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Indo-Iranian and Indo-European Studies
in Honor of

Stephanie W. Jamison

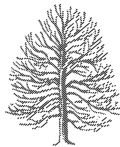
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Vedic *stusé* ‘I praise’

JAY H. JASANOFF

Among the loose ends of Vedic grammar are “a few difficult first persons middle in *se*” (Whitney 1889:319), in which a seemingly gratuitous *-s-* intervenes between the present stem and the ending *-e*. The iconic example is *stusé*, meaning some variant of ‘I praise’ (: pres. *stáuti*), which occurs 25 times in the *R̥gveda*, mostly as a 1 sg., but also—not mentioned by Whitney—as a 2sg. passive, a 3sg. passive, and an infinitive. Three other forms of this type are found more than once: *gr̥n̥sé* (: pres. *gr̥n̥áti*) ‘I praise with song’ (12×, including two instances as a 2sg. passive), *ṛñjase* (: pres. *ṛñjáte*) ‘I excite (a god)’ (6×, not including two cases as an ordinary 2sg. present of the homophonous root *ṛñj-* ‘stretch’),¹ and *cárkṛṣe* (: pres. [intens.] *cárkarti*) ‘I praise’, found once as a 1sg. and twice as a 3sg. passive. The remaining forms, each attested a single time, are *arcase* (: pres. *árcati*) ‘I praise with song’, *obise* (: *óbate*, but ptcp. *óbāná-*) ‘I attend to’,² *gāyise* (: *gāyati*) ‘I sing’, *punise* (: *punáti*) ‘I refine (a hymn)’, *yajase* (: *yájati*) ‘I worship’, and (*prá*) *hise* (no related present) ‘I spur on (a god)’. All the verbs in question mean ‘praise’ or something similar.

It would be safe to say that no one has been quite sure what to make of these forms. As can be seen from the survey of the literature by Rasmussen (1985:393 n. 28), most of the scholars of the Neogrammarian period, including Delbrück (1897:442), Neisser (1902), and Brugmann (1906:525), took them to be historical infinitives. *stusé*, according to this view, was properly a dative infinitive comparable to *jisé* ‘to conquer’; its non-infinitival functions were attributed to the frequent use of the infinitive as an impersonal imperative (*‘for praising’ > *‘let there be praising’ > *‘let me (you, him) praise’). Facts cited in support of the “infinitive” theory were 1) the use of *-se*-forms in the second and third persons; 2) the unambiguous use of *ṛñjase* as an infinitive in one passage (RV 8.4.17) and the possible or probable infinitival use of *stusé* in others (see below); and 3) the association of *-se*-forms with other sigmatic nominal forms of the verb, namely, the supposed participles *ṛñjasāná-* and *óbasāna-* (: *obise*) and the infinitive *gr̥n̥sáni* (: *gr̥n̥sé*).³

¹Tucker (2002) makes a convincing case for identifying the root of 1sg. *ṛñjase* as ²*ṛj-* ‘stimulate mentally, excite’ (< **Herg^(u)-*), distinct from the more familiar ¹*ṛj-* ‘reach, stretch’ (< **h₃erǵ-*).

²Not counting *obase* at 1.30.4, which, as Stephanie Jamison suggests to me (p.c.), may be another example of our type. She will discuss the passage separately.

³The putative connection between the 1sg. in *-se* and the forms in *-sāna-* and *-sani* is taken for granted in Grassmann 1873, where it underlies the notion of “Doppelstamm”; see p. 527 s.v. *tar-*.

