* and Avestan daθra- « gift »? See Wackernagel, *Altindische Grammatik* I (Göttingen 1896), p. 5, and again Humbach, MSS. 2, p. 10. If this is correct, *dátra-* cannot be explained as *dad-tra-* (Debrunner, *Altind. Gramm.* II/2, p. 170).

16. *yáthā yamásya sádana ā́sātai vidáthā vádan* is the reading of all editions in accordance with the Padapāṭha. No doubt *vidáthā 'vádan* is meant.

17. BSL. 59.2 (1964), p. 52ff.

18. Wackernagel, *Altind. Gramm.* I, pp. 125, 128, Macdonell, *Vedic Grammar*, p. 23, Renou, *Grammaire védique*, p. 48, mention *vidátha-* as the only exception of this kind. The only argument is the authority of Bartholomae, *Studien zur indogermanischen Sprachgeschichte*, I (Halle a.S. 1890), p. 41, whose second instance is also incorrect. (For *ducchúnā-* see Manu Leumann, *Kleine Schriften*, Zürich-Stuttgart 1959, p. 339).

ously the reason why Oldenberg, while discussing in 1900 the close semantic connection between *vidh-* and *vidátha-*, contented himself with the vague statement that also phonetically the words can « very easily » be connected [19]. A comparison with the confident words which he had written only three years earlier [20] shows that his reticence was of set purpose. What he avoided clearly to say was stated explicitly by Thieme in 1949, viz. that Oldenberg assumed a dissimilation of aspirates [21].

The meaning of *vidátha-* leaves little doubt about the origin of the word. Thieme in his excellent study [22] distinguishes the following shades of meaning: a1) distribution in general; a2) distribution of prizes on the occasion of horse-races; a3) distribution of the booty after the battle; a4) distribution of food, drinks and presents on the occasion of entertainments; b) arranging distribution, arrangement, regulation, ordinance (« anordnende Verteilung, Anordnung, Bestimmung »). Some of the passages which Thieme discusses under b) are certainly most difficult, probably because they contain cosmic speculations with reference to social phenomena the exact nature of which cannot be fully grasped. In other passages the meaning would seem simply to be « distribution ». Leaving aside the few difficult places where the exact meaning is obscure, I think it can be said that the meaning of *vidátha-* is « distribution ». It is a formation of the type *uc-átha-* and *vi-d-(H)-átha-* is obviously the verbal noun to *ví dayate* « to distribute ».

Although this will not considerably alter Thieme's interpretation of individual passages, it may clear the way for a better understanding of the basic problem. What indeed remains to be determined is the exact nature of the distributions as a social phenomenon. The verb *ví dayate* is mostly used with reference to Indra and Agni. When it is said of *maghávānaḥ* (VII.16.7), this means that people reiterated (presumably on the occasion of a special festival) Indra's function of *maghávan-*. An indication of the date is possibly contained in I.31.6 *tvám agne vrjinávartaniṁ náraṁ śakman piparṣi vidáthe vicarṣaṇe, yáḥ śúrasātā páritakmye dháne... háṁsi* ... « Toi, ô Agni, tu sauves l'homme (qui s'est engagé dans) la voie tortueuse, (l'homme) en détresse, lors de la répartition-sacrale, ô (dieu) qui circules au loin; toi qui, quand il s'agit de gagner (la bataille entre) héros, quand la course (touche) au terme, quand l'enjeu (est mis), détruis... »[23]. For the second line I would prefer the translation « thou, who slayest... when the prize is put at the turn of the year, when the winning of heroes [sons] is at stake... ». Renou himself rightly refers on p. 77 to *párye diví* « on new year's day ». Who has good sons, has the prestige which is necessary for

19. ZDMG. 54 (1900), pp. 608-611 = *Kleine Schriften*, pp. 108-111.
20. See Oldenberg, SBE. 46 (1897), p. 27.
21. See Paul Thieme, *Untersuchungen zur Wortkunde und Auslegung des Rigveda*, p. 31, n. 1.
22. See *op. cit.*, pp. 35-49.
23. Renou, EVP. 12, p. 5.

