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The Double-voiced *Rig Veda*:

Poetics and Power Dynamics of Formal Structuring Devices

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Indo-European Studies

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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The term “poetic grammar” refers to the formal patterns that distinguish poetic registers from other modes of speech: for example, patterns in meter and rhyme schemes. For many poetic traditions, function is also a distinguishing feature: epic poetry is a vehicle for heroic lore, for instance, and liturgical hymns convey entreaties to gods. Thus, poetic genres are characterized in terms of patterns in sound *or* typical topics; connections *between* form and function are most often left unexplored. My dissertation examines relationships between traditional formal “structuring devices” and the quite heterogeneous functions of a selection of hymns from the *Rig Veda*, the most ancient of Indic liturgical texts and one of considerable self-conscious poetic intricacy. Working in the traditions of interdisciplinary poetics pioneered by such figures as Roman Jakobson and Mikhail Bakhtin, and building on the insights of historical linguistics, I will explore how the phonological, grammatical and lexical patterns that comprise formal structuring devices are used to shape a discourse, and to further specific rhetorical goals of the Rigvedic poet Vasiṣṭha, among other speakers.

Most Rigvedic hymns are embedded within ritual contexts; the poets are the primary speakers, and gods, patrons and ritual officiants the usual addressees. In addition, dialogue hymns present conversations between divine and human consorts and spouses. Structuring devices connect passages that affirm the norms of poetic grammar with variations that counter or distort them, creating a double-voiced discourse (i.e. “heteroglossia”) that helps certain speakers, whose lack of divinity, lower class, or disfavored gender puts them at a disadvantage with their interlocutor, gain control of ritual interactions. This dissertation will thus connect the formal conventions of Rigvedic poetics to poet-patron power dynamics, negotiations across the human-divine power differential, and changing gender roles in ritual—all relatively new lines of inquiry.

The dissertation of Elizabeth Katherine Thornton is approved.

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FOR BOB

In loving memory of Robert Rector McGee,

who saw the forest *and* the trees—

who helped me out of the woods.

1950-2014

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PART I. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary of objectives

Briefly and broadly speaking, my dissertation will present a series of case studies as a contribution to our understanding of “structuring devices”—i.e. of structured patterns of formal lexical and morphological repetition that pervade and characterize many if not most Rigvedic hymns (*sūktas*), and of the communicative strategies that appear to underlie these patterns. While the present work is heavily focused on studying these hymns as products of a specifically Rigvedic phraseological and compositional tradition, the lenses through which I view this tradition have been crafted to keep a series of more long-term objectives in sight. I hope to catalog peculiarities in the form and function Rigvedic repetitions in such a way as to eventually facilitate comparison with a) somewhat analogous devices in cognate poetic traditions of comparable antiquity; b) later genres of Sanskrit literature, ranging chronologically from the Upaniṣads to at least Classical *kāvya*; c) a variety of literary genres from many different socio-geographic and historical contexts, such as are frequently juxtaposed in the undergraduate university curricula through which most American students who ever gain acquaintance with the *Rig Veda* first encounter it. With the metaphor of the language tree in mind, we might call these the objective of the boughs, the objective of the branch, and the objective of the forest.

1.2 *The boughs of the language tree: this dissertation in the context of Indo-European Studies*

The objective of the boughs—of facilitating comparison with the traditions of ancient verbal art produced early on in a particular language branch’s chronology of attestations—is motivated by the school of comparative philology in which I have received the bulk of my formal training: Indo-European Studies. Within this branch, one of the principle aims of comparative study of Rigvedic poetics—or indeed of comparison of any kind—is to identify techniques that have been inherited from an older Indo-Iranian and perhaps Indo-European poetic tradition. Vedic Sanskrit, the language in which Rigvedic hymns were composed, is the oldest attested layer of what would become the Indic (“Indo-Aryan”) branch of the Indo-European family. Demonstrably more archaic than Classical Sanskrit—that is, than the language described and codified by the famed ancient Indian grammarian Pāṇini (c. 500 BCE)—Vedic Sanskrit is remarkably similar to Avestan, the oldest attested Iranian language. (The Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family is the closest relative of the Indic branch; the two are often jointly referred to as the “Indo-Iranian” language family.) Rigvedic hymns are known to share a large inventory of archaic forms and

phraseology with their closest cousins, Old Avestan *hāitis*—many of which cannot be found in Classical Sanskrit. For this reason, Rigvedic poetry provides particularly fertile ground for the study of comparative Indo-Iranian and ultimately comparative Indo-European poetics.

Many have noticed that in the *Rig Veda*, patterns of repetition (of lexical roots and stems, and of inflectional and derivational morphology) frequently stretch across cola—or, going by the foot of Vedic meter instead of the colon of Greco-Roman rhetoric, across *pādas*—and in doing so comprise much of the stylistic glue that unites these units into a cohesive stanza. In recent scholarship on the *Gāthās*, i.e. on the oldest of Avestan scriptures, comparable patterns have been posited on the level of the *hāiti*, i.e. on the level of the poem. (For more on both of these lines of research, see below under “literature review.”) Even a cursory comparative glance at a few Rigvedic hymns and Avestan *hāitis* reveals some similarity between the patterns of repetitions they contain (see below, under “Identifying structuring devices,” for more on this); it would seem time for more scholars to take this line of inquiry and swing onto the Rigvedic bough.

While initially motivated by comparative considerations, a research agenda focusing on repetitions that structure the *sūkta* rather than the short series of contiguous *pādas* promises to contribute to the resolution of an internal problem within Rigvedic scholarship (in South Asia as well as in European and Euroamerican intellectual traditions): despite the existence of an ancient index (the *Sarvāṅkramaṇī*) that demarcates hymns and assigns an author to each one, scholars of the *Rig Veda* rarely make use of the analytic categories of “hymn” and “author.” Stephanie Jamison (2007) summarizes the still prevalent state of affairs in the following terms:

Thus we have, on the surface, a large collection of well-differentiated individual poems, each with its own ostensible author. And this is where we meet our paradox: despite the almost obsessive accounting of poems and poets in the text itself and in early indigenous materials devoted to the text, quite remarkable in an ancient and traditional literature, scholarly investigation of the Rig Veda, both Indian and Western, almost never makes reference to poem or poet. These are not units to which questions are put, or from which explanations are sought. With surprisingly few exceptions, the text is treated either as an undifferentiated whole or is dissolved into ten thousand separate verses, whose arrangement into hymns seems to be considered incidental and whose authorship seems irrelevant.¹

The *Sarvāṅkramaṇī* also lists the deity to which each hymn is dedicated, raising the possibility of the importance of *genre* to compositional strategies—but without establishing the security of the category of hymn/*sūkta*, it seems rather impossible to pursue this line of thought. The existence of the genre of *Āpṛī* hymns, in which a fixed inventory of key words are arranged in a fixed order, raises hopes that other sorts of genres represented within the *Rig Veda* might deploy distinct types of formal hymn-level structuring

¹ Jamison 2007: 19.

devices; in other words, we have reason to suppose that we can examine the categories of hymn, genre, and authorship through one and the same investigative approach.

Given that the *Gāthās* are primarily confessional hymns attributed to a single author, in which a speaker addresses one particular god, Ahura Mazda (Lord Wisdom), understanding how authorship and genre can affect compositional strategies would seem essential to making sound comparisons between these most ancient attested traditions of Indic and Iranian verbal art. If we could establish that certain structuring devices were characteristic of certain authors' approaches to composing hymns of certain genres, then we could begin to identify more and less natural starting places for a comparative examination of Rigvedic hymns and *Gāthās*.²

The objective of the “boughs” has left us with the following agenda: examine patterned repetitions (“structuring devices”) on the level of the hymn/*sūkta*, with attention to how these repetitions structure and demarcate individual hymns, and with an eye for how considerations of genre and authorship may explain differences in the configuration of relevant repetitions.

1.3 The Indic branch of the language tree: this dissertation in the context of Sanskrit studies

The objective of the branch stems from a desire to facilitate comparison of the *Rig Veda* to later Sanskritic traditions, and in particular to the post-Vedic materials that are more frequently studied by Sanskritists throughout the world. If “throughout the world” sounds unhelpfully vague, the reader may gloss it as “outside of the disciplinary and sociopolitical niche that is Indo-European Studies.” There are certain past demons and present difficulties that, in my opinion, render problematic the continued practice of some traditional approaches to the study of the *Rig Veda* as part of comparative “Indo-European” poetics. First and foremost among these problems is this intellectual tradition's ties to colonial enterprises, in the context of which the assertion of links between European languages and Sanskrit was part of a broader hegemonic agenda.³ It may never be possible to fully break these ties, but they can be attenuated

² As the reader will gather from the literature review, Jamison (2007) makes a particularly important contribution to these lines of inquiry.

³ It is impossible to describe the genesis of the improbable juxtaposition of pursuits behind that strange, hyphenated term, “Indo-European” without mentioning Sir William Jones. While simultaneously serving as a justice on the High Court of (colonial) Bengal and as (founder and) president of the academically-minded Royal Asiatic Society, Sir William Jones articulated an early and extremely influential formulation of the theory that Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Gothic, Celtic, and Persian could all be traced back to a common parent language. Those familiar with the work of Edward Said will also regard him as a pivotal figure in the genesis of Orientalist intellectual disciplines. By now it is no longer controversial to point out that the tracing of the languages of the colonized and the colonizers to a parent tongue that only the colonizers can reconstruct is in some sense a further exercise of power over oppressed peoples.

through approaches to the Rig Veda that also invite the input of scholars whose interests do not include comparing Sanskrit to languages of the (geographic and political) West. In deciding which formal and functional features of Rigvedic repetition to examine, I have kept in mind both relevant indigenous categories and a number of recent examples of intriguing work on later genres.

The first two relevant categories are *yamaka*, literally “twinning”; and *śleṣa*, literally “embrace.” In *śleṣa*, an extended passage can be read to have two sometimes radically different meanings. In *yamaka*, which is sometimes translated as “rhyme” (but which might also be translated as “antanaclasis,” or through any number of other imprecise equivalents), a particular sequence of sounds is repeated with a different meaning. Both of these techniques are explicitly discussed in indigenous commentaries on Classical *kāvya*, a genre which, however, postdates the bulk of the *Rig Veda* by millennia. Both *śleṣa* and *yamaka* rely on a combination of re-segmentation of a sequence of sounds and multiplicity of reference of individual words. In the case of *yamaka*, a sequence of sounds is most often repeated within a particular verse

What is worse, as Bruce Lincoln has shown (in *Theorizing Myth*, 1999), Sir William Jones’ letters make it clear that his *primary* motive to study Sanskrit was his desire to consolidate his own power and the power of the English court system within which he worked: he explicitly states that he learned the language so that he would be able to curb the “villainy of the Brahmin lawyers” to whom it was left to adjudicate civil cases (in context, it seems that by “villainy” he meant their flexible, sometimes lenient, interpretation of law). In other words, I owe the existence of my discipline to an exercise in judicial *overseership*.

Though we “Indo-Europeanists” are no longer involved in explicitly colonial enterprises, it is probably no coincidence that the *Journal of Indo-European Studies*, which is not only extant but highly respected (until recently, students and professors alike from my program regularly published in it), is funded by the Institute for the Study of Man, the same umbrella organization that finances the publication of the *Mankind Quarterly*: an outlet devoted to various types of “scientific” racism and particularly infamous for being cited numerous times in *The Bell Curve* (here I once again borrow from Lincoln’s 1999 work). The specific baggage that Indo-European Studies brings along with it suggests that practitioners like myself are never more than one deflected question away from complicity with oppressors of many shapes and forms; accordingly, my awareness of this baggage greatly increases my commitment, moving forward, to reconfigure both research agendas and curricula in ways that undermine colonial power dynamics and the devastating effects of racial prejudice coupled with power.

The present study’s focus on features of Rigvedic poetry that pluralize meaning in a manner reminiscent of some of Classical *kāvya*’s characteristic devices, *śleṣa* and *yamaka* (see discussion within main text) is undertaken with a sidelong glance at the influence of European Romanticism (inflicted upon Indian literature by way of colonialism) on prevailing views of Classical Sanskrit poetry within and beyond South Asia. The technique of *śleṣa* in particular, precluding as it does the possibility that a poem has been spontaneously composed, is still widely regarded as “decadent.” As Bronner (2010) has rightfully pointed out, this devaluation of indigenous poetic ornamentations is one facet of the much larger colonial/Orientalist project of painting India as “in decay and wild, a civilization long past its golden age and much in need of Western values” (Bronner 11). An implicit counter to this line of thinking can be found in the identification of *kāvya*-like techniques in the portion of the Sanskrit poetic tradition that Europeans have most frequently appropriated and characterized as part of a shared Indo-European heritage. The case studies in this dissertation demonstrate simultaneously operating patterns of repetition whose forms and functional interplay are so complex as to rule out spontaneous composition just as surely as *śleṣa* does.

(contemporaneous commentaries on *yamaka* classify different types according to the position of the repetitions within a single verse's *pādas*⁴); in *śleṣa*, a sustained sequence of sounds is not repeated, but rather interpreted in two different ways, often by two different characters in a scene.

As Yigal Bronner (2010) has had occasion to observe in detail, these two formal features can collaborate as part of a broader poetic strategy. For instance, in Nīivarman's *Kīcakavadha*, *Killing Kīcaka* (a retelling of the fourth book of the *Mahābhārata*), *yamaka* dominates the narrative portions; but *śleṣa* dominates the portions where disguised characters enter into dialogue with each other, sometimes only implicitly, with the explicit addressee being a king by whom one (Draupadī) is held captive as the others wait for the opportunity to liberate her.⁵ In such a situation, both *śleṣa* and *yamaka* convey a sort of double vision: for example, they connect the assault of the captive Draupadī to similar treatment she previously endured (so, they express her retraumatization), and they also foreshadow a coming war in the midst of a smaller battle. Additionally, *śleṣa* is a technique through which characters can simultaneously communicate different messages to different audiences: for instance, Draupadī employs this technique to spur on her husbands/rescuers in disguise without appearing to do the same to the king in whose assembly she is being displayed as a captive.

Polysemy (or double-vision) that is dependent upon the re-segmentation of a set of sounds, as opposed to the re-interpretation of a particular word form (whether repeated or not), is close to impossible to posit for the *Rig Veda*—and since I am taking my cues partially from the *Gāthās* and focusing on repetitions across verses rather than within contiguous *pādas*, the specific technique of *yamaka* would appear less relevant than it initially sounded.⁶ However, the broader idea that a particular form (repeated or otherwise) can be made to signify different things for or in relation to two different audiences, or interpreted to refer to events unfolding in two different settings, serves as a fruitful guiding principle for the interpretation of Rigvedic stanzas as well. What is more, a broader understanding of the types of formal repetition that may create this double vision is required not only as a favor to induct the *Rig Veda* into the *kāvya* club, but also to treat certain other tactics deployed by the first (Common-Era) poets to experiment with *śleṣa*. For instance, there is no particular name for the types of complex repetitions at-a-distance that

⁴ See Gerow 1971.

⁵ See Bronner (2010) Chapter 3.

⁶ Stephanie Jamison (2015) has suggested that an example of *śleṣa* may be found in one particular passage in 10.29.1. To my knowledge, this is the only time that anything of the kind has been suggested.

Richard Salomon has recently shown connect the fourth and sixth *sarga* of Aśvaghoṣa’s Buddhist epic *Saundarandanda*—repetitions that create a kind of double vision between the love-play of a newly married couple and the wife’s distress after her husband, Nanda, abandons her to become a monk.⁷

There is one more indigenous category—one of greater antiquity—that, while equally impossible to directly connect to the *Rig Veda*, does help sharpen the lens through which I view the significance of repetitions in Rigvedic hymns. This is the category of *bandhu*—a word that is cognate with English “bind” and that can mean “relative,” but also has the technical sense of “counterpart” or “homologue.” The identification of a *bandhu* connecting two of an established set of spheres or realms to one another is a major preoccupation of the *Upaniṣads* of the late Vedic period—a type of didactic scripture whose name literally means “connection”; these different realms include that of ritual (*adhiyajña*), that of the divine macrocosmos (*adhidevatā*) and that of the self (*adhyātman*).⁸ Within the *Upaniṣads* the things that are *bandhus* of one another are often explicitly equated, or else juxtaposed in particular formulations. Olivelle places particular emphasis on the formula, “someone venerates X as Y,” which effectively means, “he recognizes the hidden connection or homology between the two.”⁹

Cross-culturally common metaphorical associations, such as those between fire, the sun, and the human eye, often motivate these homologies; but just as often, phonetic similarity motivates these connections: the standard example is that the High Chant is associated with the sun because of the common element *ud*, “up, high,” in the word *udgītha*, “High Chant,” and the rising, *udyan* (lit “going up,”) sun.¹⁰ The inventory of such homologies is fairly well worked out and fixed in the *Upaniṣads*—and this fixed system of correspondences also fixes and reinforces social hierarchies in the ritual sphere. Accordingly, some scholars see the occasional slight modifications of some of the standard ranked categories outside of the ritual sphere as interventions articulated to alter power relations between different groups of ritualists.¹¹

⁷ See Salomon 2009.

⁸ As outlined in many sources—see, for instance, Smith 1994:ix.

⁹ Olivelle 1998: 24.

¹⁰ Olivelle 1998: 25.

¹¹ See Lincoln 2012.

If we are going to further the “objective of the branch”—i.e. if we wish to pave the way for comparative study of the function of categories like *śleṣa*, *yamaka*, and *bandhu*— it would seem that in addition to investigating formal and functional connections between the repetitions that connect contiguous pādas (on the one hand) and those that comprise more sustained structuring devices (on the other), we should take care to catalogue the kinds of “double vision” and homologies that can be articulated through such repetitions, and we should pay attention to the uses of ambiguity and phraseological loopholes for navigating and even altering power relations.

In recent years, scholars have begun to regard the *Rig Veda* as rife with examples of a process known as “poetic repair”—a kind of performed phraseological tweaking in which deviant and idiosyncratic expressions are presented and then corrected in the course of a hymn (see below under the literature review and further below under “Function,” in Section 6.9, for more on this term). Previous discussions on this phenomenon of poetic repair catalogued different kinds from a primarily formal rather than a functional perspective; an investigation of possible relationships between poetic reparations and altered power relations would now seem to be in order.

1.3 The objective of the forest and summary of research agenda

The idea that sameness in sound can produce deviant and destabilizing types of double vision seems to forge a bridge between the *Rig Veda* and literature rooted in many other different contexts—including examples that are relatively well-established within the modern English literary canon, and more popular pieces that are slowly making their way into California classrooms. One might think of the echoes of “order” in “ordure” and “odor” that destabilized the normally positive connotations of the reigning “Order” in Harold Pinter’s famous poem. One might think of the fading of the phonetic difference between “officer” and “overseer” KRS-One’s “Sound of da Police”—a popular source for protest chants among LA-area youth organizers that is also part of the curriculum of regularly offered courses at UC Irvine.¹² The more expansive English rendering of *yamaka*—antanaclasis, literally “reflection”¹³—evokes any number of contexts in which a pair of homophones push a discourse that a power figure has propped up until it collides with a counternarrative, allowing a subversive poet to get close enough to eye level with his addressee to hold up a mirror.

¹²As taught by Prof. Sohail Daulatzai.

¹³ For more on antanaclasis, see under “Function of structuring devices” below (Section 6.11).

In sum then, the long-term goals listed above would encourage us to a) study hymn-level structuring devices with an eye for compositional strategies deployed by different authors and characteristic of different genres; b) study repetitions with an eye toward the connections between pāda-level and hymn-level patterns, the types of double vision that these repetitions may produce, and the homologies they may articulate; and c) study deviant articulations of these repetitions with an eye toward the power relations that they alter.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: WORK ON THE *RIG VEDA* WITHIN INDO-EUROPEAN STUDIES

Whatever my ambitions for my future work on the *Rig Veda*, the current project is primarily indebted to scholars working within the field of Indo-European Studies. My work draws heavily from at least four different types of previous investigations conducted under this general heading:

- 1) Investigations of *pāda*-level lexical and morphological repetition in the *Rig Veda*;
- 2) The cataloguing of hymn-level structuring devices bearing some relationship to these patterns of repetition;
- 3) The observation of deviations from Rigvedic phraseological conventions within a set of repetitions;
- 4) Discussions of the social context that might motivate any rhetorical strategies behind these deviations, and speculations about what those strategies might be.

In the literature review below, I will primarily treat the first three types of investigations, since they are the areas in which the most significant amount of relevant work has been done within Indo-European Studies. I will only briefly touch upon the fourth type of investigation at the end, delaying lengthier discussions for my “methodology” section.

2.1 Indo-European Studies and the identification of *pāda*-level patterns of repetition

A long line of scholars have devoted a number of articles, chapters, and even monographs to the cataloging of lexical, grammatical and phonetic figures (i.e. repetitions and alternations) that unite phrases, collocations, successive cola, and/or multiple pādas *within a particular stanza* (see in particular Gonda, Elizarenkova, and Klein below). A number of extensive inventories of these smaller-scale devices already exist—some dealing with the *Rig Veda* specifically, and some assembled as part of a broader effort to reconstruct aspects of an Indo-European poetic grammar. Pursuant to both efforts, helpful systems of categorization, largely based upon classical rhetoric and modern semiotics, have already been adapted and applied to Rigvedic data.

Among the many monographs of Jan Gonda's that could be mentioned in this context, *Stylistic Repetition in the Veda* (1959) contains perhaps the most extensive (though certainly not the most systematic) collection of data pertaining to formal repetitions. This work is among the handful that I have consulted extensively during the process of developing a starting inventory of types of formal repetition that *might* manifest in hymn-level structuring devices. However, Gonda himself mainly discussed these various formal repetitions' ability to unite words in a phrase, phrases in a clause, or successive clauses; only in isolated instances—for example, in conjunction with the device of concatenation—did he raise the possibility that a type of stylistic repetition might unite successive stanzas.

I should mention in passing that Gonda, among many others, credits Maurice Bloomfield's *Rigveda Repetitions* (1916) as the original source for the term and concept of “concatenation” as it applies to the *Rig Veda*; that is, Bloomfield observed that in many instances, “an expression, statement, or motif in one given stanza is taken up anew in the next stanza” (5). I myself will not draw extensively from the work of Bloomfield, but it does represent an important methodological precedent for the later sources that I have found to be of more use for my purposes.

Tatyana Elizarenkova's *Language and Style of the Vedic Ṛṣis* (1995) also provides a wealth of immediately relevant data, including examples of prosodic, phonetic, and grammatical features that figure into Rigvedic poetic practice—but the observations that most significantly contributed to my present method will be treated below under a different rubric.

It would be well-nigh impossible for work on the poetics of any archaic Indo-European literary tradition not to be indebted in some way or another to Calvert Watkins' *How to Kill a Dragon* (1995); it will soon become clear that I am indebted in multiple ways (only a few of which I have space to mention here). While Watkins' survey of IE comparative poetics is not systematic in the sense of exploring all manner and scales of devices in all language branches to an equal degree of detail (this was not the intention of the author, nor would such an objective be possible to fulfill in a single volume), it is nonetheless the most comprehensive inventory to date of inherited Indo-European poetic phraseology, figures, and compositional patterns. The majority of the book chapters are “case studies” and targeted comparative investigations (“Greece and the art of the word” vs. “Vedic India and the art of the word” vs. “Ireland and the art of the syllable”; “Italy and India: the elliptic offering”), with the identification of cognate linguistic expressions of the formula HERO SLAY SERPENT (introduced on p. 301) as a thread uniting the last half of these studies. While a presentation of elements of the Rigvedic poetic grammar is rarely the sole or even primary focus of a chapter in the book, by the end many relevant observations have been made—and they have been made in ways that lend themselves to comparison of both the form and function of

analogous features in cognate traditions (see, for instance, a discussion on p.132 of what Jared Klein might call paronomastic anadiplosis and reddio).

In the last ten years, Jared Klein has produced a number of comparatively short but extremely systematic treatments of characteristic forms of formal repetition within the *Rig Veda*. For instance, in his study, “Aspects of the Rhetorical Poetics of the Rigveda” (2006), he groups many of the same features noticed by Gonda into a fuller inventory of categories of repetition (categories borrowed or adapted from Greco-Roman rhetorical theory). These categories are related to the categories of *yamaka* distinguished in *alaṃkāraśāstra*, the indigenous tradition of commentary on Classical Sanskrit *kāvya*, except that in addition to contrasting repetitions according to their positions within *pādas*, they also take into account the different sorts of elements repeated (roots, stems, inflectional endings, or identical forms). All of the individual rounds of repetition that make up what I call “structuring devices” are in one way or another related to the categories of repetition which Klein outlines there (though he explicitly confines himself to cases in which these repetitions unite consecutive cola)—although, as we will see, many different types of repetitions (according to either Greco-Roman or later indigenous classifications) come together in a single structuring device.

2.2 Cataloguing of hymn-level structuring devices consisting of these patterns of repetition

Considerably fewer expositions have focused on the role that formal patterns of repetition and alternation play in larger-scale *hymn-level* structuring devices within the *Rig Veda*. However, some very important inroads have been made—chiefly by Stephanie Jamison, Tatyana Elizarenkova and Joel Brereton, and, last but not least, by Calvert Watkins. Scholars who specialize in the closely related Avestan poetic tradition have done an equally considerable level of work on what I would call *hāiti*-level structuring devices; in particular, the approaches of Hanns-Peter Schmidt and Martin Schwartz have influenced by own work.

I will briefly break from the default, chronological order of presentation here: one particular book chapter, dealing though it did with archaic Latin poetry, nonetheless changed the perspective from which I viewed scholarship on Rigvedic structuring devices and prompted me to seek a bridge between this kind of inquiry on the one hand and catalogs of smaller-scale figures and patterns of repetition on the other. My preference for positing hymn-level structuring devices that correlate with smaller-scale patterns of repetition owes a great deal to Watkins’ analysis of Cato’s lustration of the fields in *How to Kill a Dragon* (197-214). Watkins detected a strategy of poetic composition involving elaborate formal divisions that articulate a single schematic principle *on different scales* (a bipartite developmental schema is manifested

on a large scale as an alternation of strophe-antistrophe, and replicated in miniature in two-part grammatical figures, such as Argument + Negated Counterargument and merisms; furthermore, phonetic figures link each word in a line with one other word). I have imitated the spirit of this analysis by viewing the patterns of repetition that manifest across Rigvedic stanzas through the lens of Jared Klein’s inventory of stylistic repetitions across cola. Most would agree with the assertion that Klein’s categories of close-range repetitions are intentional devices; this consensus lends a little more plausibility to the idea that analogous repetitions found across stanza boundaries might be equally intentional. In what follows, I will introduce some examples of such patterns of repetition that other scholars have noted, and periodically comment on the relevance of Klein’s inventory.

Both Elizarenkova (1995) and Jamison (2007) single out Ferdinand de Saussure’s observations on the structure of RV 1.1 as a pioneering effort—in Jamison’s terms (and mine), it is an early identification of a hymn-level “structuring device”; in Elizarenkova’s terms, it is a study of the “‘expressive’ use of theonyms” (153). What de Saussure noticed was a pattern of repetition that united all of the stanzas of the hymn through the repetition of the name of the god to which the hymn was devoted: *Agni*. In the first five stanzas, the theonym occurs at the beginning of the first pāda of each stanza, in different (declensional) cases—in other words, it is what Jared Klein (2006) would identify as polyptotic anaphora, except manifested across stanzas instead of across cola (S1: *agníṃ*...S2: *agníḥ*...S3: *agnínā*...S4: *ágne*...S5: *agnír*). Three out of the hymn’s remaining four stanzas feature another repetition of the god’s name—though in these latter instances, variables and constants seem to have switched: the name remains in the vocative case (*ágne*), but appears in different positions within the stanza, with various “sound-hints” occupying a position closer to the stanza’s beginning (for more on the possible implications of this transition, see the immediately subsequent section of the literature review).

Elizarenkova would go on to observe many more instances of similar pervasive patterns of repetition (of the type that I label hymn-level “structuring devices”). She gives copious examples of hymns whose stanzas feature a repetition of a theonym and/or a pronoun (or set of pronouns) in pāda-initial positions (either the same case or a variety of different cases—so, either exact anaphora or polyptotic anaphora). Elizarenkova notes that this pattern of repetition of a theonym is more frequent and more consistently developed in Agni-hymns than in Indra-hymns. Indra-hymns, on the other hand, are often constructed according to a different pattern of pronominal repetition, involving a series of attributive clauses followed with the corresponding demonstrative (156-157): take, for instance, the famous sequence in RV 02.012: *yáh... yáh ... sá janāsa índraḥ* “He who...he who...he, O people, (is) Indra!” (Klein might call the first two terms exact anaphoric repetition, and their relation to the final form *homoioteleuton*.)

Language and Style of the Vedic Ṛṣis also treats sustained repetitions of roots, stems or sound sequences that are related to, or phonologically similar to, theonyms. Hymns to Savitar – such as 4.54 and 6.71--often incorporate forms of the related root √sū- , “to vivify, impel” (124). (In Klein’s terms, this would be a combination of paronomastic and polyptotic repetition.)

Joel Brereton’s treatment of *RV*10.129 (1999) altered the course of my work in a number of ways; in particular, Brereton introduced me to a particular *shape* of structuring device which turns out to be quite common in the Rig Veda. Some of the article’s details will be featured a bit later in my introduction to the “geometric ring,” a term I have coined to describe the manner in which a particular hymn-level structuring device staggers its lexical repetitions; suffice it to say here that Brereton recognized that the first five stanzas of the hymn are structured around repetitions of four lexical roots (paronomastic repetition, in Klein’s terms).

Stephanie Jamison’s *The Rig Veda Between Two Worlds* (2007) has an entire chapter devoted to structuring devices employed within individual hymns. In fact, I borrow the term “structuring device” from this specific work. The techniques that come under the rubric of “structuring devices” as Jamison conceives them – “from mechanical and obvious surface phenomena to deep semantic patterns” (Jamison 59) – are a bit more vast and various than the patterns of repetition I refer to by the same name: as I mentioned above, I reserve the term “structuring device” for patterns of lexical and morphological repetition, which I then try to correlate with semantic patterns. That said, Jamison’s examples of structuring devices regularly involve such patterns of formal repetition (among others). I will have occasion to mention Jamison’s treatment of other hymns later on within this dissertation. (Three out of the five hymns that make up my case studies have been treated at least briefly by Jamison, which is itself a testament to the extent to which her observations have influenced my own thinking.)

Thus concludes my review of the literature on Rigvedic structuring devices; now I will turn briefly to discussions of structuring devices in Avestan poetry. I can only give a brief mention of the work of Hanns-Peter Schmidt here, but it should be noted that his treatment of the interconnection between form and meaning of Avestan *hāitis* appears to have greatly influenced the methods of the scholars from whom I draw more directly. In his treatment of *Yasna* 33 (1985), for instance, Schmidt notices lexical repetitions that unite adjacent stanzas throughout the entire hymn in successive rounds of concatenation (though he does not distinguish between concatenation via formal repetitions of roots and stems on the one hand and concatenation via semantically related words on the other). Crucially, however, he also notices that *Yasna* 33 can be divided into two major subgroups, with the first group of stanzas dominated by the subjunctive mood and the second group of stanzas dominated by the imperative mood. Similarly, in the *Rig Veda*

Between Two Worlds, Stephanie Jamison notices that patterns of lexical and grammatical repetition collaborate to demarcate major structural units in RV 7.76 (a hymn that I analyze in one of my case studies). My method departs from the method of both of these scholars in that I confine myself to *formal* repetition of lexical and morphological *signifiers*, and try to correlate but *not conflate* these patterns with repetitions of *signified* semantic classes or of grammatical categories that have a number of different formal manifestations; but the observation that different structuring devices can operate simultaneously throughout a hymn is an important one from my perspective as well.

My work was also in part inspired by Martin Schwartz’s analyses of the (Avestan) *Gāthās*: in particular, I have mimicked his consistent focus on formal patterns of repetition or alternation across a *hāiti* (see, for instance, Schwartz 2003). That said, the specific structure that Schwartz sees again and again in the *Gāthās*—namely, an extensive network *concentric, evenly spaced* rings of lexical repetitions (uniting the first stanza with the last stanza, the second stanza with the second-to-last stanza, and so on) does not appear to have a strong presence in the Rig Veda. In general, I have a different, perhaps slightly stricter approach to identifying hymn-level structuring devices (the manner in which Schwartz presents his results would suggest that he presupposes the existence of this particular structuring device in every *hāiti*, and then finds a way to find it).

2.3 Observation of deviations from phraseological conventions within structuring devices

Precedents to this part of my analysis, and sources informing it, fall into three main categories: a) sources that draw attention to linguistic deviations from and returns to convention, but do not mention their propensity to surface within the hymn-level patterns of repetition that I call structuring devices; b) sources that, in the process of discussing structuring devices, end up illustrating such an instance of deviation-and-return, but do not draw attention to it; and c) Rigvedic scholarship and reference materials that form a partial basis for my understanding of the conventions or norms around which this process unfolds.

Stephanie Jamison’s work on what she called “poetic repair” has most directly informed my own understanding of how phraseological deviations tend to manifest themselves within the course of a hymn. Briefly, “poetic repair” (2006) refers to Rigvedic poets’ tendency to “introduce a linguistic puzzle early in a hymn, and ‘solve’ it later in a hymn” (133). I myself will often use the term “repair” as a shorthand for deviation-and-return (though the term “poetic repair” will turn out to be a bit too narrow for my purposes). I will outline the most relevant aspects of her pioneering work later in my dissertation (in conjunction with metalinguistic repair, under the rubric of the metalingual function). Jamison classifies poetic repair as a “

structuring device,” but in doing so she uses the term in a sense that is quite different from my own (discussed further below, under “metalinguistic repair”).

While some of Jamison’s examples of poetic repair involve word forms which comprise part of a pattern of repetition across stanzas (i.e., a “structuring device” in my sense), no attention is drawn to such patterns in the article in which the concept of poetic repair is fully developed. The notion of repair is periodically mentioned in her later work on structuring devices (2007; as noted above, even in this context she uses the term in a slightly different, broader sense), but the full extent of the entrenchment of these examples of repair within broader patterns of repetition is never explicitly outlined. See, for instance, her statement on one round of lexical repetition in 7.76 (85-86): of two instances of *ámardhantaḥ*, “non-neglectful,” “the second occurrence ‘repairs’ the first,” because in the second instance, the form refers to officiants at a sacrifice, whereas in the first instance, it refers to “paths” (i.e. inanimate formations that hardly seem capable of neglect or “non-neglect”). As it turns out, this is one round from multiple networks of lexical repetitions that pervade the hymn and that provide more examples of poetic repair (see Part III Sections 2.1-4.10 of this dissertation); but Jamison does not mention most of these other repetitions.

In the “Function” portion of the methodology section, the various types of norms against which deviations are measured will be discussed in more detail; but suffice it to say here that they involve, *at the very least*, patterns in the syntactic construction and the mythological or ritual reference of Rigvedic forms, lexemes and/or collocations—not to mention patterns in the form and function of traditional lexical, grammatical and phonetic figures. Abel Bergaigne’s *La religion védique d’après les hymnes du Rig-Véda* remains an extremely valuable source for determining the types of motifs (and corresponding phrases) that tend to attach themselves to particular divine figures and to mythological and ritual settings. Needless to say, I will employ other works on myth, ritual and phraseology to supplement Bergaigne—up to and including Stephanie Jamison’s *Sacrificed Wife, Sacrificer’s Wife* (1996), which proves especially useful for analyzing my final case study.

When the search for conventions proceeds in the opposite direction (i.e. when I start with forms, and need to connect them with motifs and gods or other entities or themes via the usage patterns of either these forms themselves or the roots and collocations involved), Lubotsky’s *R̥gvedic Word Concordance* (1997) has been of inestimable help.

2.4: Observations on communicative strategies behind linguistic deviations/puzzles and “repairs” highlighted by structuring devices, and reconstruction of the social context in which those strategies operate

Since the notion of poetic repair has not heretofore been connected with transitions manifested in the course of structuring devices, it goes without saying that the communicative strategies behind these devices have not been studied in any manner that bears more than a vague resemblance to the method I will employ. That said, I did rather frequently encounter scattered glimmers of the particular type of light I hope to shed on Rigvedic poetics.

Elizarenkova (1995) attempted to link formal transitions to a bipartite model of a hymn, which distinguished between a “descriptive” and an “appellative” section. The “descriptive” section of a hymn involved outlining the gods’ traits and feats (and thus would prototypically be quite heavy on mythological references); the “appellative” section involved entreaties addressed to these same gods (and thus, references to the ritual/human world). In the same work, Elizarenkova notes that the “suggestive style of the hymns is often characterized by the double reference of a single word or phrase; there is a constant tendency to achieve a simultaneous correlation with two levels, ritual and mythological” (33). Observations of this type are not unrelated to my claim that various kinds of repair, articulated through words repeated in structuring devices, manipulate the boundary between the human and the divine. Stephanie Jamison has made other, more specific observations of the same kind: for instance, in her analysis of *RV1.61*, she noted that the case alternation found in the hymn’s dominant structuring device (which was polyptotic anaphora of a demonstrative pronoun) seemed to index switches of focus from the ritual world to the mythological world and vice versa.

Below, under the “Function” section of the explanation of my methodology, I will briefly discuss two more studies that have exerted an enormous amount of influence on my own line of thinking about the communicative function of structuring devices. Both studies have to do with types of linguistic norms from which deviations can sometimes be observed. In one, Calvert Watkins treats *metalinguistic* distinctions between near synonyms in the *Rig Veda*; essentially, a marked synonym can be substituted for an unmarked synonym, often in the context of a repeated lexical or grammatical frame. Because the “marked” near-synonym tends to carry connotations of the divine, such substitutions are often rather obviously connected to particular rhetorical strategies. In another piece to be discussed below, George Thompson speaks of formulaic *phatic* opening statements involving particular lexical elements; this line of thinking allows us to see certain phatic statements highlighted by structuring devices as deviating from the normal configuration.

Any sociolinguistic interpretation of these strategies will benefit greatly from research done by Calvert Watkins, Stephanie Jamison, and many others on the social position of the poet vis-à-vis other human agents on the ritual grounds, not to mention their divine addressees. In particular, Watkins (1995: 68-84) outlines phraseological evidence for the idea that in many different cognate Indo-European traditions, the poet performed verbal art as a gift that entailed a counter-gift from a patron.

In the Vedic tradition all this is quite explicit: from the *Rig Veda* onwards, there is an explicit distinction between poets, who compose verbal art and join with other ritualists to perform sacrifices, and patrons who underwrite it. The poets are called by a great variety of terms in the *Rig Veda*; among the separate words for “patron” is *sūrī-*. Eventually, the role of patron would be encoded as that of the *Yajamāna*, “the one who sacrifices for himself”—i.e. the one who finances and derives all material boons from the sacrifice.¹⁴ This patron would then give a *dakṣiṇā-* or priestly gift. Within the *Rig Veda* many praise hymns imbedded in sacrificial contexts have a separate section for the *dānastuti*, or the “praise of the (patron’s) gift.” The idea was that the poet would secure the favor of the god for the patron, who in turn provided a secure livelihood for the poet. Consequently, the poet’s livelihood depended upon successfully coaxing gods down to the ritual grounds (in other words, upon convincing the patron of the success of the sacrifice). Nor was the gods’ participation in sacrifice always a given: for example, many hymns dedicated to Indra beg him to accept the sacrifices of a poet’s clan rather than those of a rival clan. There are less direct hints of power differentials and rivalries between poets in the same clan—for instance, it will turn out to be relevant to at least *RV*7.86 that one term for poet-sage, *kavī*, probably initially meant a special, high-ranking poet to whom a king turned for particularly crucial word-spells.¹⁵ So, the distinct hierarchical roles of god, patron, and more and less powerful poets comprise part of the social web that poets use words to navigate. In addition, the late Vedic role of the “Sacrificer’s Wife”—subordinate but also indispensable to each Sacrificer-patriarch—will turn out to be relevant to our last case study, *RV* 1995.¹⁶

¹⁴ Jamison 1991 has a thorough yet accessible discussion of this reciprocity relationship in the introduction.

¹⁵ Jamison 2007: 119-137 has a good discussion of the indirect evidence for this. The starting point is that *kauuī-*, the exact Avestan cognate, refers to a king rather than a poet.

¹⁶ Jamison 1996 treats the figure of the Sacrificer’s Wife in detail.

2.5 Summary of status of research on the *Rig Veda* within Indo-European Studies

Stylistic features and poetic devices of the *Rig Veda* are not in themselves a new topic of study-- but relatively little attention has been devoted to their participation in the large-scale formal schemata that unite stanzas into discourse units, ultimately defining the contours that lend many *Rigvedic* hymns the appearance of coherent self-contained units. To my knowledge, no one has focused on the departures from and returns to phraseological conventions that these formal devices can contain (and therefore highlight), much less consistently applied a theoretical framework that would link structuring devices' formal features to a variety of specific communicative functions.

In consequence, no one has had the opportunity to systematically investigate the possibility that individual poets might display a preference for using particular formal techniques to accomplish the communicative goals that they have in common with their colleagues, so to speak; nor has anyone attempted to identify correlations between form and function that might distinguish different genres of *Rigvedic* hymns, or to more thoroughly investigate the relationships between these different genres and the other poetic traditions to which they bear at least superficial similarities. In short, my dissertation will fill a noticeable gap in *Rigvedic* scholarship.

3. SELECTION CRITERIA FOR CORE CASE STUDIES

It will soon become clear that the in-depth investigations into the form and function specified by my particular methodological approach(es) preclude the examination of more than a handful of hymns in the space of a dissertation: these hymns are investigated not only as self-contained poems, but as the intersection of different *Rigvedic* discourses whose thematic content and standard associated phraseology must be outlined in detail. *RV*10.95, which became the fifth, concluding case study (See Part IV, starting with Section 2), was the nucleus of and inspiration for this project in its initial stages. The four core case studies—*RV*7.75-7.77 and 7.86—were chosen for a number of reasons.

Some patterns of repetition in three out of four of these *Maṇḍala-7* hymns have been treated, in part, by other authors, so they provided a good opportunity to put my method in conversation with previous approaches. All of these hymns are attributed to a single author—*Vasiṣṭha*—but they represent at least two distinct hymn genres (praise hymns and a confessional hymn); so, they provide an opportunity to think about the role of the analytic categories of author and genre in explaining the form and function of structuring devices. Three out of four of these hymns are dedicated to Dawn, which was also an advantageous trait, since Dawn-phraseology figures prominently in the final, dialogue-hymn case study, *RV*10.95 (and one better understands how Dawn-oriented discourses might aid the nymph *Urvaśī* after

examining how these discourses operate in the more typical context of a praise hymn). It's also at least of some interest that according to *RV*7.33 among other sources, the Vasiṣṭhas were born from the mind of Urvaśī (a story that we will have occasion to recollect in Part III, Section 4.6).

Finally— part of the draw of *RV*7.77, the hymn with which I begin, is that none other than Renou called this hymn a “pièce banale.”¹⁷ In a lengthy footnote above I alluded to my objective of doing what I can from within an emphatically European interpretive tradition to push back against the devaluation of indigenous compositional techniques that both contemporary Western and South Asian scholars have inherited from colonial (European) critics. Hopefully by the end of this dissertation the reader will agree that “banal(e)” is not a word to be applied to *RV*7.77, or to any of the other hymns here treated.

¹⁷ Renou 1955-69 III: 95, also cited in Jamison 2014 II: 979.

4. METHODOLOGY PART 1: FORM OF STRUCTURING DEVICES

Since part of the aim of this dissertation is to treat structuring devices as *one of a number* of interacting communicative strategies, serving *one of a number* of interacting communicative functions, I would be remiss not to mention that this section could really fall under the rubric of “poetics”—that the patterns of formal repetition I am treating under the label structuring devices do entail a “projection of the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection to the axis of combination” at a higher order than a pāda or clause—usually, some type of discourse unit (Jakobson 1960: 358; see Section 6.12 below). Since Jakobson defines the poetic function in contradistinction to the other functions, I am inclined to follow his order of presentation and put a full treatment last; but, in the meantime, my treatments of the other functions will inevitably reference particular formal structuring devices, since the entire point is to understand the use of these devices in service of other communicative ends.

4.1 Why formal structuring devices?

To expand upon the concept of “structuring devices” introduced within and alluded to throughout the introduction and literature review: for the purposes of this dissertation, a structuring device is a pattern of *formal* repetition and/or opposition that is either *pervasive* or *regularly* recurrent over the hymn, verse group or other, multi-verse discourse unit in which it manifests itself. Above I noted that, when I speak of “structuring devices,” I use the term more narrowly than does Stephanie Jamison (2007), from whom I borrowed it. My method’s starting point is patterns in *form* rather than patterns in content; Jamison’s definition of structuring devices admits of patterns of both types—as well as an intermediary: repetitions of semantic classes and grammatical categories that may or may not lead to the repetition of lexical stems and/or inflectional morphology. As one may have gathered, the sense in which I use the word “formal” is also rather narrow: I mean to refer to repetition or opposition of particular *signifiers* with particular *phonological* “spellouts” (so, for instance, the morphological overlap in *dogs* and *cats* would count as a formal repetition, but not the grammatical equivalence of *mice* and *cheeses*). In short: for me, words and forms must have *at least* as much in common phonologically as they do semantically to be part of an initial round of inquiry into the types of patterned repetition that characterize a particular discourse unit. On the lexical end, the structuring devices I identify will typically consist of repetitions of roots and derived stems, including near-homophones where relevant; correspondingly, the grammatical repetitions I treat will involve identical or nearly identical inflectional morphology. I will include semantically distinct near-homophones in my structuring devices, but not phonologically distinct near-synonyms.

