



AVESTAN LANGUAGE III. THE GRAMMAR OF AVESTAN

iii. The Grammar of Avestan

The morphology of Avestan nouns, adjectives, pronouns, and verbs is, like that of the closely related Old Persian, inherited from Proto-Indo-European via Proto-Indo-Iranian (Proto-Aryan), and agrees largely with that of Vedic, the oldest known form of Indo-Aryan. The interpretation of the transmitted Avestan texts presents in many cases considerable difficulty for various reasons, both with respect to their contexts and their grammar. Accordingly, systematic comparison with Vedic is of much assistance in determining and explaining Avestan grammatical forms.

Old Avestan (OAv.) or Gathic Avestan, the language of Zarathustra, the founder of the Zoroastrian religion, is particularly archaic. Young Avestan (YAv.) is the language of the later texts, the earliest of which may date from the sixth century B.C. It already shows numerous innovations when compared with OAv.

A particular difficulty of Avestan is caused by the fact that many sound changes took place which obscure the original structure of the forms. Note that words ending in *-ā, -ī, -ū, -ē* are OAv., while those ending in *-a, -i, -u, -e* are YAv. Forms that are otherwise identical in OAv. and YAv. are indicated by *-ā/ă, -ī/ĭ, -ū/ŭ, -ē/ĕ*. Apart from forms with these endings, forms that are common



to both OAv. and YAv. are not specified.

1. Nominal inflection.

Like Vedic and Proto-IE., Avestan distinguishes three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. Words designating male and female beings are masculine and feminine respectively, but also many words that designate inanimate objects and concepts are masculine or feminine and not neuter as might be expected. Avestan has three numbers: singular, dual, and plural. The dual is used to refer to two persons or objects. Avestan has eight cases: nominative for the subject, accusative for the direct object, dative for the indirect object, genitive to indicate possession or relation, instrumental to indicate means or association, ablative to indicate separation, locative to indicate location, and vocative used in addressing a person, less commonly, a thing.

The basis of the nominal inflection is the noun stem, which not only conveys the lexical meaning but in most cases also the gender. In general, inflectional categories are marked by endings, most of which indicate at the same time number, case, and, in part, gender. Thus a particular ending may be characteristic of the genitive sing. masc. Neuter nouns are inflected like masc. nouns, except that they have different endings in the nom. and acc. for all three numbers. The nom. and acc. of neuter nouns are always identical. Some noun stems remain unchanged throughout the paradigm, whereas others have different ablaut grades according to the case.

The paradigm followed by a noun or adjective is usually determined by the final sound of its stem. Thus, there are masculines and neuters in *-a-*, feminines in *-ā-*, *-ī-*, *-ū-*, masculines and feminines in *-i-*, *-u-*, masculines in *-n-* and *-r-*, neuters in *-man-* and *-ah-*, and words of all three genders ending in consonants (e.g., *-p-*, *-t-*, *-k-*, *-g-*, *-s-*).

The addition of the case ending to the final sound of the stem often involves special sound changes. Thus, the original Proto-IE. ending of the nom. sing. masc. and fem. of most noun stems is *-s*, and this *-s* is retained in the case of *-a-* stems before *-ca* “and” (in sandhi), but otherwise *-as* developed via *-ah* to *-ō*. After *-ī/ĩ-*, *-ū/ũ-* and some consonants, *-s* became *-š*, e.g., *gairiš* “mountain,” *aṇhuš* “life,” *vāxš* “voice” (< **uāk* + *s*).

*a-*stems. The thematic stems in *-a-* are particularly numerous. Examples are



masc. nouns: *ahura-* “lord,” *mašīia* “mortal,” *yasna-* “worship,” *vīra-* “man,” *zasta-* “hand;” neuter nouns: *aša-* “truth,” *uxδa-* “word,” *xšaθra-* “rule,” *š’iiaoθna* “action;” and adjectives: *aka-* “bad,” *aniia-* “other,” *hauruua-* “entire.”

The masc. *a*-stem inflection is as follows. Sing.: nom. *ahurō*, *yasnas-ca*; —acc. *ahurəm* (*mašīm* < **mašīiəm*; *haurum* < **hauruəm*), —inst. *ahurā/ǎ*; —dat. *ahurāi*, OAv. *ahurāi*; —abl. *yasnāṭ*, *yasnāṭ-ca*, *-aṭ haca*; —gen. OAv. *ahurahiā*, *-aṣ iiā-cā*, YAv. *ahurahe*; —loc. *yesnē/ě* (*zastaiia* < **-ai* + *ā*); OAv. *ōi*; —voc. *ahurā/ǎ*. —Dual: nom. *ahurā/ǎ*; —inst./dat./abl. *ahuraēibiia*; —gen. *vīraiiā*; —loc. OAv. *zastaiiō*. —Plur.: nom. *mašīiā*, *mašīiāṅhō*, *ahura-ca*; —acc. OAv. *mašīiāṅg*, *mašīiāqs-ca*, YAv. *-q/-ə* (*zastə*); —inst. *zastāiš*; —dat./abl. OAv. *-ōibiiō*, YAv. *-aēibiiō*; —gen. *yasnanqm*; —loc. *mašīiāēšū*, YAv. *-aēšuuu* (< **-aišu* + *ā*); —voc. OAv. *ahurāṅhō*.

Neuter *a*-stem inflection differs from masc. *a*-stem inflection only in having special forms in the nom./acc., e.g. sing. *xšaθrəm* “rule;” dual OAv. *š’iiaoθnōi* “the two actions;” plur. *uxδā* “words.”

ā- and *ī-*stems. The inflection of fem. *ā*-stem words, e.g., *gaēθā-* “living being,” *daēnā-* “religion,” and the inflection of fem. *ī*-stem words, e.g., *nāirī-* “woman,” *ašaonī-* “righteous” (fem. adjective from *ašauuan-*) are largely parallel.

The fem. *ā*- and *ī*-stem inflection is as follows. Sing.: nom. *daēnā/ǎ*, *nāirī*; —acc. *daēnqm*, *ašaonīm*; —inst. *daēnā/ǎ*, *daēnaiiā/ǎ*, *-iiā/ǎ*; —dat. *daēnaiiāi*, *ašaoniiāi*; —abl. YAv. *-aiiāṭ*, YAv. *-iiāṭ*; —gen. *daēnaiiā*, *nāirīiā*; —loc. *grīuuaiia* “on the neck;” —voc. *daēne*, *sūra*, *ašaoni*. —Plur.: nom./acc./voc. *gaēθā*, *ašaonīs*; —inst. *gaēθābīš*; dat./abl. *gaēθābiiō*, *ašaonibiiō*; —gen. *gaēθanqm*, *ašaoninqm*; —loc. *gaēθāhu*, *gaēθBāhuua*, *-išu*, *-išuuu*.

i- and *u-*stems. Similarly formed are the paradigms of masc. and fem. stems ending in *-i-* (e.g., *aši-* “reward,” *axti-* “pain,” *gairi-* “mountain,” *paiti-* “master”) and in *-u-* (e.g., *aṅhu-* “life,” *xratu-* “mental vigor,” *daṣ iiu-/ daṅhu-* “land, country,” *mainīiu-* “spirit,” *vanḡhu-/vohu-* “good”). The stem final shows the ablaut grades *-i-*, *-ai-*, *-āi-* and *-u-*, *-au-*, *-āu-* respectively.