This approach, which still has defenders,⁴ is not very satisfactory. The grammatical ambiguity of the *-se*-forms is mostly a red herring: the 2sg. readings of *stusé* and *gṛṇīśé* are entirely predictable, as are the third-person readings of *stusé* and *cárkṛṣe*. (Any athematic 1sg. in *-e* can be parsed as a 3sg. “stative” in Vedic; cf. 1, 3sg. *dubé* ‘I milk/(she) yields milk’, 1, 3sg. *gṛṇé* ‘I praise/(he) is praised’, 1, 3sg. *bruvé* ‘I say/(it) is said’, etc.) In actual fact, the preponderance of 1sg. readings among the attested *-se*-forms (ca. 75%) is quite striking. All the forms that occur only once (*arcase*, *obīse*, *gāyīse*, *punīse*, *yajase*, and *hīse*) are 1st singulars, and even *stusé*, in one of the hymns where it arguably figures as an infinitive, is an unambiguous 1sg. a few lines later.⁵ *ṛṇjasāná-* and *óhasāna-*, which are not participles but adjectives based on adverbially employed *s*-stem instrumentals (cf. *sáhasā* ‘with strength’ → *sahasāná-* ‘powerful’, etc.; cf. Insler 1968), redundantly confirm the existence of the *s*-stem nouns **ṛṇjas-* (attested in Middle Indic phonetic shape as *āñjas-*) ‘striving’ and *óhas-* ‘attention’, but provide no support for a link between the nouns and the verbal forms 1sg. *ṛṇjase* and *obīse*.⁶ The connection, if any, between the infinitive *gṛṇīśāni* and 1sg. *gṛṇīśé* is obscure; *gṛṇīśāni* is inseparable from the similarly formed *tarīśāni* (: *tṛ-* ‘penetrate’) and *strṇīśāni* (: *str-* ‘scatter’, pres. *strṇāti*), while *gṛṇīśé* is probably an analogical creation on the basis of 1sg. *stusé*.⁷

The alternative to seeing the *-e* of *stusé* as an infinitive ending, of course, is to take it at face value as the etymological ending of the 1, 3sg. middle. This was the position of Oldenberg a century ago (1901:306–12), and more recently the view of the late J. E. Rasmussen (1985), with whom the modern study of the forms in *-se* can be said to have begun. Rasmussen took *stusé* and its congeners to be the continuants of a PIE category that he called the “prospective.” This, he said, was a modal formation marked by athematic inflection, *e* : *zero* ablaut, and the mood sign **-s-*. Reflexes of the active of the prospective, according to Rasmussen, were the Vedic 1sg. injunctive/subjunctive *stosam*, the Old Irish unreduplicated future type 3sg. *at-ré* ‘will rise’ < **-reg-s-t(i)*, and the Indo-Iranian *si*-imperatives Ved. *stósi*, *yáksi* (: *yaj-*), etc., which he identified with the Old Irish irregular imperative type *at-ré* ‘rise!’ < **-reg-s-s(i)* (cf. Thurneysen 1946:410–1). The *middle* of the prospective—specifically, the paradigm 1sg. **stu-s-h₂éi*, 2sg. **stu-s-sói*, 3sg. **stu-s-ói*—was in Rasmussen’s view the source of Ved. 1–3sg. *stusé*.

This approach had the advantage of accounting for the 1sg. grammatical role of the *-se*-forms without having to posit an earlier infinitival stage. But the hypothesis of a new mood at the PIE level is a huge affront to the principle of Occam’s Razor.

⁴Most recently Gotō 2013:135.

⁵The hymn is RV 8.23, where *stusé* can be construed as an imperatival infinitive in verse 2 (and is so taken by Geldner [1951]), but is grammatically parallel to the 1sg. finite forms *huve* and *gṛṇe* in verse 7.

⁶*ṛṇjasāná-*/**ṛṇjas-* and 1sg. *ṛṇjase* are in fact arguably from different roots, the former being from ¹*ṛj-* and the latter from ²*ṛj-* (cf. n. 1). *obīse* is the synchronic result of adding *-se* to the athematic present stem *ob-* (cf. ptcp. *óbāná-*); it can have no direct connection to *óhas-* and *óhasāna-*.

⁷On all these forms see further Fortson 2012:100–2, who argues that there was no Vedic infinitive ending *-se* (*-se*) at all.