This is not because I am more interested in patterns of signifiers than in patterns of the signified – in fact, we will often appeal to the latter to explain the various purposes of the former. Instead, this restriction arises from both a general methodological concern and a particular objective of mine.

The methodological concern is the following: I find the endeavor of establishing set criteria for *structurally significant* semantic responses a daunting if not impossible task, and it appears to me that the identification and characterization of different discourse units on purely semantic grounds becomes quite arbitrary if those distinctions and categorizations are not tied to anything formal.

The intermediate case—appealing to patterns in the manifestation of semantic categories with a *partially* formal expression in a particular hymn—is not quite as problematic, especially when the categories in question are grammatical, and therefore finite and relatively secure. Still, unless we are dealing with (grammatical) categories whose *formal expression is more often than not identical* within a hymn, I will try not to use patterns of this kind as a *starting* point for an investigation into a hymn’s structure (unless prior scholarship on the hymn emphasizes them to such an extent that some type of treatment is necessary). So, for instance, even if there are (to the eyes of a grammarian) pronounced patterns in the use of a particular tense, voice, mood, or person, unless these patterns are accompanied by related patterns (to the ears of a listener) in the morphology that expresses these categories, I will not call them “structuring devices.”

Now I will move on to the particular objective that motivates me to impose the same restrictions that qualified my definition of lexical structuring devices onto grammatical structuring devices, as well. Maintaining a focus on “formal” devices does not just minimize the role of the researcher’s arbitrary eye: such devices are also a more fitting starting point for someone whose ultimate aim is to describe various *communicative* functions that structuring devices can serve. The idea that structuring devices are often of service in communicating a message more particular than “beginning/ending of discourse unit” is, of course, predicated upon a number of tentative claims, which will either be supported or undermined by a systematic gathering of data. In the case of each of these claims, the cataloging of formal structuring devices would either provide corroborating evidence, or lay essential groundwork without which relevant data could not be gathered by the scholar—much less noticed by the audience on whose reactions the scholar speculates.

The first of these claims is the following: while structuring devices (at least as they are employed by the handful of poets that I will examine) are too regular and pervasive not to be part of an intentional compositional strategy, they are also too variegated to be employed purely for the sake of the poet’s convenience. The overwhelming tendency for formal rings to cover overlapping territory—and the multiplicity of types of rings that can co-occur—will suggest that, at least in the case of the poets and poems

I am examining, the rings were not part of an oral-formulaic system designed to facilitate rapid composition. (My understanding is that oral-formulaic systems do this in large part by limiting the number of discourse-internal lexical choices that would spring to mind once a few initial words are selected: in the Homeric case, for instance, we suppose that a particular memorized formula would jump to the tip of the tongue as soon as a few lexical choices clarified the shape of the metrical slot that need to be filled. If the presence of one structuring device within a discourse unit does not preclude the presence of any of the others, it is doubtful that they could be of any use in this respect.)

If structuring devices are not a matter of convenience for the poet, the next possibility to investigate would be that they are *primarily* there for the audience to notice; perhaps they help the audience thread different verses into discourse units, or encourage the audience to otherwise “juxtapose” these verses and to notice transitions that occur between them. A demonstration of the pervasiveness of formal structuring devices within my corpus would already go a long way toward substantiating this claim. As I noted in the literature review, such formal repetitions are already acknowledged as intentionally deployed compositional techniques that connect cola or pādas within a particular verse. It is not difficult to imagine that the same types of repetitions might be deployed to connect different verses as well.¹⁸ (As mentioned above, however, structuring devices cannot be reduced to pāda-level patterns of repetition sustained over larger swaths of a hymn, because, as we will soon see, the same structuring device can contain a variety of different types of repetition, some or all of which will not involve forms within contiguous pādas.)

Finally, the idea that structuring devices help the poet communicate particular messages to his audience involves a claim that they can signal and/or encapsulate specific types of important developmental transitions within the hymn itself. While the indexing of discourse boundaries is indeed one important function of this type, we cannot suppose that all manner of overlapping and intersecting structuring devices were intended for that purpose and that purpose only. Preliminary indications point toward this being true for formal structuring devices specifically.

Within my case studies, the lexical items and grammatical forms that comprise formal structuring devices are very frequently involved in deviations *from* and returns *to* inner-Rigvedic phraseological norms—or else, they wend their way around older norms of language usage that can be established on comparative grounds. The near ubiquity of this process of creating and solving a phraseological or linguistic puzzle—in other words, the full extent of the phenomenon of “poetic repair” identified by Stephanie

¹⁸ More specifically, the structuring devices I will identify consist of exact, polyptotic, and paronomastic repetitions on the lexical end, and homoioteleutic resposion on the grammatical end; all of these features were highlighted by Klein in his “Aspects of the Rhetorical Poetics of the Rig Veda.”

Jamison (2006; on which, see further under the section on the metalingual function)—can most clearly be demonstrated against the backdrop of a fuller inventory of *formal* structuring devices. Even more importantly, we can only suppose that “poetic repair” was a successful communicative technique if we can identify something that modulates a listener’s attention toward the phrasing of particular sections of a hymn—and formal structuring devices are ideally suited for this purpose. Formal structuring devices encourage and perhaps even compel an audience to make good use of their ability to retain the *sound* as well as the sense of the words or forms involved. The tracking of such devices requires that the audience retains and refreshes the echoes of the precise wording of certain portions of the hymn within their inner ears (a.k.a. phonological loops); this constant refreshing of the memory of these phrases in the mind of the listener is exactly what is required if subtle changes in wording (i.e. developments and resolutions that operate on the level of phraseology) are to be noticed.

The recognition of these explicit shifts in the arrangement and/or meaning of the words or forms that repeat can make the audience more aware of the other, subtly spoken transitions of the hymn—so, formal structuring devices can act as the pointed tips that lead to the submerged “deep structures” of the hymn: to its subtext, the bulk of motifs and motives whose slow but steady shifts push the poem inexorably toward its conclusion. Needless to say, in the methodology section dealing specifically with the *function* of these devices, much more precise descriptions will be given: right now, all I want to convey is that if formal structuring devices are tip of the iceberg, the tip is still the best way to find the iceberg.

4.2 Identifying formal structuring devices

No one who has spent an appreciable amount of time with the *Rig Veda* will be shocked to hear that in the case of many hymns, a chart which uncritically renders every repeated word (or form, or inflectional ending) all too swiftly becomes overwhelmingly complex: difficult even for the studious eye to absorb, to say nothing of the inner ears of an audience that does not have the privilege of leisurely scanning over (and over) whatever lines are of interest at a given time.

A number of general principles, if kept in mind, can drastically decrease the apparent profusion, confusion, and contradictions in the patterns of repetition that we draw out of and risk superimposing upon such hymns. They are all different types of acknowledgements that the resources of working memory (that is, the capacities of the audience’s inner ears) are limited, so that it takes special conditions for a particular round of repetition to command an audience’s attention and ensure its own retention. In other words, I initially evaluate the “status” of a structuring device according to the presence or absence of factors that might enhance a) the audience’s ability to *perceive* repetitions within the device and b), the ease with which

that audience can *recognize*, memorize and retain *the full configuration* of relevant forms. The factors I will treat are in order, infrequency, recency, conventionality, redundancy, and variable density.

In the sections that follow, I will define each factor, and illustrate its influence in one of the hymns treated in my case study: *RV* 7.86.¹⁹ While I have developed this inventory of factors primarily with the study of the *Rig Veda* in mind, if and when comparative study of verbal art in other related Indo-European traditions can help one grasp the relevance and influence of the factor in question, I will also provide examples from those other branches.

4.3 Infrequency

“Infrequency” refers to unexpectedness in sound, sense or syntax—an aberration that modulates attention towards the word or phrase in question. The more attentional resources are devoted to infrequent phraseology, the longer it would take for specific forms to fade from working memory.

By definition, infrequency can characterize only a short passage (otherwise, the “infrequent” trait would come to constitute a secondary norm within a series of passages). The mercilessly catchy jingle, the jarring malapropism, and the freshly minted new phrase are examples of “infrequent” verbal formations: all are *markedly* different from the words that comprise their immediate linguistic context. In many languages, *marked* patterns of word order serve to focalize certain portions of a sentence; this, too is an example of “infrequency” in action. In poetry, more stylized patterns of word order can be deployed to the same end: the commonly referenced “indexical” function of phonetic and grammatical figures is one label for the effects of some types of infrequency.²⁰

At least two examples of infrequency can be found in 7.86, a hymn to Varuṇa. As we will see later, these passages are the starting point of two structuring devices in 7.86 (Structuring Device 1 and Structuring Device 3).

7.86.2a utá **sváyā tanvā** sám vade tát
*And I speak that/thus **with my own self:***²¹

7.86.4a kím **ága** āsa varuṇa **jyáyisṭham**

¹⁹ Parts of this discussion initially appeared in *Proceedings of the 25th Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference* (Jamison, Melchert and Vine 2014).

²⁰Watkins 1995:28—9.

²¹ Translations of Rigvedic passages are based on Jamison and Brereton (2014), with some changes made to highlight repetitions and facilitate a line-by-line reading.

7.86.4b yát stotāraṃ jīghāṃsasi sákhāyam

*What was that **highest crime**, Varuṇa,*

That you wanted to slay (your) praiser, (your) friend?

Each of these passages manifests a particular variety of semantic infrequency.

The word *tanú-* can mean either “self” or “body”; but in the instrumental case (as here), it almost always has the corporeal sense (being used with verbs like *√śubh*, “beautify,” or with adjectives like *arepás*, “blemishless,” e.g., 2.39.2c and 7.72.1d; 1.124.6c and 1.181.4b). The only other example of the same collocation used in the instrumental definitely has a physical sense: *sváyā kṛpá tanúvā rócamānaḥ* “shining **with his own** form, his **body**,” said of Agni in 7.3.9b. Of course, in 7.86 the phrase *must* mean “with (my) own self”—but its use in that sense must be a bit startling to the listener.

In 7.78.6, the superlative *jyáyiṣṭha-* is used to modify a term for “crime,” and therefore must be taken in the pejorative sense of “egregious.” However, the superlative in the more basic sense of “highest” is typically used as an epithet for a god (e.g., 9.66.16a, of Soma; 1.100.4c, of Indra) or deployed in descriptions of a god’s power (1.84.5d, of Indra’s might; 6.48.21e, of the Maruts’ might). Agni is called the oldest/highest of the Aṅgirasas (1.127.2b). In other contexts, it refers to the *eldest* in the same deferential way (see RV 4.33.5a-c, for example). A pejorative use of *jyáyiṣṭha-* is anything but typical.

Subsequent verses in 7.86 feature repetitions of each element of these collocations.

7.86.4c prá tán me voco dūḷabha svadhāvo

*Proclaim it to me, O hard-to-deceive **force-all-your-own!***

7.86.5a áva drugdháni pítiryā sṛjā no

7.86.5b áva yá vayáṃ cakṛmá **tanúbhiḥ**

Free us from (our) fathers’ misdeeds

*From those we have committed **with our bodies***

7.86.6a ná sá **svó** dáakṣo varuṇa dhrútiḥ sá

*It was not **my own** intent, Varuṇa, it was seduction:*

7.86.6c ásti **jyáyān** kániyasa upāré

7.86.6d svápnaś canéd áṅṛtasya prayotá

*The **higher-up** is in the offense of the junior;*

Not even sleep wards off evil.

7.86.7a áram dāsó ná mīlhúṣe karāṇi

7.86.7b ahám deváya bhúrṇayé 'nāgāḥ

*Like a slave to a generous master, I will do service,
Crimeless, to the furious god.*

My claim here is that the semantic oddities of the prior passages (or rather, the attentional resources these oddities command) facilitate the recognition of the later repetitions. Note that, in all of these cases, the recurrences of the words display more typical semantics (the corporeal sense of *tanú-*, the deferential sense of *jyáyāms-*, 'higher/elder,' which corresponds to the superlative *jyáyīṣṭha-* 'highest/chief').

To clarify the contribution of (in)frequency to my inventory of perceptible repetitions in 7.86, I will list them here in two columns, indicating two separate series of repetitions or "structuring devices." The rationale behind these grouping judgments is discussed under various headings below.

Verse

2 sváyā tanúvā

4ab

ágāḥ

jyáyīṣṭham

4cd svadhāvaḥ

5 tanúbhiḥ

6 sváḥ

jyáyān

7

ánāgāḥ

4.4 Recency

Considered as a factor that affects the *perceptibility* of repetitions, "recency" refers to the advantage that patterns of repetition that take shape over short distances have over those that develop across distinct and sometimes quite distant segments of a hymn. It is much easier to recall the exact wording of the sentence that one has just heard than it is to accurately remember the wording of a long-past phrase; the status of lexical and morphological repetitions that occur within consecutive verses is much more secure than the status of repetitions separated by more than a verse.²² No one is likely to question the perceptibility of the repetitions highlighted below.

7.86.3b úpo **emi** cikitúṣo vipṛcham .

7.86.3c samānám ín **me** kaváyaścid āhur

²² The verse-length separation is an essentially arbitrary quantitative cutoff point for classifying repetitions as "recent" vs. "not recent"—but it has proven to be a useful rule of thumb.

7.86.3d ayám ha **túbhyaṃ** váruṇo hr̥ṇīte

7.86.4a kím ága āsa varuṇa jyéṣṭhaṃ

7.86.4b yát stotáraṃ jíghāṃsasi sákhāyam

7.86.4c prá tán **me** voco dūḷabha svadhāvo

7.86.4d áva **tvānená** námasā turá **iyām**

***I approach** the wise in order to ask around*

*The Kavis have said the very same one thing **to me**:*

*This Varuṇa is angry **at (“from”)** you.*

What was that highest crime, Varuṇa,

That you wanted to slay (your) praiser, (your) friend?

*Proclaim it **to me**, hard to deceive one, force all your own!*

*I free from guilt, **would approach/appease you**, with homage.*

This chain of repetitions continues in the verses below. Consider the relative perceptibility of the highlighted repetitions in both passages versus the repetition of the root \sqrt{kr} in 5b and 7a (*caḅṛmá ... karāṇi*).

7.86.5a áva drugdháni pítryā sṛjā **no**

7.86.5b áva yá **vayám** caḅṛmá tanúbhiḥ

7.86.5c áva rājan paśutṛpaṃ ná tāyúṃ

7.86.5d sṛjā vatsám ná dámano vásiṣṭham

***Down and away** release **our** fathers' misdeeds, deceptions (and_*

***Down and away** those which **we** have done by ourselves/with our bodies/persons*

***Down and away**, like a cattle-stealing thief, o King—*

*Release Vasiṣṭha, like a calf, **from** the bond.*

7.86.6a ná sá svó dáḅṣo varuṇa dhrútiḥ sá

7.86.6b sūrā manyúr vibhídako ácittiḥ

7.86.6c ásti jyáyān kániyasa upāré

7.86.6d svápnaś canéd ántasya prayotá

This (was) not one's own devising, nor was it deception, Varuṇa:

(It) was liquor, frenzy, dice, lack of perception...

The higher-up is in the offense of the lower;

Not even sleep (is) a warder-off of untruth.

7.86.7a áram dāsó ná mīlhūṣe karāṇi

Like a servant/Dāsa, I will give satisfaction to the Generous (Master).

“Recency” facilitates grouping judgments, too—which is not surprising, given that “recency” is essentially a synonym for the Gestalt principle of proximity, whereby stimuli that are close together or occur in swift succession tend to be grouped together. The following chart illustrating the effect of recency and proximity on perceived groupings of visual stimuli is adapted from Lerdahl and Jackendoff.²³



In the cases of a. and b., where there is relatively little intervening space, two of the three stimuli clearly belong in a group; in the case of c., the proper grouping judgment is less clear. Lerdahl and Jackendoff pointed out that varying quantities of rests/pauses would similarly affect grouping judgments of notes and other auditory stimuli.

The principle of “recency” or “proximity” encourages successive rounds of “concatenations” to be perceived as a single device –that is, a *catena*, ‘chain,’ rather than as a series of unrelated formal echoes. The standard definition of “concatenation,” as developed by Bloomfield, is as follows: “an expression, statement, or motif in one given stanza is taken up anew in the next stanza.”²⁴ In keeping with my general method, I narrow this definition to include only formal repetitions.²⁵ In both dialogue hymns and non-dialogue hymns, concatenation is a structuring device that shows up quite often; perhaps this is in and of itself an implicit acknowledgment of the ease with which it is perceived. (The subject of the ubiquity of concatenations is briefly reprised below, under “conventionality.”)

4.5 Conventionality

“Conventionality” is a term I attach to structuring devices whose particular pattern or scheme of repetition is attested numerous times in Rigvedic or closely cognate poetic traditions. Conventionally formed structuring devices help otherwise disparate repetitions be regarded as a *single* structural object with a particular function—in other words, conventionality encourages particular grouping judgments. We

²³ Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1996:40.

²⁴ Bloomfield 1916:5.

²⁵ At the same time, I preserve the idea that concatenation involves *contiguous* verses specifically, which distinguishes my usage of the term from that of Schmidt and Schwartz.

might compare conventionality to the Gestalt principle referred to as “past experience,” or “habit,” or else “learning,”²⁶ according to which a typical/familiar stimulus is more easily detected than an unfamiliar one, and particular practices in one’s environment influence one’s expectations and instincts about how stimuli are organized. (Think about stellar constellations, for instance.)

The following is a far-from-exhaustive list of examples of conventional (shapes of) structuring devices that can manifest in non-contiguous stanzas. Rather than establishing an inventory of such devices, it should suggest a method of arguing for the conventional status of a particular structuring device, a method that may be applied to other types of devices from time to time throughout my dissertation. Eventually, I hope to be able to discuss “conventionality” also at the level of individual poets—in other words, I hope that in the long-term my work will suggest that specific structuring devices are so characteristic of a particular poet’s technique that they would be quickly registered by an audience familiar with his style. For now, however, various layers of “tradition” are all to which we can appeal.

Concatenations definitely constitute conventional structuring devices; but, under this rubric, I want to highlight two additional conventional devices that typically unite lexical or morphological repetitions in non-contiguous verses.

4.6 Nested rings

The first is and most familiar example is nested or concentric rings.²⁷ By “nested rings,” I mean concentric rounds of repetition, each consisting of a *different* stock of lexical items and/or morphemes.

Nested rings occur with some frequency in other Indo-European traditions. Among the examples that can be quarried from Calvert Watkins’ survey of Indo-European poetics (1995) are a passage from *Yt.10.71* from the Iranian tradition, and the second stasimon of Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* from the Greek tradition. The Avestan passage in question runs as follows.

yō fraštacō hamərəθāδō
 ...
 stija **nijaiṅti** hamərəθā
naēða maniete **jaṅnuuā** [“*has struck*”]
naēða cim **ṽnaṅ** [“*is striking*”] sadaieiti
 yauuata aēm **nijaiṅti**

²⁶ Wertheimer 1938:86—7.

²⁷ Watkins (1995:35) highlights a standard Homeric example.

mərəzuca stūnō gaiiehe
mərəzuca xā uštānahe (Watkins 320)

It is worth briefly noting that we are extracting this particular structuring device from a broader network of repetitions. The forms outlined in bold are part of the nested ring—but at the borders of this ring are two rounds of concatenation (at the beginning: *haməṛəṭāḍā... haməṛəṭā*; at the end: *mərəzuca... mərəzuca*), which together with the central “nest” outline the discourse unit in question (an extended introductory “relative clause, the syntactic definition of the hero” (Watkins 320)).

In Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*, however, a nested ring does appear to demarcate the outer rim of a discourse unit, which is self-contained both syntactically and semantically—characterized as “an admonitory instruction for princes,” or, on more structural grounds, as a strophe and a corresponding antistrophe.²⁸

ἔθρεψεν δὲ λέοντος Ἴνιν **δόμοις** .../... ἀνήρ
There reared a lion's cub in his house...a man

ἐκ θεοῦ δ’ ἱερεὺς τις ἄταξ **δόμοις προσεθρέφθη**.
By divine will a priest of destruction for the house had been reared.
(*Agamemnon* 717-19 and 735-36)

In other words, the *form* of this ring meets our criteria for “conventionality,” but, like most of the structures that this dissertation treats, it has no set function across traditions that could help clarify its purpose(s) within the Rig Veda (hence the necessity for a separate methodology for determining the function of structuring devices).

The following structuring device from *RV*7.86 illustrates a “nested ring” configuration.

Verse	Repetitions
4	ágaḥ jyáyiṣṭham
6	jyáyān
7	ánāgāḥ

4.7 Geometric rings

Another conventional type is the “geometric” ring. This category does not exclude nested or more straightforward rings; instead, the term refers to a way in which the *beginning* and *end* of the rings can vary.

²⁸ Watkins 1995: 35-36

In a geometric ring, the distance between each of the reoccurrences of the repeated lexical elements is comparable, but different from the equally comparable distances between each of the first occurrences. For instance, the beginning of the ring could include a series of words that all occur in a single verse (spaced a few words apart on average), whereas the reoccurrences could surface in entirely different verses. The reverse can also be true: the first occurrences of forms included in a geometric ring could be more diffusely spaced than the reoccurrences. Alternatively, a series of lexical items in close proximity to one another could *each* be repeated *multiple* times, typically in the same (or, the exact reverse) order. In any of these cases, the result is that an entire section of a hymn appears to be an expanded version of a proportional, smaller-scale lexical blueprint (hence, “geometric,” with a “geometric series” in device in mind).

Joel Brereton identified an elaborate in *RV*10.129 (though, of course, he did not attach this newly-coined term to the structure).²⁹ The chart below summarizes relevant aspects of Brereton’s observations (256).

Verse (pāda)	Repetition
1(b)	paró yát
2(c)	svadháyā
3(d)	mahiná
4(b)	rétaḥ
5(c-d)	retodhá... mahimána... svadhá...práyatiḥ

(As one might have inferred by now, geometric rings are often a special case of nested rings.)

The chart below outlines a geometric ring that is present in *RV* 7.86.

Verse	Repetitions
2	sváyā tanúvā
4	svadhāvaḥ
5	tanúbhiḥ
6	sváḥ

This device is very common in both the *Rig Veda* and the Gāthās. One particular Avestan passage, *Yasna* 36, seems to feature two successive rounds of the same geometric ring (the first nested, the second not nested). The ring includes three roots: \sqrt{x} say, \sqrt{d} ā and \sqrt{a} h.

Stanza	Text	Root repeated
1	aməṣā spəntā huxšaθrā huδāṅhō yazamaide	\sqrt{x} say \sqrt{d} ā
	vīspəm aṣaonō stīm yazamaide	\sqrt{a} h

²⁹ Brereton 1999:256.

3	ya hātṣam śīiaoḍənanam vahištā xiīāt	√ah	√ah
4	fraēšīāmahī rāmācā vāstrəmcā dazdiīai ...	√dā	
	xšaiiantascā ... axšaiiantascā	√xšay	√xšay
5	huxšaḍrō.təmāi bā aṭ xšaḍrəm ...	√xšay	√xšay
	dadəmahicā cīšmahicā huuṇmahicā	√dā	
6	yaḍā āṭ... vaēdā haiḍīm	√ah	
	aḍā haṭ vohū...	√ah	
	aḍā vərəziiṇ		
	yaḍā iṭ astī	√ah	

4.8 Redundancy

“Redundancy” involves a *co-occurrence* of different types of repetition unusual enough to overwhelm the ear, and, in a kind of constructive interference, revive the fading memory of forms or phrases long since uttered.³⁰ Redundancy should facilitate the perception of repetitions separated by multiple verses.

RV 7.86 contains many instances of redundancy, including the following highlighted repetitions, which will be identified as belonging **to** Structuring Device 2.

7.86.3b úpo emi **cikitúšo** vipṛcham

7.86.3c samānām ín me **kaváyaś** cid āhur

I approach the perceptive in order to ask around.

*The **Kavis** have said the very same one thing **to me**:*

7.86.7c **ácetayad acító** devó aryó

7.86.7d gṛtsam rāyé **kavítaro** junāti

*The noble god **made the unperceptive perceive/perceived**:*

*More **Kavi-like**, he speeds the **Clever One** to wealth.*

³⁰ “Constructive interference” is a term I borrow from physics (describing the effect of two waves enhancing one another, used more or less metaphorically here). If I were using technical terms from psycholinguistics, I would identify this as “multiple repetition priming.”

In both of these rounds of repetition, the *same* referents are characterized as *Kavis* (poet-sages) and, in an adjacent clause, (re-)characterized via a form derived from the root \sqrt{cit} , “perceive, know, appear.”

On to redundancy’s relevance to *grouping* repetitions. Redundancy is related to the Gestalt principle of similarity, whereby similar stimuli/objects tend to be perceived as part of the same group. The simplest examples involve groupings of objects of similar shapes, as in figure 2.3.1, also adapted from Lerdahl and Jackendoff:



That we would describe the first two figures as, “three squares and two circles” and “two squares and three circles” rather than as, “two squares and a square and two circles,” “two squares, a circle, and two circles,” or “five shapes,” seems obvious; the implicit grouping judgments become particularly clear from c. likely described as, “two squares and two circles” rather than “two pairs of a square and a circle.”

Lerdahl and Jackendoff point out that the first two scenarios are analogous to groups of notes of different pitches;³¹ however, scenario c. touches upon an issue that I have yet to see addressed in the application of Gestalt psychology to auditory stimuli. Lerdahl and Jackendoff and the music theorists that followed in their footsteps seem concerned with the task of grouping contiguous notes; but what about the impact of similarity (/redundancy) in causing stimuli that are not contiguous in space or time to be grouped together? Consider the figure below.



A description of this configuration of objects might be, “a repeated trio of shapes—triangle, square, squiggle—within a sea of circles, stars, etc”: in other words the redundant repetitions would be grouped together. For a musical analogue, think about a unique musical motif or theme that resurfaces periodically in a movement or symphony; a listener identifies and associates repetitions of such a sequence, despite flurries of intervening notes.

³¹ Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1996:41.

Returning for a moment to the repetitions in 7.86.3bc and 7cd: the influence of the factor of redundancy on grouping judgments underlies the assertion that these repetitions constitute a single structuring device, outlined below.

7.86.3b cikitúṣaḥ

7.86.3c kaváyaḥ

7.86.7c ácetayat

7.86.7d kavítaraḥ

From among the various patterns which seem to take shape across non-consecutive stanzas, one can be most secure about the perceptibility of repetitions that are redundant.

Examples of redundant repetitions in other Indo-European traditions abound, as well. To take just one of many from the *Iliad*: Calvert Watkins has identified one ring in *Iliad* 5.733-742,³² in which Athena drops her *peplos* in favor of her father’s armor (Watkins 2000). “The passage is demarcated by the ring of two occurrences of the epithet αἰγιόχοιο [“aegis-bearing,” said of Zeus] , equidistant from αἰγίδα θυσσανόεσσαν and filling the slot between bucolic diarexis and line end like the epithet θυσσανόεσσαν [usually translated as “betasseled/shaggy,” said of the aegis]” (7).

733 Δῖος αἰγιόχοιο

738 αἰγίδα θυσσανόεσσαν

742 Δῖος τέρας αἰγιόχοιο

In all the instances above, redundancy characterized rings at the outer rims of discourse units. However, a number of structuring devices that do not appear to demarcate discourse units also exhibit this feature—particularly if their repetitions connect non-consecutive stanzas (See, for instance, the redundant rings in *RV* 7.75 and 7.77 in Part II below). Yet again, no conclusion about the function of structuring devices can be drawn from the form in which they appear.

4.9 Variable Density

Density refers to the number of repetitions in a particular hymn or hymn segment. Here, I will examine density as it relates to the problem of *perceiving* repetitions. I assume that any instance of repetition is more easily perceived in hymns, verses, or even smaller metrical units characterized by a relatively **low density** of repetitions: it is easier for a particular repeated term to “ring a bell” if there aren’t any competing sets of tintinnabulations. One way this is manifested is that local repetitions—for instance,

³² Also quoted in Watkins 1995: 100.

repetitions within a verse or across verses—often taper off to allow a more distant echo to be perceived. See, for instance, the following excerpt of 7.86. Superscripts denote separate structuring devices, i.e. each form’s affiliation with one of four distinct groups of repetitions.³³ I leave the passage untranslated because the point here is to notice the relative lack of repetitions in 4ab and 7ab.

7.86.2c kím **me**⁴ havýám **áhṛṇāno**⁴ juṣeta
 7.86.2d kadá mṛīkām sumánā abhí khyam

7.86.3a pṛché **tád**⁴ **éno**⁴ varuṇa didṛkṣu
 7.86.3b úpo **emi**⁴ **cikítuṣo**² vipṛcham
 7.86.3c samānám ín **me**⁴ **kaváyas**² cid āhur
 7.86.3d ayám ha **túbhyam**⁴ váruṇo **hṛṇīte**⁴

7.86.4a kím **ága**³ āsa varuṇa **jyésztham**³
 7.86.4b yát stotāraṃ jíghāṃsasi sákhāyam
 7.86.4c prá **tán**⁴ **me**⁴ voco dūlabha **svadhāvo**¹
 7.86.4d **áva**⁴ **tvānená**⁴ námasā turá **iyām**⁴

7.86.7a áraṃ dāsó ná mīlhúṣe karāṇi
 7.86.7b ahám deváya bhúrṇayé **nāgāḥ**³
 7.86.7c **áchetayad**² **acító**² devó aryó
 7.86.7d gṛtsaṃ ráyé **kavítaro**² junāti

The low density of repetitions in those two half-verses facilitates the recognition of the distant echoes of *ágaḥ... ánāgāḥ*.

Variable density can affect grouping judgments as well; to understand why, we might consider the Gestalt principles of good continuation, symmetry, and closure.³⁴ However, since density as a factor in grouping is not relevant to 7.86, I will save that point for another case study. *RV*7.77, as discussed in Part II Section 2.1, and *RV*7.75, as discussed in Part II Section 7.4, both explore the role of variable density in facilitating grouping judgments.

³³ All four structuring devices are outlined in a chart in Section 5.

³⁴ See Wertheimer 1938:82—4 and Lerdahl and Jackendoff 1996:46—50.

5. PRINCIPLES OF PERCEPTION AND GROUPING: THE YIELD FOR RV7.86

The following chart summarizes the results of this methodology when applied to 7.86: namely, perceptible repetitions are grouped into four structuring devices, distinguished below using columns and superscripts.

		<i>STRUCTURING DEVICE # AND TYPE</i>			
	1: Geometric	2: Redundant ring	3: Nested ring	4: Redundant Concatenation	
1					
2	sváyā tańvā¹			tát⁴ áhṛṇānaḥ⁴	
3ab		cikítuṣaḥ²		tát⁴ énaḥ⁴ emi⁴	
3cd		kaváyāḥ²		me⁴ túbhyam⁴ hṛṇíte⁴	
4ab			ágaḥ³ jyáyīṣṭham³		
4cd	svadhāvaḥ¹			tát⁴ me⁴ áva⁴ tvā⁴ anenáḥ⁴ iyām⁴	
5ab	tanúbhiḥ¹			áva⁴ naḥ⁴ áva⁴ vayám⁴ áva⁴	
5cd					
6	sváḥ¹		jyáyān³		
		ácittiḥ^{2?*}			
7ab			ánāgāḥ³		
cd		ácetayat² acítaḥ² kavítaraḥ²			

*I cannot argue that *ácittiḥ* would definitely be perceived or grouped with the others using the currently discussed aspects of my methodology; for the different take on the principle of “recency” that is behind my confidence in its inclusion in Structuring Device 2, see Part III Sections 7, and 8.3-8.5

6. METHODOLOGY PART 2: FUNCTION OF STRUCTURING DEVICES

6.1 Overview

Alongside the development of an inventory of formal structuring devices employed within the *Rig Veda*, I aim to produce a description of the communicative functions that these various structuring devices can serve. There are a number of reasons why this aspect of the project serves as a second focus rather than a more ancillary objective.

In my capacity as a philologist, equally interested in both matters of form and function of Rigvedic structuring devices specifically, I would say this: arguing that a particular structure is an intentionally employed compositional device would always entail some sort of discussion of what sort of “intentions” we can claim to reconstruct. In addition, we will frequently encounter hymns in which rings of various types are so densely and tightly intertwined as to squeeze the plausibility out of the familiar claim that they serve primarily to demarcate discourse units (a claim to which many seem to revert whenever lexical and phonological repetitions are not anagrammatical nods to a god, or to another key character or concept within the hymn). If these distinct rings cannot be shown to each have their own communicative functions, they are much more likely to be the product of a modern interpreter’s overactive eye than a purposeful poet.

Furthermore, as I tried to suggest in my summary of objectives, matters of function are also key toward paving the way for more intensive comparative study of the *Rig Veda* and later genres of Sanskrit scholarship. This is particularly true if we can demonstrate that Rigvedic speakers use repetitions a) to produce a kind of “double vision” blending events that are unfolding, have unfolded, or will unfold in different settings—or, connecting entities with homologues in other spheres; b) to speak to different audiences at once—in particular, to communicate with explicit *and* implicit addressees (as Draupadī did with the king and her husbands-in-disguise); c) to reconfigure relationships and lessen power differentials, partially through the use of deviations from normal phraseology that help collapse hierarchical, stratified layers of “double vision” into one level field.

My method for exploring the possible functions of structuring devices relies on two different frameworks. I have chosen Roman Jakobson’s six-function model of communication as a descriptive framework through which to describe a variety of relevant dimensions of language use within structuring devices. This is, in part, due to the influence it has exerted on other philologists coming from the same tradition of Indo-European Studies as myself (see the remarks on Watkins and Thompson at the end of the literature review below), and in part due to its inherent usefulness of the framework as an

organizational device. The Jakobsonian model is useful for cataloguing different types of linguistic norms that might serve as the pivot point for processes of “poetic repair,” i.e. for rhetorically advantageous phraseological deviations that are “repaired” soon after they are noticed. It is also useful for discussing the formal mechanisms through which “double vision” can be produced and sustained. (On both topics, see in particular under the “metalingual” function below.)

The second framework is a useful thinking tool for considering how exactly phraseological deviations factor into rhetorical strategies. Particularly crucial are the concepts of “heteroglossia” and the shadow that the push and pull of power struggles cast on language use, in the form of “centripetal” and “centrifugal” alignments with and departures from authoritative discourses and phraseology. To those who know how Bakhtin motivated his own approach to the study of literature—essentially, as a reaction against the Russian Formalist school—it might initially seem surprising that I have chosen a scholar who, in his earlier years, was a key figure from Russian Formalism to complement the Bakhtinian part of my methodology. I will address this issue after I describe the manner in which I am using both of these frameworks: suffice it to say for now that I do not believe Bakhtin’s valid objections to the excesses of the Formalist school apply to Jakobson’s later work (which was developed many decades and academic moorings after Jakobson’s affiliation with Formalism).

6.2 Jakobson’s communicative functions

Jakobson situates the “poetic function”—that is, “focus on the message for its own sake” (356; what others might call “form,” Jakobson calls “message”)—alongside five other functions, which are not mutually exclusive, and in fact regularly *combine* to influence the structure of *any* kind of speech act in any cultural context:

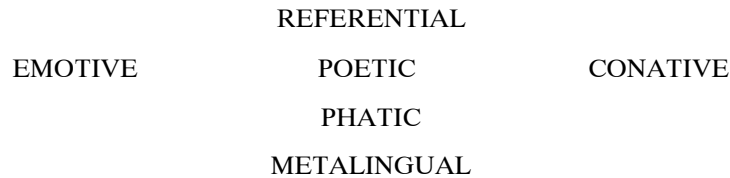
Language must be investigated in all the variety of its functions. Before discussing the poetic function we must define its place among all the other functions of language. An outline of these functions demands a concise survey of the constitutive factors in any speech event, in any act of verbal communication. The ADDRESSER sends a MESSAGE to the ADDRESSEE. To be operative the message requires a CONTEXT referred to (“referent” in another, somewhat ambiguous, nomenclature), seizable by the addressee, and either verbal or capable of being verbalized; a CODE fully, or at least partially, common to the addresser and addressee (or in other words, to the encoder and decoder of the message); and, finally, a CONTACT, a physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication. All these factors inalienably involved in verbal communication may be schematized as follows:



CODE

Each of these six factors determines a different function of language. Although we distinguish six basic aspects of language, we could, however, hardly find verbal messages that would fulfill only one function. The diversity lies not in a monopoly of some one of these several functions but in a different hierarchical order of functions.³⁵

We will treat the six functions that correspond to these factors in detail; right now, I reproduce his chart merely as a sort of roadmap for where we are headed in the following pages.



In the remainder of the exposition, I will introduce each part of Jakobson's six-function framework, and show ways in which structuring devices draw attention to the manipulation of these categories of convention, and the roles in the formal *and* conceptual progression of the hymn that these types of manipulations can play.

³⁵ Jakobson 1960: 353.

6.3 Referential, emotive, and conative functions: rhetorical shapeshifting and rhetorical repair

I am treating three factors and functions as a unit primarily because they can be at least partially understood as an adaptation of the traditional “rhetorical triangle.” Examine once again the triad at the top of Jakobson’s schematic representation.

CONTEXT

ADDRESSER

ADDRESSEE

Keeping in mind that by “context” Jakobson means the *referents* that a speech act names and describes, we see that the following pyramid of factors could be renamed in the following manner:

SUBJECT

SPEAKER

AUDIENCE

What separates this triad from yet another round of reinventing the triangle (largely by rotating it like a wheel) is the focus on different hierarchies that may develop between these functions within a particular speech act or genre—hierarchies which characterize different rhetorical “shapes,” as it were, and the genres that display them. A subset of these hierarchies may be more typical of a particular hymn-type, serving as a kind of “norm” from which the poet departs and returns in an act of “rhetorical repair.” (Here, one might be ever so slightly reminded of Jakobson’s famous treatment of Pushkin’s “*Ja vas ljubil...*” reprinted, for instance, in Jakobson 1985: 47ff.)

Before we get into these fruitful applications of Jakobson’s rhetorical triad, we need to treat the other half of his nomenclature. The functions that correspond to these factors are described in the following fashion: the “REFERENTIAL” function is “an orientation toward the CONTEXT” (353); the “EMOTIVE” function, “focused on the ADDRESSER, aims a direct expression of the speaker’s attitude toward what he his speaking about” (354); and the “CONATIVE” function is an “orientation toward the ADDRESSEE” (355). While Jakobson provides different types of explanations and examples in the ensuing discussion of each of these functions, the characterization that is most useful for our purposes involves an association of the emotive, conative, and referential functions with the “*first person* of the addresser, the second person of the addressee, and the ‘third person,’ properly—someone or something spoken of” (355). Charting out the three functions with the most typically corresponding grammatical category, we have the following:

REFERENTIAL: 3rd Person

EMOTIVE: 1st Person

CONATIVE: 2nd Person

Jakobson saw any pronounced preoccupation with a particular function/person as a diagnostic feature of different genres of poetry; he described the difference between epic, lyric and “supplicatory” or “exhortative” poetry as follows:

The particularities of diverse poetic genres imply a differently ranked participation of the other verbal functions along with the dominant poetic function. Epic poetry, focused on the third person, strongly involves the referential function of language; the lyric, oriented toward the first person, is intimately linked with the emotive function; poetry of the second person is imbued with the conative function and is either supplicatory or exhortative, depending on whether the first person is subordinated to the second or the second to the first.
(357)

Turning to the Rig Veda: if such clear-cut genres could be identified, then we might investigate whether structuring devices highlight discourse units, stanzas or pādas in which a hymn falls back to its genre’s preferred function: for instance, if there were a clear Rigvedic analog to lyric poetry, and if within that genre of hymns structuring devices focused attention on passages dominated by the first person, we could say that the device furthered the *emotive* function, a function that would number among such hymns’ most important communicative aims.

Unfortunately, this will prove much more difficult than it sounds. Attempting to distinguish different subtypes of Rigvedic hymns by the same method, we arrive at a number of different preliminary observations. Some hymns are clearly dominated by the third person. These include *RV* 10.71, 10.90, 10.129, and 10.130, treating, respectively, the origin of speech, the origin of the world and human social strata and ritual practices, the origin of the cosmos, and the origin of the sacrifice. We might therefore call these “origin hymns.” Hymns dealing primarily with the first person are a marginal category in the Rig Veda, but have an official designation: *ātmastuti* or “self-praise” hymns; perhaps the most famous example is 10.125 (dedicated to and narrated by Speech herself). A number of dialogue hymns prominently feature the first person (singular and plural), but always in conjunction with the second person (i.e. the conative function is just barely subordinated to the emotive, or the two vie for dominance—see, for instance, 10.95 and 10.10). Something similar could be said for confessional hymns. Garden-(or *barhiṣ*-and-*vedī*-) variety praise hymns eventually resort to addressing the gods in the second person, wending their way between supplicatory and exhortative valences of the conative function; however, they often feature predominately referential sections as well—and this is the “appellative”-“descriptive” dichotomy of which Elizarenkova made so much...

We could go on for some time categorizing hymns in this way, exhausting any reasonable inventory of designations (not to mention any reasonable audience) and still not arriving at an exhaustive list of hymn types, or at a satisfactory explanation of the heterogeneity within hymn types, or indeed, within individual

hymns. The entire endeavor becomes even more questionable when one realizes that the status of many of these hymn types would be shaky when examined from any other perspective.

Luckily, distinctions of genre made by these means will have far less arbitrary endpoints if we restrict ourselves to cases in which a) a genre is well-attested either within the Rig Veda or in closely related traditions; b) this genre is characterized by (among other things) a *clear* preference for a particular rhetorical shape (i.e. hierarchical ordering of these three functions). In addition, one can think of a typical rhetorical shape as a trait not only of hymn types or discourses in a general sense, but of specific phraseological elements associated with these hymn types and discourses. If we proceed this way, we quickly arrive upon cases in which formal structuring devices seem designed to highlight the lines in which this preferred shape surfaces. For examples of rhetorical shape-shifting away from a preferred referential relationship, and rhetorical repair back toward it, see Part III Sections 8.1-8.2, 8.4 and 8.6, as well as Part IV Section 4.1.

6.4 Channel: phatic function

Following Malinowski, Jakobson posits a “phatic” function corresponding to the “contact” factor, i.e. the establishment and maintenance of the connection between addresser and addressee, which initiates, facilitates and sets the tone of communication:

There are messages primarily serving to establish, to prolong, or to discontinue communication, to check whether the channel works (‘Hello, do you hear me?’) to attract the attention of the interlocutor, or to confirm his continued attention (‘Are you listening?’ or in Shakespearean diction ‘Lend me your ears!’ – and on the other end of the wire “Um-hum!”) This set for CONTACT, or in Malinowski’s terms PHATIC function (264), may be displayed by a profuse exchange of ritualized formulas, by entire dialogues with the mere purport of prolonging communication.³⁶

Some expansion of this definition will help us identify typical expressions of the “phatic” function within the present Rigvedic corpus. In part we can follow the lead of George Thompson (1997b), who applied this term to “hymn-initial assertions of the form: ‘I now proclaim the noble deeds of this or that god’ (c.f. e.g., 1.32.1: *índrasya nú vīrīyāṇi prá vocam*)” (145). Like Jakobson’s examples, these formulae are conventional means of opening a channel of communication between addresser and addressee(s).

Just as when an authorized person declares a meeting open by using a conventional formula like ‘I hereby declare this meeting open,’ so here the poet formally opens his performance by using this conventional formula of address. Like the pragmatically similar formula ‘listen to me,’ (*śrudhí me*), this formula also functions to establish direct contact with the audience (and this is phatic in Jakobson’s fruitful sense), especially when it occurs in the opening of the hymn. But to a significant degree, I would suggest, such a formulaic declaration is also a formal act of self assertion, whereby the poet claims his authority, the authority of his hymn, in fact, its *sát* or *satyá*, its “truth, effectiveness.” (146)

Note that phatic formulas like *śrudhí me*, “listen to me,” often have preferred rhetorical shapes/referential relationships; in such cases, processes of rhetorical repair will often involve versions of a phatic formula that deviate from and return to this standard rhetorical shape.

Thompson’s treatment of the phatic function in the *Rig Veda* was curtailed in service of the general objective of his article (namely, the treatment of typical expressions of *self-assertion*—with a focus, of course, on phrases including the 1st person singular); however, a slightly generalized version of his formulation will help us identify many more manifestations of the “phatic function” within the Rig Veda. This generalization will consist of two basic insights of Thompson’s, their implications broadened and fleshed out.

To start with, it is very reasonable of Thompson to suppose that if a poet is ever preoccupied with establishing a channel of contact between himself and the god (or other object of praise), or (in the case of a dialogue) with provoking an exchange between two gods or other personae, it will be at the beginning of

³⁶ Jakobson 1960: 355.

the hymn; so, we would be well-advised to seek out typical “phatic” utterances in first verses—or else, in initial discourse units whose structure revolves around (variations on) an opening invocation (such as the first half of *RV* 7.86).

Thompson’s description clarifies the insight behind Jakobson’s association of phatic communication with an “exchange of ritualized formulas”; this insight is the second major point that we will take away from his short treatment. Recapitulating the relevant portions of the quote above, we have the following.

Just as when an authorized person declares a meeting open by using a conventional formula...the poet formally opens his performance by using this conventional formula of address...such a formulaic declaration is also a formal act of self-assertion, whereby the poet claims his authority.

In the case of praise hymns, introductory phatic phrases are often part of the project of establishing the poet’s authority or competence to continue on with his ritual recitation; in the case of dialogue or confessional hymns, they are part of a particular character’s attempt to convince his or her interlocutor that an interchange is worth having. It is because of these functions that such utterances will likely be especially formulaic in nature: in a conservative tradition – and to some extent in interpersonal communication as a general rule — authority is established by appealing to or otherwise mobilizing behavioral norms and conventions.