The *i-* and *u-*stems inflect as follows. Sing.: nom. *ašiš*, *xratuš*; —acc. *ašīm*, *xratum*; —inst. *ašī*, *xratū*; —dat. (< **-ai-ai*) OAv. *axtōiioi*, YAv. *°patəē*; (< **-au-ai*) *vanḡhauuē*; —abl. YAv. *garōiṭ*, *xratantṭ*; —gen. (< **-ai-*



š) *patōiš*; (< *-aṷ-š) *xratāuš*; —loc. (*-ā < *-ā(i)) *gara*; *vanhāu*; —voc. (< *-ai) *paitē*; (< *-aṷ) *mainiiō*. —Dual: nom./acc. *paiti*, *mainiiū*; —inst. *ašibiiā*, *ahubiiā*; —gen. *mainiuuā* (< *mañiuu-āh); —loc. *aṇhuuō* (< *ahuu-aṷ). —Plur.: nom. (< *-ai-ah) *garaiiō*; (< *-aṷ-ah) *xratauuō*; —acc. (< *-i-Nš) *gairīš*; (< -u-Nš) *xratūš*; —dat. *gairibiiō*, *daṇhubiiō*; —gen. *gairinqm*, *vohunqm*; —loc. *vanhušu*.

The nom./acc. of neuter stems in *-i-* and *-u-* has in all three genders the endings *-ī/ī* and *-ū/ū* respectively.

The only *i*-stem word that is declined irregularly is *paiti-* in the sense of “husband,” which in the dat. sing. has the ending *-ī-ai* instead of *-ai-ai*: YAv. *paiθiiaē-ca*, *paiθe* (Vedic *pátye*). Several *u*-stem words have exceptional forms: nom. sing. OAv. *darəgō.bāzāuš* “long-armed;” inst. sing. *xraθβā* (Vedic *krátvā*); dat. sing. *xraθβε* (Vedic *krátve*), OAv. *aṇhuiiē*, YAv. *aṇṷhe* (< *ahṷ-ai); loc. sing. *daṇhuuō*, *daṇhauua* (< *dahṷau + ā, cf. Vedic *dásyav-i*) reflecting the ending *-aṷ (+ ā).

Root nouns, etc. A large group of masc. and fem. nouns are monosyllabic “root nouns” (that is, nouns whose stem consists of the root alone), and other nouns, not all monosyllabic, that end in *-ā-*, *-ī-*, *-ū-* (e.g., *xā-* “source,” *ərəžə-jī-* “right-living,” *tanū-* “body”) or in a consonant (except *-n-* and *-r-*). The case endings are the same in almost all paradigms. As mentioned above, the original ending *-s* of the nom. sing. appears in various forms: *-ā + s > -āh > Av. -ā* (*raθaē-štā* “charioteer”); *-ī + s, -ū + s > Av. -īš, -ūš* (*ərəžə-jīš, tanūš*); *-p + s > Av. -fš* (*afš < ā/āp-* “water”); *-k (g) + s > Av. -xš* (*vaxš < vā/āc-* “voice,” *druxš < druj-* “lie”); *-ś + s > Av. -š* (*vīš < vis-*, Vedic *vis-*, “settlement”); *-t (d) + s > Av. -s* (*hauruuatās < hauruuata!* “completeness”).

The other endings of this group are: Sing.: acc. *-əm* (*āpən, vācəm*), *-im* (*drujim*); —inst. *-ā/ā* (*visa = Vedic viśā*); —dat. OAv. *-ōi, -ē*, YAv. *-ē = *-ai* (*vīse = Vedic viśé*); —abl. (OAv. = gen.), YAv. *-aṭ* (*vīsaṭ*); —gen. *-ō < *-ah < *-as* (*vīsō = Vedic viśáh*); —loc. *-ī, -iia < *-i + ā* (*vīsi, vīsiia*; Vedic *viśi*). —Dual: nom./acc. *-ā/ā* (*ratu-friia* “delighting the Ratus”); —inst./dat./abl. *-biiā/ā* (*vayžibiiā*); —gen./loc. *-ā* (*aməratātā*). —Plur.: nom. *-ō < *-ah < *-as < Proto-IE. *-es* (*āpō*); —acc. *-ō < Proto-IE. *ns* (*vīsō*); —inst. *-bī/īš* (*vay ibiš*); —dat./abl. *-biiō* (*vīžibiiō*); —gen. *-qm* (*vīsqm*); —loc. *-hu/-šu < Proto-IE. *-su* (*naṇšū* “among the grandsons” < *napt-su).

In a number of paradigms the noun stem shows ablaut. The “strong” cases are



the sing. nom., acc., and loc.; the dual nom.-acc.; and the plur. nom. The remaining cases are “weak,” that is, they show zero grade or a short vowel in the stem. Thus, among the root nouns, we find nom. sing. *āfš*, *vāxš*; acc. sing. *āpəm*, *vācim*, but inst. sing. *apa*, *vaca*.

Ablaut is particularly well preserved in the case of the possessive suffixes **-uant-* / **-mant-* “having,” which in the “weak” cases appear as **-uat-* / **-mat-* (< Proto-IE. **-uŋt-* / **-mŋt-*). Thus, OAv. has acc. sing. *drəguuantəm* but gen. sing. *drəguuatō* from *drəguuant-* “deceitful.” The same ablaut is found in the case of the participles of athematic temporal stems (**-ant-* / **-at-*) and in the case of the adjective *bərəzaŋt-/bərəzat-* “high.” The nom. sing. masc. takes various forms. The participles have *-qs* in OAv. (< **-ant-s*: *pərəsaqs* “asking,” *haqs* “being”) but usually *-ō* in YAv. (*pərəsō*, *bərəzō*), only rarely *-q* (*hq* “being”). The expected form **-uqs* / **-mqs* (< **-uant-s* / **-mant-s*) is attested only in OAv. *θβāuuqs* “like you” and in YAv. *cuuqs* “how big” (< **cī-uant-s*). Elsewhere it is replaced by **-uūā* / **-mā* (< **-uāh* / **-māh*): OAv. *drəguuā*, YAv. *druuā* “deceitful” (< **drugūāh*); YAv. *xratumā* “having mental vigor.”

Stems in -an- and -ar-. Masc. and fem. stems in *-an-* (*-man-*, *-uan-*) and in *-ar-* (*-tar-*) form the nom. sing. in *-ā* (YAv. *-a*) < Proto-IE. **-ē/*-ō* with loss of the final consonant, e.g., *tašā* “carpenter” (Vedic *tákṣā*, Greek *téktōn*); OAv. *ptā*, YAv. *pita* “father” (Vedic *pitā*, Greek *patér*). In the other “strong” cases we find both *-an-*, *-ar-* (< Proto-IE. **-en-*, **-er-*) and *-ān-*, *-ār-* (< Proto-IE. **-on-*, **-or-*), e.g., OAv. *tašānəm* (Vedic *tákṣānam*, Greek *téktōna*); OAv. *patarəm*, YAv. *pitarəm* (Vedic *pitāram*, Greek *patéra*). In the “weak” cases the stem ends in simple *-n-*, *-r-* before an ending beginning with a vowel but in *-a-* (< Proto-IE. **-ŋ-*), *-ər-* (< Proto-IE. **-r-*) before an ending beginning with a consonant, e.g., dat. sing. *tašne* (Vedic *tákṣṇe*); OAv. *ašāunē* (Vedic *ṛtā’vne*) “to the righteous one;” OAv. *fədrōi*, OAv., YAv. *piθrē/ě* (Vedic *pitré*); —dat. plur. *ašauuabiiō* (with *-uabiiō* < **-uŋ-b^hios*); YAv. *ptərəbiiō* (Vedic *pitṛ’bhyah*). The rare gen. sing. YAv. *-arš* (< *-r-š*) corresponds to Vedic *-ur*: *zotarš* “of the sacrificer” = Vedic *hótur*.