Vedic 1sg. *stoṣam*, whether properly an injunctive with the full-grade vocalism of a subjunctive or a subjunctive with the secondary ending (-*am*) of an injunctive, clearly belongs to the system of the *s*-aorist; see Narten 1964:277 for the classic discussion.⁸ Likewise connected with the *s*-aorist is the *si*-imperative *stosi*: as famously expounded by Szemerényi (1966), *si*-imperatives are haplogized 2sg. subjunctives in **-sasi/*-sesi*, mostly from *s*-aorists.⁹ The haplology theory was expressly rejected by Rasmussen—a move he thought better of twelve years later, when he reversed his position and all but abandoned the prospective theory (1997:258-9).¹⁰ The third category that Rasmussen cited as a reflex of prospective, the Old Irish unreduplicated *s*-future (*at·ré*), was and is a formation about which we know nothing more than what its name says—that it contained **-s-* or **-se/o-* and was not reduplicated. This description applies equally well to the Greek future, the Sabellic future (cf. Osc. *deiuast* ‘will swear’, etc.), and (in part) the Baltic future (Lith. *duōs* < **-s-t(i)* ‘will give’, etc.). In principle, the possibility that Ved. *stuṣé* goes back to an athematic desiderative present (> future) of the Sabellic, Baltic, and (possibly) Old Irish type cannot be altogether excluded.¹¹ But it is much likelier a priori that the small and narrowly specialized class of *-se*-forms, briefly productive in the *R̥gveda* but lacking any counterpart in later Vedic or Avestan, was a Vedic innovation.

Our discussion, then, will proceed on the basis of the following assumptions:

- 1) the morphological formation represented by the type *stuṣé* was a post-PIE creation;
- 2) the *-e* of the ending *-se* (*-se*) is historically the primary ending of the 1sg. middle;
- 3) some of the ten attested forms in *-se* are original and others are analogical; and
- 4) the only *-se*-form that can be safely identified as original, based on its core semantics, morphological simplicity, and frequency of occurrence, is *stuṣé* itself.

Let us now ask a simple question: if *stuṣé* was an innovation, what purpose did the innovation serve? Clearly, some element of meaning was conveyed by *stuṣé* that could not be expressed so well by any other form; what could this have been? The

⁸The combination of full grade and secondary ending, though trivially explainable in more than one way, has given this form an undeserved prominence in the IE speculative literature. See now Kümmel 2012:94–5, *contra* Kortlandt 2004:8 and elsewhere.

⁹The idea is actually already found in Benfey 1852:397. Szemerényi understood the process to be inner-Indo-Iranian, but it is now known to have been of PIE date, and older than the separation of Anatolian from the rest of the family. Cf. most recently Jasanoff 2012.

¹⁰So I interpret his statement that “[i]n the face of these uncertainties it must be admitted that the limits of the ‘prospective’ within IE morphology remain indeterminable in the present state of our knowledge and so must be left aside for future reconsideration” (259).

¹¹This possibility is in fact pursued by Hill (2004:133–55), who posits a PIE athematic *s*-future of the type 3sg. **déh₃-s-ti* ‘will give’, 3pl. **dib₃-s-énti*. It is clear from other evidence, however, that the ancestor of the Baltic and Sabellic forms had Narten ablaut (Jasanoff 2003:133, with references). Hill does not explain why the *-u-* of *stuṣé* is short, given that the desiderative/future morpheme was **-h₃s-*, not **-s-*.

answer was pinpointed by Rasmussen (1985:392–3), who observed that the function of *stusé* is basically that of an instantaneous future or performative—a verb whose action is accomplished by the act of being uttered.¹² It thus means ‘I will now praise’ or ‘I hereby praise’ in examples like the invocation RV 1.159.1ab *prá dyāvā yajñāṅḥ pṛthivī ṛtvāṛdhā / mahī stuse vidátheṣu prácatasā*, rendered by Jamison and Brereton “I shall start up the praise, along with sacrifices, to Heaven and to Earth, the two great ones growing strong through truth, the discerning ones”;¹³ 6.51.3ab *stusā u vo mahā ṛtsya gopān / áditim mītrām varuṇam sujātān* “I will praise you, the great herdsmen of truth: Aditi, Mitra, Varuṇa, the well-born ones”;¹⁴ and 8.84.1 *préṣṭham vo átithim / stusé mītrām iva priyām / agnīm . . .* “The dearest guest will I praise for you—dear like an ally—Agni . . .”¹⁵ Even in cases where *stusé* is rendered ‘ich will preisen’ by Geldner, the sense is not desiderative or prospective—this is more typically the value of the subjunctive—but ‘I will now praise’ or ‘let me now praise’, with reference to the instantaneous future: cf. 2.20.4ab *tām u stusa índram tām gṛṃṣe / yásmín purá vāṛḍbhūḥ śāsādús ca* “I shall praise him—Indra—I shall sing to him, alongside whom long ago they grew strong and exulted”;¹⁶ 5.58.1ab *tām u nūnām táviṣimantam eṣām / stusé gaṇām márutam náryasinām . . .* “Now will I praise this (flock) full of power, their Marutian flock of newer (hymns [= thunderclaps]) . . .”;¹⁷ and 8.7.32 *sabó sú no vájrabastaiḥ / kánvaso agnīm marúdbhiḥ / stusé bíraṇyavāsibhiḥ* “O Kaṇvas, for us I will praise Agni along with the Maruts, who have maces in their hands, who have golden axes.”¹⁸