In this dissertation’s final case study, *RV* 10.95, structuring devices highlight a marked departure from the initiating phatic formulas that normally help the poet put his best pādas forward. This unusual opening poses a problem on a phraseological level that is “repaired” later in the hymn with the introduction of an analogous but more conventional expression. (We will treat this phenomenon of “repair” in detail in the metalingual section, because most instances of repair in this dissertation’s case studies are metalinguistic in nature.) It should already be clear that problems and innovations in the phrasing of phatic formulas can contribute to the development of more than the hymn’s formal structure: for instance, they can also establish (or, potentially, inflate) the poet’s authority until he seems a near peer to, or at least a fitting conversational partner for, the gods he addresses. Once again, we are examining manipulations of language which are relevant to much more than the hymn’s formal or structural progression.

6.5 Phatic communion and marked phatic phrases in the Homeric Hymns

It might not hurt to adduce as a comparandum a collection of poems that is in some respects comparable to the *Rig Veda*, but whose introductory phatic phrases are a bit more overtly formulaic: the *Homeric Hymns*. While Richard Janko (1981) classifies the entire portion of the Homeric hymn before the

first relative clause (which refers to the god in question) as its introduction, we will focus here on initial invocations that open the channel of communication heavenwards. Aside from a handful of hymns (which is to say, four) that begin with a direct address to the god in question, and a few hymns whose introductions appear to be lost, the body of hymns that has been handed down to us would suggest that there were two available *unmarked* means of opening this type of poem: either a first-person phatic formula (akin to the *indrasya nú vīriyāṇi prá vocam* described above), or an invocation to the Muse as a sort of intercessor in the second person (akin to the openings of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*). As Janko notes, within this initial phatic invocation, the god to whom the hymn is devoted appears in the accusative case and the third person; typically, (s)he will only be directly addressed at the end of the hymn.

Besides this basic division of the data into two relevant phraseological conventions, the most conspicuous feature of the Homeric hymns' opening invocations is that they make use of a very limited set of verb forms; what is more, the inventory of available forms is *different depending on which of the two basic types of phatic opener* is selected by the poet. For instance, ἄρχομ' αἰδεῖν "I begin to sing" (with the god in the accusative) is the most popular formula for the first-person singular opening, followed closely by various first-person singular forms from (and including) αἰδῶ. Beyond that, the only available option appears to be μνήσομαι, "I will recount" (another exception that more or less "proves the rule" will be discussed in a moment). As for the invocations to the Muse, we have three instances of ὕμναι, two instances each of ἔννεπε and αἰσεο (all second-singular imperatives that translate to "sing" or "tell"), and two instances of ἔσπετε (a second plural imperative with a similar meaning; here too, there is one exception which will be discussed below). Note that between these two sets there is only an overlap of one lexical element (αἰδῶ).

To make a little more sense of these different sets of formulaic openings, we might turn to John Laver (1981), who elaborated upon the very same Malinowskian concept of "phatic communion" that was adopted by Jakobson, and in particular demonstrated connections between formal characteristics of phatic communication and aspects of the relationship between the speakers in question, focusing in particular on their respective social standings. Malinowski originally defined phatic communion as "a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words" (Laver 215). In his treatment, Laver objected to the phrase "mere exchange of words," remarking that "speech is only one among the many strands of communication, and that the communicative function of any one strand is better understood in the context of the operation of the other strands than in isolation" (216). Without unraveling the strands of nonverbal communication involved in the rituals of phatic communion that he examined, we can note the lesson that these observations yielded: phatic communion, beyond merely initiating contact between interlocutors,

characterizes the relationship between addresser and addressee that underlies this interaction. In Laver's words, "the fundamental social function of the multistranded communicative behavior that accompanies and includes phatic communion is the detailed management of interpersonal relationships during the psychologically crucial margins of interaction" (217).

The mention of a few details of phatic communion's involvement in the "management of interpersonal relationships" will suggest that the distinct inventory of hymn-initiating formulae, rather than being a strange peculiarity of the Homeric hymns, reflects a type of power gradient that always underpins, structures, and limits phatic communication. Laver notes that it is not just the conventions of a particular language and culture that determine whether a particular phatic formula is marked or unmarked, but also the "status differential" between the speaker employing it and his interlocutor (223-224). Laver cites examples from British English, which I will briefly run through only to give the reader an idea of how difference in social status affects this aspect of communication in a somewhat more familiar setting. Laver outlines three different types of "linguistic tokens used in phatic communion": SELF-ORIENTED expressions ("Hot work, this,' or 'My legs weren't made for these hills' (to a fellow country walker)," OTHER-ORIENTED expressions ("That looks like hard work," or "How do you like the sunshine?") and NEUTRAL expressions ("Nice day' and 'beautiful morning'") (223). For those who are addressing someone they acknowledge as their social superior, NEUTRAL and SELF-ORIENTED formulae are the default choices (unless they happen to enjoy a particularly strong "solidary" relationship, in which case anything becomes possible). On the other hand, if the reverse is true—if the speaker views himself as a social superior to his interlocutor and his interlocutor agrees—then NEUTRAL and OTHER-ORIENTED communication is the default choice (again, unless they have a "solidary relationship"). What this amounts to is a social superior exercising his privilege to "invade' the psychological world of the inferior" (that is, by asking OTHER-ORIENTED questions) (234), a privilege which the inferior does not have. *Thus, if conventional phatic communication breaks the ice between two would-be interlocutors, it still leaves certain glass ceilings unperturbed.*

In the case of these "Homeric" hymns as well as that of the Rig Veda, "interpersonal relationships" seems a bit wanting as a term: the poet must manage not only the relationship between himself and the audience to the recitation (for the *Rig Veda*, this includes the officiants and the patron, who are often explicitly referenced within praise hymns); he must also pay appropriate obeisance to the god described in the hymn. Thus, the god is usually addressed at the end, after lavish praise; in the opening, he or she is treated as a distant *object* of admiration (hence, the convention of the accusative case in the *HH*).

It seems reasonable to suppose that the creation of two barely overlapping inventories of verbs used for self-referential openings on the one hand and for invocations to the Muse on the other might have something to do with the power differential between the two partners-in-poetry. After all, the Muses, daughters of Zeus as they are, have a claim to divinity; we might also note that according to a number of traditional narratives (for instance, Hesiod’s account of the origin of his poetic inspiration), the Muses *ordered* mortals to sing in the process of inspiring them (*Theogony* 33: καί μ' ἐκέλονθ' ὑμνεῖν μακάρων γένος αἰὲν ἐόντων, “And they ordered me to sing of the race of the blessed immortals”). As cover terms for this distinction in the pecking order, we might adapt Laver’s designations and call one inventory of verbs poet-oriented and the other muse-oriented.

6.6 Marked phatic phrases: HH 30 and HH 25

Two exceptions which I (alluded to but) suppressed up to this point confirm this impression of a connection between status differences and divergent inventories of phatic formulas. Both examples compensate for whatever deviations they display from formulaic phraseology with equal and opposite concessions. In addition, the second example shows multiple signs of a poet who actively aims to cut the red tape (or metrical measures) that normally separates praiser from praised.

If the use of distinct lexical elements in a way acknowledges the distinct (and implicitly subordinate) status of the poet, we might expect marked opening phrases to make some sort of phraseological concession to the Muse even if they depart from the norm in some way. One marked invocation to the Muse does just that: while using a “poet-oriented” main verb in the second person to refer to the Muse, it substitutes a “muse-oriented” subordinate infinitive for the neutral one that normally appears:

Normal formula: ἄρχομ' αἰδεῖν, “I **begin** to **sing**” (e.g. HH2)

Marked formula (HH30) ὑμνεῖν ... ἄρχεο Μοῦσα, Καλλιόπη “**Begin** to **hymn**, O Muse Kalliope!”

Normal muse-oriented formula: ὕμνει “Hymn!” (2nd singular imperative; e.g. HH4)

A marked first-person opening phrase offers a different balance of concessions and innovations. Built off of the same ἄρχομ' αἰδεῖν formula, it does make a nod to tradition; however, it omits the subordinate infinitive entirely, opting for a different construction in which both the Muses and the ultimate “objects” of praise appear in the genitive case (HH25):

μουσᾶων ἄρχομαι Ἀπόλλωνός τε Διός τε...

Let me begin with the Muses and Apollo and Zeus.

The periphrastic reference to an invocation of the Muses is perhaps a second, subtler concession to convention (even if, in fact, the alternate, self-assertive type of opening has been employed). The normally present-tense indicative verb has been replaced by a subjunctive form, perhaps to add a layer of distance in place of the eliminated infinitive.

That said, this phatic opening is still noticeably shorter compared to the formula on which it is based, *with precisely the effect that one would expect*: the “light” at the end of the channel of communication (that is to say, Father Sky et.al.) has been brought closer, now occupying the same syntactic slot as the Muses, who are normally invoked in the second person at the *beginning* of the hymn. So, we might conjecture that an effective *marked* phatic phrase must make some of the concessions appropriate to the poet’s subordinate station with respect to the gods he addresses (or, in the case of a dialogue hymn, reflect a consistent and appropriate characterization of the two interlocutors’ relationship); however, its goal is to begin to bridge the divide between speaker and audience a bit ahead of schedule.

6.7 Phatic communion and marked phatic phrases in the *Rig Veda*

Now I would like to turn (*vavṛtyām*) to the matter at hand: marked phatic introductions. Needless to say, a thorough overview of the phatic formulae in the entire Rigvedic corpus is beyond the scope of my dissertation, let alone this section—so I would encourage the reader to consult Part III, Sections 8.2 and 8.6 Part IV, Section 4.3. In general, a small amount of concordance work can reveal whether a particular phrase that opens a channel of contact has formulaic elements, and if so, whether the formula in question displays usage patterns that reveal it to be human/officiant-oriented or divine-oriented. (Throughout the dissertation, I will use “poet-oriented” more or less interchangeably with “officiant-oriented,” since the poet often jointly addresses himself and his peers on the ritual ground. We will also sometimes use “mortal-oriented,” “human-oriented,” and “ritual-oriented.” More important than a particular label is the observation of the effect of the power gradient between one side of the midspace and the other on Rigvedic phraseological tradition.)

It might be good to note a couple of general distinctions between the way the Homeric hymns’ phatic formulas manifest status differentials and the way in which analogous Rigvedic phrases tend to do so. In the *Rig Veda*, second-person verbal forms can be officiant-oriented *or* god-oriented. A single verbal root or nominal stem may appear to be decidedly “poet-oriented” in one inflected form, and decidedly “god-oriented” in another. Furthermore—as we might have gathered from our discussion of the distant *object* of praise that appears in the accusative in Homeric hymns--the usage of the case-frame surrounding

a particular verb form appears to be as crucial a part of an unmarked phatic utterance as the selection of the verb form itself. This means that this case frame is typically altered in some way by poets who are wily enough to get away with using marked phatic phrases.

One further note: with our upcoming engagement with Bakhtin in mind, it is important to recognize that though phatic formulas often provide a particularly dramatic introduction to the stakes of properly “orienting” one’s expressions, it is not only phatic phraseology that can be oriented toward a particular side of the midspace or a particular pole of another power differential: this possibility exists for all sorts of expressions.

6.8 Code—metalingual function

The metalingual function is the most important source of the types of transitions in phrasing that formal structuring devices seem designed to highlight. Jakobson defines the *metalingual* function as follows:

A distinction has been made in modern logic between two levels of language, “object language,” speaking of objects and “metalanguage” speaking of language... Whenever the addresser and/or the addressee need to check up whether they use the same code, speech is focused on the CODE: it performs a METALINGUAL (i.e. glossing) function... Imagine such an exasperating dialogue: “The sophomore was plucked.” “But what is *plucked*?” “*Plucked* means the same as *flunked*.” “And *flunked*?” “*To be flunked* is *to fail at an exam*.” “And what is *sophomore*?” persists the interrogator innocent of school vocabulary. “A *sophomore* is (or means) a *second-year student*.” All these equational sentences convey information merely about the lexical code of English; their function is strictly metalingual. Any process of language learning, in particular child acquisition of the mother tongue, makes wide use of such metalingual operations... (356)

The closest example of such a “dialogue” (though hopefully a less exasperating variant!) within Vedic literature would be the “riddling” *brahmodya* as identified by George Thompson. The term *brahmodya* “would seem to cover a variety of question-and-answer formats... There is a shorter riddling type and a longer self-assertive, or enigmatic, type” (13). Thompson has noted that “riddling” *brahmodyas* involve essentially metalinguistic equations between “secret names” in an esoteric poetic lexicon (these are found within the questions) and designations from the “ordinary lexicon” (these are in the responses) (Thompson 1997a 15-16). One of his examples follows (Thompson 14-15; VS23.53-54):

ká svid āsīt pūrvácittiḥ
kíṃ svid āsīd bṛhád váyaḥ
ká svid āsīt piśaṅgilá
ká svid āsīt pilippilá
dyaúr āsīt pūrvácittiḥ
ásva āsīd bṛhád váyaḥ
ávir āsīt pilippilá
rátrir āsīt piśaṅgilá

What then was the first insight?
What then was the celestial bird?
What then was the slippery-smooth one?
What then was the brown one?
Sky was the first insight.
Horse was the celestial bird.
Sheep was the slippery smooth one.
Night was the brown one.

(One might do well to compare this with the formula “He worships X as Y” that equates one concept with its *bandhu*, as discussed above in Section 1.3.) *Brahmodyas* are typical of the *Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā*, the *brāhmaṇas* and the *upaniṣads*, but marginal at best within the *Rig Veda*. While Thompson has convincingly demonstrated that *brahmodya*-like elements can be found in a number of Rigvedic stanzas (1.24.1-2, 1.9.2-3, 6.27.1-2, 10.129.5, to name just those that he cites), none of these are clearly of the riddling, metalinguistic variety.

However, we should not be disheartened in our hunt for the metalingual function: Thompson’s riddling *brahmodyas* are a late spinoff of a broader metalinguistic trope called *diglossia* (late from the Vedic perspective, anyway). In this context, *diglossia* refers to the distinctions between the “language of men” and “the language of the gods”—or, in Calvert Watkins’ alternate formulation, “an opposition existing in the lexicon, between the common, *semantically unmarked term*, and a rarer, more ‘charged,’ *semantically marked term*” (*Selected Writings II* 457). Manifestations of diglossia can indeed be found in the *Rig Veda*, to say nothing of verbal art from many other Indo-European traditions (cf. *Dragon* pp. 38-39 and 181-183 for a comparative treatment of this phenomenon in Indic and other IE branches). In short, the claim that at least some *pādas* of Rigvedic poetry patently perform a metalingual function is uncontroversial.

6.9 Poetic repair and the metalingual function

The two essentially metalinguistic techniques that I have found to be most common within my corpus involve patterns of lexical repetition and substitution. I call them “metalinguistic repair,” because they may be thought of as the most prevalent type of “poetic repair” as identified and named by Stephanie Jamison (Jamison 2006). Now follows a more extended treatment of the concept of “repair.”

Jamison coined her phrase to refer to Rigvedic poets’ tendency to “introduce a linguistic puzzle early in a hymn, and ‘solve’ it later in the hymn” (133). Syntactic and morphological puzzles can fall under this rubric; here I am confining myself to lexical repair because this category features the most patently metalinguistic riddles.

In Jamison's view, this sequence of puzzle and resolution is a subtler cousin of the formal structuring devices outlined above: this device too "is both a unifying one—by drawing connections between two sometimes distant parts of the same hymn—and a structuring one, in that it creates linguistic suspense that awaits resolution" (ibid). Since the structuring devices with which I am primarily concerned are patterns of lexical and grammatical repetition that surface *throughout* entire discourse units or hymns rather than responsions that unite otherwise disparate pādas, I hope to show instead that instances of "repair" typically are included *within* or modeled *on* these more pervasive configurations, and therefore highlighted by them.

In the exposition that follows in sections 6.10-6.11, each "puzzle" will be *metalinguistic* in the sense that each will revolve around an idiosyncratic choice of word(s) which nonetheless does not obscure the basics of the intended meaning. The "solution" or "repair" will involve either the substitution of a more suitable near-synonym, or the resurfacing of the (formerly) problematic word in a context that renders its selection more understandable. To rephrase this in a way which makes the connection with Jakobson's metalingual function clearer: from one perspective, the puzzles appear to boil down to variants of a question one would hear even in an exchange focused on language acquisition: either Jakobson's own example, "What is a(nother) word for [a puzzling lexical item]?" or else an equally common, "Can you use [a puzzling lexical entry] in a(nother) sentence?"

I second Jamison's observation that this technique of "repair" is intended "to keep [the audience] attentive to what was coming next." That said, frequently (perhaps even typically) this is neither the sole nor the primary function of such a technique. As Jamison periodically noted throughout her own exposition, the linguistic puzzles involved often draw attention to important (if not explicitly mentioned) roles of gods and/or officiants, or else they allude to other important aspects of the relationships, settings or interchanges depicted. For instance, in the first of the specific cases of "poetic repair" that Jamison identifies in *RV* 5.52 –namely, the substitution of the idiosyncratic construction "chant forth **with** the Maruts" for the expected "chant forth **to** the Maruts" – the distortion of the common formulation draws attention to the role of the Maruts as singers and praisers of Indra (134). Sometimes these allusions greatly further a particular rhetorical goal of the hymn (for instance, if the roles of the gods being praised overlap with those of the poet, then the poet is one step closer to portraying himself as, if not a peer, someone who can comfortably occupy the same ritual grounds as the gods long enough to make a request and be granted a boon).

In general, metalinguistic repair serves as one of the most conspicuous signs of broader conflicts and/or mergers between different discourses. These discourses may be distinguished either by the different

vantage points from which they approach a particular topic (from one side or the other of the human-divine power gradient, for example), or by topics that seem quite distinct at first glance (say, the feats of the gods versus parts of a ritual of sacrifice). These rifts and shifts between discourses have a wide variety of subtler manifestations, and often important implications that push a hymn towards its conclusion (whether it be a parting of ways between husband and nymph or a merger between the human and the divine). Note then, that if any communicative tactics are going to be instrumental in producing the types of “double vision” I discussed in conjunction with Classical *kāvya* and the *Upaniṣads*, it would be these metalinguistic machinations.

6.10 Metalinguistic repair part 1: implied metalinguistic equations

Of the two types of metalinguistic repair to be treated here, implied metalinguistic equations are most clearly related to Jakobson’s original formulation of the metalingual function: like each successive response in his dialogue, the repair answers the question, “What is a(nother word for) [a puzzling lexical item]?” The difference is that the question is not directly posed. Instead, the “question” and “answer” consist of a strong association between a word that is problematic in a particular context and a near-synonym that feels more at home within the hymn.

The lengthier version of my working definition is as follows: an implied metalinguistic equation is a relationship between two semantically comparable words that clarifies the sense or implications of at least one of those words. This connection is forged by properties of the phrases that frame the two words—properties that include strong syntactic interconnections and/or more than one of the following types of correspondences:

- Syntactic and morphological (shared constructions and inflections)
- Lexical (shared roots, stems or forms)
- Metrical (shared syllable counts and metrical positions, particularly of corresponding parts of speech)
- Other phonological (shared phonemes or features, particularly of corresponding parts of speech in corresponding metrical positions)³⁷

More than one of these types of correspondences tends to be involved because this type of metalinguistic association needs to be more pronounced than the equivalence in sense that is so often a byproduct of any poetic genre’s typical patterns in sound. While implied metalinguistic equations are emphatically *not* a

³⁷ The last two listed types of correspondences relate to the “vertical dimension” of the repetitions of syntactic patterns for which Jared Klein (2002) reserves the term “responson.” I will tend to use the term “responson” in Klein’s sense, and in particular when discussing instances of metalinguistic repair.

phenomenon restricted to poetry (for instance, this definition could just as easily apply to many metalinguistic “language transformations” identified in science fiction—see Rabkin 1979), when they occur in poetry the frames that highlight the two equivalent words need to stand out against the backdrop of the metrical (and/or other correspondences) that are the defining trait of this type of poetry—the “constitutive devices of the sequence,” as Jakobson put it). It should come as no surprise that structuring devices often provide the necessary additional type of correspondences that characterize these frames.

6.11 Metalinguistic repair part 2: implied polysemy/antanaclasis

Like implied metalinguistic equations, instances of implied polysemy occur within passages that are characterized by a high level of *diglossia* or, anticipating Bakhtin below, *heteroglossia*—that is, by the maintenance of or transition between different discourses, distinguished by their different topics and or the distinct vantage points from which the same topic is approached, and characterized by their own sets of phraseology. Implied polysemy involves the repetition of identical or homophonous roots, stems or forms throughout such a passage, so that the meaning of these phonologically close-to-identical elements—and/or a whole host of connotations that color their sense—changes noticeably. Imitating Jakobson’s habit of linking the metalinguistic function to a language-acquisition situation, we might say that the repetitions of like forms answer the question, “Can you use that word in a(nother) sentence?”

Implied polysemy could be thought of as a particular variety of antanaclasis. Antanaclasis—derivationally a “breaking-up-against,” literally a “reflection,” is the conflict between the sameness of sound and difference in sense of two word forms. Its most trivial applications are puns of the variety of Groucho Marx’s famous quip, “Time *flies like* an arrow; fruit *flies like* a banana.” However, as its etymology would suggest, this figure of speech need not be a simple funhouse mirror. When it functions as a (particularly striking) subtype of metalinguistic repair, antanaclasis alters the significance of a given string of sounds to better suit the discourse that is dominating a speaker’s mind.

Antanaclasis as metalinguistic repair is distinguished from its more superficial cousin by a number of traits. For one thing, it must *repair*, or solve, a kind of linguistic puzzle: like an implied metalinguistic equation, this tactic begins with a lexical element that is ambiguous, obscure and/or marked in sense, especially within the phrase that is the context for its initial appearance. In examples from my Rigvedic corpus, the “repair” replaces a marked usage of a word (i.e. a usage that seems strange against the backdrop of Rigvedic phraseology) with a usage that is either patently unmarked, or a departure that is more clearly licensed by a particular aspect of Rigvedic mythology.

Additionally, as was the case with implied metalinguistic equations, a particular type of *frame* is needed to help the mind perceive these distorted mirrors of distinct meanings. The most common type of frame to be employed to this end is a surrounding stock of words that are repeated in such a way as to convey obviously distinct, contrasting messages (often on the level of clause rather than the level of the word). Of course, this stock of repeated words often appears courtesy of a structuring device.

These are the formal distinctions that characterize implied polysemy/antanaclastic "repair." What deepens the significance of these dueling forms is their status as the visible pinnacle of a collision or merger between (at least) two underlying discourses—in other words, a broader environment of “double vision.” In examples from my (Rigvedic) corpus, one of these discourses is almost invariably more closely associated with a divine figure. Typically, the “repair” belongs more comfortably in this divine discourse and paves the way for a stronger association between a divinity on the one hand and the poet or one of the characters in the dialogue on the other.

6.12 Poetic function

The examples that accompany Roman Jakobson’s explanation of the “poetic function” are themselves among the most frequently reproduced passages from “Linguistics and poetics”—perhaps because of Jakobson’s penchant for finding poetic features in fairly unexpected places, like childish tirades and trisyllabic slogans:

The set (*Einstellung*) toward the message as such, focus on the message for its own sake, is the POETIC function of language... This function, by promoting the palpability of signs, deepens the fundamental dichotomy of signs and objects. Hence, when dealing with the poetic function, linguistics cannot limit itself to the field of poetry...

A girl used to talk about "the horrible Harry." "Why horrible?" "Because I hate him." "But why not dreadful, terrible, frightful, disgusting?" "I don't know why, but horrible fits him better." Without realizing it, she clung to the poetic device of paronomasia.

The political slogan "I like Ike" /ay layk ayk/, succinctly structured, consists of three monosyllables and counts three diphthongs /ay/, each of them symmetrically followed by one consonantal phoneme, /.. l.. k.. k/. The makeup of the three words presents a variation: no consonantal phonemes in the first word, two around the diphthong in the second, and one final consonant in the third. A similar dominant nucleus /ay/ was noticed by Hymes in some of the sonnets of Keats. Both cola of the trisyllabic formula "I like /Ike" rhyme with each other, and the second of the two rhyming words is fully included in the first one (echo rhyme), /layk/ — /ayk/, a paronomastic image of a feeling which totally envelops its object. Both cola alliterate with each other, and the first of the two alliterating words is included in the second: /ay/ — /ayk/, a paronomastic image of the loving subject enveloped by the beloved object. The secondary, poetic function of this campaign slogan reinforces its impressiveness and efficacy.³⁸

³⁸ Jakobson 1957: 356-357.

For most readers, both the charm and the lesson in this exposition lie in the observation that even fairly prosaic genres of communication (colloquial speech, campaign-trail talk) can and will contain poetic elements. In this context, we will focus on a derivative but somewhat distinct point: in the Rig Veda (as in other genres of verse) there are poetic features that operate “orthogonally” to the metrical (or other) schemes that define the genre.

It will be inferred from the above examples of the operation of the poetic function that whenever and wherever the repetition or sequencing of phonemes or metrical shapes affects word choice, Jakobson believes that the poetic function is at play. Jakobson’s subsequent, more technical definition confirms this impression:

What is the empirical linguistic criterion of the poetic function? In particular, what is the indispensable feature inherent in any piece of poetry? To answer this question we must recall the two basic modes of arrangement used in verbal behavior, selection and combination. If "child" is the topic of the message, the speaker selects one among the extant, more or less similar nouns like child, kid, youngster, tot, all of them equivalent in a certain respect, and then, to comment on this topic, he may select one of the semantically cognate verbs — sleeps, dozes, nods, naps. Both chosen words combine in the speech chain. The selection is produced on the basis of equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymy and antonymy, while the combination, the build-up of the sequence, is based on contiguity. The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination. (358)

My entire dissertation could be said to concern a particular manifestation of the poetic function in the *Rig Veda*: as I noted at the beginning of my “Methodology” section, structuring devices are a poetic phenomenon in the technical, Jakobsonian sense. To string together a structuring device, a poet must use words that display a patterned repetition of stems, forms, or morphemes (i.e. particular sequences of phonemes). The resultant need for words that contain the same sequence of sounds as a prior word is one form of the projection of “the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination”: i.e., it is one reason why, from time to time, considerations of *sequence* and *contiguity* (in this case, of the preservation a pattern of repetition found throughout a hymn or discourse unit) might affect word choice as much as the normal considerations of semantic equivalence.

At this point, the reader may be curious to know whether there is anything that elevates the consideration of the *poetic* function of recognized *poetic* devices above the level of a transparent tautology. Just as the maintenance of a structuring device is certainly not the dominant or defining principle of poetic equivalence that affects word choice within a stanza (that would be the metrical scheme to which a Vedic hymn more or less adheres), it is also not the only ancillary poetic feature of Rigvedic verse: other types of formal repetitions *figure* into the selection of words within or across phrases (producing Watkins’ phonetic and etymological figures and/or Klein’s stylistic repetitions). It is the intersection between structuring devices and these smaller-scale poetic devices—the manipulation of poetic conventions reflected and

refracted across structurally significant formal repetitions—that I will treat under this rubric. The final case study provides a good example (in Part IV, Section 4.2).

6.13 Bakhtinian concepts and the “double voiced” *Rig Veda*

To understand the significance of phraseological deviations and repairs to poets’ rhetorical strategies, I use the Bakhtinian concept of “heteroglossia.” “Heteroglossia” is relevant wherever power differentials can be demonstrated to affect rhetorical strategies: among other things, the term refers to the double-voicedness of speakers whose subordinate positions and discordant perspectives compel them to first adopt and then coopt traditional terms and authoritative discourses. This is obviously relevant to the *diglossia* observed by Watkins in certain passages across different Indo-European traditions—but because Bakhtinian analysis is moored in examinations of language and power in contemporary contexts, I will first provide a 20th-century example. Recounting memories of being Maltese in (French) colonial Algeria, a speaker may first refer to herself as “French, of Maltese origin,” and then call herself “Maltese.” “French, of Maltese origin” reflects the official idiom for referring to the ethnicity of French citizens; “Maltese” reflects the speaker’s personal identity and lived experiences, which were likely not as similar to those of other French citizens as the official discourse implies.³⁹

Heteroglossia is produced by a tension between speakers’ “centripetal” and “centrifugal” tendencies and tactics. In “Discourse in the Novel,” Bakhtin characterizes *centripetal* forces as striving toward the elimination of heteroglossia in favor of a unitary, reigning, and/or literary language:

Unitary language constitutes the theoretical expression of the historical processes of linguistic unification and centralization, an expression of the centripetal forces of language. A unitary language is not something given [*dan*] but is always in essence posited [*zadan*] and at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the realities of heteroglossia. But at the same time it makes its real presence felt as a force for overcoming this heteroglossia, imposing specific limits to it, guaranteeing a certain maximum of mutual understanding and crystallizing into a real, although still relative, unity—the unity of the reigning conversational [everyday] and literary language, “correct language.”...Aristotelian poetics, the poetics of Augustine, the poetics of the medieval church...[t]he victory of one reigning language (dialect) over the others, the supplanting of languages, their enslavement, the process of illuminating them with the True Word, the incorporation of barbarians and lower social strata into a unitary language of culture and truth...all this determined the content and the power of the category of “unitary language” in linguistic and syntactic thought.⁴⁰

³⁹For the sociolinguistic study on heteroglossia in a postcolonial context, see Smith (2004). Bakhtin (1994): 270-272 discusses the terms “centripetal” and “centrifugal.”

⁴⁰ Bakhtin 1981: 270-271.

In other words, “centripetal” unification is what starts to happen to dialects and discourses when one from among them is buttressed by a form of structural power (all this brings to mind the adage, “A language is a dialect plus an army and a navy”).

In contrast, the working of “centrifugal forces” is seen through the stratification of language alongside the classes of people who speak them, the mutability of living languages, and the idiosyncrasies of individual speech acts. Centrifugal forces are what produce and maintain heteroglossia.

At any given moment of its evolution, language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word (according to formal linguistic markers, especially phonetic), but also—and for us this is the essential point—into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, “professional” and “generic” languages, languages of generations and so forth...And this stratification and heteroglossia, once realized, is not only a static invariant of linguistic life, but also what insures its dynamics: stratification and heteroglossia widen and deepen as long as a language is alive and developing. Alongside the centripetal forces, the centrifugal forces of language carry on their uninterrupted work; alongside verbal-ideological centralization and unification, the uninterrupted processes of decentralization and disunification go forward.

Every concrete utterance of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces are brought to bear.⁴¹

In this context, then, “centripetal” and “centrifugal” refer to two simultaneously present inclinations: on the one hand, a need to gain authority by *gravitating towards* established norms of language usage or to keep one’s phraseology *oriented toward* a center of authority; on the other hand, a need to move *away* from those norms in order to establish oneself, to discuss one’s needs and accomplish one’s rhetorical goals.

Within the *Rig Veda* the will of wielders of authority⁴² (gods; patrons; more powerful poets; husbands) and the weight of tradition are among the centripetal forces that encourage Rigvedic poets (or the speakers whose personas they adopt) to adhere to phraseological norms, or to gravitate towards discourses that revolve around the deeds and needs of authority figures. At the same time, these poets’ ultimately centrifugal objectives—like the need to gain the upper hand despite a literally stratospheric power differential (that separates the human and divine), and the desire to re-negotiate roles with partners-in-ritual—require them to reconfigure traditional elements. Note that in this last sentence I am using the words “centripetal” and “centrifugal” in a somewhat expanded sense: to describe agendas that may underlie language choices. As hinted above in the section above on the phatic function, sometimes (centripetal) phraseological concessions help the poet accomplish (centrifugal) rhetorical objectives.

I should note that there are a number of objections that skeptical readers could raise against applying Bakhtin’s methods to the *Rig Veda* in general, and also against using Bakhtin to supplement a

⁴¹ Bakhtin 1981: 271-272.

⁴² See Section 2.4 above for a discussion of social contexts and relationships relevant to my case studies.

Jakobsonian approach to examining communicative functions. On the first point: behind one of the ellipses in the block quote describing the various forms of the “centripetal” tyranny of unitary language, right after “the canonization of ideological systems,” there was also this phrase: “philology with its methods of studying and teaching dead languages, languages that were by that very fact ‘unities,’ Indo-European linguistics with its focus of attention, directed away from language plurality to a single proto-language...” Nor is this the only time at which Bakhtin expresses antagonism to the discipline in which this study is most firmly rooted.

Later on in the same chapter, Bakhtin characterizes the language of poetic genres as often extremely “authoritarian, dogmatic, and conservative, sealing itself off from the influence of extraliterary social dialects.” The specific phrases that he then uses give us an idea of his targets: “Therefore, such ideas as a special ‘poetic language,’ a ‘language of gods,’ a ‘priestly language of poetry’ and so forth could function on poetic soil.”⁴³ These words (some of them calqued from the *Rig Veda* itself) are the very same expressions that are used by Calvert Watkins etc. to describe the marked terms most characteristic of the *Rig Vedic* register of Sanskrit. As if that were not concerning enough, in a separate work, Bakhtin motivated his own approach to the reading and interpretation as a counterbalancing response to the school of Russian Formalism to which Roman Jakobson belonged; twice in as many pages, he specifically critiques Jakobson’s work.⁴⁴

I will treat each of these problems in turn. First, I cannot defend the history of Indo-European Studies against the charge of privileging a unitary abstraction over pluralities of living practices in a manner that can be meaningfully juxtaposed with, for instance, the forceful supplanting of languages (implicitly in colonial contexts) that Bakhtin mentioned in the same paragraph. I can only say that there are within this broad discipline also traditions of scholars engaging in comparative study for the purpose of better understanding some of the most intractable idiosyncrasies of texts which, if no longer living and breathing, certainly defy any kind of synchronic systematization. Much of this tradition of philology delights in observing the different chronological strata that can be shown to exist within a single text. In like fashion, this dissertation, while moored in the general discipline of Indo-European Studies, seeks first and foremost to explore the many stratified discourses within the *Rig Veda*. In a similar vein, we can note that when we quoted Watkins speaking of a “language of the gods,” it was not to characterize the language of the *Rig*

⁴³ Bakhtin 1981: 287.

⁴⁴ Bakhtin et. al. 1994: 145-146.

Veda in general, but to characterize a stratum of marked terminology that exists alongside unmarked, mundane terminology, a heteroglossia (well, at least diglossia) that he welcomed.

As for applying Bakhtinian and Jakobsonian methodology in tandem: the early Russian Formalists, including Jakobson in his younger years, didn't write theoretical treatises so much as polemical manifestos, speaking in absolutist terms about divorcing discussions of the poetic form from discussions about the poet. The manifestos sound like a caricature of formalists' actual analytical practices. Bakhtin was primarily reacting against these manifestos when he situated his dialogic methodology in opposition to Formalism. Bakhtin, who is currently more popular among most literary critics than Jakobson, would say that Formalists evolved, but Formalism didn't.⁴⁵ So, for instance, to the extent that someone like Roman Jakobson considered a poet's psychology (and in fact, Jakobson went so far as to write an essay talking about the hallmarks of intensifying schizophrenia in the later work of a particular poet, Hölderlin⁴⁶), Bakhtin would consider Jakobson a former Formalist. The same goes for moments in which Jakobson drew any conclusions about a poem's meaning or a poet's ideas on the basis of an examination of formal repetitions and oppositions.

I am hardly the first to apply Bakhtinian poetry to “authoritative” ancient poetry against his will (his preferred object of study was the modern novel).⁴⁷ The ultimate defense of such disobedient applications is that they work. By focusing on the continual tug of war between centripetal and centrifugal forces, my dissertation will reveal that the *Rig Veda*, no less than the modern novel, gives voice to the constantly evolving (re)negotiations beneath the surface of supposedly static relationships. I will suggest that traditional structuring devices enhanced, rather than limited, the poet's agency in this process—and that the *Rig Veda* is a thoroughly double-voiced/polyphonous text, replete with diglossia/heteroglossia even in hymns where there is only one explicit speaker.

⁴⁵ In fact, Bakhtin (1994) says something very near to that on p. 141.

⁴⁶In Jakobson 1985.

⁴⁷ See Branham 2002, for instance.

7. READING STRATEGIES, CHAPTER OVERVIEWS AND NOTES ON TEXT

7.1 Working one's way through this dissertation: suggested strategies

The methodology of this dissertation navigates the insecure space outside of the realm of established Sanskrit and Greco-Roman analytic categories, and furthermore tests a synthesis of two interpretive schools that are often seen as thoroughly at odds with one another. Such an unproven approach stands or falls on the basis of its ability to handle most, if not all, relevant data that a hymn (considered as a text within a broader phraseological tradition) has to offer. In consequence, I have done my best to grapple with all of the data I knew to be relevant, which at times meant engaging in extremely lengthy and imposingly dense discussions.

I would suggest that a reader start with the comparatively short dialogue-hymn case study in Part IV of this dissertation (the conclusion), and, before delving into any of the core case studies, consult the overview that I provide below. Both the dialogue hymn and these overviews act as a kind of index highlighting the location of key results within each of the core case studies. I would suggest that readers then proceed by examining the passages that treat the results or the formal and functional issues in which they are most interested, using that interest to modulate their attention toward a widening range of discussions relevant to the hymn in question.

7.2 Overview of Part II: *RV* 7.77 and 7.75, Vasiṣṭha's Dawn hymns

The first pair of hymns that my dissertation treats are dedicated to Uṣas, “[the goddess] Dawn,” and attributed to the poet Vasiṣṭha.⁴⁸ These two particular case studies provide a useful primer on our method of detecting structuring devices. The hymns in question are relatively short, and, upon initial examination, they seem rather simple with regard to meter and other structural features; *RV* 7.77 in particular initially appears to adhere quite neatly to a simple bipartite template, in which a descriptive section is followed by a series of invocations and entreaties.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, each and every one of our criteria for the perceptibility and grouping of repetitions is required to fully account for the structuring

⁴⁸ Throughout this dissertation, “Vasiṣṭha” is used as a shorthand for a descriptor like “the poet of 7.75” or “the poet of 7.77.” While I do not definitively resolve the question of authorship in this particular study, I do hope that the long list of similarities in forms and functions of structuring devices—particularly those discussed in Part II, 7.10, 9.4 and 9.10—will strongly suggest that “Vasiṣṭha” can be regarded as a shorthand for “the poet of 7.77 and 7.75.”

⁴⁹ On which, see further Part II, Section 4.1.

devices that pervade these hymns.⁵⁰ When applied, these criteria reveal a quite diverse array of devices.⁵¹ So on the formal end of things, the examination of 7.77 and 7.75 proves to be instructive both in a basic heuristic sense and in regards to how intricate “simple” hymns can be. In the process, a number of interesting methodological questions come up: how formal structuring devices relate to patterns of stylistic repetition that more typically manifest across pādas or cola;⁵² whether perceptible repetitions of the same lexical elements must *all* belong to the same structuring device;⁵³ how to tell whether similar-looking series of repetitions constitute one structuring device versus two, and where to put dividing lines.⁵⁴

As far as the *function* of structuring devices goes, the focus of these case studies initially seems narrower: we can confine ourselves to examining *metalinguistic* manipulations, that is, the forging of connections and transitions by significant acts of naming and renaming. Significant concepts in this regard include *homologies*, links that structuring devices forge between contrasting categories of activities or entities by applying similar language to pairs of scenarios that bridge the divides.⁵⁵ Homologies are often used to frame and highlight focused transitions, by means of two major techniques: 1) *antanaclasis*, the use of particular words, or near homophones, to describe two or more categories of entities and/or actions; and 2) implied metalinguistic equations, in which homologies frame a particularly pivotal act of renaming.

What elevates this inventory of metalinguistic techniques into (the building blocks for) a successful rhetorical strategy is the relationship of the pādas and phrases that homologies link together to particular authorities whom the poet needs to persuade, or to particular authoritative, received discourses that the poet needs to repurpose into evidence of his own prowess. Key terms used to describe these relationships include “centripetal” and “centrifugal,” referring to an orientation towards authority or a shift away from authority, respectively.⁵⁶ The relationship of a particular phrase to well-attested collocations and usage

⁵⁰ See Part II, Sections 2.1-2 and 7.1-8 for the application of these categories.

⁵¹ See Sections 3 and 8 for charts summarizing these devices.

⁵² See Sections 2.1 and 7.4, for instance.

⁵³ See Section 7.4.

⁵⁴ A major preoccupation of Sections 2.1, 7.4, and 7.6-8.

⁵⁵ This term is introduced in Section 9.2 in conjunction with 7.75, but retrospectively applied to some rounds of repetition in 7.77. See above in Section 6.8-6.11 for a discussion of antanaclasis and implied metalinguistic equations. See Section 1.3 above for a discussion on *bandhu* or “homologues.”

⁵⁶ See above in Section 6.13.

patterns within Rigvedic phraseology can be described as centripetal or centrifugal. The relationship of a particular discourse to the human-divine hierarchy can be called centripetal if the discourse consists primarily of flattering descriptions of divinities and divine activity, and centrifugal if it highlights human ritual activity and entreaties. Finally, the relationship of a particular utterance to the discourse that is currently dominant *within* a particular hymn can be called centripetal or centrifugal according to whether it perpetuates or transitions away from that discourse.

Both 7.77 and 7.75 are praise hymns embedded within ritual contexts, meaning that the basic rhetorical task before the poet is to transition from a safely obsequious centripetal discourse revolving around Dawn’s heavenly host toward a more demanding discourse that clarifies what forms of prosperity the poet requests on behalf of his patron and ultimately himself. Where these centrifugal transitions are starkest, Vasiṣṭha uses a centripetal move towards Rigvedic phraseological norms to compensate for the shifts away from a language of obeisance; this process is a form of “poetic repair.”⁵⁷ For example, within one structuring device in *RV* 7.77, Dawn is first described as “bearing shining **wear**” (*rúśad vāso bíbhratī*), and then asked to “bear **wares**” (*bharā vāsūni*) down to the poet.⁵⁸ The first phrase is an idiosyncratic, centrifugal praise; the second is a formulaic, centripetal entreaty; the transition from “wear” to “wares” is an instance of antanaclasis. Expressed in this way, the entreaty sounds like a pleasing and compelling “poetic repair” of the praise.

In other passages, centripetal shifts toward conventional phraseology smooth over otherwise jarring centrifugal transitions between different nodes of human-divine and animacy hierarchies. In several relay rounds of repetitions in 7.75, homologues frame a transition from a phraseologically disfavored characterization of Dawn’s “lights”—*bhānāvah*, a term more comfortably used of Agni, the deified ritual fire—to a formulaic re-characterization of those beams as horses (*áśvāḥ*) who, in a manner reminiscent of Agni himself, collaborate with human officiants to bring Dawn down to the ritual grounds (this would be an implied metalinguistic equation).⁵⁹ Through another pattern of repetition, this latter, conventional-sounding metaphor is connected to a conventional request for a reward rich in horses (*áśvāvat*) at the end of the hymn end (this is another example of antanaclasis).⁶⁰ Because of the element of poetic repair in

⁵⁷ See Section 6.9 above.

⁵⁸ See Part II, Section 4.6.

⁵⁹ See Part II, Section 9.5.

⁶⁰ See Part II, Section 9.10.

which “horses” corrected the odd usage of “lights,” the last transition would not be received as a narrowly self-serving shift, but rather as a natural extension of an appropriate phraseological correction.

7.3: Overview of Part III: RV7.76 and 7.86, Vasiṣṭha’s omphalos hymns

The first hymn of this second studied pair—namely, *RV*7.76—is the Dawn hymn that, within the extant Saṃhitā, is found in between the hymns that were the subjects of this dissertation’s first two case studies; in consequence, it may initially seem strange to the reader to see it under a different designation and grouped with a more distant and obviously thematically different *sūkta*. The difference between the most basic characterization of the rhetorical goal of 7.86 and that of 7.75 and 7.77 is fairly obvious.⁶¹ In 7.86, the first half of the hymn contains questions about the cause of an apparent conflict between Vasiṣṭha and Varuṇa; in the second half, through an initially perplexing combination of offers of penance and deflections of blame, allusions to guilt and assertions of innocence, Vasiṣṭha attempts to clear his name. The fundamental rhetorical task then is to convincingly perform reconciliation with a desired divine interlocutor—not to secure any particular boon, but to mend the fractured channel that is the prerequisite for any future ritual collaboration. In short, 7.86 is a *confessional* hymn, rather than a praise hymn set in a clear context of ritual sacrifice.

Certain interrelated distinctions in form and function affiliate 7.76 with 7.86—distinctions that ultimately reveal a different sort of rhetorical mission within 7.76, operating in tandem with the normal Dawn-hymn progression from the sky to the ritual grounds. In other words, formally and functionally, *RV* 7.76 is an interesting synthesis of and bridge between two very different genres of hymns: the praise hymn, as exemplified by 7.77 and 7.75, and the confessional hymn, as exemplified by 7.86. In this short introduction, I will not belabor the more obvious connections between 7.76 and 7.75 and 7.77.⁶² Instead, I will focus on the features that align 7.76 with 7.86, which include 1) formal contours and strategies; 2) homology types and functions; and 3) forms of poetic repair.

The primary discourse unit in *RV* 7.76 and the whole of 7.86 display a kind of concentric arrangement of their most prominent structuring devices: in other words, the initiation and termination points of these devices suggest that these hymns pivot around a structural midriff. Following Stephanie

⁶¹ See Part III, Section 8.1 for a broad-brushed characterization of the rhetorical goal of 7.86.

⁶² These similarities include the division of the hymn into a larger and smaller discourse demarcated by the same type of structuring device on the formal end, and the use of aorist-based homologies on the functional end. On the first point, see Section 4.1; on the second point, see Sections 4.2-4.3.