Neuter *n*-stems have in the nom.-acc. sing. *-ā/ā* (< Proto-IE. **-ŋ*), e.g., YAv. *nəma* “name” (Vedic *nā’ma*, Latin *nōmen*), in the nom.-acc. plur. both *-āñī/ī*, e.g., *nāmāñī/ī* and *-qñ* (*-māñ/-māñm*), e.g., *nāmāñm*. A peculiarity of the nt. *n*-stems is the formation of the gen. sing. in OAv. *-əñg*, YAv. *-ā[n]* (< **-ənh* < **-ans*), e.g., *cašmāñg* < *cašman-* “eye;” *barəsmāñ* < *barəsmān* “bundle of twigs.” Note also YAv. *zrū* gen. sing. of *zruuan-* masc. “time,” from **zruuū* < **zruuā* <



*zruuəŋh, and abl. sing. *barəsmən* < *-man + t.

Neuter *r*-stems are well attested in Avestan in the nom.-acc. sing. with the ending *-arə*, e.g., *aiiarə* “day”, Vedic *áhar*), *karšuuarə* “continent,” *yākarə* “liver” (Vedic *yákr̥t*, Greek *hēpar*), *vadarə* “weapon” (Vedic *vádhar*). The remaining cases were formed from an *n*-stem in Proto-IE. and Proto-Aryan. Only a few such forms are attested in Avestan, e.g., OAv. *rāzarə* “directive” has *n*-stem forms in the inst. sing. (*rāšnā*), gen. sing. (*rāzəŋg*), and gen. plur. (*rāšnəm*); *huuarə* “sun” (Vedic *súvar*) contrasts with gen. sing. OAv. *xʷəŋg* (disyllabic, < **huuəŋh*), YAv. *hū* (< **huuū* < **huuə* < **huuəŋh*); YAv. *aiiarə* “day” contrasts with gen. sing. *aiiqn* (< **aiəŋh*); **azar* “day” (Vedic *áhar*) contrasts with dat. sing. *asne* (Vedic *áhne*) and gen. plur. *asnəm* (Vedic *áhnām*). In the nom.-acc. plur. we find both *-ārə* and *-qn*, *-əni*, e.g., OAv. *aiiārə* “days,” YAv. *aiiqn* (cf. Vedic *áhāni*).

h-stems. Neuter *h*-stem words with *-ah-* < *-as- have in the nom.-acc. sing. the ending *-ō* < **-ah*, e.g., *manō* “thought” (Vedic *mánaḥ*, Greek *ménos*). Before endings beginning with a vowel, *-ah-* usually becomes *-aŋh-*, e.g., inst. sing. *manəŋhā*, dat. sing. *manəŋhe*, gen. sing. *manəŋhō*. Noteworthy are: nom.-acc. plur. OAv. *manā* with *-ā* < **-ās*, inst. YAv. *manəbiš*, and loc. plur. YAv. *qzahu* “in distresses” (Vedic *ámhasu*). When *ah*-stems are used as masculines, e.g., in the case of the comparative suffix *-iaŋh-*, the nom. sing. ends in *-ā* < **āh*, e.g., OAv. *vax iiā*, YAv. *naŋhā* < **uahiāh* “the better one.” Contrast the neuter sing. OAv. *vahiiō*, YAv. *vaŋhō*, Vedic *vásyaḥ*.

The suffix *-uāh-* of the perfect participle active takes the form *-uš-* in the “weak” cases. Sing.: nom. masc. OAv. *vīduuā* “knowing” (cf. Vedic *vidvā́n*); —acc. YAv. *vīʷuuāŋhəm* (Vedic *vidvā́msam*); —dat. OAv. *vīdušē* (Vedic *vidúše*); —gen. OAv. *vīdušō* (Vedic *vidúšaḥ*). —Plur.: nom. YAv. *vīʷuuāŋhō* (Vedic *vidvā́msaḥ*).

Irregular nouns. For historical reasons a number of words are inflected irregularly. The most important are:

Mazdā- (*Ahura-*) “the Wise (Lord).” Voc. *Mazdā*, nom. *Mazdā*, acc. *Mazdəm*, dat. *Mazdāi*, gen. *Mazdā*. The last three cases have disyllabic endings *-əm*, *-āi*, *-ā*.

paŋtā-/paθ- “way, path.” Sing.: nom. *paŋtā* (cf. Vedic *pánthāḥ*), acc. *paŋtəm* (cf.



Vedic *pánthām*), inst. *paθa* (Vedic *pathā́*), gen. *paθō* (Vedic *patháḥ*), loc. *paiθī* (Vedic *pathī*). —Plur.: acc. *paθō* (Vedic *patháḥ*), inst. *padābīś* (cf. Vedic *pathībhiḥ*), gen. *paθqm* (Vedic *pathā́m*).

kauuāi- “seer” and *haxāi-* “companion.” Sing.: nom. *kauuā*, *huš.haxā*, YAv. *haxa* (Vedic *sákhā*); acc. *kauuaēm*, *huš.haxāim* (Vedic *sákhāyam*); inst. YAv. *haša* (Vedic *sákhya*); dat. YAv. *haše* (Vedic *sákhya*). —Plur.: nom. OAv. *kāuuaiias-cīṭ* (Vedic *kávayaḥ*), YAv. *haxaiō* (Vedic *sákhāyah*); gen. YAv. *kaoiiqm* (< **kauī-ā́m*), *hašqm* (< **sákhī-ām*).

**raji-* “wealth” has “weak” stem **rāi-*. Sing.: acc. YAv. *raēm* (Vedic *rayám*), inst. YAv. *raia* (Vedic *rāyā́*), gen. OAv. *rāiō* (Vedic *rāyáḥ*). —Plur.: gen. YAv. *raiiqm* (Vedic *rāyā́m*).

āiiū/ū “life” (nom.-acc. sing. nt.) has oblique forms in OAv.: inst. *yauuā*, dat. *yauuōi*, *yauuē*, gen. *yaoš.dāuru* “wood” (Vedic *dā́ru*) has gen. sing. YAv. *draoš* (Vedic *dróḥ*). *zānu* “knee” (Vedic *jā́nu*) has abl. plur. YAv. *žnubiias-cīṭ*.

gauu- masc. fem. “ox, cow.” Sing.: nom. *gāuš* (Vedic *gāuḥ*), acc. *gqm* (Vedic *gā́m*), inst. *gauua* (Vedic *gāvā*), dat. OAv. *gauuōi*, YAv. *gauue* (Vedic *gāve*); abl. OAv. *gāuš* (Vedic *góḥ*), YAv. *gaoṭ*, gen. *gāuš* (Vedic *góḥ*), voc. YAv. *gao-spənta*. —Dual: nom. *gāuuā* (Vedic *gā́vā*). —Plur.: nom. YAv. *gauuō* (Vedic *gā́vaḥ*), acc. *gā* (Vedic *gāḥ*), inst. *gaobīś* (Vedic *góbhiḥ*), gen. *gauuqm* (Vedic *gāvām*).

zam- “earth,” *ziam-* “winter,” *dam-* “house,” *ham-* “summer.” Sing.: nom. *zā* (Vedic *kṣā́ḥ*), *ziiā*; acc. *zqm* (Vedic *kṣā́m*), *ziiqm*; inst. YAv. *zāmā* (Vedic *jmā́*), *hama*; abl. YAv. *zəmaṭ*; gen. *zəmō* (Vedic *jmáḥ*), *zimō*, OAv. *dəṅg* (Vedic *dán* < **dám-s*); loc. *zəmə* (Vedic *kṣmay-ā́*), *zəmi* (Vedic *kṣāmi*), OAv. *dqm*, YAv. *dqmi*.