« announcing a *vidátha-* »: I.117.25, II.12.15, VIII.48.14 *suvīrāso vidátham
ā́ vadema* « May we, who have valiant sons announce a *vidátha-* ». Verbal
contests and bragging take place during a *vidátha-*: II.1.16 *bṛhad vadema
vidáthe suvī́rāḥ* « May we, with our valiant sons outtalk (our rivals) »,
VII.18.13 *jéṣma pūrúṁ vidáthe mṛdhrávācam* « May we during the *vidá-
tha* surpass Pūru who speaks injuriously* », cf. I.167.3 *sabhā́vatī vi-
dathyèva sáṁ vắk* « like the word that is spoken in the *sabhā́*, on the
occasion of a *vidátha* » and I.162.1 *yád vājino devájātasya sápteḥ pravak-
ṣyámo vidáthe vīryāṇi* « when we shall proclaim at the *vidátha* the
performances (?) of the divine race-horse ». Chariot-races formed part
of the *vidátha-*: the rich man who arrives first with his chariot and is
a distributor of goods is praised at the *vidáthas*, cf. II.27.12 *sá revăn yāti
prathamó ráthena, vasudā́vā vidátheṣu praśastáḥ* « that rich man wins
the chariot-race (cf. *ājíṁ yā-*!), he is praised at the *vidáthas* as a wealth-
giver ». Wealth given away at a *vidátha* lends prestige to the giver: VI.8.5
vidathyàm...rayíṁ yaśásam. To announce a *vidátha-* is a manifestation
of vitality: AS. XII.7.30 *áthā jīváso vidátham ā́ vadema* (after the funeral
rites, at a moment when the vitality of the community is traditionally
stressed) « May we then, living, announce a *vidátha-* », ṚS. X.85.27 (to
the newly-weds) *ádhā jīvrī́ vidátham ā́ vadāthaḥ* « then you will between
you (even) in old age announce a *vidátha* » (but in v. 26 *ā́ vadāsi* is
directed to the wife alone!). A man who is *vidathyà-* and *sabhéya-* has
won prestige by his distributions of wealth and as a speaker in the
sabhā́: I.91.20 *vīrám...vidathyàṁ sabhéyam*. Cf. I.167.3 *sabhā́vatī vida-
thyèva sáṁ vắk* quoted above and see IIJ. 4, p. 265ff. for *sabhéya-*.

The *vidátha-* also had a cosmic aspect. As a reiteration of the creation
it aimed at the winning of water and the sun: I.151.1 *vidáthe apsú* « at the
distribution of wealth, when the water is at stake », V.63.2 *vidáthe
svardṛ́śā* (said of Mitra and Varuṇa, who are « sun-seers » at the *vidátha-*),
AS. XVIII.1.15, where the mythological source (*útsa-*) is called *vidátham
svarvídam* « a sun-finding distribution ». For *svardṛ́ś-* see IIJ. 8, p. 114
n. 97. The contests which aimed at the acquisition of valiant sons, of
of water and sun, etc. on New Years's day have been studied in IIJ. 5,
p. 169ff. With *mahādhané* (p. 177) cf. V.59.2 *antár mahé vidáthe*, X.96.1
mahé vidáthe.

In former papers the resemblance of the Vedic « distribution of
wealth » to the potlatch-ceremonies as discribed by Mauss [24] was pointed
out. Similarly Renou, while discussing such sacrifices as the *Rājasūya*,

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24. According to Kaj Birket Smith, Mauss's explanation of the potlatch insti-
tution as an exchange of goods between sibs can no longer be maintained (see *Studies
in Circumpacific Culture Relations*, Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab,
Hist.-Filos. Meddelelser 46,2 [1973], p. 72). Be that as it may, the Vedic ceremonies
aim among other things at social prominence and prestige, just as the potlatch
ceremonies described by the same author in *Illustrierte Kulturgeschichte der Welt*
(n.d.), pp. 140, 188, 309.

Aśvamedha and *Vājapeya* of the Vedic ritual, wrote: « they are rare and costly occasions, which were a pretext for lavish celebrations, like potlaches in character, which are carefully recorded in classical inscriptions [25]. Others have raised objections to the use of the word potlatch with reference to the Vedic ceremonies [26]. It would seem clear that *vidátha-* is the specific Vedic term for a potlatch-like distribution of wealth and that it is largely matter of terminology and definition, whether or not the term potlatch is used with reference to it. This decision may be left to cultural anthropologists. Lexicographical studies will be no great help in this respect because such controversial issues can only be decided by a study of the total cultural pattern. The terms can only correctly be defined if we know how the phenomena which they denote fit into that pattern. It is hoped that the preceding analysis of the terminology may induce others to undertake such a study, which must be based upon, but at the same time transcend, the traditional philological text-interpretation.

25. RENOU, *Religions of Ancient India*, p. 31.

26. See HANNS-PETER SCHMIDT, *Bṛhaspati und Indra* (Wiesbaden 1968), p. 192, n. 54 (and my reply in IIJ. 13, p. 286) and J. GONDA, *The Vedic God Mitra* (Leiden 1973), p. 105: « There is, as far as I am able to see, notwithstanding the signification, in India, of the gift as understood and described by Mauss, no reason whatever for assuming for Vedic antiquity the existence of the institution known as potlach ».