Jamison, I term this midriff an *omphalos*.⁶³ A more subtle formal commonality between these two hymns is the existence of structurally significant but less conspicuous asymmetrical repetitions, which connect pādas of the hymn that are close to the omphalos with pādas along the hymn’s periphery. Whereas many rounds of repetition within the symmetric/concentric structuring devices contain primarily or exclusively nominal forms, the asymmetric/peripheral structuring devices that are constructed in this fashion prominently feature finite verbal forms.

These are the most obvious formal similarities, but not the only ones. In a variant of the Gestalt principle of “proximity”—we could call it *thematic* proximity—phraseology associated with particular discourses appears in the pādas containing the asymmetric structuring devices; this phraseology seems to be deployed as a formal strategy to facilitate the detection of the asymmetric repetitions, and to influence grouping judgments among them.⁶⁴ For instance, in *RV* 7.76, the verbal forms *ájaniṣṭa*, “has just been generated,” and *sám jānate*, “they genuinely agree,” from Verses 1 and 6 are flagged as related by their juxtaposition to *cákṣuḥ*, “eye,” and *ná minanti vratáni*, “they do not transgress commandments,” respectively. The latter list of forms jointly articulate a “discourse of directives” that discusses the divine generation of an over-seeing eye, an act and an entity which inspire and enforce obedience and accord among gods and humans alike.⁶⁵

That is not the only role of such phraseology, however: perhaps not surprisingly, these phraseological elements tend to influence the communicative function of the structuring devices they help flag. One generalization that can be made about the thematic content of the discourses that are deployed in this fashion is that they treat interactions between agents at different nodes within the human-divine hierarchy: primordial divinities vs. helper divinities; helper divinities vs. semi-divine fathers; supervisory divinities vs. groups of human poets; groups of higher-up poets vs. their lone and lowly interlocutor. In consequence, verbal forms and forms derived from verbal roots in asymmetric/peripheral structuring devices often encode reciprocal or analogous actions performed by these different sorts of agents. Within these devices, repetitions of the same verbal root, or the use of nearly homophonous roots, communicate commonalities, interconnections, or causal relationships between these analogous actions, forming a

⁶³ See Part III Section 8.1 for more on the notion of an omphalos.

⁶⁴ The discussions on thematic proximity can be found in Section 2.3, Appendix 1, Section 2.5-6, and 8.3-8.5.

⁶⁵ The section on the discourse of directives is 2.6. I might also add that I am indebted to Jessica Delisi’s unpublished investigations of “eye of the sun” mythology in several Indo-European branches, though the inventory of phraseology that I identify in this context is more extensive.

homology type that I call “verbal/deverbative reciprocal.” The reciprocal feel of two forms quoted above—*ajaniṣṭa cákṣuḥ* “the [overseeing] eye of the sun has just been generated” and *sám jānate* “[the ritual officiants] genuinely agree”—is probably obvious (though defining precisely what is phraseologically entailed by this “agreement” proves trickier, an issue that I will revisit in a moment).⁶⁶

Though the verbal/deverbative reciprocal homologies in 7.76 and 7.86 allude to divine agents, they culminate in characterizations of human activity and the roles that humans are capable of playing or are obligated to fulfill. In both of these hymns, this focus on characterizing and configuring human roles and relationships, rather than on forging connections between divine attributes or attendants and ritual rewards, carries over into the nominal repetitions in concentric structuring devices. Within *RV* 7.76, nominal homologies connect descriptions of inanimate ritual configurations with descriptions of humans acting in unison: for instance, first, the paths connecting the divine and ritual spheres are described as being “arranged *with goods*” (*vásubhír iṣkr̥tāsaḥ*); then, the Vasiṣṭhas are characterized as “united with the *good ones*” (*vásubhír yádamānāḥ*).⁶⁷ This is just one of several instances in which (implicitly contentious) human relations are modeled on arrangements of ritual props (which lack the faculty of will required to disagree with one another). The directionality of this and other transitions articulated through nominal homologies in 7.76 is the opposite of what we see in 7.75 and 7.77: the relevant repetitions connect descriptions of less animate entities early on in the hymn to subsequent descriptions of anthropomorphic agents.

Within 7.86, nominal homologies reconfigure Vasiṣṭha’s identity into two opposing components: a weak flesh and a willing spirit, so to speak; the latter, blameless component is framed as on par with Varuṇa. Vasiṣṭha’s “own self/person” is initially encoded by a reflexive collocation (*svá-*, “own,” + *tanú-* “self, body, person”) in Verse 2. Later verses split this collocation into two poles with two opposing roles. First, there is a more corporeal “self” (*tanú-*) which is associated with guilt and crime (i.e. *énaḥ* and *ágah*, both neuter-gendered). Then, there arrives a more animate, masculine-gendered “(one’s) own intention” (*svó dáksaḥ*); on a lexical level, this phrase is aligned with the god Varuṇa, who is called “force all (your) *own*” (*svadhāvaḥ*).⁶⁸ (Throughout the hymn, neuter-gendered words for guilt and give way to masculine-gendered epithets describing Vasiṣṭha as blameless. The first such epithet, *anenāḥ* in Verse 4, is clearly divine oriented; this epithet negates the guilt, *énaḥ*, in Verse 3.⁶⁹ At the same time, a feminine-gendered

⁶⁶ The sections on verbal/deverbative homologies include 4.4-4.6 and 8.12-8.13.

⁶⁷ See Sections 4.8-4.10.

⁶⁸ See Sections 8.8-8.9 for a discussion of *svá-* + *tanú-*; see Section 8.10 for an overview of the nominative homologies at play in this hymn.

⁶⁹ See 8.7 for *anenāḥ*.

word for “unperceptiveness,” *ácittih*, contrasts with the blameless masculine “intention” *dákṣaḥ*. These oppositions between less-animate neuter/feminine and masculine naturally influence the interpretation of the splitting of the reflexive collocation.)

Within nominal homologies, poetic repair works in a manner not unlike what we saw in the case of 7.77 and 7.75. In the highlighted example from 7.76, for instance, the shift from a less animate to a more animate reading of the instrumental plural *vásubhiḥ* is centripetal with respect to Rigvedic phraseology—so, this act of poetic repair makes the modeling of harmonious human relationships on configurations of ritual props sound more fitting than otherwise.⁷⁰ In 7.86, we first meet the collocation *svá-* + *tanú-* in the instrumental phrase *sváyā tanúvā* “with (my) own self/person,” which, in contravention of phraseological trends, is used to refer to the self as an animate interlocutor rather than as a physical body. The split of this collocation into two more phraseologically centripetal phrases is what produces Vasiṣṭha’s godlike alterego (in addition to his scapegoated corporeal “person”); so, poetic repair helps impress upon a listener the idea that Vasiṣṭha and Varuṇa have enough in common to facilitate a reconciliation.

Poetic repair works differently within verbal/deverbative homologies in 7.76 and 7.86. The easiest way to sum up this difference is that the work is in fact done by the audience: whereas in other instances of poetic repair, the poet presents and then solves a linguistic puzzle, in the case of these homologies, the poet constructs a puzzle for his listeners to “repair” in their own minds. Another way of saying this is that the two hymns’ verbal reciprocal homologies are constructed in an intentionally *centrifugal* fashion. They connect forms of the relevant roots—or nearly homophonic stand-ins—whose usage trends do not intersect in a single, obvious way; in order to understand what is being conveyed, i.e. to grasp the thematic, sequential or causal relationship between the divine and human actions that are being structurally linked, a listener has to follow the various branches of each relevant stem’s usage trends until he finds a shade of meaning that these branches can co-create.

For instance, in the case of the homology⁷¹ connecting *ajaniṣṭa cákṣuḥ* “the [overseeing] eye of the sun **has just been generated**,” and *sám jānate*, “[the ritual officiants] **genuinely agree**,” I argue that listening Vasiṣṭhas could detect in the somewhat out-of-place form *sám jānate* a reference to collaborative *generative* acts in a ritual context: either a) the *generation* of the fire, which is often phraseologically coupled with the generation of the sun, or b) the generation of the sacred formulation (expressed by the

⁷⁰ See 4.9-10 and see 8.8-8.10 for discussions on poetic repair within nominal homologies.

⁷¹ This homology connects forms from two different, but phonologically similar and otherwise associated roots.

collocation $\sqrt{jan} + bráhma-$), an act that within Rigvedic phraseology is attributed to divine agents and to the Vasiṣṭhas, but not to any other human ritual agents.⁷² Phraseology that works to the advantage of this second interpretation includes another passage in Maṇḍala 7, in which the idea of generating the sacred formulation ($\sqrt{jan} + bráhma$) is coupled with the same formula about not transgressing commandments that we find after $sám jánate$ in 7.77.6 ($ná minanti vratáni$, “they do not transgress commandments”).

It is, of course, a non-trivial assumption to suppose that a listener would expend a large amount of intellectual labor in order to interpret the connections between a specific pair of forms. In the case of these homologies, though, I think this assumption is a defensible one. The third person plural forms in which these verbal homologies terminate invite listeners to hear themselves as the implicit subjects. The listeners’ intellectual labor is therefore self-serving: it is a search for an interpretation that most favorably characterizes their own agency, their ritual role, and the relationships that they maintain with other human and divine parties. Furthermore, when they read themselves into the lines in question, the phraseological solutions are easier to detect: for instance, in the example above, the idea that the implicit subject of the verb $sám jánate$ is the Vasiṣṭhas leads to the idea that this verbal form is a stand-in for the collocation $\sqrt{jan} + bráhma$. In repairing the poet’s centrifugal expressions, the listeners are re-centering these expressions *around themselves*. I call this process “audience-centered interpretive repair.”

Within 7.86, there is a third type of poetic repair that is not present in any of the Dawn hymns, and that is related to the nature of a confessional hymn, which is essentially a dialogue of which only one side is explicitly presented. As discussed in the introduction to my methodology (Section 6.3), confessional hymns tend to have a default alternation between references to a 1st-person singular human addresser and a 2nd-person singular divine addressee. Particularly within passages in 7.86 that draw on traditional Indo-Iranian phatic phraseology associated with confessional hymns, this default 1st-person/2nd-person referential relationship can be regarded as a norm of poetic grammar.⁷³ The Sanskrit reflexes of this confessional phraseology are \sqrt{pras} , “ask” and \sqrt{vac} , “say/voice.” In Verse 3, Vasiṣṭha makes a centrifugal move away from the normal referential relationship when he uses such traditional phraseology to discuss his attempts to *ask* (\sqrt{pras}) perceptive *humans* about the reasons for his estrangement from the god Varuṇa (he uses a 1st-person/3rd-person referential relationship); then, in Verse 4, he returns to the normal arrangement when he tells Varuṇa, “You’ll *voice* this to me” (\sqrt{vac} , 2nd-person/1st-person referential relationship). This

⁷² The first interpretation is treated in Section 4.5; the second is treated in Section 4.6.

⁷³ See Sections 8.3-8.4 and 8.6 for a discussion of Indo-Iranian phatic phraseology.

pattern of departure from and return to the default referential relationship, which we can call “rhetorical repair,” helps make reconciliation with the god seem more natural than estrangement.⁷⁴

7.4 A note on text, translation, forms, and fonts

In most cases, I follow the transliterated, metrically restored *Rig Veda* of van Nooten and Holland. Transliteration is undesirable from a number of perspectives (especially given how beautifully the *devanāgarī* script suits the language concerned), but it does help a larger readership immediately recognize the formal repetitions on which my entire method is based. “Metrically restored” means that a handful of forms have been altered from what is found in extant manuscripts to reflect a more archaic pronunciation suggested by the metrical shape those forms fill (examples from *RV* 7.86: *tanvā* is altered to *tanúvā*; *jyēṣṭham* is altered to *jyáyiṣṭham*). The translations that appear in this dissertation are based on the recently released English edition by Jamison and Brereton (2014). I have made certain alterations to yield a pāda-by-pāda rendering, and so that the reader could hear a stronger English echo of the Rigvedic repetitions. Some forms will appear slightly different in the hymn text vs. when I cite them in my discussions; this is because of the phenomenon of *sandhi*, in which signs at the borderline of contiguous words are fused (the difference between “going” and “gon” in “gonna”). The font I have used for the hymn text is Titus Cyberbit; if some diacritics are not displaying properly, this font is available for download online.

⁷⁴ Sections 8.2-8.6 cover this type of poetic repair.

PART II. CASE STUDIES: VASIṢṬHA'S DAWN HYMNS

1. 7.77 TEXT AND TRANSLATION

The superscripts in the Sanskrit identify separate structuring devices, which will be identified in Sections 2 and 3. The superscripts in the English introduce footnotes.

7.77.1a	úpo ruruce ¹ yuvatír ná yóṣā	She shone —up close like a young woman, ⁷⁵
7.77.1b	vísvaṃ jívám prasuvánti ³ caráyai	Impelling all living toward activity.
7.77.1c	ábhūd agníḥ samídhe mánuṣāṇām	Agni has just ⁷⁶ manifested for the kindling of sons of Manu/worldly ones.
7.77.1d	ákar jyótir bádhamānā támāṃsi	[She] has just made light, pressing away the dark shades.
7.77.2a	vísvaṃ ³ praticí ³ sapráthā úd asthād	Facing toward all , she has just arisen in full extension;
7.77.2b	rúśad váso ⁵ bíbhra ⁵ śukrá ⁵ ásvait ⁴	Bringing/bearing (her) luminous, gleaming wear , she has just brightened .
7.77.2c	híraṇyavarṇā sudśí ¹ śikasam ¹ dr̥g ¹	Golden in color, a sight lovely to see ,
7.77.2d	gávām ⁴ mātā netrī ¹ áhnām aroci ¹	Mother of cows , of days the leader(ess) , she has just shone .
7.77.3a	devánām cáksuḥ subhágā váhantī	Well-portioned, conducting the eye of the gods,
7.77.3b	śvetám ⁴ náyanti ¹ sudśí ¹ śikam ¹ ásvam ⁴	Leading the bright horse lovely to see ,
7.77.3c	uṣá adarsí ¹ raśmíbhir ⁶ víaktā ⁶	Dawn was just seen , adorned with rays,
7.77.3d	citrám maghā ¹ vísvaṃ ³ ánu prá ³ bhū ³	Possessing brilliant bounties , projecting through toward all (the world).
7.77.4a	ántivāmā dūre amítam ucha	With valuable things nearby, dawn the foe into the distance;
7.77.4b	urvīm gávyū ⁴ tīm ⁴ ábhayaṃ kṛdhī naḥ	Create for us broad cow-pastureland , fearlessness.
7.77.4c	yāvāya dvéṣa á bharā ⁵ vásūni ⁵	Keep hatred away; bear/bring (your) wares .
7.77.4d	codāya rádho ² gr̥ṇatē maghoni ¹	Impel largesse for the singer, you bounteous one .
7.77.5a	asmé ² śrésṭhebhír bhānúbhir ⁶ ví ⁶ bhāhi	Light up for us/alight on us with (your) best, brightest lights, ⁷⁷
7.77.5b	úṣo devi pratiránti na áyuh	Goddess Dawn, lengthening our lifetime,
7.77.5c	íṣaṃ ca no dádhati ² víśvavāre	Provider of all valuables, bestowing for us both renewal and
7.77.5d	góm ⁴ ád ⁴ śvāv ⁴ ád ⁴ ráthavac ca rádh ²	Largesse in cattle, horses and chariots.
7.77.6a	yám tvā divo duhitar vardháyanti	Daughter of Heaven, you who are raised
7.77.6b	úśaḥ sujāte matíbhir ⁶ vásiṣṭhāḥ ⁶	By the Vasiṣṭhas with prayers, well-born Dawn,
7.77.6c	sásmá ² dhā ² rayím iṣvám bṛhántam	(As) that one, provide in/among us wealth high and lofty.--
7.77.6d	yüyám pāta suastíbhīḥ sádā naḥ	Do you protect us always with your blessings.

⁷⁵ Unless I indicate otherwise, the reader can assume that translations have been influenced by Jamison and Brereton 2014.

⁷⁶ To convey the immediate past of the Rigvedic aorist, I add the adverb “just”—e.g. “has just brightened” and “has just shone.”

⁷⁷ The Sanskrit imperative *bhāhi* refers to “lighting up” rather than “alighting”; I provide the homophonous alternate translation in an effort to convey the range of dative/locative semantics of *asmé*, “on us/for us.” “Best, brightest” is translating *śrésṭha*; the rationale for this will be explained later on.

2. FORMS OF STRUCTURING DEVICES IN 7.77

Before I begin to elaborate the function of structuring devices, I should explain the grounds on which I claim that they are perceptible (both the individual repetitions and the grouping judgments), and say a little bit about how they relate to categories of *local* repetition already identified by others.

2.1 Overview

Running through 7.77 are two series (according to my own grouping judgments, which I will account for below) displaying the *conventional* technique of concatenation. The relevant repetitions appear below; I will subsequently discuss the matter of the boundary between the two devices.

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6
		náyantī			
	sudṛśīkasamḍṛk	sudṛśīkam		asmé	
	netrī	adarśi	rádhaḥ	dádhatī	asmásu
ruruce	aroci	-maghā	maghoni	rádhaḥ	dhāḥ

(The less transparent repetitions share a root rather than a stem: *ruruce* and *aroci* from \sqrt{ruc} , *netrī* and *náyantī* from $\sqrt{nī}$, *adarśi* and *sudṛśīka(...)* from $\sqrt{dṛś}$, *dádhatī* and *dhāḥ* from $\sqrt{dhā}$.) In all instances, the concatenation involves word forms in consecutive verses; therefore, on the grounds of *recency* as well as *conventionality*, we can confidently claim that these devices would be perceptible to the listener. (The first device displays a degree of redundancy, with two forms of the root appearing in both Verse 2 and Verse 3.) Returning to Klein’s categories of repetition in cola/contiguous pādas,⁷⁸ we see that these two structuring devices are dominated primarily by *paronomastic* repetition (repetition of a particular *root* rather than a particular stem), but that there are also some cases of polyptotic and exact repetition. Already then, we see that structuring devices cannot necessarily be reduced to occurrences of Klein’s categories that are spread over several verses (rather than confined to a single verse).

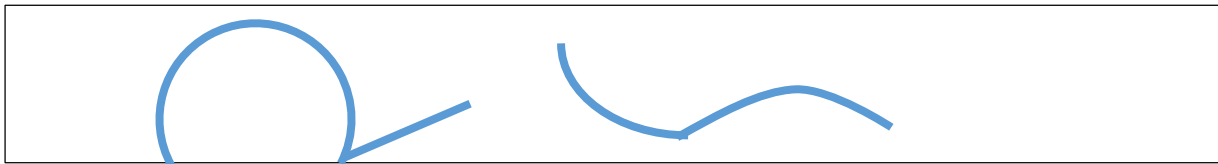
I say that these concatenations constitute two structuring devices, rather than one, because of the symmetrical *variations in density* that create two separate identifiable “peaks.” Recall the Gestalt principles of good continuation, symmetry and closure that are behind the role variations in “density” play in grouping judgments. Briefly expanding upon the methodology section from the introduction,⁷⁹ I will

⁷⁸ Relevant categories are outlined in the methodological introduction, Part I, Section 4. See also Klein 2006.

juxtapose the standard visual examples of these principles with a chart of relevant repetitions listed according to the verse in which they would be perceived.

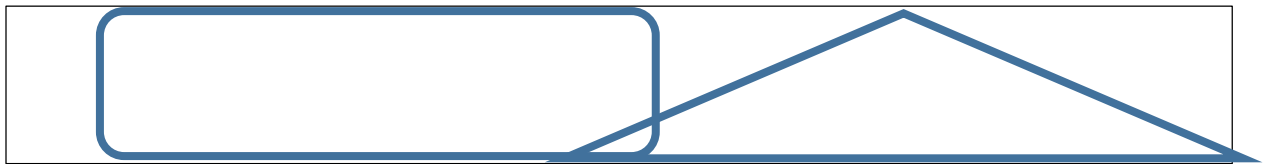
According to the Gestalt principles of good continuation and symmetry (the “inner coherence” of parts or “logical correctness of a part considered relative to the whole”), both drawings in Figure 1 will appear to contain two shapes—a single arc and another line/curve segment—rather than one: the abrupt changes in curvature discourage the latter grouping judgment.

Figure 1



According to the Gestalt principle of closure (in addition to good continuation), Figure 2 will appear to contain two self-contained units rather than a single unit.

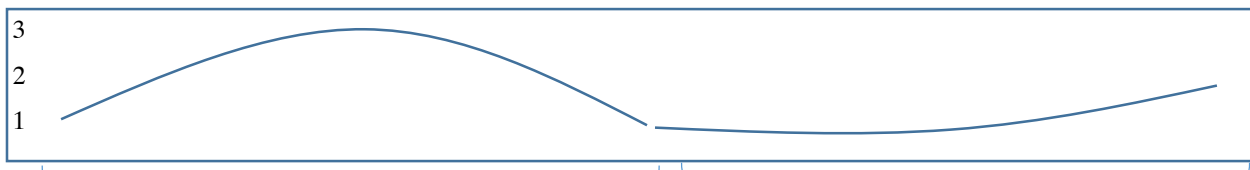
Figure 2



Below, in Figure 3, I chart out the density of rounds of concatenation in each verse. I list these rounds according to the verse in which they would be perceived and, from top to bottom of each column, in the order in which they would be perceived. Forms in parentheses are in preceding verses; the other forms are in the verse under which they are listed. The y-axis on the graph in Figure 3 is therefore the number of repetitions *heard* within a verse.

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6
	(netrī...)náyantī			
	(sudṛṣīkasaṃdṛk...)sudṛṣīkam			(asmé...)
)asmásu			
(ruruce...)aroci	(sudṛṣīkasaṃdṛk ...)adarśī	(-maghā...) maghoni	(rādhaḥ...)rādhaḥ	(dádhatī...)dhāḥ

Figure 3



⁷⁹ See Part I, Section 4.9 The reader may also consult Wertheimer 1938:32-4 and Lerdaahl and Jackendoff 1996:46-50.

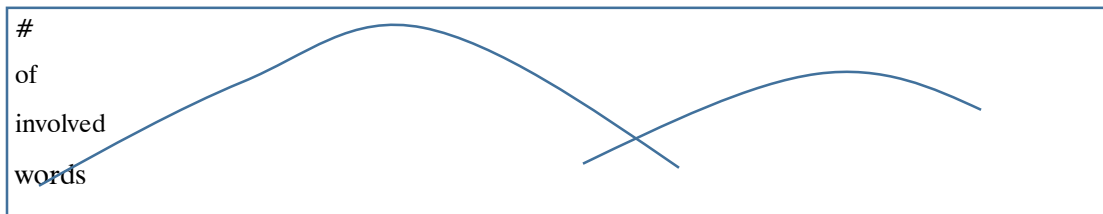
The resulting figure is not unlike the depictions of an arc and a line/curve segment in Figure 1; a noticeable change in curvature (i.e. the peak and dip from Verse 2-4 versus the gradual ascent from 5-6) creates the impression of *two* objects. The likely grouping judgment is that these rounds of concatenation amount to *two* series of repetitions.

Arranging these repetitions in the more static, cumulative representation (which may or may not be constructed and retained in the mind of the listener) provided at the beginning of this section (2.1), we arrive at the same conclusion. The first two graphs below illustrate the most likely groupings of two structuring devices (depicted as two curve segments); they differ according to whether *-maghā* and *maghoni* are taken to be the end of the first device or the beginning of the second. The third graph illustrates the kind of (erratic-looking) structuring device that would be produced if all of these repetitions were grouped as one.

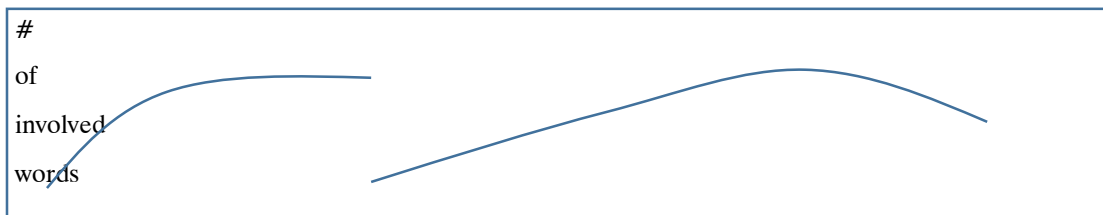
Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6
		náyantī			
	sudṛśīkasamḍṛk	sudṛśīkam		asmé	
	netrī	adarśi	rádhaḥ	dádhatī	asmásu
ruruce	aroci	-maghā	maghoni	rádhaḥ	dhāḥ

Figure 4

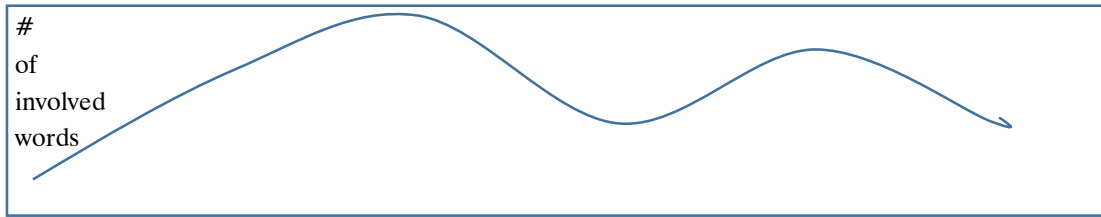
Likely interpretation A



Likely interpretation B



Less likely interpretation



Though we cannot on purely formal grounds determine whether the boundary between the two structuring devices is at the end of Verse 3 or the beginning of Verse 4, we can say that a transition would be perceived within that range of pādas.

Moving on, we examine another structuring device, which runs through Verses 1-3. In each case, the pound/number/ hashtag sign (#) indicates that a particular repeated form occurs at a metrical boundary.

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3
#víśvaṃ...prá-	#víśvaṃ prá-	víśvaṃ... prá-

This device is characterized by recency, and also by redundancy: two lexical elements, *víśva-* and *prá-* are repeated, each time occurring in the same syntactic node. The declinable one—*víśva-*—always appears in the same inflected form, *víśvaṃ*. All three times, *víśvaṃ* is at the beginning of its syntactic colon; so, in Klein’s inventory of Greco-Roman rhetorical terms, we are dealing with anaphora. Two out of three times, *víśva-* also appears in the same metrical position. The other lexical element, *prá-*, being a prefix or preverb, always appears in the same form as well; so this structuring device is characterized by exact (rather than paronomastic and polyptotic) repetition. The co-occurrence of different types of repetitions—same forms, same inflection, same order, similar metrical positions—would also support the idea that these three repetitions would be grouped together into a separate structuring device (recall the Gestalt principle of “similarity” behind redundancy’s role in grouping judgments).

The chart below details the different series of repetitions identified so far. This time they are grouped into columns according to type; superscripts indicate separate series of repetitions, i.e. “structuring devices” (according to the grouping judgments explained above). The double superscripts assigned to *-maghā* and *maghoni* reflect uncertainty over where to place the boundary between the two series of concatenations (as discussed above):

Verse	Concatenations	Verbatim repetition
1	ruruce ¹	#víśvam...pra- ³
2	sudṛśīkaśaṃḍṛk ¹ netrī ¹ aroci ¹	#víśvam pra- ³
3	náyantī ¹ sudṛśīkam ¹ adarśī ¹ -maghā ^{1/2}	víśvam... prá- ³
4	rádho ² maghoni ^{1/2}	
5	asmé ² dádhatī ² rádhaḥ ²	
6	asmáśu dhā ²	

Let's turn our attention to two even more redundant rounds of repetition found within this hymn, depicted in two columns below.

Verse	Concatenations	Verbatim repetition
2	váśo bíbhratī	
3		raśmíbhir víaktā#
4	bharā vāsūni*	
5		bhānúbhir ví bhāhi#
6		matíbhir váśiṣṭhāḥ#

* The stem *vásu-* is not etymologically linked to the preceding phonologically similar stem *vásas-*.

The redundancy of the round that connects Verses 2 and 4 is obvious: the two phrases that make up this lexical ring involve paronomastic repetition of the root \sqrt{bhr} , alongside one of two nearly homophonous stems: *vásas-*, “clothing,” or *vásu-*, “(a) good.” I say “nearly homophonous” particularly because the two vowels that we see in the roots within these stems— *-ā-* vs. *-a-* —alternate in derivational patterns (somewhat like English “singing” vs. “song”). One could easily imagine a folk-etymological relationship developing between the stem *vásu-* and the root \sqrt{vas} , ‘clothe,’ from which *vásas-* is derived, although I have not found any examples of the folk-etymological figures that typically provide ample

evidence of such a relationship.⁸⁰ Despite the fact that paronomasia and near-homophony are at play here, the resultant phrases— *vāso bībhratī* and *bharā vāsūni*— are isosyllabic (though not metrically identical); this constitutes another variety of redundancy. Note that because this one round includes both paronomasia and folk etymological wordplay, and because the position of each connected form within metrical and syntactic units is different, *vāso bībhratī* and *bharā vāsūni* could not be connected using only classical categories.

Turning to the rounds of repetition that run through Verses 3, 5 and 6: note that they involve homoioteleuton in one form and alliteration in the adjacent form. The homoioteleuton consists of the repetition of the instrumental plural marker, *-bhir* (*sandhi* variant) in the first form (*raśmībhir*, *bhānúbhir*, *matībhir*); the alliteration involves an initial *v-* in the second word form (*vīaktā*, *vī bhāhi*, *vāsīṣṭhāḥ*), and is complemented by something of a vocalic pattern (*vi_ā* and *va_i*). Already, then, we have a kind of redundancy, though these repetitions would perhaps be too subtle to “overwhelm the ear.” However, these adjacent forms manifest other types of redundancy, as well. In all three instances, the relevant two-word phrase occurs immediately before a metrical boundary, taking up the full span between the caesura and line end. Whether one believes that Rigvedic word order is determined chiefly by syntactic ties or by stylistic concerns,⁸¹ one would have difficulty arguing that these alignments are insignificant: neither rationale predicts that different parts of speech with different syntactic relations to the preceding word should by default take the same position in their respective clauses *and* metrical phrases; *vīaktā* is a participial adjective, *vī bhāhi* is an imperative and *vāsīṣṭhāḥ* is a nominal subject that does not syntactically govern the preceding instrumental. The shared syllable count and relative position (part of the overall “vertical resposion” of these phrases, in Klein’s terms⁸²) of each corresponding form within these phrases can be

⁸⁰ Folk etymological relationships between verbs and nominal stems often reveal themselves when the two are frequently included in the same syntactic node, or in interrelated clauses describing reciprocal relationships (see discussion of *aśva-* and *śvit* at the end of 2.1 *māh-* and *maghā-* below in Section 7.2). The few instances in which *vāsu-* “good” and *√vas*, “clothe”/ “be clad” are used in close proximity appear to be of neither variety: e.g. 4.5.15bc *vāsor ānikam dāma ā ruroca / rúsad vāsānaḥ sudṛśīkarūpaḥ* “The face of the **good one** shines here in the house / Gleamingly **clad**, with a form lovely to see” (of Agni).

⁸¹ The latter position is obviously the more tenable one: word order in the *Rig Veda* does not often conform to the default SOV pattern of Sanskrit.

⁸² Klein 2006: 198. Strictly speaking, “vertical resposion” refers to the identity of the grammatical structure, metrical position and syllable count of the instrumental forms that precede these nouns (*raśmībhir*, *bhānúbhir*, *matībhir*). But of course, this resposion also implies the shared metrical position of each immediately subsequent form.

regarded as a separate type of repetition. Taken together, homoioteleuton, alliteration, shared metrical position and isosyllabicity produce a rather strong phonological echo. In other words, these repetitions abound in redundancy; each type of echo redounds on the others, guaranteeing they'll be perceptible together.

Now comes the matter of grouping. Note that all of the rounds of repetition we have discussed have some features in common between them. Both consist of two stems or endings, one of which begins with *v-*; in each case, the other begins with the *bh-* followed by *-r-*. Furthermore, two of the forms in these structuring devices—*vāsūni* and *vāsīṣṭhāḥ*—are etymologically linked. A case can be made that these these rounds of repetition would be grouped into one structuring device. We will have occasion to make this case during a discussion of the forms of structuring devices in 7.75, below;⁸³ for right now, however, it suffices to rely on the higher degrees of similarity and redundancy found within each sub-group (the phrases that connect verses 2 and 4, and those that connect 3, 5 and 6) and provisionally regard each as a separate structuring device.

A final series of repetitions unites the stems *gó-* and *ásva-*, in the process making use of certain stems derived from the root \sqrt{svit} , stems that are phonologically close/quite possibly folk etymologically connected with *ásva-*. I reproduce it below.

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5
<i>aśvait</i>	<i>śvetām</i>	<i>gávyūtim</i>	<i>gómat</i>
<i>gávām</i>	<i>ásvam*</i>		<i>ásvāvat</i>

*The stem *ásva-* is phonologically close to the preceding verbal form *aśvait*, but is not etymologically related to it.

In verse 5, the relevant forms (*gómat* and *ásvavat*) are contiguous; in other rounds of repetition, they are more spread out. Recall that this matches the description of a “geometric ring.”⁸⁴ As a reminder, geometric rings are characterized by conventionality, i.e. by their particularly well-attested geometric “shape” or progression, in which vocabulary from one particular line is recapitulated over a larger portion of the hymn, usually in a particular, consistent order. This grouping judgment is therefore all but guaranteed as long as the individual repetitions are perceptible. In this geometric ring, each of the relevant rounds of repetition has at least one factor working for it. The first round of repetition, connecting the verbal form *aśvait* (from \sqrt{svit}) with *both* *ásvam* (from the stem *ásva-*, “horse,” which is nearly homophonic

⁸³ See Sections 7.6-7, and especially Section 7.8 for more on this.

⁸⁴ See Part I, Section 4.7

to the verbal stem and folk etymologically connected with $\sqrt{\acute{s}v\acute{i}t}$ ⁸⁵) and *śvetām* (from $\sqrt{\acute{s}v\acute{i}t}$), is characterized by recency and redundancy: these forms appear in contiguous verses (recency), and the latter two forms appear in the same noun phrase in pada 2b (redundancy). In the final recapitulation, both *gó-* and *áśva-* appear in the same syntactic node in Verse 5; so, the redundancy involves the presence of both lexical items in the same phrase. As we are about to see, the middle recapitulation, connecting two forms of *gó-*, is characterized by infrequency.

Note that this geometric ring, like the five other structuring devices discussed above, includes vastly different types of repetition (whether classified by the relationships of forms to one another or their position within pādas and cola).

2.2 Holy Mother of cows, leading lady of days: infrequency and the introduction of a structuring device.

The only round of repetition that remains to be defended is that which connects the form *gávām* in 2d with the form *gávyūtim* in 4b. The reader might fairly ask why this repetition of a single stem in non-consecutive verses is considered structurally significant, as opposed to, for instance, the repetition of $\sqrt{kṛ}$ in 1d and 4b (in the forms *ákar* and *kṛdhī*, respectively). In other words, how can we argue that *gávām*, as opposed to other seemingly minor lexical repetitions, would be retained in the audience’s inner ear long enough for the echo to register? Each metrical segment of the relevant verses is packed with other types of repetitions, so we certainly cannot appeal to “low density” as the factor that enables these repetitions to be perceived.

The answer lies in the striking clause that surrounds this form in pada 2d, a clause that is filled with all manner of “infrequency.”

7.77.2d *gávām* mātá netrī áhnām aroci

The mother of cows, of days the leaderess, shone.

Marked and stylized word order indexes this passage as important. The word order in pāda 2d is chiasmatic: in the first phrase, the genitive precedes the governing noun; in the second, it follows the noun (the above translation does the exact reverse).⁸⁶ The word order, then, already qualifies as a type of infrequency.

⁸⁵ As illustrated by other Rigvedic passages connecting *śveta-* with *aśva-*, including 1.116.6a and 8.26.19b.

⁸⁶ See Watkins (1995) Chapter 7 for examples of chiasmus deployed as an indexical figure—though in that section he discusses the Greek, rather than the Indic, tradition.

As much as the word order, the phraseological innovations in 2d make a lingering impression upon the ear. That cows can be used as a metaphor for Dawn’s light (among *many* other things) is obvious to all students of Vedic; nonetheless, this is one of *only three* hymns in the entire Vedic corpus in which anyone is called the “Mother of cows” (*gávām mātā*), specifically.⁸⁷ More important than the raw numbers, though, are the unusual semantics of this phrase. Rather than being called the *mother* of cows, Dawn or “the dawns” is/are often compared to a herd of cows (4.51.8d, 4.52.5b), or described as yoked with cows (5.80.3a). The cows can be described as driving Dawn (6.64.3c, similar to 7.75.6ab); or, Dawn herself can be called a cow (7.44.3b). At Dawn’s most possessive, she clings to the cows with a mere oblique enclitic pronoun as they drive out darkness and spread light of their own accord (7.79.2cd). In short, in the family books, Dawn is

⁸⁷ The other examples of this epithet are 4.52 and 5.45, neither of which represent independent examples of Dawn being called “Mother of Cows.” On 4.52, see two footnotes down. 5.45 is a hymn to the Viśvedevas (the “All Gods”), so the reference of the epithet in question is not self-evident, but must be inferred from context.

5.45.2ab ví súriyo amátim ná śríyaṃ sād
 á ūrvád **gávām mātā** jānatī gāt
Sūrya unfurled his glory, like a light-likeness;
*Aware (of the path), **the mother of cows** came out of (her) enclosure.*

Later on in the hymn, the lexical stems *mātár-* and *gó-* occur in a different configuration.

5.45.6ab étā dhíyaṃ kṛṇávāmā sakhāyo
 ápa yá **mātām** ṛṇutá vrajám **góḥ**
Come, comrades, we’ll perform the prayer
*With which **the mother** opened **the cow’s** stall. .*

Subsequent passages in contiguous stanzas of 5.45 clarify the reference. The first such passage shares not only the stem *gó-*, “cow,” with the prior passages, but also homophonous roots $\sqrt{ṛ}$, one of which is manifested in 6b above the form *ṛṇutá*, “opened,” another below in *ṛtām*, “the true-going (way),” and *ṛtásya*, “of true-going.” The name “Saramā” has replaced the nominative of *mātár-*, “mother” as the subject of the relevant clauses.

5.45.7cd **ṛtām** yatī **sarāmā gá** avindad
 vísvāni satyá āṅgirás cakāra
*Going **the true-going** (way), **Saramā** found the cows;*
The Aṅgiras performed all things exactly as they were.

5.45.8 víśve asyá viúṣi máhināyāḥ
 sám yád **góbhir** āṅgirasó návanta
 útsa āsām paramé sadhástha
ṛtásya pathá **sarāmā** vidad **gáḥ**
When, at the dawning of this splendid (lady), all
*Aṅgiras bellowed, together **with the cows--***
The source of these: inside the farthest place--
Through the path of true-going, Saramā** found **the cows.

Saramā is certainly the “mother” in this instance of the epithet. This passage is a reference to the myth of Indra and the (dawn-)cows in the cave, in which Saramā plays a more prominent role than the dawns. See section 5 for more on this myth.

not generally the caretaker and steward of her “cows,” who are more like her alter-egos, bovine escorts, or *team* (like oxen). Usually, Dawn does not *have* a cow; she *is* one.⁸⁸

“Mother of cows” is not the only relatively rare and idiosyncratic-sounding phrase in this line: “Leaderess of days” (*netrī áhnām*) is equally jarring. A *feminine* stem for the word “leader” (*netrī-* as opposed to the masculine *netár-*), occurs in only two hymns outside the corpus of Vasiṣṭha (1.92 and 4.56);⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Another way to see the strikingly idiosyncratic nature of the semantics here is to examine usages of a related Rigvedic collocation: that involving (*matár-*) or cow(s) (*gó-*) and a calf (*vatsá-*). Where this collocation is concerned, the mother-calf relationship must not connote any sort of hierarchy (at least, not one that positions the mother-cow over the calf); rather, it suggests a sort of single-minded, doting attention directed toward the god by the sacrificers. A demonstration of the more typical uses of this idiom will give an idea of the semantic twist we see in 7.77 (see below).

3.41.5 matáyaḥ somapám urúm
rihánti śávasas pátim
índraṃ **vatsám** ná **mátáraḥ**
Thoughts/prayers the wide Soma-drink
Lick, and (they lick) the lord of strength,
*Indra, like **mothers** a **calf**.*

9.12.2 abhí víprā anūṣata
gávo vatsám ná **mátáraḥ**
índraṃ sómasya pītáye
The wordsmiths bellowed
*Like **cow-mothers** to **calves**,*
To Indra, to drink of the soma.

See also 2.16.8, 6.45.25, 6.45.28, and 9.13.7, among a host of other comparable examples. It is notable that the mother(s)/cow(s) tend to be plural and refer to officiants or their gifts, and the calf tends to be in the singular, and refer to a divinity—often Indra (c.f. 4.18.10, and see section 4.6 for another collocation in 7.77 with similar distribution). In the one Rigvedic example that I can find where Dawn is the “cow” (= “mother”) in this collocation (1.64.17, where the sun is the calf), the collocation reemerges in the description of a pot of milk set upon the sacrificial fire (1.164.28-9); so, the exception proves the rule of ritual association.

⁸⁹ A more thorough examination of the distribution of “mother of cows” and “leaderess” would suggest that the number of unique applications of these terms to Dawn is even lower. Two of the three other family-book hymns featuring *gávām mātā* or *netrī*—4.52 and 4.56, respectively—are part of a set attributed to Vāmadeva (4.45-58). There are a number of signs that would suggest that 7.75-7 and 4.45-58 depend on each other (or, in a less likely scenario, on a third, subsequently lost, set of hymns). Tellingly, in 4.56, the same hymn to include the stem *netrī-*, an entire hemistich seems lifted almost verbatim from Vasiṣṭha’s hymn 7.75 (to be treated in the second half of this chapter).

4.56.2a devī devébhīr yajaté yájatrain
Pair of god(desse)s with the gods, venerated pair with the venerable

7.75.7b devī devébhīr yajatá yájatrainḥ.
Goddess with the gods, the venerated with the venerable

The only difference between these two sequences is that in 4.56, *devī-* and *yajatá-* are in the dual rather than the singular—a grammatically necessary modification given that the subject of the hymn is the divine pair, Sky-earth (*dyāvāpṛthivī*). These two lines are the only instances in the Rig Veda of these four lexemes being strung together in this formation (in fact, surprisingly, one cannot even find another occurrence of the first half of this line, *devī devébhīr*

in general, feminine agent nouns in *-trī* are uncommon. The full phrase *netrī áhnām*, “leader(ess) of days,” is nowhere else attested, and seems to be a variation on a locative formula, *ágre áhnām*, “at the first of days”/ *uśásām ágre* “at the first of dawns”: for *ágre áhnām*, see 5.1.4d and 5a, and 5.80.2d (an Agni hymn and an Uśas hymn, respectively) in the family books; for *uśásām ágre*, see 7.8.1d, 7.9.3c, and 7.68.9b (two Agni hymns and an Aśvin hymn). In most cases, this phrase describes the prominent position/early appearance of Dawn. The variants are likely metrically triggered. The *uśásām ágre* variant fills a variety of metrical slots, with *uśásām* either immediately preceding or contributing the first syllable of the trochaic cadence of triṣṭubh pādas, and *ágre* in various locations, often separated from *uśásām*. The *ágre áhnām* variant always makes up the trochaic cadence⁹⁰ itself. Formally speaking, then, the nominative epithet *netrī áhnām* (*uśásām*) involves (besides lexical substitution) a morphological change (from locative to nominative) that results in a syntactic promotion of the formula as a whole, from an adverbial phrase in the predicate to an attributive phrase modifying the subject. By transforming a formula which describes the (almost incidental) circumstances or position of Dawn’s appearance into an epithet referring to Dawn’s innate leadership qualities, the poet increases Dawn’s importance and agency.⁹¹

So, “Mother of cows” and “Leaderess of days” are idiosyncratic modifications, pointed departures with the same ultimate aim in mind: to recast Dawn as a higher-up in a ritual exchange or mythological exploit. The above discussion should be sufficient for arguing that, due to the “infrequency” of the

“goddess with the gods”). So, it is clear that these two poets’ corpora have a unique connection, and 7.77, 4.52, and 4.56 are not three independent examples of *gávām mātā* and *netrī*.

⁹⁰ The reader might note that the second vowel of *ágre áhnām* appears to be long, which is of course not typical for a trochaic cadence; but van Nooten and Holland (1994: v) among many others note that in the *Rig Veda*, the vast majority of cases of *-e* before a vowel must be scanned as short.

⁹¹ The full epithet, “leader of days” seems to have been coined for this particular occasion—*leading* one to wonder what he designed it to connote. I cannot definitively answer this question—but another passage that contains the same lexical roots (*ágra-* and *√nī*, “lead,”) in a different configuration suggests an additional connection to Saramā (see five footnotes up).

3.31.6 vidád yádī sarámā ruṅám ádrer
 máhi páthaḥ pūrviyāṃ sadhríak kaḥ
ágraṃ nayat supádi ákṣarāṅām
 áchā rávam prathamá jānatī gāt
If Saramā finds a breach in the stone,
She performs her prior great (trek) towards the path.
The swift-footed one led the foremost of imperishable syllables
Aware (of the way), she was the first to go toward the cry.

expressions that surround and include *gāvām*, the repetition of *gó-* in *gāvām... gávyūtīm* would likely be noticed.

2.3. Summary

The perceptible repetitions in *RV 7.77* can be grouped into six structuring devices (see next section for a comprehensive list). While many of the individual repetitions could be described using Klein's classical categories, single structuring devices, and in some case single rounds of repetition, incorporate many different types of repetition. In other words, while Klein's categories are not irrelevant to the repetitions that comprise structuring devices, structuring devices cannot be said to be nothing other than the same types or repetition occurring at a distance.