-yan/-yn- “striking,” in *vəṛəθra-jan-* “breaking the resistance.” Sing.: nom. masc. *vəṛəθra-jā* (Vedic *vṛtra-hā́*); acc. *vəṛəθrā-janəm* (Vedic *vṛtra-hānam*); dat. *vəṛəθra-yne* (Vedic *vṛtra-ghné*).

YAv. *span-/sun-* “dog.” Sing.: nom. *spā* (Vedic *śvā́*); acc. *spānəm* (Vedic *śvānam*); dat. *sūne* (Vedic *śúne*); gen. *sūnō* (Vedic *śúnaḥ*). —Dual: nom. *spāna* (Vedic *śvā́nā*). —Plur.: nom. *spānō* (Vedic *śvā́naḥ*); gen. *sunqm* (Vedic *śúnām*).



nar- “man” and *star-* “star.” Sing.: nom. OAv. *nā*, acc. *narəm* (Vedic *náram*), YAv. *stārəm*; dat. OAv. *narōi*, YAv. *naire* (Vedic *náre*); gen. OAv. *nərəš*, YAv. *narš*; voc. YAv. *narə*. —Plur.: nom. OAv. *narō* (Vedic *náraḥ*), YAv. *stārō*; acc. OAv. *nərəqš*, YAv. *nərəš*, incorrect *nərəuš* (cf. Vedic *nṛ́n*), YAv. *strəš*, incorrect *strəuš*; dat. OAv. *nərəbiiā-cā*, YAv. *nərəbiiō*, *nəruiiō* (Vedic *nṛbhyaḥ*); abl. *stərəbiiō*; gen. YAv. *narəm* (Vedic *nārām*); OAv. *strəm-cā*, YAv. *strəm*.

ātar- masc. “fire” has been remodeled from an old neuter. Sing.: nom. OAv., YAv. *ātarš* (< **ātr-š*); acc. OAv. *ātrəm*, YAv. *ātrəm* (<**ātr-m*); inst. OAv. *āthrā* (< **āthr-ā*); dat. YAv. *āθre*; abl. OAv. *āθras-cā*, YAv. *āθraṭ*; gen. OAv., YAv. *āθrō*; voc. OAv., YAv. *ātarə* (< **ātr*). —Plur.: acc. (< nom.) YAv. *ātarō*; inst. YAv. *ātarəbiiō*; gen. YAv. *aθrəm*.

Pronouns. The irregularity of the Avestan pronominal inflection is almost entirely inherited from Proto-Indo-Ir. and Proto-IE. Thus the personal pronouns for the first and second persons have in all three numbers stem forms in the nominative differing from the stems of the remaining cases (cf. English I : me, we : us). In the case of the personal pronouns no distinction of gender is made, but masculine, feminine, and neuter are distinguished in the demonstrative, relative, and interrogative pronouns.

Personal pronoun for the first person (“I, we both, we”). Sing.: nom. *azəm*; acc. *məm*; dat. OAv. *maibiiā*, *maibiiō*, YAv. *māuuōiia*, *māuuaiia-ca* (< **mauiā* < **maβiā*); abl. *maṭ* (OPers. *-ma*); gen. OAv. *mā.nā*, YAv. *mana* (OPers. *manā*). Enclitic forms: acc. *mā*; gen., dat. OAv. *mōi*, YAv. *mē* (OPers. *-mai*). —Dual: nom. OAv. *vā*; acc. *āuuā*. Enclitic gen. *nā*. —Plur.: nom. *vaēm* (< **uaiəm*, cf. OPers. *vayam*); acc. OAv. *əhmā*, YAv. *ahma*; inst. OAv. *əhmā*; dat. OAv. *ahmaibiiā*; abl. OAv. *ahmaṭ*; gen. YAv. *ahmākəm*. Enclitic forms: acc. OAv. *nā*, YAv. *nō*; gen., dat. OAv. *nā*, YAv. *nō*.

Personal pronoun for the second person (“you”). Sing.: nom. OAv., YAv. *tū*, OAv. *tuuəm*, YAv. *tūm* (OPers. *tuvam*); acc. *θβəm* (OPers. *θuvām*); inst. *θβā*; dat. OAv. *taibiiā-cā*, *taibiiō*; abl. OAv. *θβaṭ*; gen. *tauuā/ā*. Enclitic forms: acc. *θβā*; gen., dat. OAv. *tōi*, YAv. *tē* (OPers. *-tai*). —Dual: gen. YAv. *yauuākəm*. —Plur.: nom. *yūžəm*, OAv. *yūš*; inst. OAv. *xšmā*; dat. OAv. *xšmaibiiā*, YAv. *xšmāuuōiia*; OAv. *yūšmaibiiā*, YAv. *yūšmāoiio*; abl. OAv. *xšmaṭ*, OAv., YAv. *yūšmaṭ*; gen. OAv., YAv. *xšmākəm*, YAv. *yūšmākəm*. Enclitic forms: acc. OAv. *vā*, YAv. *vō*; gen., dat. OAv. *vā*, YAv. *vō*.

Personal pronouns for the third person (“he, she, it; they”) are represented by



various forms of the stems *i-*, *h(i)-/š(i)-*, *di-*. All forms are enclitic except for OAv. *hī* (sing. nom. fem. and dual nom. nt.). Sing.: acc. masc. fem. *īm*, *hīm*, YAv. *dim* (OPers. *dim*); gen., dat. OAv. *hōi*, YAv. *hē/šē* (OPers. *-šaiy*). —Dual: acc. OAv. *ī*. —Plur.: acc. OAv. *īš*, OAv., YAv. *hīš* (OPers. *-šīš*), YAv. *dīš* (OPers. *-dīš*). —Neuter forms: acc. sing. OAv. *ī̄*, YAv. *ī̄*, *dī*; plur. YAv. *ī*, *dī*. —Reflexive sing. dat. YAv. *hūuāuuōiia* (< **huuαβiā*).

Demonstrative pronouns: *ta-* “this,” *aēta-* “this,” *auua-* “that one over there (yonder);” relative pronoun *ya-* “who, which;” interrogative pronoun *ka-/ca-* “who, which” (when followed by the enclitics *-cā/ā*, *cī/ī̄*, this becomes an indefinite pronoun “whoever, whichever”). The case endings of all these pronouns are largely the same in the masc. and nt. as those of the *a*-declension nouns and in the fem. as those of the *ā*-declension nouns. Examples: masc. sing. nom. OAv. *yā*, *kā*, YAv. *yō*, *kō*; acc. *tām*, *kām*, OAv. *yām*, YAv. *yim*, *aom* (< **auam*, OPers. *avam*); gen. YAv. *aētahe*, *auuaṛhe*, OAv. *yehiā*, YAv. *yeṛhe*, OAv. *kahiā*, *cahiā*, YAv. *kahe*, *kahiā-cī*; —plur. acc. OAv. *tāṅg*, *tā*, YAv. *tā*, *tā*, YAv. *auuū*, *aū* (< **auā*).