The performative and instantaneous future meanings are expressed by the same morphological category in Vedic. For most verbs of speaking this is the aorist injunctive (cf. Hoffmann 1967:250–4); one has only to think of the familiar 1.32.1a *índrasya nú víriāni prá vocam* “Now I shall proclaim the heroic deeds of Indra.” For the root *stu-*, however, the “extended performative” function, as we may call it, is expressed by the 1sg. present *stusé*. *stusé* thus takes the place of a 1sg. injunctive form which, had it been attested, would have been **stósi* (cf. 1sg. aor. indic. *astosi* [4×]). But no *s*-aorist injunctive forms are attested from *stu-* in the *R̥gveda*—a distributional peculiarity which, like the absence of an active indicative (**ástauṣam*, etc.) and a middle subjunctive (**stósai*, etc.), probably points to an earlier stage when the root *stu-* had

¹²Rasmussen uses the German term *Koinzidenzfall*, referring to the “coincidence” of utterance and action.

¹³All Vedic passages are from the *R̥gveda*. It is a pleasure to be able to use the long-awaited translation by our honorand and her co-author (Jamison and Brereton 2014), from which all English glosses are taken if not otherwise noted. Geldner (1951) for this passage has “Ein Lob stimme ich unter Opfern an . . .”

¹⁴Geldner: “Ich preise euch, die Wächter des hohen Gesetzes . . .”

¹⁵Geldner: “Euren lieben Gast preise ich, der beliebt wie ein Freund ist, den Agni . . .”

¹⁶Geldner: “Diesen Indra will ich preisen und loben, an dem sie vordem ihre Stärke und Zuversicht hatten.”

¹⁷Geldner: “Jetzt will ich diese ihre kraftvolle Schar, die marutische, preisen, der Jüngsten . . .”

¹⁸Geldner: “Zusammen mit den Marut, die Keulen in der Hand und goldene Äxte tragend, will ich fein unseren Agni preisen, ihr Kanviden.”

no *s*-aorist at all.¹⁹ This is also suggested by the fact that no aorist is formed by the cognate root *staun-* in Avestan.