3. CHART OF STRUCTURING DEVICES IN 7.77

Immediately below, find a chart of all the structuring devices in 7.77. As in prior charts, the columns indicate different types of repetitions (concatenations, verbatim repetition, a geometric ring, and two devices made of redundant lexical, grammatical, and metrical repetitions). As above, different superscripts within the columns denote the different structuring devices to which the forms belong.

STRUCTURING DEVICE TYPE

<i>Verse</i>	Concatenations	Verbatim Repetition	Geometric Ring	Gramm./Lex./Metr. Repetition
1	ruruce¹	#víśvam...pra⁻³		
2	sudṣśikasamḍṛk¹ netrī¹ aroci¹	#víśvam pra⁻³	aśvait^{4*} gávām⁴	vāso bíbhratī⁵
3	náyanti¹ sudṣśikam¹ adarśi¹ -maghā^{1/2}	víśvam... prá⁻³	śvetám^{*4} áśvam⁴	raśmíbhir víaktā#⁶
4	rádho² maghoni^{1/2}		gávyūtim⁴	bharā vásūni**⁵
5	asmé² dádhatī² rádhaḥ²		gómat⁴ áśvāvat⁴	bhānúbhir ví bhāhi#⁶
6.	asmāsu dhā²			matíbhir vásiṣṭhāḥ#⁶

* The forms **aśvait** and **śvetám** are etymologically related to each other, but only folk etymologically related to the stem **áśva-** (with the syntactic relationship between **śvetám** and **áśvam** encouraging association here).

The stem **vāsas- is only phonologically related to the stem **vāsu-**.

4. FUNCTIONS OF STRUCTURING DEVICES IN 7.77

4.1 Indexical Function: *Discourse-unit demarcating*

The first, second and third structuring devices (as labeled above rather than in order of appearance) initially seem to serve a primarily indexical function, demarcating two separate discourses with different grammatical structure and thematic content. Based purely on these devices, we might suppose that the boundary is somewhere between the end of Verse 3 (where Structuring Device 3 terminates) and the end of Verse 4 (where, at least according to one possible interpretation, Structuring Device 1 terminates in *maghoni*).

<i>Verse</i>		
1	ruruce ¹	#vísvam...pra- ³
2	sudṣ́ikasamḍṛk ¹	
	netrī ¹	#vísvam pra- ³
	aroci ¹	
3	náyantī ¹	
	sudṣ́íkam ¹	
	adarśi ¹	
	-maghā ^{1/2}	vísvam... prá- ³
4	rádho ²	
	maghoni ^{1/2}	

Indeed, the content of the hymn's verses changes markedly within this range. Others have noted that introductory verses of Dawn hymns tend to be dominated by aorist indicative verbs,⁹² and that is what we see in Verse 1-3. These aorist forms are in the third person, describing actions of Dawn and the fire kindled as she appears. In this hymn, Verses 4-6 are dominated by imperative formations, primarily second singulars addressing Dawn herself; there are no aorist indicative forms. This distribution may remind us of Elizarenkova's ideas on the structure of Rigvedic praise hymns. According to her, the standard-issue praise hymn is "composed of two parts: explicative (descriptions) and appellative (addresses and invocations)."⁹³ She may have overstated her case, but her framework seems to apply in this instance.

⁹² See, for instance, Jamison 2007:73-74.

⁹³ Elizarenkova 1995:9.

Thus far, we seem to be leaning towards an initial discourse unit consisting of Verses 1-3 and a second discourse unit consisting of Verses 4-6. There are a few wrinkles around the edges of the dividing line, however. For one thing, the complementary concatenating Structuring Devices 1 and 2 – which we take to roughly demarcate the first and second discourse units—can be interpreted to crisscross at the end of Stanza 4.⁹⁴

7.77.4 ántivāmā dūrē amítram ucha
 urvīm gávyūtim ábhayaṃ kṛdhī naḥ
 yāvāya dvéṣa á bharā vāsūni
 codāya **rádho**² grṇatē **maghoni**^{1/2}
 With valuable things nearby, dawn the foe into the distance;
 Create for us broad cow-pastureland, fearlessness.
 Keep hatred away; bear/bring (your) wares.
 *Impel **largesse** for the singer, **you bounteous one**.*

Just where, then, do we place the discourse boundary—and does it even make sense in this case to think of a discrete boundary?

Discourses need not be defined and distinguished solely by a set of contrastive and mutually exclusive features; we might also think of certain transitions that change a discourse from the inside out until it becomes another.

4.2 Structuring Device 1: plying and implying through honorific epithets

Some such transitions are indeed articulated through the relevant word forms in the first and third structuring devices, though they initially seem more significant from a morphological and syntactic point of view than a rhetorical one. Let’s look at a case in point from within the concatenation that helps bind together Verses 1-3 (the first structuring device, according to the numbering above). The roots $\sqrt{nī}$ and $\sqrt{dṛś}$ appear in both Verses 2 and 3. The first two occurrences of $\sqrt{dṛś}$ are within the same compound (which is quite rare, at least in Vedic Sanskrit⁹⁵), describing Dawn’s beauty. The first occurrence of $\sqrt{nī}$, *netrī*, has been discussed at length above; here I reproduce the passage and translation.

⁹⁴ Section 2.1 discusses the multiple grouping possibilities for *-maghā* and *maghoni*.

⁹⁵ In fact, in Vedic Sanskrit it is quite rare for there to be more than two members of any type in a compound formation (this one has three); see Whitney’s *Sanskrit Grammar*, §1246.a.

7.77.2cd hiraṇyavarṇā **sudṛśīkasamḍṛg**
 gāvām mātā **netrī** áhnām aroci
Golden in color, a sight lovely to see,
Mother of cows, of days the leader(ess), she shone.

In Verse 3, the same roots reappear in two consecutive pādas.

7.77.3bc śvetāṃ **náyantī sudṛśīkam** áśvam
 uṣá **adarśi** raśmíbhir víaktā
Leading the bright horse lovely to see,
Dawn was just seen, adorned with rays.

The root √*dṛś* again appears twice, this time in two separate word forms, both of which describe Dawn’s good looks.

Essentially, both transitions amount to expressions of the “implied action[s]” nominalized in the forms *netrī*, “leaderess,” and, *sudṛśīkasamḍṛk*, “a sight lovely to see”—standard Rigvedic practice, according to the work of Elizarenkova (cited immediately above). Described in terms of the grammatical elements involved, these transitions link two attributive nominative epithets to forms involved in the predicate: namely, verb phrases and participial phrases expressing ongoing action.

To help us understand the function of these transitions, it might be useful to have a few more comparanda. Another similar transition that (debatably) occurs in Structuring Device 1 is particularly worthy of discussion. This transition is contained within the only round of repetition that could be grouped with *either* Structuring Device 1 *or* Structuring Device 2, terminating in the verse which heralds the arrival of the second discourse unit.

7.77.3c uṣá adarśi raśmíbhir víaktā
 7.77.3d citrá**maghā**¹ víśvam ánu prábhūtā
Dawn was just seen, adorned with rays,
Possessing brilliant bounties, projecting through toward all (the world).

7.77.4d codáya **rádho**² grṇaté **maghoni**¹
Impel largesse for the singer, you bounteous one.

Like the repetitions discussed above, this one involves a transition away from a nominative epithet; this time, however, the transition is toward a vocative (invocation). The common ground between these two types of transition consists of at least three traits: 1) in each round of repetition, the quality or action is attributed or ascribed to *Dawn*; 2) in the first half of each round, Dawn’s general tendencies or propensities are described via an epithet; 3) in the second half, a verbal form or a vocative describes or demands Dawn

's presence or participation *on this specific occasion*. “Demand” is definitely the operative word in 4d: rather than simply expressing the implied action in a preceding nominalization, this invocation —*codáya rádhah...maghoni* “impel largesse...you bounteous one” — turns a ritual praise into an obligation. The preceding flattery-by-epithet (*citrámaghā*) has now been leveraged to pressure Dawn to participate in a particular ritual exchange; with great compliments come great responsibilities.

We might say that the structuring devices that run through the first discourse unit, as well as the discourse unit itself, move(s) from praises of Dawn’s general attributes and descriptions of her typical roles and *appearance* to the here-and-now of today’s Dawn *appearing* (and the ensuing sacrifice). From that perspective, it makes sense that aorist indicatives would be a common tense throughout this unit: aorist indicatives generally refer to “what has just taken place,”⁹⁶ and the moment of Dawn’s manifestation is definitely a fitting transition point between these two *topoi*. Rather than fixing a discourse boundary at a particular pāda, we might say that by the end of the first structuring device, this transition is complete, and a new topic has begun. In the final analysis, then, we must conclude that Structuring Device 1 not only serves an indexical function, but also highlights some manifestations of the subtle yet requisite transitions that characterize this discourse unit in general.

All that said, none of these transitions rises to the level of heteroglossia or metalinguistic repair in the sense in which I used the terms in the methodological introduction.⁹⁷ The most we can say in this regard is that a new nominal formation (*netrī*) is “repaired” by a less infrequent participial stem, and an odd redundant hapax of an epithet that was used to describe Dawn herself (*sudṛśīkasamḍṛk*) has been split in half into the adjective *sudṛśīka-*, which in Verse 3 describes the horse Dawn *is leading* down, and the third person singular aorist *adarsī*, which describes Dawn as “just (now) seen.” The form *adarsī* is used elsewhere to that end (c.f. 7.81, 4.52; in other hymns, the kindling of Agni is described using this form), so this too qualifies as a rather trivial form of linguistic repair. To the extent that the odd-sounding *sudṛśīkasamḍṛk* created suspense, this sequence *may* have served to modulate the listener’s attention toward the intervening pādas. As we will see, other structuring devices more directly highlight changes in the configurations of metaphorical descriptions or ritual appeals, coupling formal transitions with stark

⁹⁶ From Whitney. For a more in-depth discussion of meanings of the Sanskrit aorist, see Whitney’s *Sanskrit Grammar*, §928-30, or any Sanskrit grammar, for that matter.

⁹⁷ See Part I, Sections 6.8-6.11 and 6.13.

semantic shifts. Crucially, these other semantic shifts will more clearly indicate a heteroglossic change in focus toward the perspectives and needs of *human* (hence more humble and down-to-earth) social groups.

4.3 Structuring Device 2: polyptoton and pronominal hedging

The second structuring device—connecting Verses 3-4, and demarcating the second discourse unit— contains a formal transition of some import. It involves the first person plural pronominal stem, one of the stems tying together the fifth and sixth verses.

- 7.77.5a **asmé** śreṣṭhebhīr bhānúbhīr ví bhāhi
*Alight **on us**/(Light up **for us**) with your best, brightest lights;*
- 7.77.6c **sāsmāsu** dhā rayīm ṛṣvām bṛhāntam
*(As) that one, place **in/among us** wealth high and lofty .*

The form *asmé* is technically ambiguous: it is used as an alternate form for *both* the dative and the locative case, whose distinct forms are *asmábhyam* and *asmāsu*, respectively. The indeterminacy of *asmé* is well rendered by Wendy Doniger’s translation of its three occurrences in *RV* 6.70. I have modified the translation somewhat, but preserved her interpretation of *asmé* in each instance:

- 6.70.2cd rājantī asyā bhūvanasya rodasī
asmé rétaḥ siñcataṃ yān mánurhitam
*You two world-halves, rulers over this universe,
 Pour out **on us** that seed that was the base for mankind.*
- 6.70.5cd dádhāne yajñāṃ dráviṇaṃ ca **devátā**
 máhi śrávo vājam **asmé** suvīriyam
*(You two) bestowing sacrifice and wealth **among the gods**
 Great fame, the victory prize, and virility **to us**.*
- 6.70.6cd saṃrarāṇé ródasī víśvāsambhuvā
 sanīm vājam rayīm **asmé** sám invatām
*Let the two world halves, working together, giving benefits to all,
 Together thrust **toward us** gain, and the victory prize, and wealth.*

If one objects that the first instance of *asmé*, translated as “on us” (locative), could also be interpreted as “for us,” it might be worth considering that the second, translated as “to us,” could also be translated as “among us,” especially since the adverb *devátā* in the prior phrase (“among the gods”) can have a locative meaning. Whether we follow Doniger or not, it seems that a translation of all three passages would have to reflect a sharpening in the case semantics of *asmé* toward the locative.

In the case (no pun intended) of Vasiṣṭha's Dawn hymn, the question of the identity of this ambiguous form is further highlighted by the appearance of that unambiguous locative *asmásu* in the final verse, especially since both are involved in the same structuring device. This locative form occurs only 21 times in 18 hymns within the entire *Rig Veda* (one tenth of the frequency of *asmé*); we can safely assume that it is used here toward some particular end. But what is that end? Are we to take these two forms as parallel or contrastive? That there is no clear solution is to the poet's rhetorical advantage: in this way, he can make an appeal to Dawn *on behalf of* himself, his patron, and his fellow officiants (dative semantics) while still seeming to request simply that Dawn continue her daily rounds and make an appearance *at* the ritual grounds (locative semantics).

One may or may not consider this a case of poetic repair, depending on whether one privileges the criterion of token frequency or semantic clarity. That said, with things yet to come in mind, it is worth pointing out that no matter what interpretation of *asmé* we choose, the locative *asmásu* ("among us") definitely situates Dawn more firmly on the ritual grounds; in that respect, then, the transition is not only decisive, but complements the transitions we observed between Dawn's (general) appearance and Dawn (presently) appearing at the time of the ritual.

4.4 Metalinguistic functions: antanaclasis, poetic repair and reciprocity

Whereas Structuring Devices 1-3 pervade *either* the discourse unit detailing Dawn's manifestation on the horizon *or* the discourse unit that focuses on the ritual officiants' activities and desires, the remaining devices cut across (approximate) discourse boundaries. These structuring devices pair an intricate rhetorical strategy with what would otherwise be rather coarsely self-serving transitions from standard descriptions of Dawn's attributes to requests for particular gifts. The transitions are clearly heteroglossic in nature: words used to praise a literal "higher-up" are redeployed in a down-to-earth discourse centered on ritual officiants, activity and remuneration. Though Dawn might appear to be generally more obliging than the other gods (by which I mean that Dawn seems to serve all equally, and that, regardless of the quality of today's sacrifice, the sun will come out tomorrow⁹⁸), the gap between the ritual grounds and the sky-born goddess is a wide one; it behooves the poet to tread cautiously on a tightrope woven from words.

⁹⁸ Of course, since the maintenance of cosmological order depends in part on sacrifice, and since, as Section 5 of this chapter points out, it is to the advantage of officiants to frame the "kindling" of Dawn as if it were contingent upon their agency, this is not the standard Vedic view of things.

In large part this rhetorical tightrope consists of links between concrete requests and earlier metaphorical descriptions of Dawn’s light, so that it is rarely entirely clear how much the poet assumes or demands. Where the transition to talk of ritual remuneration is clearest, Vasiṣṭha uses poetic repair, i.e. a centripetal move towards Rigvedic phraseological norms, to compensate for his centrifugal shift away from a language of obeisance.

4.5 From presence to presents: antanaclasis and folk etymology in the fourth ring

The fourth ring, labeled above as a “geometric ring,” is likely anchored in Verse 5, where we find a juxtaposition of the relevant stems: *gó-* “cow” and *ásva-* “horse.”

7.77.5c-d *dádhatī...gómāḍ áśvāvad ráthavac ca rádhaḥ*

Bestowing (for us)...largesse in cattle, horses and chariots.

As we will soon see, this is the culmination of a semantic development that turns *parts* of Uṣas in to things she can *part with*: this particular structuring device unites metaphorical descriptions of Dawn’s appearance with descriptions of Dawn’s (more detachable) attendants, and finally terminates in a (live)stock phrase describing counter-gifts from a Dawn well honored.

Let’s back up to the initial iterations of these repeated stems (and their phonological doubles). The first relevant form is an aorist verb in pāda 2b, describing an action/color associated with Uṣas herself: *ásvait* “[She] (has) just turned white,” from the root *√śvit*. The phonological similarity of *ásva-* “horse” to *ásvait* is probably clear enough; as I will explain below, the next iteration removes any doubts about whether the poet intended his audience to associate these two lexical items. Dawn’s coloring is certainly *part* of her; it is an inalienable trait.

Recall that the first iteration of *gó-* is also in Verse 2 (pāda 2d); there it is half of the epithet describing her relationship to her beaming bovine attendants (*gávām mātā* “Mother of cows,” discussed in more detail above). The *relationship* itself is presumably another inalienable trait: even if the cows don’t come home, they will still have their doting mother Dawn.

The second iteration of this structuring device already contains a pointed repackaging of Dawn’s attributes. In Verse 3, instead of directly describing Dawn’s light, the *√śvit* root is rearticulated as an adjective syntactically modifying *ásva-*, horse:

7.77.3b-c *śvetām náyantī sudṛśīkam áśvam*

uṣá adarśi raśmībhir víaktā

*Leading a **white horse** lovely to see,*

Dawn has just been seen, adorned with rays.

This syntactic association of the root behind *aśvait* with the stem *áśva-* cements the impression that the prior verbal form is indeed a part of the structuring device, functioning as a kind of folk-etymological double.

Clearly, this is still a metaphorical description of Dawn’s light—but now that the light is associated with a distinct entity (and with detachable adornments), the poet’s and patron’s prospects for remuneration suddenly look brighter. Presumably, Dawn has horses and jewelry to spare; perhaps she will be willing to pass one or two on as a perk to her praisers. In addition, recall that the participle *náyantī*, “leading,” in 3b, comes from the same root as *netrī*, “leader,” found above in the epithet, “leader of days.” This shared lexical frame forms part of the basis of an implied metalinguistic equation between “days” and “horse,” the latter term being highlighted by this structuring device. (The implied metalinguistic equation is further solidified by comparable semantics and similar syntactic relations: both “days” and “horse”—i.e., *áśva-*—are characterized generally or folk-etymologically by a light appearance; and both share the thematic role of “object,” encoded either into an objective genitive or the accusative case governed by a stem derived from $\sqrt{nī}$, “lead.”) This metalinguistic equation ensures the possibility of a metaphorical reading of this passage, even if we strongly suspect that the horses Vasiṣṭha has in mind are less about the passage of time and more about the “temporal” world.

The second iteration of *gó-* moves the poet closer to his ultimate objective, since it is featured in one of the first two direct requests that the poet makes of Dawn.

7.77.4ab *ántivāmā dūrē amítam ucha*

urvīm gávyūtim ábhayaṃ kṛdhī naḥ

With valuable things nearby, dawn the foe into the distance;

*Create for us broad **cow-pastureland**, fearlessness.*

Given that the fiend is being driven away by *shining* or *dawning* (the form *ucha* is imperative from the root \sqrt{vas} , “shine,” which is etymologically related to Dawn’s name, Uśás, and in some forms bears a significant phonological similarity as well), these could amount to little more than requests for Dawn to turn night into day; certainly, various creatures prowl the pastureland more aggressively under cover of darkness. Dawn would naturally oblige requests such as these—as opposed to later demands for actual livestock (which, unlike their metaphorical counterparts, rarely fall from the sky). Nonetheless, there is a definite transition between the use of *gó-* here and that in Verse 2. Grammatically speaking, we’ve already moved into the “

appellative” portion of the hymn, or the part dominated what Jakobson would call the conative function;⁹⁹ in keeping with this move, *gó-* is part of a description of a desired condition *on the ground* rather than an observed state of the *sky-born* god.

The final round of repetition has already been quoted—but I suppose it would not hurt to end this discussion of a structuring device with a little ring composition. Here is the relevant passage, this time in context.

7.77.5 asmé śréṣṭhebhīr bhānúbhīr ví bhāhi
 úṣo devī pratirāntī na áyuḥ
 íṣaṃ ca no dádhatī víśvavāre
gómāḍ áśvāvāḍ ráthavac ca rádhaḥ
Light up for us (alight up on us) with your best, brightest lights,
Goddess Dawn, lengthening our lifetime,
Bestower of all valuables, bestowing for us both refreshment
*And largesse **in cows, horses, and chariots.***

Thus, after changing *parts of* dawn into things she can *part with*, the poet feels free to imagine that the ritual participants will receive a piece of her riches. Antanaclastic usages of *gó-* and *áśva-* (first in metaphorical, then in literal senses) have smoothed over the tradition from ritual praise to pointed appeal.

At least, that is one interpretation; it seems key to the poet’s overall strategy that another is also possible. In our discussion of the structuring device that unites Verses 4-6 into a discourse unit, we already mentioned that the technically ambiguous form *asmé*, connected structurally with the locative *asmásu*, provides an avenue for the poet to simultaneously request certain benefits *for* himself and his fellow ritual participants (dative semantics) while still appearing only to ask her to manifest *among* these participants (locative semantics). It goes without saying—much less begging—that Dawn will pay poet, patron, and other participants a visit each morning—so, keeping the door open to a locative interpretation eliminates any hint of presumptuousness. A similar tactic is being used here. The description of the gift is connected to descriptions of Dawn’s attributes: the overlap in vocabulary keeps the door open to the interpretation that this hoped-for gift, “(rich) in cattle” (*gómāḍ-*) and “(rich) in horses” (*áśvāvāḍ-*) as it is, is really nothing other than Dawn’s beaming sheen. We might suppose that the third adjective, “rich in chariots” (*ráthavāḍ-*), would make it clear that the poet had a slightly more worldly sort of remuneration in mind—

⁹⁹ On Elizarenkova’s categories, see the footnote to section 4.1 above; on Jakobson’s “conative function,” See Part I, Section 6.3.

until we remember that Dawn can be described as arriving by chariot (as we will see in 7.75, analyzed in the second half of Part II). It is probably not an accident that the only actual imperative form in this verse requests that Dawn “alight on/light up for” the ritual officiants, and that the more concrete requests are couched in participial phrases.

4.6 From bearing wear to bearing wares: the fifth device, folk etymology, and metalinguistic repair

Most of Vasiṣṭha’s structuring devices seem poised at a semantic fulcrum, balancing meanings and maintaining plausible deniability, as if to carefully gauge the goodwill of the goddess (not to mention that of the patron, who would likely have to pay the poet an advance on any boons that Dawn would bear his way). The fifth structuring device (as numbered in Section 3) tips this balance toward a worldly interpretation. This device unites two phrases in Verses 2 and 5, phrases which share one verbal root and feature nearly homophonous objects. Here are the phrases in (by now, familiar) context.

7.77.2b rúśad **váso bíbhratī** śukráṃ aśvait

7.77.2c hiraṇyavarṇā sudṛśíkasaṃdṛg

7.77.2d gāvām mātā netrī áhnām aroci

***Bearing/bringing** her luminous, gleaming **wear**, she has just brightened*

Golden in color, a sight lovely to see,

Mother of cows, of Days the leaderess, she has just shone.

7.77.4a ántivāmā dūrē amítam ucha

7.77.4b urvīm gávyūtim ábhayaṃ kṛdhī naḥ

7.77.4c yāvāya dvéṣa á **bharā vásūni**

With valuable things nearby, dawn the foe into the distance.

Create for us broad cow-pastureland, fearlessness.

*Keep hatred away; **bring/bear** (your) **wares**.*

The first phrase, of course, belongs to the explicative (descriptive) section of the hymn; the second phrase belongs to the appellative one (with a second singular imperative verbal form).

Here we undoubtedly have an instance of poetic repair—one which uses the weight of phraseological convention to tip the scales in favor of a generous reward. The stem *vásas-*, “wear,” is an extremely rare form within the *Rig Veda*: it occurs a total of 12 times in the entire corpus, with 8 of those times being in the relatively late first and tenth maṇḍalas. The stem *vásas-* does not occur again within the hymns attributed to Vasiṣṭha; the root from which it is derived—*√vas*, to clothe—occurs only twice within

this putative corpus, in 7.37.6a and 7.97.6d (as opposed to over 20 instances of $\sqrt{bhṛ}$ in the same range of hymns). In other words, it is impossible to suppose that the choice of the stem $vāsas-$ was not deliberate.

The stem $vāsu-$ “good” or (as translated here) “ware,” on the other hand, appears extremely frequently in the *Rig Veda*; there are 66 attestations of $vāsūni$, including six in Vasiṣṭha’s corpus alone (other forms of $vāsu-$ are also amply attested). The collocation $\sqrt{bhṛ} + vāsu-$ is also fairly well-attested, with examples including, but not limited to, the following verses, the last of which is attributed to another member of Vasiṣṭha’s clan.

2.30.10c jiyóḡ abhūvann ánu dhūpitāso

2.30.10d hatvī téṣāṃ á **bharā** no **vāsūni**

They’ve been (proudly) puffed up for long enough;

*Having killed (them), **bring us their goods/wares.***

3.51.5ab pūrvīr asya niṣṣídho mártiyeṣu

purū **vāsūni** pṛthivī **bibharti**

Many offerings are his (Indra’s) among men;

*The earth **brings** (him) many **goods/wares.***

7.25.2cd āré tám śáṃsaṃ kṛṇuhi ninitśór

á no **bhara sambháraṇaṃ vāsūnām**

Make the praise-song of the carping one far away,

Bring us a brought-together (heap) of goods/wares.

It’s worth noting that a disproportionate number of instances of this collocation, including the three above examples, seem to be describing or addressed to Indra specifically, as opposed to Dawn (or other flickering or sky-born divinities). Nonetheless, the context of the first and third examples bears certain similarities with Verse 4 of 7.77: Indra is exhorted to smite the enemies and to make the songs of the carping one *far*; Dawn is exhorted to “dawn the enemy into the distance,” and to keep hatred away.¹⁰⁰ When viewed in terms of semantics as well as frequency, then, $\sqrt{bhṛ} + vāsu-$ in 7.77.4c is a “repair” of $\sqrt{bhṛ} + vāsas-$ in 7.77.2b even if its usage here does evoke the roles of a more storied subject of mythology and object of sacrifice

¹⁰⁰ Also, Dawn would be just as easily associated with the bringing of wares because *dakṣiṇās* or “priestly gifts” were given to priests and poets at the early morning rites. See Jamison and Brereton 2014: 46.

such as Indra.¹⁰¹ On the one hand, the poet deployed an unprecedented¹⁰² phrase to describe Dawn’s appearance and attributes; on the other hand, he used an attested collocation to express a desire for Dawn’s gifts; and these two phrases are nearly homophonous and structurally equivalent. The listener could not help but connect these two phrases, perceiving them as a more or less identical syntagm save for the substitution of *vásu-* for *vásas-*. Such a perception amounts to a focused implicit comparison in which Dawn *sounds* more naturally inclined to bring wares than to bear wear. (To really translate the effect in English, we might have to pit two somewhat off-beat phrases against two semi-common idioms: “Bearing her wear, bringing her sheen” vs. “Bear your gifts; bring your wares.”) This is a clear-cut case of metalinguistic repair.

Above, alluding to the function of the present poetic repair, I referred to the way it “tips” the scales or the balance toward a “worldly interpretation” or a “generous reward.” By this I meant that the second half of Structuring Device 5 does not invite a metaphorical interpretation as easily as the other instances of antanaclasis, because (as mentioned toward the end of Section 2.1) this device links two stems that are (nearly homophonous yet) *not* folk-etymologically linked. Instead, it highlights a decisive *transition* between a description of Dawn’s wear and a request for her wares. This is a distinctly centrifugal shift away

¹⁰¹ This raises another issue: how one can identify possible differences between effectively evocative idiosyncratic diction on the one hand and malapropisms on the other? Can the distinction be made simply through examining phraseological trends as opposed to imposing our own normative assumptions upon the text? (Of course, if an analytical method should ever lead us to believe that malapropisms characterize even a portion of a liturgical text preserved with such care, it would likely be an indictment of the method rather than the text.) The dialogue hymns that are the subject of the final chapter of this dissertation will compel us to examine this issue in great detail, since one party seems to lose a round of verbal repartee seems by making use of malapropisms (as defined below).

For now, let us note that one difference between an innovative, artful, (likely) resonant deviation and a problematic malapropism might be that an artful deviation mobilizes portions of Rigvedic phraseology to new ends. In other words, the relevant “deviant” phrases, while rarely used in conjunction with a particular divine figure, might be typically/frequently used to elaborate certain themes or express certain traits that are pertinent to that figure. Other deviant phrases might involve words or expressions that are not frequent, but that nonetheless articulate familiar thoughts. In contrast, a malapropism should be both phraseologically and semantically contradictory to relevant usage patterns in the *Rig Veda*. More succinctly, deviant art bends towards particular (unorthodox but) recognizably Rigvedic characterizations as much as it bends away from other norms; malapropisms, on the other hand, are warped almost beyond recognition. (As a short illustration, consider the difference between two deviations from the idiom, “Get off your soap box”: a) “Get off your soap opera” (artfully deviant phrase); b) “Get off your soap bar” (malapropism).

Footnotes to Section 2.2 provide examples of the phraseology that other idiosyncratic phrases in this hymn (such as “Mother of cows” and “Leader of Days”) bend toward; suffice it to say that they similarly aggrandize Dawn’s roles and suggest that Dawn is as suitable an object of sacrifice as Indra.

¹⁰² Unprecedented within Rigvedic phraseology, at least. In the later language, ‘wear’ is an attested meaning of \sqrt{bhr} (e.g. to ‘wear a beard.’). So it is possible that the poet has introduced an idiom from a colloquial register; nonetheless, in this context the phrase would be unusual and striking.

from themes tailor-made for Dawn and her celestial companions, and toward a discourse that serves the ritual officiants themselves. That the poet reverts to phraseological norms at the very same time as he turns his gaze away from the skies should come as no surprise: this centripetal correction helps distract from the otherwise startling departure that he made.

4.7 Cultivated by prayers, dawn brings wares: more metalinguistic repair; grammatical rings and reciprocity

R. V. 3.51.5ab, the middle example of $\sqrt{bhṛ}$ + *vásu-* quoted above, introduced an as-of-yet unanswered question. Unlike the other two examples, which suggest that the gifts or wares a god bears are either booty wrenched from the clutches of a vanquished enemy or a lesser poet’s loss, 3.51 speaks of the tributes/wares that mortals—and the earth in general—must bear to Indra. We might suppose that whether this collocation surfaces as a description of tribute *to* the gods or gifts *from* them, it is understood to be part of a reciprocal exchange between divine and humble, earth-bound entities. It is one thing to smooth over the transition between praising Dawn to the skies and discussing the terms of ritual exchange, and quite another to successfully dictate those terms to Dawn; accordingly, we might ask ourselves what makes Vasiṣṭha so sure he has the *goods* that would compel Dawn to deliver. Several formal features of the final structuring device (labeled “6” in the chart in Section 3) collectively suggest an answer.

The first two rounds of this device have already been quoted in other contexts above; repeating them for convenience, we have the following.

7.77.3bc śvetāṃ náyantī sudṛśīkam áśvam
 uṣā adarśi **raśmībhir víaktā**
Leading the bright horse lovely to see,
*Dawn has just been seen, **adorned with rays.***

7.77.5ab asmé śréṣṭhebhīr **bhānúbhir ví bhāhi**
 úṣo devi pratirántī na áyuḥ
*Alight on us (/Light up for us) **with your best, brightest lights,***
Goddess Dawn, lengthening our lifetime

Recall that the structural features which characterize the ring as a whole are the instrumental plural marker *-bhir* (*-bhiḥ*), an initial *v-* in the immediately subsequent word, and the isosyllabicity and shared metrical position of each word in the two-word sequence (“vertical resposion” in Klein’s terms). The first two rounds also feature an additional element of lexical repetition: in each case, the word that begins with *v-* is the preverb/prefix *ví-*; in each case, the prefix precedes a disyllabic form.

At first glance, speaking strictly in terms of structure, the third round seems to loosen ends rather than tie them.

7.77.6ab yāṃ tvā divo duhitar vardhāyanti
úṣaḥ sujāte **matībhīr vasiṣṭhāḥ**
*Daughter of Heaven, you who are raised*¹⁰³
By the Vasiṣṭhas with prayers, well-born Dawn

The preverb *vī-* is gone, and the syntax of the final phrase is different (the instrumental “with prayers”) is not directly governed by “Vasiṣṭhas.”

However, looking closer, we should notice at least two oddities of the intermediate phrase in 7.77.5a, *bhānúbhīr ví bhāhi*, both of which seem to be resolved or “repaired” in 7.77.6b. First off, *bhānúbhīḥ* does not sound anywhere near as natural as the other two instrumental plurals. Whereas the noun *raśmi-* is much more frequently used in the plural than it is in the singular (60 times vs. 12 times), and the instrumental plural *raśmībhir*, featured in 7.77.3c, is particularly common (occurs 36 times, as opposed to a single instance of the instrumental singular), *bhānú-* appears most frequently in the *singular* (49 times as opposed to 15 plural forms), and appears in the instrumental singular over three times more often than it does in the instrumental plural (24 times vs. 7 times). So, the second instrumental plural that is included in the grammatical ring sounds more than a bit stranger than the first. We might compare the distribution of *bhānú-* with that of “light(s)” (as both a count noun and a mass noun): the sun, the moon, a lamp, and even *lights* themselves, shine with their *light* (singular) as opposed to their *lights*. The situation of *raśmi-* is more like that of “ray(s).” So, if we wanted to translate these two phrases in a way to reflect their relationships to linguistic convention, we might say that 3c sounds a bit like “adorned with (her) rays” whereas 5a sounds like “light up with (your) lights!”

The additional phraseological oddity in the intermediate round of this structuring device (i.e. in 7.77. 5a) is the form *śréṣṭhebhīḥ*. (Above, this form is translated as, “(with) best, brightest” in keeping with its typical gloss, “best,” but also to reflect its quite relevant connection to *śrī-*, “beauty, splendor, radiance, brightness.”¹⁰⁴) The superlative adjective *śréṣṭha-*, of which *śréṣṭhebhīḥ* is an inflected form, is almost

¹⁰³ (More precisely, the lines read, “you whom the Vasiṣṭhas raise”; the voice of the verb was changed to allow a line-by-line translation.)

¹⁰⁴ The last translation is the most questionable one, since *śrī-*, while most frequently referring to a pleasing visual quality (a translation of “beauty” works in many places), is not really a “light” word at its core. Still, I’ve gone with “brightness,” because “best and brightest” has a distribution not unlike that of *śréṣṭha-*.

exclusively used in the singular and in direct cases (nominative or accusative). So, more typical uses would look like the two below.

2.33.3ab **śréṣṭho** jātāsya rudara śriyāsi
 tavāstamas tavāsām vajrabāho
*You are the **best and brightest** of anyone born in brightness, Rudra,
 The most powerful of the powerful, o you with the mace in your arms.*

5.62.1cd dāśa śatā sahā tasthus tād ékaṃ
 devānām **śréṣṭham** vāpuṣām apaśyam
*Ten times a hundred they stood together; but that One
 Best and brightest thing of the lovely forms of the gods I saw.*

(The “best brightest thing” turns out to be the “greatness” —*mahitvām*—of MitrāVaruṇā)

While we cannot quite replicate the distribution of this adjective with an English equivalent, the fact that “best and brightest” is more conventionally used as an epithet for an individual or group of individuals (like the use of *śréṣṭha-* in 2.33.3a) creates a *somewhat* analogous strangeness in the phrase, “best, brightest lights.”

These two oddities in pāda 5a are “repaired” in the phrase *matíbhīr vasiṣṭhāḥ* (pāda 6c). The instrumental plural *matíbhīḥ* is the most frequent form of the stem *matí-*, occurring a total of 38 times; so, in at least one sense, *matíbhīḥ* can be taken to repair *bhānúbhīḥ*. The case forms of the superlative stem *vasiṣṭha-*, “best,” have about the same relative distribution as those of *śréṣṭha-*; that and the morphological similarities between the two stems (along with their shared metrical position) would suggest that the nominative plural name *vasiṣṭhāḥ* “repairs” the instrumental *śréṣṭhebhīḥ*. So, we have at least two instances of poetic repair.

What is more, this final superlative stems from the same (putative) root as the adjective/substantive *vāsu-*, “good,” the very word we examined in conjunction with the last structuring device. This means that the final stem loosens the grammatical ring in Structuring Device 6 only to interweave it with a lexical ring in Structuring Device 5. From multiple perspectives, then, we see that the hymn’s overall structure has in fact been tightened.

But the relationship between *vāsu-* and *vasiṣṭha-*, i.e. the family name of the poet Vasiṣṭha, is significant in other ways as well. The poet’s family name literally means the “most goodly” (if we were to translate it in a way that reflects this relationship). If we think in terms of the shared root, this too is an instance of antanaclasis, one which expands the possible scope of referene of *vasiṣṭha-* to include not only the identification of the poet’s clan, but also the etymological implications of this identification. Etymology

provides a kind of provisional answer to the question that began this section: Vasiṣṭha not only has “the goods”; he has the *most* goods. The “goods” in question would likely be the thoughts/songs/prayers with which his family has cultivated Dawn’s goodwill (and good-wielding). By constructing at least one—or, remembering the role of *vásu-* in another device, perhaps two—structuring device(s) that terminate in the phrase *matíbhīr vasiṣṭhāḥ*, the poet has effectively made the etymological “solution”—and the thoughts (*matí-*) that provide an explanation—the anticipated cymbal(/symbol) strike at the end of a verbal drumroll.

Of course, etymology is an inherently centripetal (and retrogressive) pursuit: it is a tracing of two words whose use in discourses diverges widely back to a common origin; and no word could be more at home in a praise hymn than the name of the praiser. So this means that the phrase *matíbhīr vasiṣṭhāḥ* contains a total of three counts of poetic repair: 1) adjustment of the unusual plural instrumental adjective *bhānúbhīḥ*; 2) adjustment of the unusual case of the preceding superlative *śréṣṭhebhīḥ*; 3) reverting to a single, central etymological meaning from which *vásu-* and *vasiṣṭha-* had diverged. It’s worth noting that this phraseological conservatism is embodied in two words whose meaning definitively shifts the discourse away from a Dawn in the sky, moving it down to the ritual grounds. The metalinguistic substitution of “prayers” (from *matí-*) for “rays” or “lights” (from *rasmī-* and *bhānú-*) is a transition to talk of ritual exchange, since prayers are one currency in which officiants pay obeisance and the Vasiṣṭhas are the mortal parties to this exchange. It makes sense that compensatory centripetal poetic repairs would be required to maintain this centrifugal train of thought without seeming to run off the rails.

4.8 Summary

Demarcative structuring devices define discourse boundaries, which correspond to thematic changes and which, at least in the case of this Dawn hymn, are dominated by different morphological categories; the first such device also highlights a thematic transition between Dawn’s general appearance and the act of Dawn appearing on the present ritual occasion. Transgressing these discourse boundaries are another series of structuring devices, which, through antanaclastic uses of the same stems and roots, link descriptions of Dawn’s presence with descriptions of her presents, walking a fine heteroglossic line between praise poetry and the specific, possibly presumptuous requests that ultimately motivate the ritual into which the poetry is embedded. Through a similar set of sleights of tongue, the poet’s and the officiants

' fitness as partners in reciprocal ritual exchange is subtly articulated: for instance, if the poet's family name is any indication, he has the "goods" to bring Dawn to the table. These articulations, along with manipulations of linguistic convention known as poetic repair, contribute to a steadily growing impression that Dawn and the ritual officiants are engaging in a real transaction: with every second (or, more to the point, verse) that goes by, it *sounds* more natural to suppose that Dawn and the Vasiṣṭhas have entered into a reciprocal, collaborative arrangement of mutual advantage. Using these various rhetorical tricks, Vasiṣṭha plies his audience and his trade, and suggests that Dawn profits from the latter.

5. ON CRAFTY PHRASEOLOGICAL CONFLATIONS OF AGNI, "FIRE" AND UṢAS, "DAWN"

This section is not directly connected to a particular case study like the ones that precede and follow; instead, it provides some information about some key words and strategic uses of blended phraseology connecting Dawn with Agni. Some understanding of these blends is particularly crucial to the upcoming case study of *RV* 7.75, but it also enriches our perspective on some as-of-yet overlooked phrases in *RV* 7.75.

Our preliminary discussions on idiosyncratic uses of phraseology (fleshed out in footnotes to Sections 2.2 and 4.6) might lead to the impression that it is generally possible to evoke *one particular* mythological figure to the exclusion of most, if not all, others (for instance, to allude to Saramā, as opposed to Indra etc.). While it is true that a particular stem or form may more effectively conjure up a particular mythological or ritual, divine or mortal agent (or class of agents), we should not make the mistake of assuming that Dawn, Indra, or the ritual officiants dwell at certain circumscribed coordinates within the mental lexicon, i.e. at the intersection of particular subjects and verbs. Rather, like Wendy Doniger, we should think of "constellations of images"¹⁰⁵ that, more often than not, form the outline of particular mythical or ritual entities: while one particular epithet, phrase, or described trait may evoke a long list of entities, a cluster of references can coalesce into a more distinct depiction.

"Constellations" is a particularly apt metaphor because such a depiction (like a group of stars) nonetheless changes depending on the distance and angle from which it is perceived—whether, for instance, one's gaze tends toward the sky or the ritual grounds, and whether, at any given moment, the gods are deemed to be in the heavens or close at hand. The constant juxtaposition or even conflation of

¹⁰⁵ Doniger 1981: 17.

mythological, meteorological, and ritual events often causes the interpreter to ask herself questions like, “[A]re the cows symbolic of the sun, or is the sun a metaphor for cows?”¹⁰⁶

In the context of Dawn hymns, a more pertinent question would be, “Is the fire of sacrifice flickering, or are the fibers of Dawn’s gown glittering?” Above I mentioned that a certain verb form (*adarśi*) is frequently used to describe the light of Dawn or, less frequently, that of Agni, the god of fire. Such a distribution makes more sense when one remembers that Agni is kindled at dawn in the first daily sacrifice, so that Dawn’s changing colors and Agni’s flickering fire would frequently intermingle. In Dawn hymns, one sees over and over again almost certainly intentional conflation of Dawn- and Agni-imagery. Omitted subjects and other forms of (often temporary) syntactic ambiguity contribute to the multivalence of related descriptions. Take the following two clauses from 7.77.

7.77.1cd *ábhūd agníḥ samídhe mánuṣāṇām*

ákar jyótir bádhamānā támāṃsi

Agni (m.) manifested for the kindling of the sons of Manu/ritual ones

[No explicit subject] *produced light, pressing away (f.) the dark shades.*¹⁰⁷

Prior to the arrival of the feminine participle *bádhamānā*, “pressing away,” the natural assumption would be that Agni (m.) is the subject of the clause in 1d as well.¹⁰⁸ The subtlety of the referential shift accomplished by this participle smoothes the transition from celestial to sacrificial descriptions, and suggests that once the fire is kindled, light-footed Dawn touches down on the ritual grounds. Employing a musical metaphor that has been previously applied by Stephanie Jamison, we might regard phrasing that can reference both divine “luminaries” as a kind of “modulation,” in which “the poet uses a word or phrase that functions in two systems”—in music, two keys—“to move from one system to the other seamlessly.”¹⁰⁹ To find another example of the same technique we need look no further than 7.76.1, in which (neuter and) masculine grammatical subjects dominate the first 3 pādas, leading one to assume a similar subject for the fourth until *uṣáḥ*, “Dawn,” arrives at the end of the verse. Similar temporary ambiguities can also be used

¹⁰⁶ Doniger *ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ The first gloss of *mánuṣa-* —“sons of Manu”—is the etymological meaning; the latter gloss is designed to fit the majority of Rigvedic uses of this adjective while evoking Manu’s role as the first ritual officiant.

¹⁰⁸ Of course, after the arrival of *támāṃsi*, this participle could technically be reinterpreted as a neuter plural—but Dawn’s role as the dispeller of darkness (in different phraseological variations) would probably discourage this.

¹⁰⁹ Jamison 2007:64

to modulate between the Dawn(s) and other masculine agents, including the ritual officiants (see 4.51.10 for an example of this). Suffice it to say that an interplay between—and, on certain occasions, a conflation of—differently-gendered agents is one way to pivot between descriptions of Dawn and more down-to-earth *topoi*.

Smooth transitions are certainly a product of such confluences or modulations—but they are not the only (and perhaps not even the primary) objective that these tactics serve. Blending Agni- and Dawn-imagery extends poets’ and priests’ apparent sphere of influence, and may even permit them to expect that their ritual contributions will turn into reciprocal exchanges. Ritual officiants exert direct control over where and when Agni appears, a fact which is often highlighted in descriptions of the kindling of the ritual fire. The following lines from one of Vasiṣṭha’s Agni-hymns will serve as a representative illustration.

7.12.3ab *tuvāṃ vāruṇa utá mitró agne*

tuvāṃ vardhanti matíbhīr vasiṣṭhāḥ

You are Varuṇa and Mitra, Agni

You the Vasiṣṭhas raise with prayers.

The last half of this sequence is nearly identical to half of 7.77.6ab, which I reproduce here.

7.77.6ab *yāṃ tvā divo duhitar vardháyanti*

úṣaḥ sujāte matíbhīr vasiṣṭhāḥ

Daughter of Heaven, you who are raised¹¹⁰

By the Vasiṣṭhas with prayers, well-born Dawn

(For other comparable passages where *√vardh* is used of kindling Agni, see 5.13.5ab, 5.22.4cd and 6.1.5ab.) Vasiṣṭha portrays Dawn as if she can be “raised” (i.e. kindled) on officiants’ prayers just like Agni—and as long as his cohorts and/or clan are consistent with their sacrifices, who can counter this claim? The benefit of such a description is probably obvious: if the poets have kindled Dawn, they have given the goddess much, and from her much can be demanded. Note that this characterization is strategically placed in the final appellative portion of the hymn, where the poet requests specific (counter-)gifts from Dawn.