Characteristic pronominal forms are, e.g., masc. sing. (from the pronoun *ta-*, *aēta-*) YAv. *hā*, *hō* (Vedic *sá*), YAv. *aēšō* (Vedic *eṣá*); (from the pronoun *auua-*) OAv. *hūuō* (< **hau*), YAv. *hāu* (= fem.) (OPers. *hauv*); —inst. *kana*; —dat. *aētahmāi*, *yahmāi*, *kahmāi*, *cahmāi* (Vedic *yásmai*, *kásmai*); —abl. *aētahmā̄*, *yahmā̄*, *kahmā̄* (Vedic *yásmāt*); —loc. *aētahmi*, *yahmī̄*, *kahmi*, *cahmi* (cf. Vedic *yásmīn*, *kásmīn*). —Plur. nom. OAv. *tōi*, YAv. *tē*, *aēte* (Vedic *té*, *eté*), *auue* (OPers. *avaiy*), OAv., YAv. *yōi*, *kōi* (Vedic *yé*, *ké*); —gen. *aētaēšqm* (OPers. *avaišām*), *yaēšqm* (Vedic *yéšām*). —Neuter sing. nom./acc. OAv., YAv. *tā* (Vedic *tát*), YAv. *auuā*, OAv. *hīā*, YAv. *yā* (Vedic *yát*), *kā* (Vedic *kát*). —Fem. sing. nom. *hā*, *aēša* (Vedic *sā*, *eṣā*), YAv. *hāu* (OPers. *hauv*); —inst. *aētaiia* (Vedic *etáyā*); —dat. YAv. *auuaṛhāi* (< **auahīāi*); —abl. *auuaṛhā*; —gen. *aētaṛhā* (< *aitahīāh*, Vedic *etasyāh*); —loc. *yeṛhe* (< **īahīā*, cf. Vedic *etásyām*). —Plur. gen. YAv. *aētaṅqm* (Vedic *etā́sām*).

A special pronoun with the meaning “this one here” is based on the stems *a-* and *i-/ai-*: masc. sing. nom. OAv. *aiiām*, YAv. *aēm* (Vedic *ayám*); —acc. YAv. *imam*; —inst. *anā* (OPers. *anā*); —dat. *ahmāi* (Vedic *asmai*); —abl. *ahmā̄*; —gen. OAv. *ahiiā*, YAv. *ahe*, *aṛhe* (Vedic *ásya*); —loc. *ahmī̄*, *ahmiia*. —Dual nom./acc. *ima*; —dat. *ābiia*; —gen. *aiiā*. —Plur. nom. *ime*; —acc. *ima*; —inst. OAv. *āiš*, *anāiš*, YAv. *aēibiš*; —dat. *aēbiō*; —gen. *aēšqm*; —loc. *aēšu*, *aēšuua*.



—Neuter sing. nom./acc. *imaṭ*. —Plur. nom./acc. OAv. *ī*, *imā/ā*. —Fem. sing. nom. YAv. *īm* (< **iṭam*, Vedic *iyám*); —acc. *imqm*; —inst. OAv. *ōiiā*, YAv. *ā/āiia* (Vedic *ayā*); —dat. OAv. *ax iiāi*, YAv. *aṛhāi* (Vedic *asyāi*); —abl. *aṛhāṭ*; —gen. *aṛhā*; —loc. *aṛhe* (< *ahīā*). —Dual dat. OAv. *ābiiā*. —Plur. nom./acc. *imā*; —inst. OAv. *ābīš*; —dat. *ābiiō*; —gen. *āṛhqm* (Vedic *āsām*); —loc. *āhū*, *āhuua*.

In addition to the interrogative pronoun *ka-/ca-* there is a stem *ci-* (*ci-* + *cā/ā* “someone,” *naē-ci-* “no one”): sing. nom. masc. *ciš*, *ciš-cā/ā*, *naē-ciš* (Latin *quis*, *quis-que*, *nīquis*); —acc. *cīm*, *naē-cim*. —Nom./acc. nt. *ciṭ* (Latin *quid*), *naē-ciṭ*. —Plur. nom. masc. *caiiō*, *caiias-cā*; —nom./acc. nt. *cī/ī-cā/ā*.

The possessive pronouns OAv. *ma-* “my,” OAv. *θβa-* “your” (sing.), and OAv., YAv. *x^va-*, YAv. *hauua-*, *huua-* “one’s own” also have some pronominal endings, e.g., masc. sing. *θbahmāi*, *θbahmāṭ*, *θbahmī*, *x^vahmi*. —Plur. nom. *θβōi*. —Fem. sing. nom. *θβōi* (< **tuā + i*), *x^vaē-cā* (< **suā + i*); —inst. *maiiā*; —dat. OAv. *x^vax iiāi*; —gen. *θβax iiā*. Note also the pronominal endings used with *aēuua-* “one,” *aniia-* “other,” and *vīspa-* “all:” sing. *aniiahmāi*, *vīspāmāi* (< **-ahmāi*, Vedic *vīśvasmai*), *aēuuaahmāṭ*, *aēuuaahmi*. —Plur. *aniie*, *vīspe* (Vedic *anye*, *vīśve*), *aniiaēšqm*, *vīspaēšqm* (Vedic *anyēšām*, *vīśvešām*). —Fem. sing. gen. *aēuuaṛhā*.

2. Verbal inflection.

Many Avestan verbal forms have counterparts in the Vedic language. Since Vedic is attested by an extensive literature that enables its grammatical forms to be determined with exactitude, it is possible to establish the complicated Avestan verbal system with considerable certainty by comparing it systematically with Vedic. With the exception of certain nominal forms such as participles, every verbal form terminates with a personal ending. The personal endings determine the first, second, and third persons in singular, dual, and plural. In addition, they indicate at the same time the diatheses active (e.g., English “I praise”) and middle (e.g., English “I praise in my own interest, we praise each other, I am praised”). The middle may be reflexive, reciprocal, or passive, etc. There are four kinds of personal endings: the primary and secondary endings, the imperative endings, and the perfect endings. The secondary endings indicate only the person and the diathesis whereas the primary endings indicate also present time (e.g., English “I am praising”). The special perfect endings indicate, together with the perfect stem, the state



arrived at as a result of an action (“I have praised”). The basis of a verb form is the so-called “verb root,” which conveys the lexical meaning of the verb. By means of changes of the verb root or by the addition of suffixes the so-called “tense stems” are formed. These are known as the present, aorist, and perfect stems. The future stem is typologically a present stem.

When an imperative ending is added to a present stem the verb form expresses a command (imperative present). The addition of a primary ending to the present stem results in an indicative present whereas the addition of a secondary ending to the present stem results in an injunctive present. The injunctive present is used to mention an action without reference to time, one which is general or adhortative, past or future. The preterite is expressed by the imperfect, which is formed by prefixing to the verbal stem the augment *a-*. Whereas the augment *a-* is common in Vedic and OPers., it is seldom found in Avestan.

Originally the aorist stem was used to indicate the perfective aspect of an action, that is the view of a completed action in its entirety, but this function of the aorist is usually no longer evident in the Avestan texts. The aorist stem can take only imperative or secondary endings. With secondary endings the aorist is known as the injunctive aorist, which has functions corresponding to those of the injunctive present. The aorist stem with prefixed augment *a-* and secondary endings forms the indicative aorist, which has preterite meaning.

The moods of the verb are: indicative, injunctive, imperative, subjunctive, and optative. The subjunctive expresses volition and futurity. It is characterized by the addition of the suffix *-a-* to the high-grade present, aorist, and perfect stems. The subjunctive may take either primary or secondary endings, no difference in meaning being discernible. The optative expresses volition and potentiality. It is formed by adding to the low-grade tense stems the suffix *-iā/-ī-* and the secondary endings.