Avestan also sheds light on our problem in a more substantial way. The absence of an aorist comparable to Ved. *stos-* in Avestan is made up for, so to speak, by the fact that the verb *staun-* has two presents. One of these is the familiar Narten present OAv. *stāumī* (= post-RV *staumi*) 'I praise', ptcp. *stauuat-*, YAv. *staomi*, *staoiti* (generalized full grade), mid. *staoite*, *staomaide*, etc., with secondarily thematized byforms 3sg. subj. *stauuāt*, 2sg. opt. *stauuōiš*, etc. The other present, easily confused with the first, is seen in the 1sg. middle form *stuiiē* (< **stuyai*), mostly in ritual formulas with the preverbs *ā*, *us*, and *fra*. Typical passages for *stuiiē* are Y 1.21 *yezi θβā diduuāēša . . . ā tē aijhe fraca stuiiē* "si je t'ai nui . . . je fais pour toi l'éloge-préliminaire" (Kellens 2004:286);²⁰ Y II.17 (= 0.4) *frastuiiē humatōibiiascā hūxtōibiiascā humarštōibiiascā maθβōibiiascā vaxadβōi-biiascā varštūuōibiiascā* "Je fais l'éloge préliminaire (du sacrifice et du chant) au moyen de (pensées) qui ont été bien pensées . . . au moyen de (pensées) qui seront (bien) pensées . . ." (285);²¹ Y 12.2 *us gāuš stuiiē tāiiāatcā hazayhaatcā* "Ich schwöre ab dem Diebstahl und Raub des Rindes";²² Y 12.3 *nəmayhā ašai uzdatā patī auuat stuiiē* "Bei den unter Verehrung für Asha aufgesetzten (Zaothra's) gelobe ich das: . . ." (followed by the vow); Y 12.8–9 *āstuiiē humatəm manō āstuiiē hūxtəm vacō āstuiiē huuarštəm šiiəoθanəm / āstuiiē daēnəm mązdaiiasnīm* "Ich schwöre mich ein auf den gutgedachten Gedanken, ich schwöre mich ein auf das gutgesprochene Wort, ich schwöre mich ein auf die gutgetane Handlung, ich schwöre mich ein auf die mazdayasische Religion." The usual view of this form, starting with Narten 1968:17, is that it shows the common analogical substitution of zero grade for full grade in the "weak" stem of an acrostatic paradigm. Apophonic renewal of this type is well documented, both in general and in the specific case of the Narten present IIr. **stāy-*. Secondary zero grades are uncontroversially on hand in Ved. 3pl. *stuvānti*, pres. ptcp. *stuvánt-* (for expected **stāvati*, **stávat-* [*< *stéu-nt-*]), and YAv. 2, 3sg. opt. *°stuiiā*, *°-iiāt* (for expected **stauui-*). In

¹⁹LIV (600) hesitantly sets up a PIE *s*-aorist on the strength of Ved. *astosi*, but the gaps in the Vedic distribution, the absence of extra-Indic cognates, and the rarity in general of old *s*-aorists beside root presents give grounds for skepticism. In my view, the two sets of sigmatic forms—the active subjunctive (*stosat*, *-šāma*, etc.) and the middle indicative (*astosi*, *-ošta*, etc.) originally had little or nothing to do with each other. *stosa-* looks like it was once a free-floating subjunctive of the same type as *śróša-* (: *śru-* 'hear'), originally perhaps associated with a Narten *s*-present, but derivationally unaffiliated with any synchronic present or aorist in Indo-Iranian proper. *astosi*, on the other hand, was apparently the inner-Indic replacement of **ástavi*, the historically expected 1sg. corresponding to the 3sg. "passive" aorist *ástāvi* (cf. below). For the sigmatization process compare **ábudhi* → *ábutsi* (: 3sg. *ábodhi* 'awoke'), **ávidi* → *avitsi* (: 3sg. *avedi* 'was found'), **ásrji* → *asr̥ṣi* (: 3sg. *ásarji* 'was released'), etc.; see further Narten 1964:26 and Jasanoff 2003:207. Interestingly, neo-*s*-aorists of the *ábutsi*-type share with *astosi* the property of lacking an injunctive in the *Rgveda*.

²⁰Reading **āat tē* for *ā tē*. The formula is repeated, with *vō* for *tē*, in Y 1.22. Kellens's translation supersedes Bartholomae's "(so) preise und lobe ich dich dafür."

²¹Bartholomae apud Wolff 1910: "Ich verpflichte mich feierlich (darauf, daß) gut gedacht und gut gesagt und gut getan (wird alles), was zu denken und zu sagen und zu tun (ist)."

²²This comes from the *Frauarānē* (Zoroastrian Creed), as do the following examples. Translations are from Bartholomae/Wolff.

the 2sg. impv. both languages have zero grade (cf. Ved. *stuhí*, YAv. *°stui̯di*), suggesting that here, at least, the imperative **studhí* ‘praise!’ may go back to Indo-Iranian times, if not to Proto-Indo-European itself.