Phraseological expressions of the idea that ritual officiants can see *and raise* Dawn’s rays frequently draw on a particular mythological precedent, to which I have already alluded above (in footnotes to Sections 2.2): the myth of Indra and the cows in the cave. In this myth, primordial priests known as the Aṅgirasas act as backup singers while Indra belts out a number so powerful that it forces open a cave (found

¹¹⁰ The lines actually read, “you *whom* the Vasiṣṭhas raise”; I changed the voice of the verb to permit line-by-line translation.

by Saramā: see *RV* 5.41.2-8 and 3.31.6) in which the dawn-cows are held captive. They also offer Indra a draught of Soma, with Agni—i.e. a ritual fire—as the intermediary. The following passage describes Agni’s foremost purpose since his “birth”: to support the “growth of the lord of bay horses,” (i.e. Indra, who is preparing to bring the house down) and to honor the “sons of the great rosy one,” i.e. the Aṅgirasas, born of the sky (c.f. 4.2.15c, where the Aṅgirasas are called the “sons of the sky”).

- 3.31.3 agnir jajñe juhuvā réjamāno
mahás **putráṁ aruśásya** prayákṣe
mahán gárbho máhi á jātám eṣám
mahí pravṛd dháriaśvasya yajñaiḥ
Trembling with his tongue, Agni was generated/born
*To display/honor **the sons of the great ruddy one.***
Great (was) the womb; great the birth/generating of these here;
Great the growth of the lord of bay horses, through sacrifices.

Because of his role in this myth, to say nothing of his general indispensability in ritual settings, Agni is often called an Aṅgiras himself. The example below, from *RV* 5.8, is one of a great many; I have selected it because surrounding lines contain a cluster of lexical elements which also appear in 7.77 and 7.75.

- 5.8.3ab tuvám agne **mānuṣīr** ṛlate víśo
hotrāvídaṃ vívicim **ratnadhátamam..**
*To you, Agni, the **ritual** clans appeal--*
*[To you,] knowing priestly offices, discerning, **most-likely-to-remunerate,***
5.8.4cd sá no juṣasva **samidhānó aṅgiro**
devó mártasya yaśásā sudítibhiḥ
Aṅgiras, when kindled, take joy in our (songs)
(you) the god, in the mortal’s glorious (gift/fire), (blazing) with (your) good blazes

In hymn 7.75, discussed immediately below, Dawn is called “the best of the Aṅgirasas” or “the most Aṅgiras-like” (*áṅgirastamā*). This epithet is one of a constellation of Agni-related epithets to be applied to Dawn within the hymn. She is also called “ritual/descendant of Manu,” *mānuṣī* (compare *mānuṣīr* above; as we will have occasion to discuss below, this epithet is also frequently applied to Agni himself), and a “goddess among men,” *dévi mártesu*, which closely mimics the juxtaposed “god” and “mortal’s,” *devó mártasya*, in the passage above. (The other bolded words surface in the hymns as well, but not as *epithets* for Dawn.)

Not unlike the collocations discussed in Sections 2.2 and 4.6, such a transferal of epithets supplies a flattering revision of Dawn’s role in the myth (wherein she is more properly a captive cow); but even more importantly, it more directly allies her with Agni in his capacity as a steadfast servant to ritual officiants and humble attendant to human affairs. Thus, at the very least, the Dawn-Agni association creates a sounder (-sounding) basis for reciprocal exchange and cooperation between the goddess and her worshipers.

6. 7.75 TEXT AND TRANSLATION

The superscripts in the Sanskrit identify separate structuring devices, which will be identified in Sections 7 and 8. The superscripts in the English introduce footnotes.

7.75.1a	ví uṣá āvo divijā ³ ṛtēna	Dawn, born/generated in heaven , has just dawned widely with truth;
7.75.1b	āviṣkṛṇvānā mahimānam ¹ āgāt ³	Revealing her own grandiosity ¹¹¹ she has just come here .
7.75.1c	āpa drūhas tāma āvar ājuṣṭam	She has just uncovered the deceits, the disagreeable darkness;
7.75.1d	āṅgirastamā pathiyā ajgaḥ ³	Best of the Aṅgirasas, she has just awakened the paths.
7.75.2a	mahé ¹ no adyá suvitāya bodhi	For our grand good faring take note of us today;
7.75.2b	úṣo mahé ¹ saubhagāya prá yandhi	O Dawn, for (our) grand good fortune provide.
7.75.2c	citrām ⁴ rayīm ⁴ yaśasaṃ dhehi asmé	Bestow for us bright , glorious wealth
7.75.2d	dévi márteṣu ¹ mānuṣī śravasyúm	That seeks fame, o goddess among mortals , belonging to Manu's sons.
7.75.3a	eté tiyé bhānāvo darśatāyās ⁵	These, the very lights of seemly ¹¹²
7.75.3b	citrā ⁵ uśaso amṛtāsa ¹ āguḥ ³	Dawn, the bright immortal (lights), have just come here .
7.75.3c	janāyanto ³ daiviyāni ³ vratāni	Generating/(birthing) the heavenly commandments,
7.75.3d	āpṛṇānto antárikṣā ví asthuḥ	Filling the midspace, they have just spread out.
7.75.4a	eṣá siyá yujāná parākāt	This, the very one, hitching herself up out of the distance,
7.75.4b	pāñca kṣitīḥ pári sadyó jigāti ³	Comes and goes around the five settlements in a single day,
7.75.4c	abhipāśyantī vayúnā jánānām ³	Looking upon the patterns of the peoples/generations --
7.75.4d	divo ³ duhitā bhūvanasya pátnī	Heaven's Daughter , mistress of the world.
7.75.5a	vājínivatī sūriyasya yóṣā	Possessed of prize mares, the maiden of the Sun,
7.75.5b	citrāmaghā ^{1,4} rāyā ⁴ īṣe vāsūnām	Who grants ¹¹³ bright gifts , has dominion over wealth , over goods.
7.75.5c	īṣiṣṭutā jarāyanti ³ maghóni ¹	Praised by seers, awakening (the world), granting gifts ,
7.75.5d	uśá uchatī vāhnbhir ⁶ gṛṇānā	Dawn dawns, being hymned by the conductors (of songs/oblations).
7.75.6a	prāti dyutānām ³ aruśaso āśvās ²	Opposite, the horses —ruddy,
7.75.6b	citrā ⁵ adṛṣrann ⁵ uśasaṃ vāhantaḥ ⁶	Bright—has just been seen conducting the heavenly, flashing ¹¹⁴ Dawn.

¹¹¹ Translations of this word and of forms of *máh* in Verse 2 below are intended to mimic echos that would be perceived in the Sanskrit (see Section 7.2 for more information).

¹¹² “Seemly” here is meant to be associated with “has just been seen” in 6b; both forms come from $\sqrt{dṛś}$.

¹¹³ I translate this epithet (more literally, “possessing bright bounties”) in such a way as to mimic the almost-homophony between *maghā-* (“bounty, **granted** gift”) and *máh-* (“great, grand”). For more on this, see Section 7.2.

¹¹⁴ “Heavenly, flashing” translates the form *dyutānām* in the preceding pāda.

7.75.6c	yāti śubhrā viśvapīśā rāthena	She drives, the resplendent one, with a chariot entirely ornamented;
7.75.6d	dādhāti ² rātnam ² vidhaté ² jānāya ³	she bestows treasure for the stewardly gens. ¹¹⁵
7.75.7a	satyā satyēbhir mahatī mahādbhir	True along with the true ones, great with the great,
7.75.7b	devī devēbhir yajatā yājatraiḥ	Goddess with the gods, worship-full with the worshipful --
7.75.7c	rujād dīḥāni dādād usriyāṇām	She broke the fastnesses, she will give of the dawn-red (cows):
7.75.7d	prāti gāva ² uśāsaṃ vāvaśanta	The cows keep bellowing in response to Dawn.
7.75.8a	nū no gōmad ² vīravad dhehi ² rātnam ²	Now, bestow for us a treasure consisting of cows, of heroes,
7.75.8b	úšo ásvavad ² purubhójo asmé	and of horses o Dawn, you who provide much nourishment to us.
7.75.8c	mā no barhīḥ puruśātā nidé kar	Do not put our ritual grass to scorn among men.
7.75.8d	yūyám pāta suastībhiḥ sādā naḥ	Do you protect us always with your blessings.

7. FORMS OF STRUCTURING DEVICES IN 7.75

As the superscripts in the text above might suggest, I have identified six structuring devices:¹¹⁶ two nested rings, one geometric ring, two redundant rounds of lexical repetition, and one round of concatenation. I now explore each in turn.

7.1 Complementary nested rings

In 7.75, two structuring devices are made up of nested rings (as opposed to the rounds of concatenation that we observed 7.77). The first such device stretches through Verses 1-5¹¹⁷ of the hymn.

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5
mahimānam	mahé	amṛtāsaḥ		(citrā-) maghā
	mahé			maghónī
	márteṣu			

¹¹⁵ “Distributor” is likely a more literal translation of *vidhánt-* than “steward.” See Section 7.3 for further discussion. Also: *jānāya* could be translated as “for the person” as well as “for the gens”; I chose the version that kept the relationship between this form and other forms of *√jan* transparent.

¹¹⁶ Well, five or six, depending on one’s ideas about a grouping judgment explored in Section 7.8.

¹¹⁷ It might strike the reader as odd that Verse 4 should contain no repetitions relevant to this structuring device. I will have more to say about this in Section 7.5 (where I discuss Structuring Device 3); but for now, remember the ways in which variable density can aid in the perception of repetitions (discussed in Part I, Section 4.9).

The second device encompasses the remaining verses.

Verse 6	Verse 7	Verse 8	Verse 8, cont.
ásvaḥ	gávaḥ	gómat	dhehi rátnam
dádhāti rátnam vidhaté			ásvavat

The inner round of the first nested ring (in Verses 1-5) is composed of the etymologically related stems *márta-*, “mortal,” and *amṛta-*, “immortal,” in *contiguous* stanzas (in *pādas* 2d and 3b, to be exact): our principle of “recency” allows us to posit that the repetition would be perceived. The outer round of repetition in this device is composed of forms and derivatives from two etymologically distinct stems that synchronically look like phonological variants of one another: *máh-*, “great, strong, abundant, **grand**” and *maghá-*, “bounty, a **granted gift**.”¹¹⁸ This round of repetitions is characterized by redundancy: it begins with three repetitions of the first stem (*máh-*) and ends with two repetitions of the second stem (*maghá-*). The principle of redundancy also suggests that these two rounds of repetitions would be perceived as a group; so does the principle of conventionality, since the structuring device thereby created has the well-attested shape of a nested ring.¹¹⁹

7.2 Homophony and allophony: arguing for folk-etymological connections between *maghá-* and *máh-*

The claim that *maghá-* and *máh-* are essentially homophonous stems might require a bit of defending in and of itself, especially since the historical relationships between these forms (or more likely, the lack thereof) are disputed. Whatever the etymologies of these two forms may be, they must be associated synchronically. The evidence for this includes the phonological relationship between *-h-* and *-gh-*, and several collocations that connect *maghá-* to *máh-* (among other phonologically similar forms¹²⁰).

¹¹⁸ The translations in bold are looser in terms of their semantics, but I favor them because they mimic the repetitions in the Sanskrit

¹¹⁹ See Part I, Section 4.6.

¹²⁰ Take an epithet that combines forms of *maghá-* and *mámhiṣṭha-*, the latter being a superlative from a distinct root \sqrt{mami} (not connected to *máh-*, but presenting the same challenge to claims of homophony): *maghónām mámhiṣṭha-*, found in 5.39.4a, 6.68.2c and 8.1.30b. Since it exists alongside polyptotic twists that involve truly identical/etymologically linked stems, of the type found in 7.32.7a, *bhāvā várūtham maghavan maghónām*, “Be the refuge, o gift-grand one, of the gift-grand ones,” we might gloss *maghónām mámhiṣṭha-* as “the **most grandiose** of the gift-granting,” to preserve the echo that would be perceived. Particularly telling are instances in which this epithet occurs alongside epithets involving truly etymologically linked stems. Below, it is preceded by two stems linked to the root $\sqrt{sū}$, “swell.”

Particularly because these synchronic associations turn out to be relevant to both the form *and* the function of this structuring device, they are worth exploring in some detail here.¹²¹

First, note that in many paradigms, the sounds *-h-* and *-gh-* alternate with one another, since they *can be* different outcomes of a historically identical phoneme. (Among the most famous cases of this alternation is the present paradigm of \sqrt{han} , “slay”: *hánti*, “he slays,” vs. *ghnánti*, “they slay.”) Perhaps this is why semantically and phonologically similar (but not necessarily etymologically linked) lexemes can show such “alternations” in juxtaposed forms.

As far as *maghá-* and *máh-* specifically are concerned, the *Rig Veda* presents a number of instances in which an epithet involving *maghá-* is glossed or expanded upon with a clause or verb phrase involving *máh-*, in a pattern which should feel very familiar after our close-reading of 7.77 (and which, unsurprisingly, we will have cause to reexamine below when we discuss the function of structuring devices).¹²² The following is just a partial list of examples, with particular emphasis on instances occurring in the same maṇḍala as our Dawn hymn. In the first example, the epithet *maghávan-*, “gift-granting”¹²³ (the feminine nominative form of which we have seen in 7.75.5c), is expanded upon by a relative clause containing *both maghá-* and *máh-*. This example is particularly compelling from our perspective because in the same

6.68.2bc **śúrāṇām śáviṣṭhā** tá hí bhūtám
maghónām māmhiṣṭhā tuviśúṣma
*May you two be **the most valiant of the valiant,***
The most grandiose of the gift-granting, powerfully forceful

(Geldner certainly translates the epithet *maghónām māmhiṣṭhā* as if it contained two etymologically linked stems, e.g. “die Freigebigsten unter der Freigebigen” in 6.68.)

¹²¹ Section 9.2 below discusses the relevance of these relationships to the function of this structuring device.

¹²² See Section 4.2, and also Sections 9.2 and 9.9, the last two for these observations’ relevance to the function of repetitions in 7.75. Though in 4.2 we did not frame the discussion in quite the same way, the reader will likely recall that 7.77 also presented a case in which epithets were more implicitly “glossed,” or explained, via particular lexical repetitions within a structuring device. For instance, remember the repetitions of \sqrt{ni} and $\sqrt{dyś}$ in 7.77: the implied actions fossilized in epithets like *netrī*, “leaderess,” and, *sudṣīkasaṃdṛg*, “a sight lovely to see,” were then carried out through verbal vehicles like the participial phrase *náyantī... áśvam*, “leading a horse” and the verb phrase *uṣā adarśi*, “Dawn was just seen.” Ultimately, I will argue that the instances of *máh-* in Verse 2 of 7.75 are linked to the epithets *citrāmaghā* and *maghónī* in a similar fashion, with the difference being that the relevant forms in Verses 2 and 5, like the forms in the passages we have just seen, link *two different parties to a ritual exchange*.

¹²³ Yet again, the decision to translate this word as “gift-**granting**” rather than as “possessing gifts/ bounties” is an attempt to mimic the echo between *maghá-* and *máh-* “great” (see similar note to the translation of this hymn above).

passage, a similar process plays out between the epithet *váhni-*, “conductor,” and a *truly* etymologically related form: *vaha*.

7.16.9 sá mandráyā ca jihváyā
váhnir āsá vidúṣṭaraḥ
 ágne rayím **maghá**vadbhyo na á **vaha**
 havýádātiṃ ca sūdaya

7.16.10a yé rádhāṃsi dádati áśviyā **maghá**

7.16.10b kámena śrávaso **maháḥ**

7.16.10c tám̐ āṃhasaḥ pipṛhi partṛbhiṣ ṭuvám̐

As the one with a pleasing tongue (and)

*Face, the wiser **conductor** --*

*Agni, **conduct** wealth toward our **gift-granting** (patrons)*

And set the offering in order.

*Those who give **the granted** equine gifts (and) largesses*

*Out of desire for **grand** glory—*

You, guard them from anxiety with safeguards!

In this same example, two sides of a reciprocal—and thus, one would hope, an equal—gift-giving relationship are being depicted: the patrons’ gift-granting (*maghávan-*) character and granted (*maghá-*) largesse are offered up to the god; in return, the patrons desire great (*máh-*) glory.¹²⁴

In another passage from the same maṇḍala, a passage which occurs twice in two contiguous hymns attributed to Vasiṣṭha, *maghá(van)-* and *máh-* once again appear to describe a reciprocal gift-giving relationship.

7.24.6bc prá te **mahím̐** sumatím̐ vevidāma (=7.25.6bc)

īṣam pinva **maghá**vadbhyaḥ súvīrām̐

*We would like to see your **grand** goodwill;*

*Fill up/(give fully) renewal rich in sons for the **gift-granting** ones.*

In lines like these, where two halves of *the same* exchange are being described, the poet is using the similar semantics and phonology of *maghá(van)-* and *máh-* to suggest the fundamental equivalence of the human officiants’ offerings and the compensation he/they request(s). Since a sense of sameness is so crucial in these contexts, it is hard to believe that he would willfully deploy two words that he perceived to be unrelated.

¹²⁴ Notice also that in this hymn as in many others, two forms of the root \sqrt{vah} (“conduct”) are used to express Agni’s role as a middleman facilitating this exchange.

In yet another example, which also occurs in two hymns attributed to Vasiṣṭha, a verb phrase including *máh-* most definitely *glosses* the epithet *maghávan-*, since at issue is how to *describe* or *name* Indra.

7.28.5ab vocéméd índram **maghávānam** enam (=7.29.5ab)

mahó rāyó rádhaso yád dádan naḥ

*We should call him “that **gift-grand Indra**.”*

*If he will give us (some) of (his) largesse of **great** wealth.*

Given that this passage describes reciprocity from a more metalinguistic angle (i.e. what Indra should be called in response to his gift-giving), we can be even more confident that the conceptual link between *maghá(van)-* and *máh-* is also a folk etymological one. For more on the significance of these observations, see Section 9.2.

7.3 Second Nested Ring; Semantic Infrequency

On to the nested ring linking Stanzas 6-8. The relevant repetitions are listed below according to verse.

- | | |
|----|---|
| 6 | ásvāḥ
dádhāti rátnam vidhaté |
| 7. | gávaḥ |
| 8. | gómat
dhehi rátnam
ásvāvat |

Because the nested ring is a conventional shape for a structuring device (see related footnote at the end of Section 7.1 above), this grouping is a very likely one so long as the individual rounds of repetition are proven perceptible.

On to examining those repetitions. The innermost ring of this device, consisting of repetitions of the stem *gó-*, has recency on its side: the two relevant forms, which connect Verse 7 to Verse 8, occur in contiguous metrical units (7d and 8a). The middle ring, connecting Verses 6 and 8, consists of a redundant repetition of the form *rátnam* and the root $\sqrt{dhā}$ in the same verb phrase. This redundancy is present whether or not we include the additional element *vidhánt-*, “distributor/worshipper/steward,¹²⁵” from $\sqrt{}$

¹²⁵ “Steward” is my own idiosyncratic translation, which is intended to echo “bestow.” “Distributor” is likely the best translation, it follows from a (folk- or true) etymological connection to *vi+√dhā*.

vidh, “distribute/worship,” which either originates from or is folk-etymologized as *ví* + *√dhā*, “put/place.”

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Even though the inclusion of *vidhánt-* is not necessary for establishing the form of this structuring device, it will be helpful once we turn to examining its function; so, below, I will quickly explore the perceived relationship between that participial form and the root *√dhā*. Establishing a historical relationship between *vidhánt-* and *ví* + *√dhā* is beyond the scope of our current endeavor, but we can easily show that a synchronic (i.e. folk-etymological) relationship exists. The same grammatical and phonetic figure that we see in 7.75.6d— i.e. *vidhánt-*, in the dative, functioning as an indirect object to a form of *√dhā* (without the preverb) —also occurs in 4.12.3c, 4.44.4d, 6.65.3c, and 7.16.12c. I will quote the last example here because it occurs in the same maṇḍala as 7.75, and because 7.16.12 has a number of other lexical elements in common with 7.75 (*váhni-*, *rátna-*, *jána-*, and *suvíriya-*, which has one element in common with and a similar meaning to *vīrávat-* in 7.75.8a).

7.16.12 táṃ hótāram adhvarásya prácetasam
váhniṃ devá akṛṇvata
dádhati rátnaṃ **vidhaté** suvíriyam
agnír jánāya dāsúṣe
Him, the attentive Hotar of the rite,
The gods made (their) conductor;
He bestows treasure and an abundance of good heroes **to the steward,**
(He,) Agni, to the person/gens who worships.

Variant juxtapositions of *√dhā* and *√vidh* can be found in a number of other places, such as 4.34.4a and 8.27.15b. I quote the first example here because it involves the compound *ratnadhéya-*, which contains two of the elements of the second nested ring in 7.75. (*rátna-* in addition to *√dhā*).

4.34.4ab ábhūd u vo **vidhaté** ratnadhéyam
idá naro dāsúṣe mártiyāya
Just now there has come to be the **bestowing** of treasure for your **steward**
For the worshipful mortal, o fine men (i.e. Ṛbhus).

Given the frequency of such collocations despite the relative rarity of the verb *√vidh*, it seems highly likely that *√dhā* and *√vidh* are perceived to be related; this is particularly the case given that in many cognate poetic traditions, etymologically related terms are used to encode reciprocal actions.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Thieme, Hoffman, etc. trace *√vidh* back to *ví* + *√dhā*.

¹²⁷ See, for instance, Watkins 1995: Chapter 31, which quotes RV 7.59.8 among a host of other examples. Other *Rig Vedic* passages show that the relationship between divinities and officiants is frequently encoded in similar

Yet another factor, infrequency, argues for the perceptibility of the outer ring. This ring is formed by two occurrences of the stem *ásva-*: *ásvāḥ* and *ásvāvat*, in 6a and 8b respectively. The first of these forms, *ásvāḥ*, is the *answer* to a linguistic riddle—more specifically, it is the “solution” side of an implied metalinguistic equation formed by another structuring device. The two relevant passages are below; in what will become standard practice, I underline words that are connected by the common lexical frame that forms this “equation” (i.e. this focused comparison or transition). The frame itself is put in bold.

7.75.3ab eté tiyé ***bhānāvo darśatāyās***

citrā uśāso amṛtāsa āguḥ

These, the very lights of seemly

Dawn, the bright immortal (lights), have just come here.

7.75.6ab prāti dyutānām aruśāso ***ásvās***

citrā adṛśrann uśāsam vāhantaḥ

Opposite, the horses—ruddy,

Bright—have just been seen* conducting the heavenly, flashing ***Dawn.**

We will discuss this instance of poetic repair in detail when we examine the functions of the structuring devices in this hymn. For now, note that this equation connects *bhānāvāḥ*, “lights,” to *ásvāḥ*, “horses,” and that the lexical and syntactic environment that creates this implied metalinguistic equation includes three repeated roots and/or stems, one of which, *citrā-*, appears with the exact same inflected form and metrical position in both instances,¹²⁸ and in both instances modifies the noun in question (*bhānāvāḥ*, “lights,” or *ásvāḥ*, “horses”).

This linguistic riddle is initiated by a kind of semantic infrequency, involving an adroit manipulation of one of the same words that participated in poetic repair in 7.77: *bhānū-* (“light”). In the passage quoted above, Dawn’s *bhānāvāḥ*, “lights”—nominative plural masculine—are front and center in the syntax. That the (syntactically) primary image of Dawn should consist of multiple beams or lights or

grammatical and etymological figures. See for instance, *RV*8.88.6ab (1.61.11cd, attributed to the same poet, contains the same figure).

8.88.6ab nákiḥ páriṣṭir maghavan maghāsya

yád ***dāśúṣe daśasyāsi***

There is no constriction of your granted gifts, gift-granter,

*When you **do service to your (pious) servant.***

¹²⁸ The metrical shape of the form *citrā(h)* will often land it in pāda-initial position, and there are other inflections of this stem that would have the same appearance in sandhi—so I do not mean to overemphasize the significance of this individual replication of forms; I merely note its contribution in a broader repeated lexical frame.

rays (such as regularly characterize the flames of Agni, for instance) is not entirely intuitive: to the extent that cloud cover scatters Dawn into different pieces, it tends to give those pieces the spread-out shape and checkered appearance of a pied cow’s hide rather than the focused energy of beams of light (c.f. the Dawn-cows, discussed above in Section 2.2). Furthermore, as we have already seen in our preliminary discussion on Agni-imagery in Dawn hymns (Section 5 above), a change in the gender of subjects can be indicative of a change in the divine agent being invoked (or imagined)—so, a masculine-gendered form that dominates the syntax of a sentence describing Dawn is notable in and of itself.

These counterintuitive semantics make themselves felt in Rigvedic usage patterns. Where Dawn’s light is described *using nominative plural masculine forms*, the primary purpose of these descriptions seems to be to *link* that light to animate entities via similes or implied metalinguistic equations. As a result (in the attention-modulating process we term “poetic repair”) a listener well-versed in Rigvedic poetic practice would anticipate that the focus on the nominative plural masculine *bhānāvāḥ* in 7.75 would soon be adjusted to reveal such animate entities.

Within the corpus of Rigvedic hymns that has come down to us, nominative plural forms of *bhānú*, *raśmí-*, and *arcí-* (masculine nouns referring to light) are *invariably* accompanied by a sort of explanatory simile or an implied metalinguistic equation if they refer to Dawn’s various hues. The animate beings that “repair” range from the usual suspects like cows and the deified Dawns (1.92.1-2; 4.52.5; possibly 3.7.9-10), to birds (6.64.2.5; possibly 5.1.1) and even sages (1.48.13-14).¹²⁹ I do not mean to suggest that it is impossible that at some point in time a Rigvedic poem, one that was not passed down as part of the extant maṇḍalas, was composed in such a way as to counter this claim—but the materials left to us are definitely sufficient to establish a *trend* in usage. I will quote just one additional example of *bhānāvāḥ* being used to link Dawn’s light to a group of animate beings. Below, the “frame” of the implied linguistic equation is put in bold.

6.64.2 bhadrá dadṛkṣa urviyá ví bhāsi
út te śócír bhānāvó dyám apaptan
 āvír vākṣaḥ kṛṇuṣe śumbhāmānā
 úṣo devi rócāmānā máhobhiḥ
You have been seen, a harbinger of luck; you shed light widely;
*Your flames, your lights **have just flown up** to the sky*
Resplendent, you make your chest visible;
O Goddess Uṣas, shining with your greatness(es)

¹²⁹ By my count, the parenthetically cited passages are an exhaustive list.

6.64.6 **út te váyaś cid vasatér apaptan**
 náraś ca yé pitubhájo víuṣṭau
 amá saté **vahasi** bhúri vāmám
 úšo devi dāśúṣe mártiyāya
The birds have just flown up from their nest at your
Dawning, and (so did) the heroes with foodstores
You conduct¹³⁰ much of value to him who is at home,
To the mortal who serves (you), Goddess Dawn

The above-illustrated trend contrasts with the usage patterns that we see when the same nominative plural forms describe Agni. When *bhānávaḥ*, *raśmáyaḥ*, and *arcáyaḥ* are used to describe Agni’s flames, many instances (at least 9—e.g. 5.9.5; 5.17.3) involve no such comparisons to other entities or things. Where a simile or implied metalinguistic equation is present, Agni’s lights or rays are typically compared to not-so-animate things, such as streams (1.44.12; 1.143.3), lightning (3.1.14; 5.10.5), or a pressing-stone (5.25.8).

So, due to both the counterintuitive (i.e. “infrequent”) semantics of *bhānávaḥ* as used in 7.75 and the specific usage patterns according to which *Dawn’s lights* (nom. pl. masc.) are implicitly recast as animate entities, we can confidently assert that the reader will expect this form to be glossed, and will anticipate the answer to the implicit question it raises: “*What on earth (or, in heaven) are the lights/beams of Dawn?*”

The gloss/answer arrives in 6a: the lights are *áśvāḥ*, “horses.” In solving the phraseological riddle introduced by *bhānávaḥ*, *áśvāḥ* commands the attention of the listener, which ensures that a subsequent repetition of the stem in 8b will be noticed: after having been the subject of such speculation, the solution would not easily fade from working memory.

We can now confidently claim all of the above-listed rounds of repetitions would indeed be perceptible; and as stated at the beginning of this section, the “conventionality” factor strongly suggests that they would be perceived as a single *structuring device*.¹³¹

¹³⁰ Note the use of a form from *√vah*, “conduct,” to describe a ritual exchange between Dawn and the officiants.

¹³¹ There is one further perceptible repetition that initially looks as if it should be grouped with this structuring device: the same form of *√dhā* that is part of this second nested ring previously appeared in pāda 2c, and the presence of the form *asmé* in both relevant half-verses renders the repetition redundant enough to be recognized.

7.75.2c citrāṃ rayiṃ yaśásaṃ **dhehi asmé**
 7.75.2d dévi márteṣu mānuṣi śravasyúm
Bestow for us bright, glorious wealth

7.4 Perception vs. grouping of repetitions: Klein's categories and Emily Dickinson's syntactic constellations

The interpretation of *máh-* and *-maghá-* as a round of repetition within the hymn's first nested ring (see Section 7.1-2) might have raised another question in the careful reader's mind. One might wonder why the subsequent repetitions of the stem *máh-*—specifically, those in the phrase *mahatī mahádbhiḥ*, “great with the great (ones),” in 7b—are not discussed in conjunction with this structuring device; after all, this latter redundant round of repetitions would most certainly be *perceived*. Quoting the most relevant lines, we have the following.

7.75.2a **mahé**¹ no adyá suvitāya bodhi

7.75.2b úṣo **mahé**¹ saúbhagāya prá yandhi

*For our **great** good faring take note of us today;*

*O Dawn, for our **great** good fortune provide (for us).*

7.75.5b citrá**maghá**¹ rāyá íse vásūnām

7.75.5c ṣṣiṣṭutā jaráyantī **maghónī**¹

*(Dawn) who brings bright, **grand gifts**, has dominion over wealth, over goods.*

*Praised by seers, awakening (the world), **gift-grand***

7.75.7a satyá satyébhir **mahatī mahádbhir**

*True along with the true ones, **great with the great**,*

No doubt, this final round of repetitions in Verse 7 would jump out and grab the listener's ear: it is not only redundant in and of itself, but redundant in *much the same* way as the previous rounds were (in other words, it is redundantly redundant).

Grouping, however, is a different matter. Although the Gestalt principle of similarity (the principle that is behind the separate role our factor of “redundancy” plays in grouping judgments) initially seems to suggest that these rounds of repetitions would be grouped into the same “object” as the prior instances of

That seeks fame, o goddess among mortals, belonging to Manu's sons.

7.75.8a nú no góma vīrávad **dhehi rátnam**

7.75.8b úṣo áśvāvad purubhójo **asmé**

*Now, **bestow** for us a treasure consisting of cows, of heroes,*

*and of horses o Dawn, you who provide much nourishment **to us**.*

The factors of recency, redundancy and conventionality that bind the nested ring together would proportionately weaken any inclination to group the prior repetition into the structuring device. See Section 7.4 below for more on the problem of perceptibility vs. grouping (though the specific repetitions treated there are different).

máh- (and *maghá-*), there are other things at play here. First, observe that *mahatī mahádbhiḥ* is one of *four contiguous* instances of polyptoton in the first half of Verse 7.

7.75.7ab satyá satyé**bh**ir mahatī mahá**db**hir

devī devé**bh**ir yajatá yá**ja**traiḥ

*True along **with the** true ones, **great with the great.***

*Goddess **with the** gods, worship-full **with the** worshipful—*

Note that these repetitions are not only identical with regard to the cases represented (nominative singular feminine and instrumental plural masc/neut), but also with regard to each individual form’s syllable count and metrical position (illustrating what Klein would call “perfect vertical responson”). For the most part, forms in corresponding cases have corresponding endings (though note that two different endings for each case are present). I will argue that the tight grammatical, morphological, and metrical figures that structure these lines do much to distance *mahatī mahádbhiḥ* from the prior repetitions of *máh-* (and *maghá-*). That is, even though this last round of repetitions would be *perceived*, it would not be closely *associated* with the earlier forms—so that *mahatī mahádbhiḥ* could easily both belong to a different discourse and refer to different entities and qualities than the earlier ones.

The problem of *perceptible* repetitions that cannot be grouped with any specific series is a recurrent one in this chapter.¹³² Anglophone readers who wish to get an intuitive understanding of the difference between perceiving repetitions and associating them (i.e. viewing them as a group), would be well advised to turn briefly to an American poem (by Emily Dickinson) in which grammatical figures seem to “distance” a pair of easily perceptible repetitions. The poem is about the moon, as its beginning makes clear; but in this context, I will only quote the last three stanzas.

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Her lips of amber never part;

But **what must be** the smile

Upon her friend she **could** bestow

Were such her silver will!

And **what** a privilege to **be**

¹³² Such repetitions are briefly treated at the end of Section 7.3, within Section 7.5, and within Section 9.5.

But the remotest **star**!
For certainly her way **might** pass
Beside your twinkling door.

Her bonnet is of firmament,
The universe **her** shoe,
The **stars** the trinkets at **her** belt,
Her dimities of blue

One could hardly avoid *noticing* that the word “star” is repeated in the last two verses—and yet, one is never tempted to conflate the image of the first “star” (cast as a friend who beams when the beaming moon crosses paths with her/him) and that of the second (refashioned into adornments around the moon’s waist). In other words, here we have a case in which two instances of the word “star” are *perceived*, and yet not *associated* or *grouped* together.

Surrounding grammatical and lexical figures are one of the factors that help insulate the first instance of “star” from the second: the first discourse on “friendship” is structurally marked by exclamatives beginning with “what” and ending with “be,” and by modal verbs. The second discourse on the moon’s apparel is marked structurally by copulative sentences in which the subject or subject complement includes a noun phrase of the form, “her [noun describing clothing].” Both “stars” are too bright to fade from the mind’s eye, but they belong to different syntactic constellations, whose dots are connected into quite different imagery.

Recasting these observations in terms of the methodology I have been using to detect structuring devices, we might say that the factors of “recency” (in Gestalt terms, “proximity”) and “redundancy” (in Gestalt terms, “similarity”) *strongly* encourage all the lines framed by these grammatical figures to be grouped together, and proportionately weaken any associations that would have developed *between* stanzas.

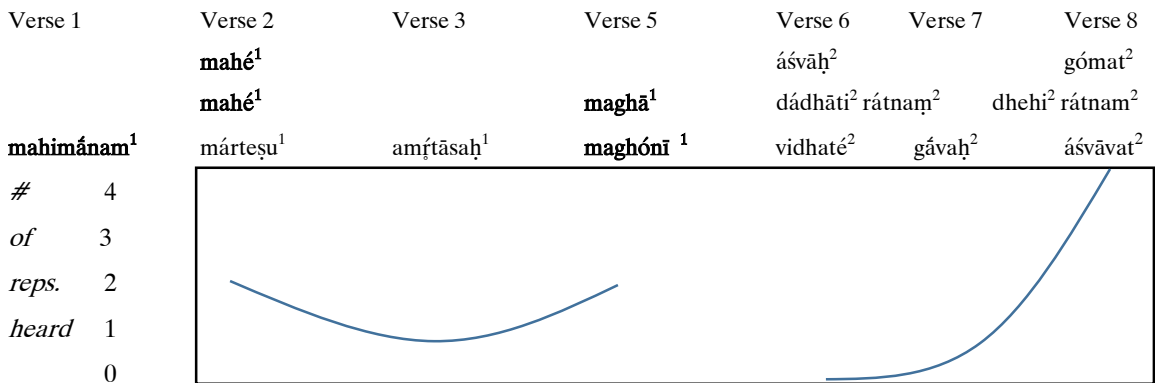
In what follows, I will use my methodology (and the Gestalt psychological principles behind it) to argue that the grammatical, metrical and morphological figures that frame *mahatí mahádbhiḥ* have a similar dissociative effect in 7.75. We begin in much the same manner as we did with Dickinson’s stanzas. The factor of redundancy (i.e. the Gestalt principle of similarity) could be mustered to argue that listeners’ minds would *group mahatí mahádbhiḥ* with the structurally identical phrases that surround it. Of course, there was also a large degree of redundancy between *mahatí mahádbhiḥ* and the repetitions of *máh-* (and

maghá-) in other stanzas. What begins to tip the balance in favor of grouping *mahatī mahádbhiḥ* with the other instances of polyptoton in Verse 7 is the factor of recency (in Gestalt terms, proximity): as was the case with the instances of “star” and the framing figures in Dickinson’s stanzas, *mahatī mahádbhiḥ* is bound to the tight-knit group of figures in its immediate context.

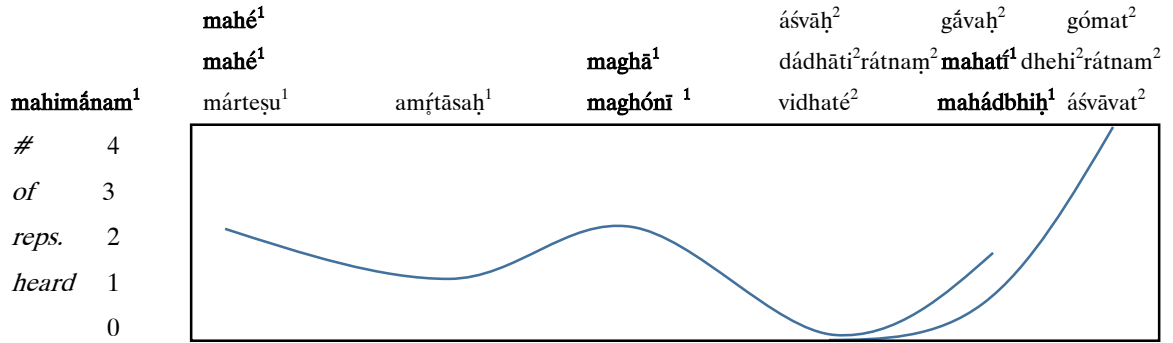
Other principles/criteria also help us argue in favor of closing the structuring device before Verse 7: for instance, the grouping criterion of “(variable) density” (i.e. the Gestalt principles of good continuation, symmetry and closure) would work in favor of closing this nested ring at Verse 5, because in that case, this hymn would have two complementary nested rings, each with a clear beginning, middle, and end marked by a single, wavelike *variation in density* of related repetitions. If we were to include *mahatī mahádbhir* in the first nested ring, the picture would become rather blurry: if the listener were to *interpret* these last repetitions as a resurgence of the first nested ring, that resurgence would coincide with the detection of a new analogously constructed ring. This does not seem like a likely grouping judgment, as it would draw a rather arbitrary line between one “object” and another.

Below I have constructed a chart to illustrate the key difference in the two possibilities. The y-axis indicates the density of structurally relevant repetitions as they would be *heard* from stanza to stanza. Superscripts indicate what nested ring these repetitions are grouped into (1 or 2; see Section 7.1 if the difference is unclear). The lines reflect a cumulative representation of the nested rings.

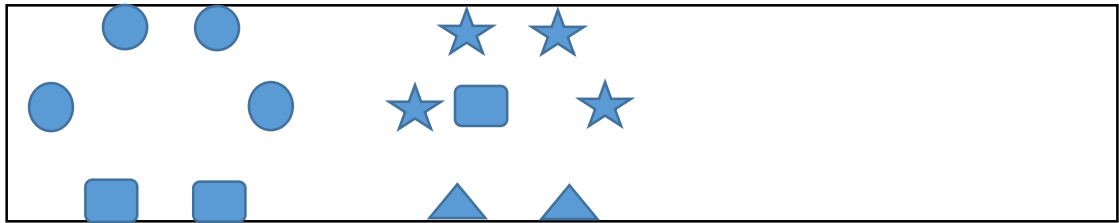
Favored by “density”/ “good continuation”



Less likely alternative



Alternatively, one could illustrate how the Gestalt principle of closure operates in such an instance by constructing an analogous set of visual objects—for instance a pair of objects with the same general shape, but constructed from different materials (analogous to two different nested rings composed of different inventories of words). Some of the “building blocks” of one of the objects could appear within other one—but that would not change our grouping judgment.



In other words, we are likely to interpret the above diagrams as two self-contained pentagons, despite the presence of a building block from the first shape within the space occupied by the second.

So, how are we to classify *mahatí mahádbhiḥ* and the rest of the instances of polyptoton in Verse 7? What role does it/do they play? I certainly do not mean to suggest the echo of *máh-* in Verse 7 is necessarily without interest or significance. To some extent, this question can be delayed until the “function” section (Section 9.9 specifically); suffice it to say here that to the extent that the *mahatí mahádbhiḥ* is perceived to be semantically related to prior repetitions of *máh-* (and *maghá-*), it is the *sum total* of the forms and meanings of these prior repetitions (rather than any individual form or round) that will be compared to *mahatí mahádbhiḥ*. One may also safely suppose that *mahatí mahádbhiḥ* will not herald any significant structural turning point or discourse boundary.

7.5: Geometric ring reinforced by concatenations

Another device also runs through Stanzas 1-5: a geometric ring, charted out below.

Verse 1	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6
divijá	águḥ	jigāti	jaráyantī	dyutánám
ágāt	janáyanto daíviyāni	jánānām divāḥ		jánāya
ajīgaḥ				

The relevant repeated elements are the following: the verbal root \sqrt{jan} , “be born, be generated,” from which is derived the verbal form *janáyantaḥ* “generating,” and the nominal stems, *jána-*, “person, people, generation, gens” and *-já-*, “born” (in compound); the verbal root $\sqrt{gā}$, “go,” from which are derived the verbal forms *ágāt*, “has just come,” *águḥ*, “have just come,” and *jigāti*, “goes”; the verbal root \sqrt{gr} , “awaken,” from which are derived the verbal form *ajīgaḥ*, “has just awakened,” and the participial form *jaráyantī*, “awakening”; and the root \sqrt{div} , “brighten,” from which are derived the stems, *dyú-/dív-*, “sky, heaven,” the adjective, “divine, heavenly” *daívyā-*, and the verbal extended root, \sqrt{dyut} , “shine” (and additionally, *devá-* and *devī*, “god” and “goddess”).

These four repeated roots, in turn, appear to be grouped into two “pairs” whose repetitions are interlinked; when discussing the factors that make these repetitions perceptible, it might therefore be best to consider them in pairs. First, consider the repetitions of $\sqrt{dí(v)}$ and \sqrt{jan} , a pair which is introduced in a compound and repeated in two rounds of two contiguous forms.

- 7.75.1a ví uṣá āvo **divijá** ṛténa
*Dawn, **born/generated in heaven**, dawned widely with her truth;*
- 7.75.3c **janáyanto daíviyāni** vratāni
***Generating/(birthing) the heavenly** commandments,*
- 7.75.4cd abhipásyantī vayúnā **jánānām**
divó duhitá bhúvanasya pátnī
*Looking upon the patterns of the **generations/peoples** –
Heaven’s Daughter, mistress of the world.*

The two roots appear in one final round of repetition, this time at a distance.

- 7.75.6 práti **dyutánám** aruṣáso ásvás
citrá adṛśrann uṣasaṃ váhantaḥ
yāti śubhrá viśvapísā ráthena
dádhāti rátnaṃ vidhaté **jánāya**
*Opposite, the horses—ruddy,
Bright—were just seen conducting the **heavenly, flashing** Dawn.
She drives, the resplendent one, with a chariot entirely ornamented;*

she bestows treasure for the stewardly gens.

Redundancy clearly works to the advantage of this pair of roots: in all instances but the last, they appear as contiguous, i.e. co-occurring forms or compound members. The compound *divijā-* is also rendered memorable by its infrequency: there are only two instances of it in the entire *Rig Veda*, and this is the only one in the family books; it is quite possibly a novel paraphrase of one of Dawn's normal epithets, *divó duhitā*, "Heaven's daughter," which appears in pāda 4d and on many other occasions in Dawn hymns throughout the *Rig Veda*. So, we can be sure that this first compound would be remembered long enough for the first repetition of its elements to be perceived, and that the redundant repetitions would be not only perceptible, but striking.

Though in the final round of repetitions the two forms occur at considerable distance from one another, by then the appearance of the first element would trigger expectations of the second.

The repetitions of $\sqrt{gā}$, "go," and \sqrt{gr} , "awaken," are interlinked in a different way. The first two forms from these roots, *āgāt* and *ajīgaḥ*, are both found in Stanza 1 (at the ends of 1b and 1d, respectively).

7.75.1b āviṣkṛṇvānā mahimānam¹ **āgāt**³

7.75.1c āpa drūhas tāma āvar ājuṣtam

7.75.1d āṅgīrastamā pathīyā **ajīgaḥ**³

*Revealing her own greatness, she **came here**.*

She uncovered the deceits, the disagreeable darkness;

*Best of the Aṅgīrases, she **awakened** the paths.¹³³*

Incidentally, these forms are quite at home in dawn hymns: *āgāt* is used of the arrival of Dawn in 1.113, 5.80, 7.76, and 7.78, for instance; and the form *ajīgaḥ* is similarly used 1.92, 1.113, and 6.65. In 3.58, an Aśvin hymn, it is said that the praise of Uṣas awakened (*ajīgaḥ*) the divine twins.

The first repetition of $\sqrt{gā}$ is manifested in *āguḥ*.

7.75.3a eté tiyé bhānāvo darśatāyās

7.75.3b citrā uṣāso amṛtāsa **āguḥ**

These (are) the very lights of seemly

*Dawn; the bright immortal (lights that) **have just come here**.*

This form is four times less common than *āgāt*; but since we tend to argue that infrequency most powerfully enhances the perception of repetitions when idiosyncrasies help prior forms *linger* in the mind, the present

¹³³ Also, the use of *pathīyāḥ*, "paths," as a direct object for \sqrt{gr} , "awaken," would seem to *pave* the way for a more thematic link between this verb phrase and a motion verb like $\sqrt{gā}$, "go."

methodology forces us to remain agnostic as to whether a listener would initially take note of *águḥ* — especially in an environment rife with other repetitions.