The present system. Since the Proto-IE. period, present stems have been formed in many different ways, but it has in most cases not been possible to determine the reason for any particular formation. From the point of view of morphology two broad groups can be distinguished: the thematic and the athematic present stems. The thematic present stems end in the thematic vowel *-a-*, which with certain variations is retained before the personal endings. In the case of the athematic present stems the personal endings and the suffixes for subjunctive and optative are added directly to the various present stems



instead of being preceded by the thematic vowel.

Thematic present stems. To the full or zero grade of the verb root is added the thematic vowel *-a-* alone or a suffix ending in *-a-*: *-iā-*, *-aiā-*, *-sa-* (= Vedic *-cha-*). Examples: *bar-a-* “carry,” *spas-iiā-* “espy,” *kir-iiā-* (passive) “be done,” *xš-aiiā-* “rule,” *vaxš-aiiā-* (causative) “make grow,” *ja-sa-* “come” (= Vedic *gáccha-* < Proto-IE. *gʷm-skʰé-*). The root can receive an infix *-n-*, e.g., *kərənta-* “cut” (Vedic *kṛ-n-ta-*). The desideratives are characterized by reduplication and the addition of the suffix **-sa-* (*-ha-*, *-ša-*), e.g., *su-srū-ša-* “wish to hear.” In some cases the present stems look quite different from the root, e.g., *sixša-* (Vedic *śikṣa-*) “wish to be able (*sak*), learn,” *diβža-* (Vedic *dipsa-*) “wish to cheat (*dab*).” The future stem in **-sīa-* (*-hiā-*, *-šīa-*) can also be classified as a thematic present, e.g., *vax-šīiā* “I shall say.”

Inflection of the thematic present stems. Active: indic. pres. sing. 1. *barāmi* (OAv. *pərəsā* “I ask”), 2. *barahi*, 3. *baraitī*. —Dual 3. *baratō*. —Plur. 1. *barāmahi*, 2. *-aθā*, 3. *barənti*. —Inj. pres. sing. 1. *barəm*, 2. *barō*, 3. *baraṭ*. —Dual 3. *-atəm*. —Plur. 2. *-ata*, 3. *barən*. —Subj. pres. sing. 1. *barāni*, 2. *barāhi*, 3. *-āiti*, *barāṭ*. —Dual 1. *-āuua*, 3. *barātō*. —Plur. 1. *barāma*, 2. *āθā*, 3. *barānti*, *barəṇ*. —Opt. pres. sing. 2. *barōiš*, 3. *barōiṭ*. —Plur. 1. *-aēma*, 2. *-aēta*, 3. *baraiiən*. —Imv. pres. sing. 2. *bara*, 3. *baratu*. —Plur. 2. *barata*, 3. *barəntu*. —Part. pres. *barənt-*.

Middle: indic. pres. sing. 1. *baire*, 2. *-ahe*, 3. *baraite*. —Dual 3. *baraēte*. —Plur. 1. *barāmaide*, 2. OAv. *dīdrayžō.duiiē* “you wish to fasten” (< **-a-duai*, Vedic *-adhve*), 3. *barənte*. —Inj. pres. sing. 1. *baire*, 2. *-aṇha* (< **-a-sa*), 3. *barata*. —Dual 3. *-aētəm*. —Plur. 3. *-ənta*. —Subj. pres. sing. 1. *-āi*, *āne*, 2. *-āṇhe* (< **-āhai*), 3. *-aite*. —Plur. 3. *-āite*. —Opt. pres. sing. 2. *-aēša*, 3. *baraēta*. —Plur. 1. *-ōimaidī*, 2. *-ōiδβəm*, 3. *-aiiaṇta*. —Imv. pres. sing. 2. *baraṇṇha*, 3. OAv. *vərəziiātqm* (< **-atqm*). —Plur. 2. OAv. *gūšōdum* “listen” (< **-a-duəm*), 3. *-əntqm*. —Part. pres. *barəmna-*.

Athematic present stems. In the case of the athematic present stems the personal endings are added to the root or to the present suffix directly, that is, without the intervention of the thematic vowel *-a-*. The most important classes of these present stems are: 1. the root presents; 2. the reduplicated presents; 3. the present stems containing infix *-n-*; 4. the present stems ending in *-nā-*; 5. the present stems ending in *-nu-*. These present stems are affected by ablaut: they have the full grade of the root or the infix or suffixes in the case of the active singular forms of the indic., the inj., and, in part, of the imv. as well as



throughout the active and middle paradigms of the subj. The remaining forms have the zero grade as far as that is phonologically possible.

1. The root presents. In this case the pres. stem is identical with the verb root, e.g., *ah-/h-* “to be” (Vedic *as-/s-*), *mrauu-/mrū-* “to speak” (Vedic *bravⁱ-/brū-*); *vas-/us-* “to wish” (Vedic *vaś-/uś-*). A subgroup has the long grade in the act. sing. indic. and inj. and otherwise the full grade, e.g., *stāuu-/stauu-* “to praise,” *tāš-/taš* “to fashion;” *aog-* “to speak;” *sāh-* “to instruct.”

Active inflection: indic. pres. sing. 1. *ahmī/ī*, *mraomī/ī*, *vasəmī*; *stāumī*, 2. *ahī/ī*, *vašī/ī*, 3. *astī/ī*, *mraoiti*, *vaštī*; *tāšti*, *sāstī*. —Dual 1. *usuuahī*, 3. *stō* (Vedic *s-taḥ*), *mrūtō*. —Plur. 1. *mahī/ī* < **hmahi* (Vedic *s-masi*), *usəmahī* (Vedic *úsmási*), 2. *stā* (Vedic *s-tha*), *uštā*, 3. *həntī/ī* (Vedic *s-ánti*). —Inj. pres. sing. 1. *mraom*, 2. *mraoš*, 3. *mraoṭ*; *tāšt*. —Plur. 2. *mraotā*, *uštā*. —Subj. pres. sing. 1. *anhā*, *mrauuā*, *mrauuāni*, 2. *aṅhō*, 3. *aṅhaṭ*, *aṅhaitī*, *vasaṭ*. —Plur. 1. *āṅhāmā* (< **aṅhāma*), 3. *aṅhən*, *vasən*. —Opt. pres. sing. 1. OAv. *í iiəm* (Vedic *s-yā́-m*), 2. *í iiā*, *mruiiā*, 3. *í iiāt*/YAv. *hiiāt*, *usiiāt*, *sāhiṭ*. —Plur. 1. *í iiāmā*, 2. *í iiātā*, 3. YAv. *hiiārə*. —Imv. pres. sing. 2. OAv. *zdī* (< **s + d^hi*) “be!,” *mrūi’i*, 3. *astū*, *mraotū/ū*. —Plur. 2. *staota*, 3. *həntu*. —Part. pres. *haṅt-* (sing. nom. masc. *həs*, acc. *həntəm*, gen. *hatō*. —Plur. gen. *hātqm*. —Fem. stem *hā/āiti-*), *usaṅt-*; *stauuat-* (< **stéu-ṅt-*).

Middle inflection: indic. pres. sing. 1. *mruie* (< *mruai*); *aojōi*, 3. *mrūite*. —Plur. 1. *mrūmaidē*; *aogəmadaē-cā*, *staomaide*, 3. *aojaite* (Vedic *óhate* < **-ṅtoi*). —Inj. pres. sing. 1. *aojī*, 2. *aoyžā* (< **augg^h + sa*), 3. OAv. *aogədā* (< **augg^h + ta*), YAv. *aoxta*, *staota*. —Subj. pres. sing. 1. *aojāi*, *mrauuāne*, *stauuāne*. —Opt. pres. sing. 2. *mruuiša*, 3. *mruuīta*; *aojīta*. —Part. pres. *mruuāna-*, *aojana-*.