But *stui̯ē* does not look like such a secondarily “zero-graded” form. The rest of the middle paradigm of *stuu-* has full grade: cf. 3sg. *°staoite*, *staoita*, 1pl. *°staomaide*, ptcp. *stauuāna-*, matching Ved. 3sg. *stáve*, ptcp. *stávāna-* (+ thematized *stávate*, etc.).²³ While it is common in cases of analogical change to find renewed and unrenewed forms side by side, it is hard to see why zero grade should in this instance have been introduced *consistently* into the 1sg. of the middle and nowhere else. Formulas meaning “I swear” or “I forswear” are the last place one would expect to find a specifically innovated form; compare Eng. *I do solemnly swear . . .*, with the 17th-century use of *do* persisting to the present day. I submit, therefore, that *stui̯ē* is an archaism, the sole remaining trace in Avestan of an Indo-Iranian present middle whose paradigm in the singular, distinct from the “Narten” middle **stáuai*, etc., would have been 1 **stuuái*, 2 **stusái*, 3 **stuuái*. The earlier existence of such a paradigm is independently suggested by the fact that the root *stu-* forms a passive aorist *ástāvi* in Vedic. Indo-Iranian passive aorists are linked via an IE derivational process to middle root presents of the “stative-intransitive” type in 3sg. **-ái* (< dialectal PIE **-ói/*-ór*);²⁴ the pattern is familiar from pairs like aor. *ávedi* ‘came to light, etc.’ : pres. 3sg. *vidé*, aor. *áceti* ‘shone forth’ : pres. 3sg. *cité*, aor. (*vi*) *śrávi* = OAv. *srāuuī* ‘was heard’ : pres. OAv. 3sg. *srui̯ē*, and others involving non-Indo-Iranian material.²⁵ Young Avestan 1, **3sg. stui̯ē* beside Ved. *ástāvi* fits perfectly into this picture, as do perhaps also the marginal Vedic zero-grade middle forms 3sg. opt. *stuvītá*, 1pl. opt. (*prá*) *stuvīmahi*, and especially ptcp. *stuvāná-* (paired with *gr̥nāná-*). Decisive comparative evidence for a zero-grade middle root present comes from two other branches of the family: Anatolian, where Hitt. *ístumwāri* ‘becomes publicly known’ can only go back to a preform **stuuór*; and Germanic, where, as I have argued, OHG *stuēt* ‘atones for, confesses’ < **stuwaiθ* conceals an older preform 3sg. **stuwai* < **-ói*.²⁶

If Proto-Indo-Iranian inherited both a Narten middle **stáuai*, **stausái*, etc. and a zero-grade middle **stuuái*, **stusái*, etc., the two must somehow have contrasted in meaning. While we have no direct information on this point, it would be natural to suppose that the zero-grade paradigm, as the derivative of a PIE root aorist,²⁷ would have had a more “perfective” set of meanings than its Narten counterpart, pos-

²³Vedic also has a handful of zero-grade forms, on which see below.

²⁴Here as elsewhere, I maintain the view that the primary middle endings were characterized by the *hic et nunc* particle **-r*, which was replaced in some IE branches, including Indo-Iranian, Greek, and Germanic, by the active *hic et nunc* particle **-i*.

²⁵The Indo-Iranian pattern is discussed, though against the background of different assumptions, by Kümmel (1996:9–21); for the IE context see Jasanoff 2003:169–73.

²⁶The family of OHG *stuēn* and Go. *stojan* ‘judge’ is the subject of Jasanoff 2014, updating an earlier discussion of *stuēn* in Jasanoff 2003:170 and briefly anticipating the analysis of *stusē* below.

²⁷I.e. the *h₂e*-conjugation root aorist ancestral to Ved. *ástāvi*.

sibly coinciding with the present-like uses of the Vedic aorist injunctive described by Hoffmann (1967:135–45 and 250–4). The performative use of YAv. *stuiiē* (‘I hereby (for)swear’, etc.) would be consistent with this hypothesis. Let us provisionally assume, therefore, that IIr. 1sg. **stuuái* had performative value as well, and that when this form was lost in Vedic its functional slot was filled by the enigmatic 1sg. *stusé*. The contribution of Avestan to the problem of *stusé* is thus to suggest that whatever the exact morphological history of the Vedic form, *it was the replacement of an Indo-Iranian 1sg. *stuuái*.