However, trivial but effective redundant repetitions help guarantee that *águḥ* will eventually be perceived and grouped with other forms of $\sqrt{gā}$. The pronominal forms that begin pādas 3ab, the half-verse that terminates in *águḥ*, are from the same stems as those that begin pādas 4ab, the half-verse that terminates in *jigāti*:

7.75.3ab **eté tiyé** bhānāvo... **águḥ**

These (are) the very lights... (that) have just come here.

7.75.4a **eṣá siyá** yujāná parākāt

7.75.4b pāñca kṣitīḥ pári sadyó **jigāti**

This (is) the very one who, hitching herself up out of the distance,

Comes and goes around the five settlements in a single day

Here we have masculine plural nominative (in 3b) and feminine singular nominative forms of the pronominal stems *etá-* and *tiyá-*; these forms display vertical respiration. In and of themselves, these pronouns constitute a redundant round of repetition;¹³⁴ with the addition to the root $\sqrt{gā}$, the redundancy increases. Once this extremely redundant ring is recognized (as it inevitably would be), both repetitions of $\sqrt{gā}$ would certainly be noticed and grouped together.

Another, more unusual type of redundancy helps guarantee that *jigāti* in 4b will be perceived as a particularly significant repetition. This form is a reduplicated present from $\sqrt{gā}$, “go”—but on a phonological level, it sounds as if it should be associated with *ajīgaḥ*, and therefore, \sqrt{gr} “awaken”: the pattern of reduplication is quite similar (we have already seen in Section 2.1 of our treatment of 7.77 that vowel length can be disregarded when assessing the phonological similarity of words that appear to be involved in the same structuring device). In other words, *ajīgaḥ* is a kind of portmanteau repetition,¹³⁵ containing, in different ways, both $\sqrt{gā}$ and \sqrt{gr} , and thus qualifying as redundant. (For a loose English analogy, consider the following. In an almost certainly apocryphal interchange between two 19th-Century

¹³⁴ This is another example of perceptible repetitions that heighten our attention to certain features, though they themselves cannot be straightforwardly grouped into a structuring device. Since they are confined to these two pādas and serve to highlight repetitions of $\sqrt{gā}$ associated with the broader geometric ring, I mention them only as an ancillary repetition associated with this ring. (Here the separation of form from function is more of an organizational device than a methodological step.)

¹³⁵ Incidentally, I am not the first to suggest that certain form within the *Rig Veda* are meant to be perceived as portmanteaus. See Knobl 2009 (“Portmanteau Words in the Ṛgveda”) for a valuable and charming treatment of the subject.

New York lawyers—culled from Bartlett’s pages—the first lawyer accused the second of “Chesterfieldian urbanity”; the second accused the first of “Westchesterfieldian suburbanity.” The sting of the gibe—i.e. the one-two pun(ch) —is in the relationship that “suburbanity” possesses with *both* “urbane” and “(sub)urban.”)

Nor can we suppose that the introduction of this phonological echo is accidental: this is the only case in which this form, or any form from the same (reduplicated present) stem, is used to describe the motion of Dawn. The overwhelming majority of instances of *jīgāti* refer a) to the motion of ritual offerings, and/or or b) to the motion of Agni back and forth from the ritual grounds to the divine realm. The examples (over two dozen) are too numerous to quote fully; here I will provide one of each type from the seventh maṇḍala.

7.4.1cd yó daíviyāni mánuṣā janúṃṣi
 antár vísvāni vidmānā **jīgāti**
[Agni] who between divine and ritual tribes (/tribes of Manu)
Between all, with knowledge goes.

7.84.1cd prá vāṃ ghr̥tācī bāhuvór dādhanā
 pári tmānā víṣurūpā **jīgāti**
The ghee-spoon, placed in the arms, for you
Goes around by itself, manifesting in different forms.

In other words, in addition to manifesting a type of redundancy, the form *jīgāti* (in context, when used to describe the motion of Dawn in the sky) possesses a kind of semantic infrequency, infrequency which (once again) draws attention to this form and to any related future repetitions by creating a phraseological riddle awaiting a solution.

This portion of the geometric ring is rounded out by a repetition of \sqrt{gr} , “awaken.”

7.75.5c řṣiṣṭutā **jaráyanti**³⁷ maghóni¹
*Praised by seers, **awakening** (the world), bounteous...*

The elements of infrequency and redundancy that characterized *jīgāti* ensure that this last repetition would be perceived despite the distance between it and the prior etymologically related form *ajīgaḥ*. At least momentarily, a repetition of \sqrt{gr} would have been perceived *within* the sequence of phonemes in *jīgāti*; this mistaken impression, though eventually rejected, would hint at the possibility that \sqrt{gr} could resurface later on.

The reader may fairly ask what binds these two pairs of repeated terms into a single geometric ring. The co-occurrence of members of both pairs in Verses 1 *and* 4 helps cement their association via the

principle of recency (=proximity). In addition, both of these verses have a relatively low density of structurally significant repetitions; in particular, Verse 4 has absolutely no structurally significant repetitions other than the three forms that belong to this ring (*jigāti*, *jānānām*, and *divāḥ*), and the abovementioned pronominal forms which render repetitions of $\sqrt{gā}$ more perceptible. In Section 7.2 above, we noted that the nested ring that otherwise pervades Verses 1-5 seems to skip over Verse 4. It may be that this pocket of “low-density” was intended to facilitate the grouping of into *jigāti*, *jānānām*, and *divāḥ* into the same geometric series.

7.6 Form of structuring devices, continued: Redundant ring(s)

Three more rounds of repetition remain to be treated. The first two I reproduce here.

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 5	Verse 6
citrāṃ rayīm	darśatāyās citrā	citrā(-maghā) rāyāḥ	citrā adṛśran

We have two clearly redundant rings: one pair of phrases involves juxtaposed forms of the stems *citrā-* and *rayí-*; the other repetitions pair *citrā-* with a form from the root $\sqrt{dṛś}$. These repetitions would certainly be perceptible; however, the matter of grouping these repetitions into larger object(s) is a little less clear. Given that both rounds of repetitions involve the stem *citrā-*, a question presents itself: is this one structuring device or two?

7.7 Emily Dickinson again: structural braids and romantic entanglements

To understand why this is question is worthwhile from a perspective beyond the confines of the present methodological framework (zooming out to the framework of the “forest,” as discussed in the introduction), it would not hurt to turn to Emily Dickinson once again. The following poem, written in 1862, quite obviously deals with the relocation of someone close—but the merging and restructuring of what would initially be perceived as two structuring devices gives some pointed cues as to the relationship’s beginning, “flowering,” and concomitant limitations. (I will explain the meaning of the superscripts in the exposition that follows; basically, they connote formal repetitions associated with each “structuring device.”)

I¹ envy¹ Seas, whereon He rides
 I envy Spokes of Wheels
 Of Chariots, that Him convey
 I envy Crooked **Hills¹**

That² gaze upon **His²** journey
How easy All can see
What is forbidden utterly
As Heaven—**unto me²**!

I¹ envy¹ Nests of Sparrows
That dot His distant Eaves
The wealthy Fly, upon His Pane
The happy—happy **Leaves¹**

That² just abroad **His²** Window
Have Summer's leave to play
The Ear Rings of Pizarro
Could not obtain **for me²**

I¹ envy¹ Light—that wakes Him
And Bells—that boldly ring
To tell Him it is Noon, abroad
Myself^{1?}—be Noon to **Him^{1?}**

Yet **interdict²**—**my^{1/2}** Blossom
And abrogate—**my^{1/2}** Bee
Lest Noon in Everlasting Night
Drop **Gabriel^{2?}**—and **Me^{2?}**

This is a very tightly structured poem, and there are far more patterns of repetitions within and across stanzas than what I have highlighted above; I intend to call attention only to repetitions that would be most likely to be perceived as structuring devices because of a) unique levels of *redundancy*, facilitating the perception of repetition; b) their role in framing *conventionally* recognized structural sub-units, namely, stanzas.

The first two thirds of the poem features an alternation between two such structurally significant patterns of repetition. In the first pattern, i.e. device, labeled with a superscript “1,” the initial clause of the stanza begins with, “I envy [inanimate object(s)]”; the stanza then ends with a noun that refers to inanimate objects or elements of setting. The other pattern/device entails a stanza-initial clause, which begins with the conjunction, “that,” features a third plural indicative verb, and includes a noun phrase with the 3rd

singular possessive personal pronoun, “his”; the stanza then ends with the first singular accusative pronoun “me” as the object of a preposition.

This pattern obtains for the first four stanzas. In the final two stanzas, something very interesting happens. In Stanza 5, the first structuring device begins as usual—but the final word no longer refers to an object or an element of scenery. Instead, that final word is another third person pronominal form: “Him.” We might also notice that the same line of the stanza begins with an emphatic “Myself”—not among the carefully limited inventory of pronominal forms that we have seen before in the poem. In other words, the repetitions associated with this structuring device have been somewhat attenuated, though not altogether discarded; this makes the two (possibly interrelated) changes stand out all the more.

Stanza 6 is even more interesting from a structural perspective. As in the other rounds of repetition that we’ve associated with the second structuring device, the first clause of this stanza has a third person plural verb; however, as if to herald coming changes, that clause begins with “yet” in place of the expected “that.” The changes do indeed begin immediately, instead of the expected possessive “His,” we have, “my.” This seems to be a blend of aspects of repetition that formerly characterized Structuring Device 1 *or* 2; for that reason, I labeled “my” with both superscripts. The stanza ends with “Me,” which would appear to preserve the pattern in the second structuring device—except that this time, (along with an up until now unmentioned “Gabriel,”) this pronominal form functions as a *direct object* rather than a more syntactically peripheral object of a preposition, a role-change which seems to be hinted at by idiosyncratic orthography (i.e. the capitalization).

These revisions of the old structuring devices prompt a reappraisal of the poem’s structure in its entirety; by the end of Stanza 5, the poem’s development seems to be less about the repetition of formulaic phrases and more about the evolving interplay between “Me, Myself, I” and mysterious “Him,” or rather, “His” (unattainable) Majesty. During the first four stanzas, clauses would feature *either* the first person pronoun *or* the third person pronoun in one of the two most crucial syntactic roles: namely, subject and (the noun phrase that functions as the) direct object. At the end of the fifth stanza, though this pattern is not quite broken, the emergence of the emphatic pronoun “Myself” in the same line as “Him” suggests a heightened proximity. In the sixth stanza, the first-person “my” occupies the structural slot formerly reserved for “His”—a formal merger of the once independent Structuring Devices 1 and 2. Summing all of this up, we can say that the two structuring devices have been braided together into one series of referential relationships encompassing the first and third person pronouns.

This revised appraisal of the formal structuring device(s) at play also influences our understanding of the functions of variations within them. Jakobson might say that the poem begins by alternating between an *emotive* mode (the first-person dominated “I envy”) and a *referential* mode (the third-person references to the separate settings “whereon He rides”), and ends in an even blend, when the mind’s eye dwells on a particular *context* that can subsume both “Him” and “Me.”¹³⁶ That context involves church bells sounding at morning and noon, and “He” is renamed “Gabriel,” i.e. identified as a messenger of God. A church, then, is the backdrop for the meeting of “Him” and “Me,” and we have a suspicion that “He,” like “Gabriel,” is someone a few rungs above Dickinson on the stairway to heaven. Indeed, in 1862, a Minister Charles Wadsworth, one of Emily Dickinson’s closest friends (and, according to many, a possible romantic interest), relocated to a new church across the country.¹³⁷ The braiding-together of the structuring devices in the stanzas referencing a church can be interpreted to hint at the “grounds” of their former proximity and continued intimacy, with all its attendant barriers and proscriptions.

Although I did not belabor the point before, we did see a similar “braiding” together of seemingly separate structuring devices in 7.77.¹³⁸

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6
váso ⁵ bíbhratī ⁵	raśmíbhir ⁶ víaktā# ⁶	bharā ⁵ vāsūni ^{5/6}	bhānúbhir ⁶ ví ⁶ bhāhi# ⁶	matíbhir ⁶
vásiṣṭhāḥ# ^{6/5}				

As I noted above in Section 3.7, the family name Vasiṣṭha, which appears in 7.77.6 as part of the last round of Structuring Device 6, is etymologically related to *vásu-*, a stem which features prominently in Structuring Device 5 (appearing in 7.77.4): so, much like “my” (the 1st person that dominated Structuring Device 1) supplanted “His” (the third person that dominated Structuring Device 2) in Stanza 6 of the Dickinson poem, these devices in 7.77 might appear to be fused by the movement of an element from one into the other (and on the basis of underlying phonological similarities). To indicate this possibility, we could have assigned this device two superscripts:

¹³⁶ See Part I, Section 6.3 and Part IV, Section 4.1 (among other places) for remarks on similar shifts in Vedic poetry (I call them “rhetorical shapeshifting”).

¹³⁷ See Dickinson and Johnson: 1955 for more on the life and art of Emily Dickinson.

¹³⁸ Brief note was made of this in Section 2.1 and Section 3.7 of this chapter.

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6
váso bíbhrati ^{5/6}	raśmíbhīr víaktā# ^{6/5}	bharā vásūni ^{5/6}	bhānúbhīr ví bhāhi# ^{6/5}	matíbhīr
vásiṣṭhāḥ # ^{6/5}				

Not unlike the case of Dickinson’s poem, this structural merger in 7.77 one of the factors that made a direct, equal interchange between Dawn and the family of officiants sound more probable: such a merger would allow for a more direct comparison between the “goods” (*vásūni*) that Dawn bore down and the “goods” the Vasiṣṭhas *had* (the proper name could be literally translated as “most goodly”).¹³⁹ In light of these two cases, the question of one structuring device versus two seems to be eminently worth asking.

7.8 Repetitions of *citrá-* and the braiding together of two devices in 7.75

Returning then to the case of 7.75: the recognition of two separate redundant rings might not be the only, or even the first, grouping judgment to materialize within a listener’s mind. What follows is an account of a listener’s grouping judgments as they might evolve.

The two basic principles that are at play here are the principles of recency/ (in Gestalt terms) proximity and different orders of redundancy/ (in Gestalt terms) similarity.

The factor of recency would argue for the close association of the forms of *citrá-* that are in contiguous verses: the pair in Verses 2-3 would be one structuring device, and the pair in Verses 5-6 another.

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5	Verse 6
citrám ————— citrá(h)			citrá(-maghā) ————— citrá(h)	

However, the redundant rings (*citrám rayím... citrá(-maghā) rāyáḥ*, *darśatāyās citrá...citrá adṛśran*), and therefore the Gestalt factor of similarity would promote the opposite associations.

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 5	Verse 6
citrám rayím	darśatāyās citrá	citrá(-maghā) rāyáḥ	citrá adṛśran

This grouping arrangement also has a different form of redundancy/similarity working to its advantage: the forms of *citrá-* in Verse 3 and Verse 6 are both nominative plural.

¹³⁹ More on the formal aspects and implications of this comparison can be found in the second half of Sections 4.7-8.

Of course, the identity of the stem *citrá-* along with the two-syllable count and pāda-initial metrical position of all of the forms of *citrá-* that we see in 7.75 constitutes yet another order of redundancy/similarity, which argues for the association of all four forms with one another.

Rather than conflicting with each other, these different types of association would steadily promote the impression that all of these phrases constitute a single series of repetition. In such a fashion, two structuring devices (i.e. the two redundant rings) might easily coalesce into one. I denote this shifting grouping judgment by providing two alternate superscripts for each repetition.

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 5	Verse 6
citrám^{4/5} rayím^{4/5}	darśatáyās^{5/4} citrá^{4/5/4}	citrá^{4/5}(-maghā) rāyāḥ^{4/5}	citrá^{4/5/4} adṛśran^{5/4}

The possibility of different orders of association between these repetitions will have some important implications when we turn to the question of function: basically, these two redundant rings act together to articulate a particular type of transition that bridges this hymn’s two main discourse units.

7.9 A structural “hub” in Verses 5 and 6 —repetitions of \sqrt{vah}

With respect to duration and complexity, the final structurally significant round of repetition that I will identify in 7.75 is rather minimal; but (as we will soon see) with regard to its position and role in the hymn’s developmental scheme, it is crucial. For that reason, it will end up making sense to consider it as a “device” in its own right.¹⁴⁰ This device consists of one simple concatenation, a pair of repetitions of the root \sqrt{vah} , “conduct.”

Verse 5	Verse 6
vāḥnibhiḥ	vāhantaḥ

This repetition occurs in the same pair of verses in which all the other structuring devices terminate or are initiated. Below, I assign the two nested rings superscripts “1” and “2,” the geometric ring superscript “3,”

¹⁴⁰ In Section 7.5, I chose not to identify similarly modest-looking pronominal repetitions in Verses 3 and 4 as an independent structuring device because they were semantically trivial function words and served primarily to make a round of an otherwise unrelated geometric ring more perceptible. Here, I choose to identify the repetitions of \sqrt{vah} as a structuring device with an eye for their semantics (see Sections 9.5-6 below) as much as their formal features, and particularly with the knowledge that other hymns attributed to Vasiṣṭha seem to flag structurally climactic passages with semantically relevant repetitions (see the treatment of 7.86 in a subsequent chapter). This is another moment in which the separation of form and function is little more than an organizational device.

and the redundant ring(s) involving *citrá-* the superscript(s) “5/4.” (See Section 8 for a full inventory of these structuring devices.) The superscript “6” will therefore be assigned to the repetitions of \sqrt{vah} .

7.75.5c $\text{ṛṣiṣṭutā jaráyanti}^3 \text{ maghóni}^1$

7.75.5d $\text{uṣá uchatī váhñibhir}^6 \text{ grṇānā}$

*Praised by seers, **awakening** (the world), **bounteous***

*Dawn dawns, being hymned by the **conductors** (of songs/oblations).*

7.75.6 $\text{prāti dyutānām}^3 \text{ aruṣāso áśvās}^2$

$\text{citrá}^{5/4} \text{ adṛśrann}^{5/4} \text{ uṣāsaṃ váhantaḥ}^6$

yāti śubhrā vísvapísā ráthēna

$\text{dádhāti}^2 \text{ rátnam}^2 \text{ vidhaté}^3 \text{ jánāya}^3$

Opposite, the horses--ruddy,

Bright—have just been seen conducting the, heavenly flashing Dawn.

She drives, the resplendent one, with a chariot entirely ornamented;

she bestows treasure for the stewardly gens.

At least with regard to position, we can say that the repetitions of \sqrt{vah} are *pivotal* in one sense or another. Without getting too ahead of ourselves, we might note that \sqrt{vah} is a word which denotes movement and connotes reciprocal exchange (see *RV* 7.16.9, quoted in Section 7.2, or *RV* 6.64.6, quoted in Section 7.3); so there might be other ways in which this passage is pivotal.

That brings me to a final parallel between 7.75 and the Dickinsonian poem that we have considered at some length. I quote the last two stanzas.

I envy *Light*—that wakes Him

And Bells—that boldly ring

To tell Him it is **Noon**, abroad

Myself—be **Noon** to Him

Yet *interdict*—my Blossom

And abrogate—my Bee

Lest **Noon** in Everlasting Night

Drop Gabriel—and Me

Recall that these are the two stanzas in which a pair of prominent structuring devices coalesced into one pattern of repetition; so, structurally speaking, they marked a shift.

“Noon” is a turning point semantically as well. The unique repetition of “Noon” at the *end* of Dickinson’s poem not only indexes a transition in context/topic, but also helps us understand a bit more about the significance of this transition for the author. The sounding of church bells at noon—which no

doubt resounded loudly in the setting in which she and Minister Wadsworth met—is meant as a gesture of celebration (the custom originated to celebrate the victory in the Battle of Belgrade). As a daily experience shared by Dickinson and Wadsworth despite the geographic distance between them, the noon bells can also function as note of imagined intimacy (at least, in the mind of Emily Dickinson). At the same time, the bells of “Noon” seem to remind Dickinson that things could take a *turn* for the worse (“Everlasting Night”) should that intimacy become any more concrete. They dictate the terms of a healthy exchange.

7.10 Summary

We are now in a position to notice some striking formal similarities between 7.77 and 7.75. In each of these hymns, two complementary structuring devices of the same type pervade opposite sections of the hymn. (In both hymns, they are labeled as Structuring Devices 1 and 2. In 7.77, both of these devices are formed by concatenation; in 7.75, they are nested rings.) In both hymns, a structuring device composed of two redundant lexical rings straddles the boundary suggested by these complementary devices. (I’m referencing Structuring Device(s) 5/6 in 7.77 and Structuring Device(s) 4/5 in 7.75.) Additionally, both hymns have a geometric ring. This inventory of similarities seems too copious to be attributed to chance. That said, there is one structural feature that distinguishes 7.75 from 7.77: the singular “hub” that is the destination and/or starting point for all the hymn’s structuring devices.

8. CHART OF STRUCTURING DEVICES

<i>S</i>	Nested rings	Geometric Ring	Redund. Lexical Ring(s)	Concatenation
1	mahimānam ¹	divijā ³ āgāt ³ ajīgaḥ ³		
2	mahé... ¹ mahé ¹ mārteṣu ¹		citrām ^{4/5} rayīm ^{4/5}	
3	amṛtāsaḥ ¹	eté tiyé ^{3**} ... āguḥ ³ janáyanto ³ daíviyāni ³	darśatāyās ^{5/4} citrā(ḥ) ^{5/4}	
4.		eṣā siyā ^{3**} ... jigāti ³ jānānām ³ divāḥ ³		
5.	(citrā-) maghā ^{1*} maghónī ^{1*}	jaráyanti ³	citrā ^{4/5} (-maghā) rāyāḥ ^{4/5}	vāhribhiḥ ⁶
6	ásvāḥ ² dádḥāti ² rátanam ² vidhaté ^{2*}	dyutānām ³ jānāya ³	citrā ^{4/5} adṛśran ^{5/4}	vāhantaḥ ⁶
7.	gávaḥ ²			
8.	gómat ² dhehi ² rátanam ² ásvāvat ²			

*The forms *maghā* and *maghónī* are etymologically related, but only *folk*-etymologically related to *mahimānam* and *mahé*. The form *vidhaté* is at least folk-etymologically related to the form *dhehi* (and *dádḥāti*).

**These pronominal repetitions seem to be a trivial focalizing device that helps draw attention to the geometric ring (see Section 7.5); as a result, I have decided not to categorize them as a separate structuring device.

9. FUNCTION OF STRUCTURING DEVICES

9.1 Overview: devices and discourses

As outlined in Section 7.1 above and detailed in Sections 7.2-4, 7.75 features two structurally complementary nested rings: the first ring (superscript “1” in the chart above) terminates in Verse 5; and the second one (superscript “2”) begins in Stanza 6. There is also a third structuring device (superscript “3” that pervades these initial verses). Particularly after examining 7.77, our first instinct would be to suppose that Structuring Devices 1 2 and 3 jointly serve an indexical function, demarcating two separate discourses, which dominate Verses 1-5 and 6-8, respectively.

However, this hymn turns out to be a little more complicated. Other structuring devices challenge rather than support the idea that two completely discrete discourses can be identified. Depending on the structuring devices that one privileges, a putative boundary between discourses could be put anywhere from pāda 5c (where Structuring Device 1 terminates) to pāda 6d (where Structuring Device 3 terminates). Additionally, some structuring devices would only be recognized as such when they terminate in Verses 5-6 (see the discussion of Structuring Device(s) 4/5 in 7.6-8). Finally, we must not ignore the unique repetition of *√vah* (superscript “6”), which is initiated in Verse 5 and terminates in Verse 6. Collectively, these patterns seem to hint at another structural unit, a kind of transitional “hub,” in which all structuring devices are terminated and/or initiated.

Nor is there any obvious independent evidence to support the idea that Verses 1-5 constitute one discrete discourse unit and Verses 6-8 another. Recall that there was no dearth of such evidence in 7.77. In that hymn, the first discourse unit was dominated by aorist indicative forms (which tends to be the case in Dawn hymns), and the second discourse unit was dominated by imperative forms. This distribution of forms corresponded to a thematic split between the explicative(/descriptive) prelude and appellative conclusion. In the case of the present hymn, we cannot rely on such clear-cut categories and morphological indicators. The finite verbs in Verses 1-5 are almost evenly split between aorist indicatives on the one hand and presents and imperatives on the other; Verse 2 is dominated by the second singular imperatives that supposedly should characterize the final “appellative” portion of the hymn. Verses 6-8 are not as clearly dominated by the imperative as the second discourse unit in 7.77 (in fact, there are some aorist indicatives); if we are to convincingly claim that particular verse groups are separate discourse units thematically as well as structurally, we will have to rely on other criteria.

In 7.75, even more than in 7.77, transitions and confluences articulated through structuring devices will help functionally distinguish discourses. Based on the considerations above, I propose we examine the functions of three separate categories of devices: devices that pervade Verses 1-4, before the transitional “hub”; devices that are first recognized in Verses 5-6, i.e. in the “hub” itself; and finally, the single structuring device that dominates the verses after the “hub.”

9.2 Structuring Devices 1 and 3: Dawn’s appearance and Dawn appearing in epithet-based homologies

Structuring Devices 1 and 3 pervade Verses 1-4, eventually tapering off and terminating in the structural “hub” of the hymn. If 7.75 communicates anything akin to the transitions that are present in the first discourse of 7.77, it would be in these two structuring devices.

In Section 4.2, we noted that one particular type of formal and thematic transition manifested itself in the first discourse of 7.77. Roots or stems that first surfaced in attributive epithets describing Dawn were reconfigured into parts of the predicate (participial forms, objects in participial phrases, finite aorist forms), or else they were converted into vocatives. In all of these instances, descriptions of Dawn’s general attributes and roles gave way to references to/demands for action on the present occasion. Some relevant things do appear to be happening in the first few stanzas of 7.75, and more specifically within Structuring Device 3. Take the following example, for instance: in this case, an attributive epithet is transformed into a participial phrase.

7.75.1a ví uṣá āvo **divijá**³ ṛténa

Dawn, born in heaven, has dawned widely with her truth;

7.75.3cd **janáyanto**³ **daíviyāni**³ vratāni

āpṛṇánto antárikṣā ví asthuḥ

Generating/(birthing) the heavenly commandments,

Filling the midspace, [the lights of Dawn] spread out.

Note also that if the epithet were to be rendered as a verbal phrase, Dawn would be a passive/intransitive subject, whereas in the participial phrase, Dawn is the subject/agent of a transitive verb. Additionally, there is a change in gender and number from feminine singular to masculine plural.¹⁴¹

Within 7.75, there is one particularly close phraseological parallel to 7.77: an attributive use of the stem *citrámaghā-* transitions to a predicative (nominative, instead of vocative) use of the stem *maghóní-*.

¹⁴¹ Compare this to the transitions discussed in in Section 9.4.

7.75.5b citrá**maghā**¹ rāyá íse vásūnām

7.75.5c íṣiṣṭutā jaráyantī **maghónī**¹

*(Dawn) who possesses bright, **grand gifts**, has dominion over wealth, over goods.*

*Praised by seers, awakening (the world), **gift-grand***

Compare this to the transition highlighted in our treatment of 7.77 above.

7.77.3c uṣá adarśi raśmíbhīr víaktā

7.77.3d citrá**maghā**¹ víśvam ánu prábhūtā

Dawn was just seen, adorned with rays,

*Possessing bright, **grand gifts**, projecting through toward all (the world).*

7.77.4d codáya rádho² grṇatē **maghoni**¹

*Impel largesse for the singer, **you gift-grand one**.*

Of course, 7.75.5bc is a transition within a verse as opposed to a round of a structuring device that unites verses. Still, there is a clear pattern here: attributive usages of *citrámaghā-* are linked to predicative/vocative usages of *maghónī-*. Remembering the role of *maghá-* in expressing reciprocity relationships (discussed at length in Section 7.2), we can see that here, as in 7.77, great compliments are being reformulated into great expectations. We might approximate the effect of this pattern in the following paraphrase: “**Gifted** and bright, Dawn was just seen...Drive largesse toward the singer, **Gift-giving** Dawn!”

There is one more difficulty. When we look at other forms of *maghá-/máh-* in Structuring Device 1 in 7.75, we see similar links but a more ambivalent progression: first *máh-* appears as a part of the *predicate*, in verbal/participial phrases; then, *maghá-* manifests as a part of an *attributive epithet*; in the same stanza, *maghá-* manifests as part of a predicative adjective (*maghónī*).

7.75.1b āviṣṭkrṇvānā **mahimānam**¹ āgāt

*Revealing her own **greatness**, she has just come here.*

7.75.2ab **mahé**¹ no adyá suvitāya bodhi

úṣo **mahé**¹ saúbhagāya prá yandhi

*For our **great** good faring take note of us today;*

*O Dawn, for our **great** good fortune provide (for us).*

7.75.5bc citrá**maghā**¹ rāyá íse vásūnām

íṣiṣṭutā jaráyantī **maghónī**¹

uṣá uchatī váhñibhir grṇānā

*(Dawn) who brings bright, **grand gifts**, has dominion over wealth, over goods*

*Praised by seers, awakening (the world), **granting gifts**,*

Dawn dawns, being hymned by the conductors (of songs/oblations).

How, then, are we to characterize these transitions, and by extension the first discourse unit?

One way to accommodate the lack of a consistent directionality in the shifts found in 7.75 is to think of transitions as a special case of *homologies*, i.e. links and alignments. In the present case, shared lexical elements are asserting homologies between Dawn’s general tendencies and actions on this present occasion. We can characterize this type of homology formally as well as semantically: it consists of (folk-)etymologically related forms that link adjectives describing *Dawn’s* (general traits/) *appearance* to phrases describing *Dawn appearing* on the ritual grounds. Outlining the traits that seem to repeat themselves in similar homologies found in 7.77 and 7.75, we have the following.¹⁴²

- 1) (thematic) the explicit **focus is on Dawn’s** appearance and Dawn appearing;
- 2) (formal) **one half** of the relevant round of repetition is an **attributive epithet** modifying the subject, Dawn;
- 3) (formal) the **other half** of the relevant round of repetition is **part of the predicate, or else a vocative**: in other words, it is a form that communicates something about the unfolding ritual scene.

Henceforth, this pattern will be referred to as “type a” homologies or “epithet-based” homologies.

Epithet-based homologies found in structuring devices seem to be modeled off a technique that is commonly found in stanza-internal repetitions, the simplest manifestation of which would be a statement like, “Dawn dawns” (*uṣá uchatī*) in 7.75.5d; c.f. 7.77.4a, “Dawn (v.), (O Dawn)!” (*ucha (uṣah)*). We might capture the approximate effect of this technique with such formulations as, “**Welcome Dawn** might as **well come down**” or, “The **heir-apparent Dawn appeared** in the **air**” (or, as suggested above, “**Gifted** and bright, Dawn was just seen...Drive largesse toward the singer, **Gift-giving Dawn!**”).

Indeed, even the more elaborate-sounding requests in 7.75.2 above essentially boil down to, “Dawn, o Dawn!” More specifically, each of them could be taken as a paraphrase of, “Wake us up [imperative] for our daily tasks [dative].”

7.75.2ab **mahé**¹ no adyá **suvitáya bodhi**

úṣo **mahé**¹ **saúbhagāya** prá yandhi

For our great good faring [dative] **take note** [imperative] *of/awaken us today;*

O Dawn, for our great good fortune [dative] **provide** [imperative] *(for us).*

This is particularly the case since the form *bodhi* can be taken to derive from the root \sqrt{budh} , “awaken,” a root used with the same dative construction to convey this sort of message. (The other possibility for *bodhi* is a derivation from $\sqrt{bhū}$, “become.”)

¹⁴² This is essentially the same inventory of features described in Section 4.2.

1.92.9a *viśvāni devī bhūvanābhicākṣyā*

1.92.9b *praticī cākṣur urviyā ví bhāti*

1.92.9c *viśvaṃ jīvaṃ carāse bodháyantī*

The goddess, gazing out over all creatures,

Like an eye, facing straight towards (them), shines out widely,

Awakening every living thing to motion.

To the extent that one regards Dawn’s appearance (in a general sense) and Dawn’s appearing (on this occasion) as sufficiently different topics, this could be regarded as a kind of antanaclasis. I myself would not use the term “antanaclasis” quite so lightly. The more important point is that the same principle of linguistic manipulation is at play here, albeit with subtler results: the epithet-based homologies are a formal method of deploying repetitions in the service of rhetorically advantageous alignments between past and present.

Since in 7.77 Structuring Devices 1 and 3 appear to formally demarcate the first discourse unit, and in 7.75 these devices pervade the hymn’s introductory verses, we might suppose that homologies found in these devices are part of what characterizes the introductory discourse in both hymns, particularly since similar techniques cannot be found in the final verses of either hymns. As has been mentioned, this linguistic tactic helps leverage complements in the process of making demands. We will need a little more information before we can understand why these processes should unfold specifically in the first discourse unit; for now, let’s just say that if complementary epithets are to be used to pressure Dawn into fulfilling the poet’s wishes, it would make sense that this pressure would be introduced *before* the most specific demands are made and before the poet explicitly presents himself as an effective ritual partner.

9.3 Structuring Devices 1 and 3, continued: Dawn appearing and interacting in aorist-based homologies

We have just seen that in both 7.77 and 7.75, Structuring Device 1 seems to include concerted attempts to establish connections between Dawn’s general tendencies and the here-and-now of the ritual scene, using a template that links a complementary epithet to an observed or desired action; we have also seen that in 7.75, Structuring Device 3 is also involved in this process.

Epithet-based homologies are not the only such alignments to be found in Structuring Device 3. Recall from our discussion on the “form” of repetitions in 7.75 that this structuring device also features the following forms of $\sqrt{gā}$, “go,” and \sqrt{gr} , “awaken.”

7.75.1b āviṣkṛṇvānā mahimānam āgāt³

7.75.1c āpa drúhas tāma āvar ājuṣṭam

7.75.1d āṅgīrastamā pathīyā ajīgaḥ³

*Revealing her own greatness, she **has just come here**.*

She uncovered the deceits, the disagreeable darkness;

*Best of the Aṅgīrases, she **has just awakened** the paths.*

7.75.4ab eṣā siyā · yujānā parākāt

pāñca kṣīṭīḥ pári sadyó jigāti³

This, the very one, hitching herself up out of the distance,

***Comes and goes** around the five settlements in a single day*

7.75.5cd ṛṣiṣṭutā jaráyantī³ maghónī

uṣā uchatī váhnbhir grṇānā

*Praised by seers, **awakening** (the world), gift-grand,*

Dawn dawns, being hymned by the conductors (of songs/oblations).

Recall from the same discussion (i.e. Section 7.5) that the forms *āgāt*, “came,” and *ajīgaḥ*, “awakened” are commonly used to describe the fact and effects of Dawn’s arrival. We also established that the form (*pári*) *jigāti*, “goes (around),” typically refers to the motion of ritual offerings and implements (such as the ghee-spoon), or to the motion of Agni back and forth from the heavenly realms to the ritual grounds; the reference to Dawn would be a noticeable departure. The (relatively rare) form *jaráyantī*, “awakening,” does tend to refer to Dawn’s celestial manifestation rather than her participation in ritual; but it differs from *ajīgaḥ* in being a present participle indicating sustained and continued interaction—and context makes it more than clear that Dawn is capable of lending a hand (or at least a few rosy fingers) down on the ritual grounds. In other words, Structuring Device 3 contains a homology linking Dawn’s forever *punctual* but fleeting appearance in the sky (expressed by the aorist forms *āgāt* and *ajīgaḥ*) to a more sustained presence and potential ritual role (expressed by the present-tense forms *jigāti* and *jaráyantī*).

Revisiting 7.77 with this newly discovered homology type in mind, we see that in that hymn as well, the first discourse unit bestows similar formal and thematic links. The passages below will no doubt be familiar.

7.77.2b rúśad váso bíbhratī śukráṃ aśvait⁴

*Bringing/bearing (her) luminous, gleaming wear, she **has just brightened**.*

7.77.3b śvetám⁴ náyantī sudṛśīkam aśvam⁴

*Leading a **bright horse** lovely to see*

7.77.3bc śvetám náyantī sudṛśīkam¹ aśvam

uṣā adarśī¹ raśmībhir víaktā

Leading a bright horse lovely to see,

*Dawn **has just been seen**, adorned with rays.*

In these three intersecting passages, we see two aorist indicative verbal forms— *ašvait*, “(she) has just brightened,” and *adarši*, “has just been seen” — transformed into objects in present participial phrases. While the first example involves forms in a structuring device that extends into both discourse units, and the second example occurs *within* stanzas rather than across them, these particular links are made exclusively within the first discourse unit, and can thus be taken to characterize that unit. In these cases, just as in the examples from 7.75, we see Dawn’s already accomplished (aorist-tense) arrival re-parsed into a more sustained interaction, this time involving the leading of a “bright horse lovely to see” that is highly reminiscent of ritual gift-bearing. Note that 7.77.3b has been previously described (in Section 4.5) as a “pointed repackaging of Dawn’s attributes...light is associated with a distinct entity (and detachable adornments)”; I am saying the same thing here, just rephrased in light of these newly identified formal patterns.

Based on the four examples above, we could outline the following features of this homology type.

- 1) (thematic) the explicit focus is on a description of **Dawn appearing**;
- 2) (formal) **one half** of the relevant round of repetition is an **augmented aorist indicative verbal form**;
- 3) (formal) **the other half** of the relevant round of repetition is a **present verbal form** or part of a present participial phrase that connotes a more sustained ritual interaction.

We can call this homology “type b” or “aorist-based.” Like the type-a epithet-based homologies, this seems to be modeled on a technique that can be used within stanzas (see 7.77.3bc, above). We might simulate the effect with a paraphrase like, “Dawn **passed** overhead; she takes light down and **passes it around**,” or, “Dawn **was seen**, bringing her horse **to see and be seen**.”

As the reader will no doubt have noticed upon reading passages that more often than not involved a significant amount of overlap, these homologies can interact with a sort of relay or tag-team effect, simultaneously creating multiple different types of alignments: something to the effect of, “**Welcome** Dawn **passed** overhead; she might as **well come** here. She takes light down, **passes** it around.”

9.4 Recharacterizing the first discourses of 7.77 and 7.75

In 7.77, epithet-based and aorist-based homologies are unique to the first discourse unit. In 7.75, they are unique to the two structuring devices that pervade the initial four verses of the hymn (although both of these devices actually terminate in the 7.75’s “hub,” i.e. Verses 5-6). The basic function of these

homologies seems to be to connect Dawn’s typical characterizations with expected or hoped-for actions on one specific ritual occasion, and to subtly refashion the fact of Dawn’s appearance into something that sounds *a bit more* like ritual activity. In other words, the initial verses of both hymns inch closer in both space and time to a more worldly discourse. However, in the beginning of these hymns, the phrases that contain these modest centrifugal shifts are carefully constructed to explicitly refer to Dawn’s divine attributes and atmospheric movements, and only implicitly connote ritual activity.

To understand just how intricate this balancing act can get, we should examine another feature that unites the first verses in 7.77 and 7.75. In 7.77, the most striking conflation of Agni- and Dawn- imagery is in the first discourse unit: 7.77.1cd features a modulation from Agni- to Dawn-imagery via an initially ambiguous implied grammatical subject. Likewise, in the first four verses of 7.75, we see “constellations” of imagery linking Dawn to Agni: for instance, epithets like *aṅgīrastamā*, “best of the Aṅgirasas” (pāda 1d), and *dēvi mārteṣu mānuṣi*, “Goddess among mortals, descendant of Manu” (pāda 2d), all of which have been shown (in Section 5) to be highly reminiscent of collocations describing the fire-god. Within that section, I suggested that the blending of Dawn- and Agni-imagery was prompted by much more than the simple mingling of daybreak’s hues and fire’s flames at Dawn’s sacrifice: because the ritual officiants are the agents that kindle the sacrificial fire (and therefore ritual partners with Agni), depicting Dawn as akin to that fire strengthens officiants’ claim to a reciprocity relationship with the goddess. It is hardly an accident that modulations from Agni- to Dawn- imagery (like the one in 7.77.1cd) are often finally disambiguated via gender-inflected forms: the alternations between female and male agency signal not only the intermingling of Dawn and Agni, but interchanges between (female) Dawn and (exclusively male) ritual officiants.

With all this in mind, it would be good to turn our attention back to one particular aorist-based homology that we have observed in Verses 1-4 of 7.75. Essentially, this homology taps into the expectation that divine and human entities will be split along gendered lines, and then pits those expectations against other explicit and implicit references to divine and human activity. First, I quote a string of vocatives that immediately precedes this homology.

7.75.2d *dēvi mārteṣu*¹ mānuṣi...

...Goddess **among mortals**, belonging to the sons of Manu

Here we have a seemingly contrastive juxtaposition of the singular feminine (vocative) divinity and the plural masculine (locative) human agents (*dēvi mārteṣu*, “Goddess among mortals”); but no sooner is this

implied gendered contrast made than a third term comes along to mediate it. The inflectional morphology of *mānuṣi* indicates it refers to a female, Dawn, but its derivational morphology connects Dawn to Manu, the (male) first ritualist, and by extension to (male) officiants in general. The result is that this triad of terms can be read to *either* emphasize *or* undercut the distinction between feminine singular *divine* agency and masculine plural *ritual* activity.¹⁴³

What happens next proceeds along the same lines, but in a more elaborate fashion, implicitly blurring while explicitly emphasizing the line between divine and ritual activity. Dawn’s light is refracted into *masculine plural* lights (*bhānāvaḥ*); but an implied metalinguistic equation adjusts this characterization almost as soon as it is presented, linking those lights with a feminine singular form. The frame of this equation is the same set of pronominal stems and forms of $\sqrt{gā}$ that were discussed in Section 7.5; those terms appears in bold below. The words equated are underlined. (This passage constitutes an additional example of an aorist-based homology.)

7.75.3 **eté** **tiyé** bhānāvo darśatāyās
 citrā uśaso **amṛtāsa**¹ **āguḥ**³
***These, the very lights** (masculine plural) of seemly
 Dawn, the bright immortal (lights), have just come here.*

7.75.4ab **eṣā** **siyā** · yujānā parākāt
 pāñca kṣitīḥ pāri sadyó **jigāti**³
***This, the very one, hitching herself up** (feminine sing.) out of the distance,
 Comes and goes around the five settlements in a single day*

The form *yujānā*, “hitching herself up,” is the feminine singular form that implicitly replaces *bhānāvaḥ*.

Particularly after the appearance of *dévi márteṣu*, it would be hard for the masculine *bhānāvaḥ* of the ritual fire not to connote Agni and his human collaborators on some level; and as we have already seen (in Section 7.3), usage trends suggest that the form *bhānāvaḥ* is more comfortably used to describe firelight than Dawn’s hues. However, these lights are explicitly described as *amṛtāsaḥ*, “immortal,” a term which the first nested ring connects and implicitly contrasts to *márteṣu*, “among the mortals.” On the other hand, while the phrase *yujānā parākāt*, “yoking herself up out of the distance,” can hardly refer to anyone besides Dawn, we see that this feminine singular subject is paired with the verbal form *jigāti*, which has already been shown to almost exclusively refer to the movement of Agni or the circulation of ritual offerings (see

¹⁴³ While ritual activity implies roles for humans, it is of course not a mutually exclusive category with divine agency, a fact which our poet puts to good use later on in this hymn.

Section 7.5). In other words, when the reference to Dawn becomes more explicit through the use of a feminine singular subject, forms with even stronger ritual associations again suggest that the poet has his eye on something other than the sky goddess.

We have now arrived at a point where we can more fully characterize the first discourse of 7.75 (as well as 7.77) by employing formal and functional criteria alongside broader thematic characterizations. This discourse could be called a prelude or preface to ritual exchanges and specific wish-lists in the second discourse unit, were it not for the fact that the “preface” is so elaborate as to equal if not exceed the length of the subsequent appeals. Throughout the initial verses of both hymns, the dominant explicit theme is the manifestation and appearance of Dawn’s light in *the atmosphere*; but the goal is to describe that phenomenon in terms that are **reminiscent of a ritual interaction in which the poet might have some kind of “say.”**

No sooner has Dawn appeared than attempts are being made to align her rays with the light Agni sheds on the ritual grounds, and to recast her role as one that is more intensely participatory and interactive in a manner reminiscent of ritual itself. In the case of 7.75, repetitions in Structuring Devices 1 and 3 contribute to this process through a formal technique that I have dubbed “aorist-based homologies”; in the case of 7.77, these homologies occur throughout the first discourse unit, though not within any specific structuring devices. In 7.75, the same structuring devices (1 and 3) also draw parallels between Dawn’s past actions and general appearance and her present manifestation, through what I term “epithet-based homologies”; in 7.77, Structuring Device 1 contains a number of examples of this homology type. In this type of homology, the complementary epithets can function as a kind of prediction (“**Welcome** Dawn might as **well come** down”), or provide a source of usefully subtle pressure (“O bright, **gifted** Dawn, come down, **giving gifts!**”); in both cases, these homologies strengthen the poet’s claim toward agency and his position in exercising that agency. A similar effect is achieved by commands that boil down to, “Dawn, o Dawn!”—commands that Dawn inevitably obeys.

So, the two crucial components of this prefatory discourse are ritualistic-sounding descriptions of Dawn dawning and a strengthening of the poet’s perceived agency. Manipulations of gender (in 7.75, via Structuring Devices 1 and 3; in 7.77, in pādas 1cd, but not via a structuring device) contribute toward both ends. Dawn is the sole feminine agent in these hymns, and masculine-gender words tend to either explicitly denote or at the very least connote the ritual fire (the masculine-gendered Agni) and ritual officiants (who are all male). As mentioned in Section 5, confluences of Dawn and Agni that are produced in this way do

not only intimate that a ritual is in progress, but suggest that the poet and other officiants might have as much of a role in bringing about Dawn as they do in kindling Agni. Below, find a chart summarizing these formal tactics and their effects.