2. Reduplicated present stems. The commonest such verb is **da-dā-*, which continues both Indo-Ir. *dā* “to give” and *d^ha* “to put.”

Active inflection: indic. pres. sing. 1. *da’qmi*, 2. *daḍāhi*, 3. *dadāitī*, *daḍāitī*. —Plur. 1. *dadəmahī*, YAv. *dənmahi*, 3. *dadaitī* (Vedic *dád(h)ati* with *-ati* from **-ṅti*). —Inj. pres. sing. 1. *daḍam*, 2. OAv. *dadā*, 3. OAv. *dadāṭ*, YAv. *daḍāṭ*. —Plur. 3. *dadaṭ* (< **d^ha-d^h-ṅt*). —Subj. pres. sing. 1. *daθāni*, 3. OAv. *dadaṭ*, YAv. *daθaṭ*. —Plur. 1. *daθāma*, 3. *daθən*. —Opt. pres. sing. 1. *dai’iiqm*, 2. *daidīš*, *daiθiiā*, 3. OAv. *daidīṭ*, YAv. *dai’iṭ*, YAv. *dai’iiāt*, *daiθiiāt*. —Dual 3. *dai’itəm*. —Plur. 3. *daiθiiqn*, *daiθiiārəš*. —Imv. pres. sing. 2. *dazdi* (< **d^ha-d^h-d^hi*), 3. *dadātū*. —Plur. 2. *dasta*. —Part. pres. *dadat-* (sing. nom. masc. *daḍō*, *daθō*).



Middle inflection: indic. pres. sing. 1. *dadē*, *daiθe*, 3. *dastē* (Vedic *datté*), *dazdē* (< **d^ha-d^{hz} + tai*). —Plur. *dadəmaidē*. —Inj. pres. sing. 3. *dazdā* (< **d^ha-d^{hz} + ta*), *dasta*. —Subj. pres. sing. 3. *daθaite*. —Plur. 3. *dadəntē*. —Opt. pres. sing. 2. *daiθiša*, 3. *daidītā*, *daiθīta*. —Imv. pres. sing. 2. *dasuuā* (Vedic *d(h)atsva*). —Plur. 2. *mąz-dazdūm* (< **d^ha-d^{hz}-d^huam*) “bear in mind!” —Part. pres. *daθāna-*.

3. Present stems containing infixes *-n-*. In the act. sing. forms of the indic. and inj. and throughout the subj., *-na-* is infixes but elsewhere only *-n-*, e.g., *vi-na-d-/vi-ŋ-d-* “to find,” *ci-na-h-*, *ci-na-s-/cīš-* (< *ci-N-š-*) “to assign,” *mərə-ŋ-c-* “to destroy.”

Active inflection: indic. pres. sing. 1. *cinahmi*, 3. *cinasti*, *vinasti*. —Plur. 1. *cīšmahī*, 3. *viṇdənti*. —Inj. pres. sing. 3. *cinas*. —Plur. 3. *viṇdən*. —Opt. pres. sing. 3. *cīšiiāṭ*, *mərəšiiāṭ* (< **mṛŋčīāt*). —Plur. 3. *čīšiiṇ*. —Imv. sing. 2. *cīzdī*.

Middle inflection: indic. pres. sing. 3. *mərəyənte* (< **mərəŋ(g)te*). —Plur. 1. *cīšmaide*, 2. *mərəŋgəduiē* (< **mṛng-d^huaj*), 3. *mərəŋcaite* (with *-aitē* < **-ŋtoj*). —Opt. pres. sing. 3. *mərəŋcīta*, *viṇdīta*. —Part. pres. *viṇdāna-*.

4. Present stems in *-na-*. In the act. sing. forms of the indic. and inj. and throughout the subj. the affix *-nā-* is used but elsewhere only *-n-*, e.g., *frī-nā-/frī-n-* “to delight,” *gərəβ-nā-/gərəβ-n-* “to seize,” *pərə-nā-/pərə-n-* “to drive away,” *vərə-n-* “to choose.”

Active inflection: indic. pres. sing. 1. *frīnāmi*, 3. *gərəβnāiti*. —Plur. 1. *friiṇmahī* (< **frinmahī*), 3. *frīnənti*. —Subj. pres. sing. 1. *frīnāni*, 3. *frīnāṭ*. —Plur. 3. *gərəβnṇ*. —Imv. plur. 3. *frīnəntu*.

Middle inflection: indic. pres. sing. 1. *vərənē*, 3. *vərəntē*. —Inj. pres. sing. 3. *vərənta*. —Plur. 3. OAv. *vərənātā* (with *-ātā* < **-ata*). —Subj. pres. sing. 1. *frīnai*, *pərənāne*, 3. *pərənāite*.

5. Present stems in *-nu-*. The suffix appears in the full grade as *-nau-* in the sing. forms of the indic. and inj. active. In the subj. it takes the form *-nau-a-* and elsewhere it appears as *nu-* or *-nu-*. The commonest such verb is *kar* “to make, do.”

Active inflection: indic. pres. sing. 1. *kərənaomi*, 3. *kərənaoiti*. —Plur. 3. *kərənuuainṭi*. —Inj. pres. sing. 3. (*a-*)*kərənaoṭ*. —Subj. pres. sing. 1. *kərənauuāni*. —Plur. 3. *kərənaon* (with *-naon* < **-nouən*). —Opt. pres. sing. 3. *kərənuiiāṭ*. —Imv. pres. 2. *kərənūi*. —Part. pres. *kərənanṭ-*.



The aorist system. As shown by Vedic, the aorist stem indicates the perfective aspect. Apart from the consideration of aspect, the inj., subj., opt., and imv. forms of the aorist have the same functions as the corresponding forms in the present system. The indic. aor. is formed by prefixing the augment *a-* to the injunctive. The indic. aor. is restricted to the past. Three types of aorist are found in Avestan: 1. thematic aorists, 2. athematic root aorists, 3. sigmatic aorists.

1. The thematic aorist. There are three kinds of thematic aorist. The thematic vowel may be added to the full grade of the root (e.g., *taša-* “to fashion,” Vedic *tákṣa-*; *hana-* “to acquire,” Vedic *sána-*) or to the zero grade of the root (e.g., *sīša-* “to instruct,” Vedic *śiṣa-*, from the root *sāh*, Vedic *sās*; *xša-* “to rule” from the root *xšā*, Vedic *kṣā*; *xsa-* “to look” from the root *xsā*, Vedic *kśa*) or to the reduplicated root (e.g., *vaoca-* “to speak,” Vedic *vóca-* < **ua-ṽc-a-* from *vac*).

The thematic aorist inflection corresponds to that of the thematic present stems. Noteworthy forms are: active inj. *ā-xšō* “look at,” *tašaṭ* “he fashioned,” *ā-uuaocāma* (Vedic *á-vocāma*) “we spoke.” —Subj. *hanānī* “I shall acquire,” *fra-uuaocāmā* “we will proclaim.” —Opt. *sīšōiṭ* “may he instruct,” *hanaēmā* “may we earn.” Middle inj. *mā . . . xšəntā* “they shall not rule.” —Subj. *xsāi* “I shall look.” —Opt. *xšaētā* “may he rule.” —Imv. *xšəntqm* “let them rule.”

2. The athematic root aorist. Thirty-seven verbs use the verb root as aorist stem without the addition of any further morphological feature. Their inflection is largely the same as that of the athematic root present stems. The following examples are attested forms of *dā* 1. “to give,” 2. “to put” and *gam* “to go.”