The task of explaining *stusé* can thus be seen as the problem of understanding how and why a Vedic form that “should” have surfaced as **stuvé* (< **stuuái*) was sigmatized to yield the actually attested *stu-ṣ-é*. Framing the problem in these terms opens the way to a new solution. *stusé*, it will be recalled, is not the only sigmatic form in Vedic without a counterpart in Avestan; the *s*-aorist *astosi*, *-ṣṭa*, along with its subjunctive (*stósā-*) and *si*-imperative (*stósi*), is similarly isolated. It is not unlikely that these facts are related. At the outset of its inner-Indic history, pre-Vedic **stuvé* would have formed a functional minimal pair with the true “prospective,” the subjunctive *stávā*, mid. *stávai*:

pres. **stuvé* ‘I (will) now praise’ : subj. *stávā*, *-ai* ‘I intend to praise’.²⁸

But the relationship of *stuvé* to *stávā*, *-ai* would have been subtly altered by the creation of the *s*-aorist *stos-* (cf. n. 19). With an aorist in the picture, there would have been *two* subjunctives, one (*stósā* [*nī*]) aligned with the aorist and meaning ‘I intend to praise, start praising’, and the other (*stávā*, *-ai*) aligned with the Narten present and specifically imperfective: ‘I intend to be praising’ *vel sim*.²⁹ Schematically:

: aor. subj. *stósā* ‘I intend to praise’
**stuvé* ‘I (will) now praise’
: pres. subj. *stávā*, *-ai* ‘I intend to be praising’

The functional-formal mismatch is significant. In the meaning ‘I (will) now praise, I hereby praise’, **stuvé* had the synchronic value of an aorist injunctive (cf. above); yet from a formal point of view it would have appeared, owing to its lack of *-ṣ-*, to be associated with the imperfective present stem. The creation of *stusé*, I suggest, was

²⁸Needless to say, the two meanings were very close; the forms must have been virtually interchangeable in some contexts. Crucially, however, there were also contexts in which they were *not* interchangeable, and speakers found it useful to maintain the difference.

²⁹Prior to the introduction of the *s*-aorist, the subjunctive *stáva-* would have been the subjunctive both of the Narten present (imperfective) and the zero-grade present (perfective). With the creation of the *s*-aorist, the perfective function was transferred to the aorist subjunctive *stósā-* (whether or not this was originally based on an *s*-present, as suggested in n. 19). Most of the relevant 1sg. subj. forms are actually attested: pres. act. *stávā* (2×), mid. *stávai* (3×), aor. act. *stósāni* (1×); cf. also YAv. mid. °*stauuāne* (Vd. 19.7). There is no 1sg. mid. **stósi*, since the aorist subjunctive of *stu-* is *actívum tantum*.

a response to the need to provide the aorist subjunctive *stósā* with a performative counterpart that, so to speak, looked the part.

The process can be envisaged in either of two similar ways. Under one possible scenario, **stuvé* ‘I (will) now praise’ would have been felt to require more explicit marking as an aorist, and was directly remade to *stusé*. Under the other scenario, a transitory distinction would have been introduced between more and less “aoristy” readings of **stuvé*, via a proportion *stávā* : **stuvé* :: *stosā* : X, where X was solved as *stusé*. Either way, the sigmatized form *stusé* provided a better “fit” with the role of a performative/immediate future and replaced the older form. A trace of the *s*-less zero-grade present stem may survive in ptcp. *stuvāná-*.

If this picture is correct, the form *stusé* would have been a 1sg. from the very beginning, created in response to the need of speakers (or possibly just of poets) for a more transparent extended performative to take the place of the older 1sg. **stuvé* (= YAv. *stuiiē*). The advent of *stusé* set off a string of further developments. First, the ending *-se* was extended to the 1sg. of other presents meaning ‘praise’, ‘sing’, ‘attend to’, etc.; the new forms (*gṛṇṣé*, *arcase*, *ohise*, etc.) had the same value as their model. Second, and more interestingly, the use of *stusé* was in a few cases extended from the 1sg. to the 3sg. — a reflection, ultimately, of the accidental identity of the 1sg. middle ending *-e* < **-h₂ei* with the 3sg. “stative” (i.e. passive) ending *-e* < **-oi*. As a 3sg., *stusé* means ‘will now be praised, is to be praised’, as in 1.122.7a *stusé sá vām varuṇa mitra rātīr* “This gift of yours is to be praised, Mitra and Varuṇa” and 8.63.3 *sá vidvāṁ āngirobbhiya / índro gá avṛṇod ápa / stusé tād asya paúmsiyam* “Indra, knowing how, uncovered the cows for the Āngirasas. That manly act of his is to be praised.”³⁰ The obligational meaning evident in these and similar passages, which under ordinary circumstances would have been expressed by an aorist injunctive, is exactly what would have been expected from the displacement to the 3sg. of a form that *did* pattern as an aorist injunctive in the 1sg. But the syntax of *stusé qua* passive, especially when it retained its accent in *pāda*-initial position as in 1.122.7, could lead the Vedic poets to construe it, as many later scholars have done, as an infinitive. We thus find 8.4.17cd *ná tāsya vemī áraṇam hí tād vaso / stusé pajrāya sāmāne* “I do not pursue (anything) of his—for that is alien, o good one, (and it is) for Pajra Sāman to praise,” where an infinitival analysis of *stusé* is compelled, at least synchronically, by the dative agent *pajrāya sāmāne*. The passage is discussed by Keydana (2013:239–40), who judges it the only verse in the *R̥gveda* where a nominal interpretation of *stusé* is unavoidable.³¹

³⁰So too Geldner, in both passages. Genuinely difficult is 10.93.9ab *kyābī no āhrayo deva savitah / sá ca stuse maghónām*, which Geldner takes as a 3sg. (“Mache, daß wir uns nicht zu schämen brauchen, Gott Savitri, und der unter den Lohnherren soll gepriesen werden”) but Jamison and Brereton read as a 1sg. (“Make for us immoderation (of wealth), god Savitar. I will praise (you?) in company with our patrons”). Sgall (1958:182) takes unaccented *stuse* in this passage as an infinitive.

³¹Cf. Geldner: “Nicht wünsche ich dessen Besitz, denn das ist fremdes Gut, du Guter, das für Pajra Saman zu preisen ist.” It can hardly be an accident that this and a high proportion of the other passages in which *stusé* is potentially an infinitive or otherwise problematic (e.g. 8.5.4, 8.23.2, and 8.24.1) are in Book 8.

For those fond of looking for analogies between linguistic and biological evolution, the *-se*-forms offer abundant material. The PIE root **steu-* had a zero-grade present middle (3 sg. **stuyó(r)*; cf. Hitt. *ístuwāri*, PGmc. **stuwai[p]*), distinct from the Narten full-grade middle (3 sg. **stéuo(r)*; cf. Ved. *stáve*, Gk. *στέυται* ‘declares, boasts’). Under pressure from the full-grade forms, the zero-grade paradigm was confined to peripheral uses in Indo-Iranian; a specific instance of this was the specialization of 1sg. **stuyámi* (> YAv. *stuiiē*) as an extended performative. In Vedic, where Ir. **stuyámi* would have become **stuvé*, an analogical change—a “mutation,” so to speak—converted this to *stuṣé*, with an *-ṣ-* that made the form more transparent, and hence easier to learn and pass on to later generations. In the period of expansion that followed, the newly viable *stuṣé* spread into new environmental niches (3sg. and infinitive) and gave rise to new forms or “species” (*gr̥n̥ṣé*, etc.). This is the situation as we find it in the *R̥gveda*, and it is also the point at which Darwinian comparisons can tastefully be dropped. Over the long term, the forms in *-se* showed themselves to be grammatical dinosaurs, leaving no trace in the later Samhitas.

Abbreviations

LIV = Kümmel, Martin, and Helmut Rix (eds.). 2001. *Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben: Die Wurzeln und ihre Primärstammbildungen*. 2nd ed. Wiesbaden: Reichert.

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