Active inflection: inj. aor. sing. 3. *dāṭ*. —Plur. 2. *dāta*, 3. *dąn*, *gmən*. —Subj. aor. sing. 1. *jimā*, 2. *dāhī*, 3. *dāitī*, *dāṭ*, *jimaitī*, *jimaṭ*. —Plur. 1. *dāmā*, 3. *daiṅtī*, *dąn*, *jimən*. —Opt. aor. sing. 1. OAv. *diiqm*, 2. *jamiiā*, 3. *diiāṭ*, *jəmiiāṭ*. —Plur. 1. *jamiiāmā*, 2. *dāiiata*, 3. YAv. *jamiiąn*, *jamiiārəš*. —Imv. aor. sing. 2. *dāidī*, *gaidī*, 3. *dātū*. —Plur. 2. *dātā*. —Part. pres. *daṅt-*.

Middle inflection: inj. aor. sing. 2. *dāṅhā*, 3. *dātā*. —Dual. 1. *duuidī* (< **d^h-uad^hi*) “we two destined.” —Subj. aor. sing. 1. *dānē*, 2. *dāṅhē*, 3. *dāitē*. —Dual 3. *jamaētē*. —Plur. 2. *daduiē* (< **d^h-a-d^huai*), 3. *dāṅtē*. —Opt. aor. sing. 1. *diiā* (< **d^h-iia*), 2. *dīšā*. —Imv. aor. sing. 2. *dāhuuā*.



Some special forms for the 3. sing. passive also belong to the root aorist: *uuāci* “it has been called,” *srāuuī* “it has been heard;” *arəž-ucam* (imv. sing. 3.) “it shall be correctly told” (from the root *vac*).

3. The sigmatic aorist. Whereas the thematic aorist and the athematic root aorist can be distinguished from similarly formed present stems only on the basis of comparison with Vedic, the sigmatic aorist is clearly marked. Proto-IE. *-s-*, which may appear in Avestan as *-h-* or *-š-*, is affixed to the verb root. The root has the long grade in the indic. and inj. but the full grade elsewhere. The inflection is athematic. About twenty-seven verbs have attested sigmatic aorists. The following verbs have been selected to illustrate the inflection: *xšnu* “to satisfy” (*xšnāuš-/xšnaoš-*), *dis* “to show” (*dāiš-/dōiš-*), *fras* “to ask” (*fraš-*), *man* “to consider” (*məṅgh-*, *mąs-*), *van* “to overcome” (*vəṅgh-*, *vąs-*), *varz* “to work” (*varš-*), *rā* “to present” (*rāh-*, *rāṅh-*), *uruuaj* “to walk” (*uruuāxš-*), *sand* “to appear” (*sąs-*, Vedic *chā/ānts-*).

Active inflection: inj. aor. sing. 2. *dāiš*, 3. *xšnāuš*, *sąs*. —Plur. 3. *uruuāxšaṭ* (with *-aṭ* from **-nt*). —Subj. aor. sing. 1. *dōišā*, 3. *vəṅghaitī*, *vəṅghaṭ*, *varəšaiti*. —Plur. 3. *xšnaošən*. —Imv. aor. 2. *dōiši* (< *daiš* + *ši*). —Plur. 2. *sąstā* (< *ssānd-s-ta*).

Middle inflection: inj. aor. sing. 1. *frašī*, *məṅghī*, 3. *fraštā*, *mąstā*. —Plur. 1. (*a*)*məhmaidī*. —Subj. aor. sing. 1. *məṅghāi*, *varəšanē*, 2. *rāṅhanhōi*, 3. *varəšaitē*. —Plur. 2. *maz-dāṅhō.dūm*. —Imv. aor. sing. 2. *fərəšuuā*. —Part. aor. *manhāna*.

The perfect system. The perfect originally designated the state arrived at as the result of an action but it came to be used as a preterite tense. It is found with fifty-six verbs in Avestan. In the perfect stem the verb root has the full grade in the sing. forms of the active and throughout the subj. but elsewhere it has the zero grade. With the one exception of *vaēd/vid-* “to know” all the perf. forms are reduplicated, that is, the first consonant of the root followed by the vowel *-ā/ā-* (occasionally *-i-*, *-u-*) is prefixed to the root. The perf. differs from the present-aorist system also in having special endings in the indic. active and middle. The following are examples of perf. stems: *āh-* (< *ah* “to be”), *dadā-/dā/ād-* (< *dā* “to give; put”), *mamn-* (< *man* “to think”), *yaiiat-/yaēt-*, *yōit-* (< *yat* “to take a firm stand”), *vāuuarəz-/vāuuərəz-* (< *varz* “to work”), *vaēd-/vid-* (< *vid* “to know”).

Active inflection: indic. perf. sing. 1. *vaēda*, 2. *vōistā*, *dadāθā*, 3. *vaēdā*. —Dual 3. *yaētarə*. —Plur. 1. *yōiθmā*, 3. *āṅharə*, *vīdarə*. —Opt. perf. sing. 1. *dai’iiqm*,



3. *vīdīiāṭ*. —Dual. 3. *aṅhāṭ.təm* (< **āh-īā-tām*). —Part. perf. (suffix *-uāh-*, *-uš-*, fem. *-ušt-*) sing. nom. masc. *vīduuā*, *daduuā*, gen. *vīdušō*, *dadušō*, fem. *vīθušt-*.

Middle inflection (rare): indic. perf. sing. 3. *vāuuērəzōi* “it has been worked.” —Dual 3. *mamnāitē*. —Opt. perf. plur. 3. *vaozirəm* “they would have driven” (from root *vaz*). —Part. perf. *mamnāna-* “having thought,” *vāuuērəzāna-* “having been done.”

Infinitives. Infinitives are formed by the addition of various suffixes either directly to the root or to a tense stem: **-ai*: OAv. *pōi* (< **pH-ai*) “to protect,” YAv. *buiie* (< **buu-ai*) “to become;” **-uai*: OAv. *dāuuōi* “to give,” *vīdūiē* (< **uid-uai*) “to know;” **-uanaṅ*: OAv. *vīduuanōi* “to know;” **-taṅ*: OAv. *itē* “to go,” *mrūitē* “to say,” *stōi* “to be;” **-ah*: OAv. *auuō* “to aid,” *vərəziō* “to work;” **-ahaṅ*: OAv. *vaocaṅhē* “to say” (from aorist stem *vaoca-*), *srāuuaiieṅhe* “to recite” (from caus. stem *srāuuaiia-*), **-d^hiāṅ* (Vedic *-dhyai*): OAv. *jaidīiāi* “to be killed” (from root *jan*), *dīβžaidīiāi* “to be deceived,” *vərəziieidiāi* “to do, be done.”

Verbal adjectives. Verbal adjectives ending in *-ta* have almost always passive meaning, but there are exceptions such as *gata-* (= Vedic *gatá-*) “gone.” If phonologically possible the root appears in the zero grade, e.g., *-uxta-* “said” (Vedic *uktá-* < *vac*); *vista* “found” (< **uid^z-tá-*, cf. Vedic *vitttá-* < *vid*); *vərəzda* “increased” (Vedic *vṛddhá-* < **ur^dd^há-* < **ur^dd^{hz}-tó-*); *jata-* “slain” (Vedic *jātá-* < *han*) from root *jan*; *zāta-* “born” (Vedic *jātá-* with *-ā-* < *ṅH-*) from root *zanH*. Roots ending in *-ā-* do not show ablaut, e.g., *dāta-* “given; put” (But Vedic *hitá* < **d^hā-tó-*).

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