	<u>Function 1</u>	<u>Function 2</u>
	<i>Give Dawn's dawning a more interactive feel, and loosely evoke ritual-oriented imagery</i>	<i>Specifically increase poet's claim to agency and/or or provide pressure for the poet to leverage</i>
	<u>Formal/Phraseological Tactics for Function 1</u>	<u>Formal/Phraseological Tactics for Function 2</u>
<u>7.75</u>	- Structuring Devices 1&3: Aorist-based homologies -Other aorist-based homologies	- Structuring Devices 1&3: Epithet-based homologies -Other epithet-based homologies, including "Dawn, o Dawn!" imperatives
	- Structuring Devices 1&3: Agni- and Dawn-imagery (both functions) -Constellations of Agni-imagery (both functions)	
<u>7.77</u>	-Aorist-based homologies	- Structuring Device 1: Epithet-based homologies -Other epithet-based homologies -Modulation between Agni and Dawn (both functions)

Perhaps the biggest difference between the form and function of the prefatory discourse in 7.75 versus the one in 7.77 is that in 7.75, Structuring Devices 1 and 3 are more heavily used to articulate homologies and to generally further the functions described above; in 7.77, some structuring devices are mainly indexical, serving primarily to demarcate discourse units.

9.5 Structuring Devices 4-6: Antanaclasis, poetic repair, and reciprocity relationships¹⁴⁴

Now we turn our attention toward the structuring devices that are only recognized as such during Verses 5 and 6, the "hub" of the hymn. The devices in question are summarized in the chart below. Within these structuring devices, words for or metaphorical characterizations of light give way to terms for currencies and participants in ritual exchange, with poetic repair compensating for these decisively centrifugal shifts.

Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 5	Verse 6
citrāṃ ^{4/5} rayīm ^{4/5}	darśatāyās ^{5/4} citrā ^{4/5}	citrā ^{4/5} (-maghā) rāyāḥ ^{4/5} vāhribhiḥ ⁶	citrā ^{4/5} adṛśran ^{5/4} vāhantaḥ ⁶

The tentative superscripts attached to the more complicated structuring device, which we might dub Structuring Device(s) 4+5, are meant to reflect the evolving grouping judgments described earlier on in

¹⁴⁴ Compare what follows to Sections 4.4-7.

this chapter; by the end of the “hub,” these repetitions would almost certainly be perceived as a single group or series.¹⁴⁵

I will start with the first round of repetitions within Structuring Device(s) 4+5; this is also the first round that would be recognized within the “hub.” Though this round of repetition is initiated fairly early on into the hymn, it would only be recognized upon its culmination in Verse 5.

7.75.2c **citrām rayīm** yaśāsaṃ dhehi asmé

7.75.2d dévi márteṣu mānuṣi śravasyúm

*Bestow for us **bright, glorious wealth***

That seeks fame, o goddess among mortals, belonging to Manu’s sons.

7.75.5a vājīnīvatī sūriyasya yóṣā

7.75.5b **citrāmaghā rāyā** īse vásūnām

Possessed of prize mares, the maiden of the Sun

*Who grants **bright gifts, has dominion over wealth, over goods.***

What we see in this round of repetition is an unequivocal transition from a metaphorical reference to Dawn’s light to a concrete discussion of wealth, i.e. exchangeable goods. The separation of *citrā-* from *rayí-* alone encourages such a reading, especially in light of passages like this one, which also feature the same verbal form:

4.21.4ab sthūrāsya **rāyó** bṛható yá **īse**

tám u ṣṭavāma **vidátheṣu** índram

*Who **has dominion over** substantial, lofty **wealth***

*Him—Indra—we will praise at the **ceremonial distributions***

See also similar references to Agni in *RV* 3.16.1cd, 4.12.3ab, and 7.4.6ab (in the last case, the reference to ceremonial exchanges is clearer than the reference to specific goods). In 7.75.5b, further disambiguation comes from a word for worldly “goods” that stands in apposition to “wealth,” with the operative stem being *vásu-*, the same stem discussed in Sections 4.6-7.

The glossing of “wealth,” from *rayí-*, with “goods,” from *vásu-*, in pāda 5b, renders very difficult a reading of “wealth” as a metaphor for light, but one still needs to demonstrate that this is a significant departure from the way the same stems are used in pāda 2c. Earlier on in this chapter, I pointed out that prior to the end of 7.77, most imperatives could easily be interpreted as requests for Dawn to bear her *light* (described in various metaphorical terms) down, a request which she cannot help but oblige (see Sections

¹⁴⁵ For the reasons behind the tentativeness of these grouping judgments, see Sections 7.6-8. It seems that two devices would ultimately regrouped into/ reanalyzed as one.

4.3-5); for instance, we have such expressions as *dūré amítam ucha*, “Dawn the foe into the distance,” in 7.77.4a. Something similar is happening in 7.75.2c, where we have *citrám rayím yaśásam dhehi asmé*, “Bestow for/(on) us bright, glorious wealth.” Note in passing that *yaśás-*, “glorious,” was also part of the “constellation” of lexical elements that we tentatively identified as capable of evoking Agni (see Section 5 and 9.3). More important for our present purposes is the following observation: while *rayí-* “wealth” may seem to denote concrete remuneration, the collocation “bright wealth” has other connotations. In *RV* 1.66, Agni’s light is compared to “bright wealth.”

1.66.1ab **rayír ná citrá** sūro ná saṃdṛg
 áyur ná prāṇó nityo ná sūnúḥ
*Bright like wealth and the sight of the sun,*¹⁴⁶
Like life-breath, like a dear son-

(Compare also *saṃdṛk* “the sight” in 1.66.1a, to *sudṛśikasamḍṛk* “a sight lovely to see,” in 7.77.2c.) In general, imperative formulations involving this collocation seem to emphasize *citrá-* (“bright”) more than *rayí-* (“wealth”). Witness the following example, also from an Agni-hymn. Despite potentially referring to some more down-to-earth remuneration, this passage relies heavily on imagery related to Agni’s flames.

6. 6.7a-dsá **citra citráṃ citáyantam** asmé
citrakṣatra **citrátamaṃ** vayodhám
 candráṃ **rayím** puruvíram bḥántaṃ
 cándra candrábhir gṛṇaté yuvasva
*You **bright one** (give) us **bright brightening** (wealth),*
*You (who are) having **bright** dominion, (give us) **brightest**, energy-bestowing,*
*Shining **wealth**, (wealth) with many sons and great,*
To the singer, o shining one; unite (it) with your shining (flames).

Whatever “(wealth) with many sons” is being referred to, it is clear that the singer’s claim on it is predicated upon a framing metaphor that links it with Agni’s brightness and shining flames (flames fanned by the officants).

Dawn hymns also feature collocations of *citrá-* + another nominal stem to describe light; these occur both in descriptions and imperative phrases. Hymn 1.92 contains examples of both usages. =

1.92.5cd sváruṃ ná péso vidátheṣu añjāñ
citrám divó duhitá **bhānám** ásret
As one sets up the stake in the sacrifice, adorning it with colorful ornaments
*So the daughter of the sky sets up her **bright light**.*

¹⁴⁶ I join Stephanie Jamison in assuming that **citrá** modifies both *rayíḥ* and *saṃdṛk* and agrees with the latter.

1.92.13a úṣas **tác citráṃ** á bharāsmábhyaṃ vājinīvati

*Dawn, possessed of prize mares, bring **that bright** (power) to us.*

These passages collectively suggest that an imperative like ***citrāṃ rayīm yaśásam dhehi asmé***, “Bestow for us **bright**, glorious **wealth**,” could easily be taken to refer to Dawn’s (or Agni’s) light in a metaphorical fashion. This is exactly what we would expect from an imperative within what we’re now calling the “prefatory discourse”: a reference to Dawn dawning that *sounds* vaguely like an appeal for ritual remuneration.¹⁴⁷

Now that we have established the fact of this transition, the question becomes, what is its function? Why would it be advantageous to delay talk of currencies of ritual exchange until this hymn’s fifth verse, and to tie discussions of those currencies to a description of light? Part of the answer is that the glossing of *rayí-* with *vásu-* suggests, but *does not demand*, a retrospective reinterpretation of the more pointed imperative in 7.75.2c. When the imperative phrase was first introduced, it seemed like a request for light; now, we are not so sure—but crucially, the time elapsed between the two connected phrases ensures that such a reinterpretation is not (yet) necessary.

Another transition within the same structuring device (and in Verse 6 of the “hub”) proceeds along similar lines. Recycling verbal material from pādas 3ab (some of which is also connected to other structuring devices), this structuring device helps highlight a previously discussed metalinguistic equation and lexical substitution.¹⁴⁸ The lexical elements connected to Structuring Device(s) 4+5 are the stem *citrá-* and the root √*dṛś*. Other elements that are repeated within these two passages—some associated with structuring devices, some not¹⁴⁹—are also in bold; and the two equated forms are underlined. The form *ásvāḥ* plays both roles.

7.75.3ab eté tiyé *bhānávo darśatáyās*^{5/4}

citrá^{5/4} ***uśáso*** amṛtāsa águḥ

These, the very lights of seemly

Dawn, the bright immortal (lights), have just come here.

7.75.6ab práti dyutānám aruśáso *ásvāś*²

¹⁴⁷ Recall that the preceding imperatives in 7.75.2, discussed in Section 9.2, could also be interpreted in this fashion. Like the predictions-by-epithet in the same discourse unit, this tactic increases the poet’s claim to agency: By making commands that the goddess can’t help but comply with, the poet increases an audience’s confidence that other requests will be fulfilled.

¹⁴⁸ See Section 7.3, and in particular the discussion of semantic infrequency.

¹⁴⁹ This is yet another emergence of the phenomenon to which Section 7.4 was devoted: perceptible repetitions which would nonetheless not be grouped into any particular structuring device.

citrá^{5/4} *adṛśrann*^{5.4} *uśásam* váhantaḥ

Opposite, the horses—ruddy,

Bright—have just been seen conducting the heavenly, flashing Dawn.

Recall that pāda 3a is also the beginning of an aorist-based homology (discussed in Section 9.4). Recall also that this line features a rather elaborate process of playing masculine plural “lights” (*bhānávaḥ*), which in context connote the ritual fire and the agency of officiants, against explicit references to (Dawn’s) immortality. Finally, recall from Section 7.5 that the lexical substitution of “horses” (*ásvāḥ*) for “lights” (*bhānávaḥ*) represents a conventional *form* of poetic repair. What do all of these ingredients mean for the overall function of this structuring device and the purpose of the transitional “hub”?

On a number of occasions we have seen that poetic repair acts as a compensatory technique, smoothing over a centrifugal transition to a ritual-oriented discourse with centripetal adjustments toward more conventional phraseology.¹⁵⁰ It is certainly the case that the repetition of *rayí-* (\pm *citrá-*) in Structuring Device(s) 4+5 makes such a transition in the repetitions that connect 2cd to 5ab. But that raises one question while answering another: why should the poetic repair be centered in these repetitions as opposed to those? Is there a similar transition happening here?

To some extent, we can already answer in the affirmative. Semantically speaking, it is certainly the case that horses have firmer footing on the ritual grounds than do immortal beams of light. As Calvert Watkins has demonstrated, the word *ásva-* is the unmarked term for “horse,” as opposed to terms reserved for divine steeds.¹⁵¹ It is also the case that the horses, at least inasmuch as they are *conducting* Dawn, are playing an interactive role that is more reminiscent of ritual. But as we will soon see, pādas 5d-6d effect more transitions than that. This latter half of the hub replaces ambiguity between references to ritual and divine elements with ambiguity in regards to the animacy of certain ritual participants. This latter kind of ambiguity moves certain elements of the ritual entourage closer to being regarded as the earthly “goods” that Dawn lords over and dispenses.

In order to fully understand what poetic repair is compensating for here, we need to look at the final structuring device within the hub.

7.75.5d *uśá* uchati *váhnibhir*⁶ *grṇānā*

Dawn dawns, being hymned by the conductors (of songs/oblations).

7.75.6a *prāti* dyutānām *aruśáso* *ásvās*

¹⁵⁰ See in particular Sections 4.6-8.

¹⁵¹ See Watkins 1994: 460-2.

7.75.6b citrá adṛśrann uṣásam **váhantaḥ**⁶

Opposite, the horses--ruddy,

*Bright—were seen to blaze, **conducting** the flashing Dawn.*

Note that two out of the three relevant pādas have already been quoted above in association with poetic repair: namely, 6a and 6b. The remaining pāda, 5d, is noteworthy in explicitly referencing ritual “hymning” and the officiants who do it, with a formulaic use of the root \sqrt{gr} . The presence of this keyword in the passage signals a decisive transition toward the theme of human ritual activity (in collaboration/coordination with divinities).

The form of \sqrt{gr} used to describe hymning/singing is a participle. Note first that a similar participial form was used in 7.77.4cd to describe hymning/singing that required ritual remuneration: *á bharā vāsūni / codāya rádho grnaté maghoni* “Bear/bring your **wares** / Impel largesse for the **singer**, gift-granting one.” There are many other instances in which the singer and the god(dess) whose praises are being sung (root: \sqrt{gr}) appear to be involved in a reciprocity relationship, and in which the stem *vasú-* is used to describe the good(s)/ware(s) that the singer receives in return for his services: 4.24.1c, 6.31.4c, 9.69.10c and 10.49.1a. Below I quote another passage in which two participial forms are used to express that reciprocity relationship itself:

6.39.5a nú **grṇānó grnaté** pratna rājann

6.39.5b íṣaḥ pinva vasudéyāya pūrvīḥ

Being sung now, ancient king, for the singer

Swell many refreshments for the giving of good things

The form used in both 6.39 and 7.77 to express the role of the singer is a present active participle in the dative case: *grnaté*. The present middle participial form in 7.75d, *grṇānā*, is the feminine equivalent of *grṇānāḥ*, “being sung,” in 6.93.5a. There are a number of formulaic passages involving the present middle participle that can be paraphrased in the following manner: “Indra, being praised/sung, make refreshment swell for the singer like rivers”—for instance, *RV* 4.16.21 4.17.21, 19-24.11a. I quote the first example here.

4.16.21a nú ṣtutá indara nú **grṇānā**

4.16.21b íṣam **jaritré** nadíyo ná pīpeḥ

Now praised, O Indra, now **sung**

Make refreshment swell **for the singer** like rivers.

The noun *jaritár-*, “singer,” is also derived from the root \sqrt{gr} , and appears in the dative case as an alternative to *grnaté*. In every similar instance, this participle invites a request for remuneration. By

using the participle *gr̥ṇānā́*, the poet is referencing the fulfillment of his ritual role, and implying it is time for a little reciprocity from Dawn.

9.6 Instrumental ambiguities: animacy hierarchies replace horizons as crucial points of contention

In the above formulaic passages, the praiser/singer is in the dative case, which explicitly marks him as the recipient of ritual remuneration; but there are other conventional formulations which have more direct bearing on the possible meanings of 7.75.5d.

Particularly pivotal are the ambiguous semantics of instrumentals around participial forms of \sqrt{gr} , which is exactly what we see in the pāda that contains the first half of Structuring Device 6. I quote it again below for convenience.

7.75.5d uṣá uchati **váhnibhir**⁶ gr̥ṇānā́

*Dawn dawns, being hymned by the **conductors** (of songs/oblations).*

There are a number of other instances in which the role of the praiser(s) is expressed by an instrumental of agent in the same pāda as the participial form of \sqrt{gr} . Especially prevalent is the formula *áṅgirobhir gr̥ṇānāḥ* “being sung by the Aṅgirasēs.” This formula appears four times: in 1.62.5a, 2.15.8a, 4.16.8d, and 10.111.4d. *RV* 4.16, the same hymn from which a reference to reciprocity was just quoted, provides an instructive example:

4.16.8cd sá no netá vājam á darṣi bhúriṃ

gotrá rujánn **áṅgirobhir gr̥ṇānāḥ**

As our leader, tear out an abundant prize,

*Breaking apart the cowpens, **being hymned by the Aṅgirasēs***

There are also a number of instances in which an instrumental in the same pāda as *gr̥ṇānāḥ* expresses the means by which the god is hymned—e.g. by songs (*āṅgūśébbhiḥ*) in 4.29.1, by inspired thoughts (*dhībhiḥ*) in 10.105.3d. But as we will soon see, given that *váhnibhiḥ* is a form of the nominal stem *váhni-*, it almost certainly must be construed as an agent rather than a means of ritual hymning. This stem is typically used in the singular; overwhelmingly, the singular forms of *váhni-* refer to Agni in his capacity as a ritual agent, and occur in passages pertaining to ritual exchanges.¹⁵² Many examples could be cited; here,

¹⁵²In the singular, *váhni-* is most frequently an epithet for Agni, referring to his priestly roles. Within the same passages, Agni is frequently renamed as *hótar-*, “invoker/Hotar,” a particular kind of (decidedly human) ritual officiant.

6.16.9a tuvám **hótā** mánurhito

6.16.9b **váhnir** āsá vidúṣṭaraḥ

I will reproduce an example that includes a verbal stem from the root \sqrt{vah} , and that had other significance in Section 7.2 above.

- 7.16.9 sá mandráyā ca jihváyā
váhnir āsá vidúṣṭaraḥ
 ágne rayím **maghávadbhyo** na á **vaha**
 havýádātiṃ ca sūdaya

*As the one with a pleasing tongue (and)
 Face, the wiser **conductor** --
 Agni, **conduct** wealth toward our **gift-granting** (patrons)
 And set the offering in order*

Plural forms of the stem *váhni-* have a larger semantic range: they can refer to human ritual officiants, and less frequently to earthly draft horses, for instance. But I have not found an occasion on which they refer to hymns, songs or another type of verbal art *by means of which* a god could be hymned.¹⁵³

-
- 6.16.9c ágne yákṣi divó víśaḥ
*You are the **Hotar** established by Manu
 The **conductor** (of oblations), with your mouth, the very wise on,
 Agni, you sacrifice to the clans of heaven.*

On other occasions, the Hotar (*hótar-*) is identified as the human ritual partner of Agni, the *váhni-*; in other words, both sides of the ritual exchange are explicitly depicted. Notice that the example below includes a further agent noun, *vidhartár-*, “distributor,” whose etymology is similar to *vidhánt-*, “distributor/steward,” discussed in 7.3.

- 7.7.5a ásādi vṛtó **váhnir** ājaganván
 7.7.5b agnir brahmá nṛṣádane **vidhartá**
 7.7.5c diyaús ca yám pṛthiví vāvṛdháte
 7.7.5d á yam **hótā** yájati viśvāvāram
*Having come here, the chosen **conductor** has been seated
 At the seat of men—Agni, the ritual formulator and **distributor**,
 Whom Heaven and Earth have made strong,
 The one fulfilling all desires, to whom the **Hotar** sacrifices.*

¹⁵³ Some plural usages of *váhni-* refer to *human* ritual officiants. Below, find an example this first usage in a Dawn hymn, and note the other vocabulary elements relevant to ritual exchange that this verse has in common with 7.75 and 7.77.

- 5.79.4 abhí yé tvā vibhāvāri
 stómair grṇánti **váhnayah**
maghaír maghoni suśríyo
 dámanvantaḥ surátayaḥ
 sújāte **ásvasūnṛte**
*You, far-radiant one (=Dawn), those
Conductors who hymn (you) with praises;
 Those very splendid ones, **through your granted gifts, gift-granting one**,
 (Will become) possessed of gifts and lovely presents,*

So again, if taken with the participle *gr̥ṇāná*, *váhnibhiḥ* would be interpreted to encode the ritual *agents* who praise Dawn.

But crucially, that is not the only possible interpretation of *váhnibhiḥ*. In 7.75, the instrumental *váhnibhiḥ* is in fact sandwiched in between two verbal forms (the participle and the main verb). It is perfectly syntactically possible to take it with either verb. If one were to take it with the active verb *uchati*, “shines,” that precedes it, then the instrumental would have a sense of accompaniment or means: *uṣá uchati váhnibhiḥ*, “Dawn shines along with/by means of her conductors.” This sort of ambiguity shows up fairly frequently in the *Rig Veda*. Consider, for instance, the possible interpretations of *háribhiḥ* in the following passage, which also happens to include the participle *gr̥ṇānáḥ* juxtaposed to an instrumental of means by which.

- 4.29.1 á na stutá úpa **vájebhir úti**
 índra yāhí **háribhir** mandasānáḥ
 tirás cid aryáḥ sávanā purúṇi
āṅgūśebhir gr̥ṇānáḥ satyārādhāḥ
 Praised, (along) **with prizes and help**,
 O Indra, **with your fallow bays** drive here, to find exhilaration for yourself
 (Drive) even across the many pressings of the stranger,
Being hymned by songs, as one whose benefit is real

As currently translated, *háribhiḥ* in pāda 1b could be an instrumental of accompaniment (“along with”), or an instrumental of means (just “with”) connected to *yāhí*, “drive”; so that is already one form of ambiguity. But this instrumental could just as easily be taken to depend on the other word to which it is juxtaposed (not a mediopassive participle, strictly speaking—that would be *mandānáḥ* rather than *mandasānáḥ*—but

O well-born lady, liberal with horses

See also 1.48.11d.

In other instances, *váhni-* in the plural involves references to draft horses that draw or “conduct” chariot poles. In such an instance, these horses are invoked as a ritual gift from a patron.

- 8.3.22a róhitam me pákasthāmā
 8.3.22c ádād **rāyó** vibódhanam
To me Pākasthāman (a patron) the sorrel...
*Gave, (that sorrel), the awakener of **wealth***
 8.3.23a yásmā anyé dáśa práti
 8.3.23b dhúraṃ **váhanti váhnayah**
Alongside which the other ten
Conductors(/draft horses) **conduct**(/draw) the yoke pole

See also 2.24.13ab.

the latter has similar semantics), in which case it would be rendered, “finding exhilaration **by means of your fallow bays,**” i.e. by means of soma, a substance associated with ritual sacrifice. Note also that in pāda a, *v ájebhir ūtí*, “with prizes and help,” is also best interpreted as an instrumental of accompaniment with *yāhí* despite its proximity to the passive participle *stutáh*, “praised,” and that the final instrumental in the passage, “by songs,” is an instrumental of means dependent upon a participle rather than a main verb; so all possible syntactic and semantic interpretations of *háribhiḥ* find support in context.

There are no other instrumentals in the immediate context of *váhnibhiḥ* in 7.75, but dueling usage trends provide similar balanced support for alternative interpretations. On the one hand, in the vast majority of cases in which the participle *grṇāná-* occurs next to an instrumental, that instrumental expresses an agent or a means by which (this includes 1.62.5a, 2.15.8a, 4.16.8d, 9.62.24c, 9.65.24b, 10.61.26a, 10.104.3d, and 10.111.3d; 10.147.5a is a case where the instrumental of means goes with the main verb rather than the participle). On the other hand, every other instance of *váhnibhiḥ* in the *Rig Veda* appears to be an instrumental of accompaniment. 6.32.3 is illustrative of these examples.

6.32.3 sá **váhnibhir** ḥkvabhir góṣu śásvan
mitájñubhiḥ purukṣtvā jigāya
púraḥ purohá sákhibhiḥ sakhīyán
dīlḥá ruroja kavíbhīḥ kavīḥ sán
He, every time cattle (were at stake), with the conductors (of songs), with the versifiers
With their knees fixed, (he,) the doer of many deeds, triumphed
Acting as a comrade along with comrades, the smasher of fortresses fortresses
Firmly fixed, broke, being a poet along with poets.

(Three out of four refer to human ritualists, or else to the humanoid *Aṅgirases* who accompany Indra in the Vala myth, and who serve as the mythological analogs of human ritualists. In another variant, 10.93.9cd, the “conductors” seem to be draft horses. But in all of these cases, the conductors are companions *along with* whom some action is performed.)

In other words, in Verse 5 of 7.75, it seems quite possible to interpret *váhnibhiḥ* as dependent on either verbal form and having either sense; competing types of cues reinforce one or the other alternative.

This syntactic and semantic ambiguity exerts significant influence upon a listener’s interpretation(s) of this part of the hymn. To repeat: if the instrumental in 7.75 is construed as an instrumental of agent depending upon *grṇāná*, 7.75.5 would first be taken to reference the agents by whom Dawn is hymned. These agents of course, could be conceived of variously: as human ritualists, as the flames

of fire, or even as deified ritual substances, which hiss, sputter and rasp out “hymns” of a different variety.¹⁵⁴ All other things being equal, the “conductors” would probably be taken to refer to human officiants, in light of the formulaic usages of participial forms of \sqrt{gr} to refer to gods hymned and humans hymning, prompting the delivery of a ritual reward.

On the other hand, if this instrumental is construed as an instrumental of accompaniment or means with *uchati*, “shines,” the conductors would be luminescent attendants or tools; in other words, if the clause *uṣá uchati váhñibhiḥ grṇānā* is taken to mean something like “Dawn shines along with her conductors, praised,” or even, “Dawn shines by means of her conductors, praised,” the conductors, rather than being full ritual partners, would be more like shining chattel: similar to the horse that Dawn leads down in 7.77.3b¹⁵⁵ and ultimately confers upon the poet, but already more anchored to the ritual grounds by the surrounding context. They would be a parsing of light into shareable parcels, rather than agents who adopt a ritual role that involves more than shining.¹⁵⁶

The ambiguity between these interpretations is a significant one with regard to animacy hierarchies and power relations: it gives the sense that both relationships and rates of ritual exchange are being discussed. The poet creates the impression that he is asserting his status as an appropriate partner, without absolutely insisting upon that (because there are other ways to construe *váhñibhiḥ*); at the same time, he is clarifying what sort of chattel with whom he would like to be associated (and eventually compensated).

We might mimic this type of ambiguity (though not the specifics of the syntax that produce it) with this loose, paraphrasing translation:

Conductors
hymnal-singing
horses shine, flare up on
high, conduct Dawn through.

¹⁵⁴ If the reader is unsure whether all of these things can be constructed as *vocal* ritual agents, (s)he may investigate the various uses of the root \sqrt{ribh} in the *Rig Veda*. A short discussion of these uses can be found in my analysis of *RV* 7.76.

¹⁵⁵ The text of 7.77.3b is *śvetám náyantī sudṛśīkam áśvam*, “leading a bright horse lovely to see”; note that in the preceding *pāda*, 7.77.3a, Dawn is described as conducting, *váhantī*, the eye of the gods, i.e. the sun.

¹⁵⁶ In that case, the primary difference between the connotations of 7.77.3 and 7.75.5 would be the clear references to a ritual context in 7.75.5—particularly the use of the root \sqrt{gr} in addition to \sqrt{vah} —combined with the masculine plural gender of the attendants in question, and various other allusions to male ritual agency in connected passages (discussed in Section 9.4). Together, these details open up the possibility that the shining chattel are fire’s flames (particularly since *váhñi-* in the singular tends to be an epithet of Agni). This will be discussed in more detail below; suffice it to say here that whether sky- or firelight is being referenced, in this interpretation, the “conductors” (like horse in 7.77.3) have a less-animate, detachable, *exchangeable* status rather than a crucial form of agency.

Here, the ambiguity is driven by the ability of the first participial phrase to attach to either “conductors” or “horses”; in the first case, the first two lines could be interpreted as, “(While) conductors (are) hymnal singing,” in which case the poet *is* asserting his status as a ritual partner; in the second case, “conductors” becomes a colorful characterization of “hymnal-singing” horses, which are something besides the poet and fellow officiants. (I provide this paraphrase primarily because as our arguments about the functions and effects of ambiguity grow more elaborate, it is useful to remind ourselves that similar effects of ambiguity can be more spontaneously perceived in English.)

In the second half of Structuring Device 6—which rounds out the half-verse and the syntactic phrase that contains the “repairing” appearance of *ásvāḥ*, “horses”—the poet steers our eyes and ears even further away from the skies and toward the ritual grounds, and reinforces particular alternative interpretations of the “conductors” from Verse 6.

7.75.6a *prāti dyutānām aruśáso áśvās*

7.75.6b *citrā adṛśrann uśásam váhantaḥ*⁶

Opposite, the horses—ruddy,

*Bright—were just seen, **conducting** the flashing Dawn.*

Connected to the ritualists/attendants in Verse 5 via the root \sqrt{vah} , the *horses* that conduct Dawn down also sound quite a bit like the celestial horse that Dawn leads down in 7.77.3. However, this time, the syntactic and thematic roles have been reversed: in 7.77.3, Dawn was conducting (*váhantī*) the eye of the sun and leading (*náyantī*) the horse; but in 7.75.6, the *horses* are conducting (*váhantaḥ*) Dawn. Recalling our observations in Section 5 about the (thematically if not always syntactically) active role ritual officiants are said to have in generating the Dawn, this difference should be regarded as significant: these “horses” now seem much more firmly associated with ritual activity than the Dawn’s chattel in 7.77: they are much more likely to be metaphors for the ritualists’ flames than the sky’s rays.

Of course, we cannot assume that the comparable content of 7.77 would be prominent or even present in listeners’ minds—but comparisons between this and other interlinked passages in 7.75 lead to much the same conclusion. Recall also (from Sections 7.3, 9.4 and 9.5, above) that 7.75.6ab is the third and final of a group of passages linked by implied metalinguistic equations: 7.77.3ab, 7.77.4ab, and then 7.75.6ab. More specifically, 7.75.3ab is related to 4ab and 6cd through two different “frames” that equate specific words or phrases. In this case, both frames consist primarily of shared lexical elements. Forms of $\sqrt{gā}$, along with the demonstratives that begin *pādas* 3a and 4a, equate *bhānávaḥ* “lights” with *yujāná* “

(Dawn) hitching herself up”; forms of $\sqrt{dṛś}$ and $uṣás-$, along with the form $citrāḥ$, equate $bhānávaḥ$ with $ásvāḥ$, “horses” (with $\sqrt{dṛś}$ and $citrāḥ$ being components of Structuring Device(s) 5/4). I will again juxtapose all these passages, with the frames in bold, and the equated terms underlined.

7.75.3ab **eté tiyé bhānávo darśatáyās**

citrá uśáso amṛtāsa águḥ

These, the very lights (masculine plural) of seemly

Dawn, the bright immortal (lights), have just come here.

7.75.4ab **eśá siyá · yujāná parākát**

pāñca kṣitīḥ pári sadyó jigāti

This, the very one, hitching herself up (feminine sing.) out of the distance,

Comes and goes around the five settlements in a single day

7.75.6a **práti dyutānám aruśáso ásvās**

7.75.6b **citrá adṛśrann uśásam váhantaḥ**

Opposite, the horses—ruddy,

Bright—were seen to blaze, conducting the flashing Dawn.

Clearly, the last pair of pādas is distinguished from the others by the demotion of the role of Dawn and markedly *sky-born* immortal agents in general. In the other two relay rounds, one pāda is dominated by a masculine (nominative-case) noun or adjective, or else by a verb that connotes the presence or activity of ritual officiants and/or the flames they generate; the other (syntactically inseparable) pāda is dominated by a syntactically complementary element that connotes the presence or activity of Dawn or explicitly immortal entities;¹⁵⁷ in this way, these passages paint a layered picture of intermingled divine atmospheric and ritual human activity. Not so with 6ab. The masculine plural subjects, i.e., the “horses” in pāda 6a, connote ritual activity more strongly than the “lights” in pādas 3ab; but the masculine plural participial form $váhantaḥ$ in 6b (which, like $vāhniḥ$, is a form of the by and large ritual-oriented root \sqrt{vah}) dilutes, rather than promotes, any lingering Dawn-imagery. Compare that form to the adjective $amṛtāsaḥ$, “immortal,” in pāda 3b, which plays a similar syntactic role, but (in the context of a passage where the opposition of divine vs. mortal is aligned with the opposition of feminine vs. masculine) connects the lights with Dawn via the shared trait of immortality.

¹⁵⁷ As Section 9.4 hopefully made clear, in the wake of the phrase $dévi mārteṣu$ “Goddess (f.) among mortals (m.),” the opposition of immortality vs. mortality would align with the opposition of atmospheric vs. ritual activity through the intermediate opposition of feminine vs. masculine gender. By the time $deví devébhiḥ$ “goddess with the gods (masc.)” arrives in Verse 7, these oppositions will have been thoroughly dissociated in favor of a focus on immortal masculine agents, like Agni or his (sometimes deified) flames that are associated with ritual activity.

Consider also that four out of the five other attestations of *váhantaḥ* clearly refer to ritual agents or implements: clans or men engaged building the ritual fire in *RV* 1.69; Adhvaryu priests in *RV* 2.14; processed soma ingredients in *RV* 9.83; and pressing stones used to process soma in 10.94. The fifth instance of *váhantaḥ*, in *RV* 1.35, describes the movement of escorts of Savitar: Savitar, the god of the rising and setting sun (on the horizon immediately above the ritual ground), who compels men to engage in sacrifice.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ Below, find the relevant excerpts of some of these hymns, with more detailed descriptions. In 1.35, *váhantaḥ* describes the movement of escorts of Savitṛ, god of the sunrise and the sunset.

- 1.35.5 ví jánāñ chyāvāḥ śítipádo akhyan
ráthaṃ híraṇyaprauḡaṃ **váhantaḥ**
śásvad víśaḥ savitúr daíviyasya
upásthe víśvā bhúvanāni tasthuḥ
The dusky (horses) with white feet have looked out across the peoples,
While conducting his chariot with its golden forepole
The clans, in divine Savitar's
Lap abide, (as well as) all creatures ever

The name “Savitar” literally means “impeller,” and later Vedic texts (particularly the Yajur Veda) suggest that this is because he impels humans to sacrifices; in hymns like *RV* 2.38, he is characterized as compelling humans to sacrifice as well as to perform a host of other activities characteristic of the end of the day.

Specific ritual officiants (Adhvaryu priests) are the explicit subject of the participle in 2.14.

- 2.14.8 ádhvaryavo yán naraḥ kāmáyādhve
śruṣṭí **váhanto** naśathā tád índre
gábhastipūtam bharata śrutáya
índrāya sómaṃ yajyavo juhota
Adhvaryus! What you will desire, o men,
*You will attain that with Indra, **conducting** (offerings) in obedience.*
Bring what is purified by your hand to the one who is famed.
To Indra offer soma, o you eager to sacrifice.

See also 1.69.10a for a similar usage (priests are said to “conduct” what seems to be the ritual fire).

In 10.94, the two relevant participial forms refer to the movement of pressing stones, i.e. ritual implements.

10.94.6ab, 7cd, and 8ab

10.94.6a ugrá iva prav**váhantaḥ** samáyamuḥ

10.94.6b sákāṃ yuktá vṛṣaṇo bíbhtrato dhúraḥ

*Like powerful **conducting** (-horses), they have held fast,*
yoked together, the bulls bearing the chariot poles.

10.94.7c dáśabhiśubhyo arcatájárebhiyo

10.94.7d dáśa dhúro dáśa yuktá **váhadbhiyaḥ**

Sing...to those who possess ten reins, to the unaging ones,
conducting ten chariot poles, (conducting) ten yoked ones [=fingers?]

10.94.8a té ádrayo dáśayantrāsa āśávas

These swift (pressing) stones have ten fastening straps...

So in 6b, we very nearly lose Dawn and ideas of atmospheric activity amid the imagery of ritualists' flames. The carefully constructed alternations between female, divine, celestial actions and male, human, ritual-oriented agency—alternations that coupled with related homologies to characterize the first part of this hymn—are finally broken down in Verse 6. And this departure would almost definitely be perceived, because the two prior passages from 7.75 are structured so that a listener could not help but compare them with Verse 6.

But another form of alternation has replaced the poet's former penchant for hovering at the horizon between the ritual and the atmospheric. Notice that two particular uses of *váhantaḥ* are attested twice outside of 7.75: the use of the participle to characterize the role of animate ritual agents, i.e. human priests, and the use of the participle to characterize ritual implements or ingredients, which have a lower position on any animacy hierarchy than humans or gods even when described metaphorically (in 10.94, for instance, “conducting” pressing stones are compared to yoked bulls, or to lead-horses who conduct ten other yoked horses, likely ritualists' fingers—but not to ritualists themselves). So, this particular use of the root \sqrt{vah} can suggest more *or* less animate participants in or elements of ritual. This is not unlike the two alternative interpretations of the instrumental *váhnibhiḥ*, described above: according to one, the “conductors” were less-animate, shining chattel; according to another, they were more-animate ritual agents.

Another riddle of reference seems carefully structured to reinforce this ambiguity of *animacy* (rather than of affiliation). The forms of \sqrt{vah} in Structuring Device 6 could be taken to link descriptions of two different groups of entities; or, they could be taken to link two different descriptions of the same entity. In other words, the horses “conducting Dawn” in 6b could be equated with the “conductors” in 5d; or, since there is no frame of shared lexical elements and similar syntax to force the idea of equivalence, they could be perceived as distinct.

If they are taken to be the same, pādas 6ab might very well retrospectively color the interpretation of *váhnibhiḥ* in 5d. In that case, the reference to “horses” in Verse 6 would rule out the idea that the conductors in either passage are *human* ritual officiants; already, then, *one* of the highest positions in almost any animacy hierarchy would be eliminated. Given that in this interpretation, both “conductors” and “horses” would likely be understood to rename the flames of the ritual fire. Since this fire, along with

See also 9.83.1d, which describes processed (as opposed to “uncooked”) soma ingredients as “conducting along” (*váhantaḥ*) until they reach the filter.

its flames, has a way of being deified, the door is not closed to an interpretation that includes an animate agent: deified flames, if crackling, sing Dawn’s praises at least as well as any human ritual agent. On the other hand, the “conductors” could also be the less animate shining, fiery chattel that, after ushering Dawn down in their capacity as an element of ritual, could be left in the care of her praiser. As a reminder: the first interpretation requires that *váhnibhiḥ* be taken as an instrumental of agent with *grṇānā́*; the second requires that *váhnibhiḥ* be interpreted instrumental of accompaniment or means with *uchati*.¹⁵⁹

On the other hand, if pādas 5cd and 6ab are interpreted contrastively—as a case of antanacclasis rather than an implied metalinguistic equation—one particular syntactic and semantic alternative would gain support. If they are free to be something other than horses, the conductors in 5d would likely be taken to be *human* ritual agents, since, as we have demonstrated above, \sqrt{gr} generally refers to ritual hymning performed by humans or the humanoid Aṅgirasas. This requires that *váhnibhiḥ* be interpreted as an instrumental of agent with *grṇānā́*, of course. The shining horses in 6a would then be construed as less-animate elements of ritual: the flames that are at the ritualists’ beck, call and kindling, and that could ultimately function as fiery chattel analogous to the ritualists’ desired earthly reward.

So, the first three fourths of the hymn’s “hub” supports three different interpretations of the two forms of \sqrt{vah} that make up Structuring Device 6:

- 1) Less animate; one entity: **“horses...conducting” in 6ab is the primary metaphor for the flames** of the ritual fire that lead Dawn through the morning sacrifice; **in a compatible, secondary characterization, the flames are “conductors” in 5d, conceived of as the means by which or attendants with whom Dawn shines.**
- 2) More animate; one entity: the **“conductors” in 5d are the primary metaphor for/understanding of flames,** conceived of **as deified, crackling ritual agents by whom Dawn is praised;** in a compatible, secondary characterization, the flames are (neighing) horses, conduct Dawn through the ritual.

¹⁵⁹ In a compatible recharacterization, the difference between the two possible judgments of animacy of the “conductors” in 5d can also be regarded as contingent upon whether “conductor” is the primary metaphor for “flames” or a secondary one. If

“horses” is the primary metaphor for flames (in which case “conductors” would have to be a recharacterization of “horses...conducting” rather than an instrumental of agent with “being hymned”) the (horses/)flames have a lower degree of agency; but if “(hymning) conductors” is the primary metaphor and “horses” a recharacterization, the (hymning conductors/flames) would be bona fide ritual agents with a high degree of agency. This alternate characterization renders it possible to find an English paraphrase that captures much of the ambiguity (already given in the main text above). In the less-animate interpretation, the elliptical grammar of this paraphrase could be fleshed out as follows: “Conductors,(that is) ‘hymnal-singing’ *horses*, shine (and) flare up on high (and) conduct Dawn through.” The more-animate interpretation would be: “(Acting as) *conductors* (who are *busy*) *hymnal-singing*, horses shine (and) flare on high (and) conduct Dawn through.”

3) Two entities with different levels of animacy: the “conductors” are human ritual agents by whom Dawn is praised; in contrast less-animate “horses,” i.e. flames, conduct Dawn through the ritual.¹⁶⁰

The last two pādas of Verse 6 pit two different types of cues against one another to reinforce two of these three interpretations.

7.75.6cd yāti śubhrā **viśvapīśā rāthēna**

dādhati rātṇaṃ **vidhaté** jānāya

She drives, the resplendent one, with a chariot entirely ornamented;

She bestows treasure for the stewardly gens.

On the one hand, the instrumental noun phrase, “with a chariot entirely ornamented,” which is clearly to be construed with the finite present verb *yāti*, “drives” as an instrumental of accompaniment or means, seems designed to reinforce the idea that *vāhñibhiḥ* is to be taken with the finite present verb *uchati*, “shines”; in that case, both instrumental nouns could easily be read as metaphors for the less-animate flames accompanying or enabling Dawn’s appearance on the ritual grounds, metaphors that create a ritual analog for the types of rewards poets and patrons tend to request.

On the other hand, as we have established above (see Section 7.3), the (at least) folk-etymologically linked forms *dādhati* (present active verb) and *vidhaté* (dative singular adjective) encode a ritual partnership between human officiants and the divinity. This supports the third, contrastive reading in which the conductors of 5d refer to human ritualists—as opposed to the horses of 6b, which must refer to the divine flames of Agni’s fire, functioning as shining chattel that conduct Dawn through the ritual.

From beginning to end, then, the hymn’s hub seems built to convert one carefully maintained type of ambiguity into another, which is cultivated with an equal amount of diligence. The earlier confluences of heavenly, feminine and ritual, masculine agency (in pādas 3ab and 4ab), which were produced by pitting grammatical cues (including gender and number) against content and connotations, give way to clearly ritual-oriented descriptions, which incorporate ambiguities in syntax and multivalent usage patterns in order to make a problem of the level of animacy of the “conductors” and “horses” involved. The act of poetic repair that substitutes *bhānāvah*, “lights,” with *āsvah*, “horses,” helps smoothly transform one type of ambiguity into another. At the end of the hub, two of the three above-described readings of *vāhñibhiḥ* and *āsvāḥ...vāhantaḥ* have been promoted by at least one from each set of competing contextual cues:

¹⁶⁰ There is a third way to flesh out the elliptical grammar of the English paraphrase to reflect this last interpretation: “(While) conductors (are) hymnal-singing, horses shine (and) flare up on high (and) conduct Dawn through.”

1) Less animate; one entity: the “conductors” in 5d can be **flames**, conceived of as **the means by which or attendants with whom Dawn shines**; in a compatible characterization, they are horses conducting Dawn through the ritual.

3) Two entities with different layers of animacy: the “conductors” can be **human ritual agents by whom Dawn is praised**; in contrast, less-animate “horses,” i.e. flames, conduct Dawn through the ritual.

As we will see, this sets the stage for the final discourse unit of the hymn, in which both form and function hinge on the question of the animacy of horses and other attendants/chattel.

For right now, note that the English paraphrase given in the middle of this section could easily be expanded so that syntactic parallels reinforce one particular (less-animate) interpretation and semantics reinforce another (more-animate) interpretation:

Conductors
hymnal-singing

Horses shine, flare up on
high, conduct dawn through;

In chariot-
colors, blazing,
Dawn proceeds;

She serves and
treasures men
who staff the service.

The parallel syntax in the next-to-last triad of lines encourages “Conductors, hymnal-singing” to be taken as a recharacterization of “horses,” just as “In chariot-colors, blazing” is a recharacterization of “Dawn”; on the other hand, the final triad of lines semantically supports the identification of “conductors” as separate, human ritual officiants who “staff” the service. (Once again, I provide this simply to show eyes growing weary of arguments about the spontaneous effects of poetry that similarly subtle reinforcements of particular animacy judgments can be spontaneously discerned in English.)

9.7: Characterizing the “hub,” i.e. the discourse dominated by Structuring Devices 4-6

Pivoting from ambiguity between divine and ritual agency to ambiguity between ritual agency and the exchange of chattel makes for a decidedly centrifugal turn. Any move away from descriptions of gods in the sky and toward observation of an unfolding ritual plays into the *hands* of officiants, including the poet; but here the poet has also managed to suggest that his ritual entourage has performed the sort of “hymning” that should trigger a ritual reward (if we interpret *vāhnibhiḥ* as an more-or-less animate *agent*, that is), and/or that the desired reward may be close at hand (*ásvāḥ...vāhantaḥ*, especially if coupled with less-animate interpretations of *vāhnibhiḥ*). Structuring Device 6 helps connect the locus of one decisive centrifugal turn toward ritual agency (*ásvāḥ...vāhantaḥ* in pādas 6ab) to the source of the new ambiguities (the syntactically and semantically ambiguous *vāhnibhiḥ* in pāda 5d). Structuring Device(s) 4/5 helped frame the pivotal lexical substitution (of *ásvāḥ* for *bhānávaḥ*), which simultaneously communicated a turn toward a ritual-oriented discourse and deployed poetic repair to grease the wheels a bit. Additionally, the repetitions counted within Device(s) 4/5 had already communicated a similar “pivoting” by separating a form of *citrá-*, “bright,” from its collocation with a form of *rayí-*, “wealth,” and coupling that latter term with a form of *vásu-* “good(s).” (However, in that instance, the significance of “wealth” was *clarified* to pertain to goods exchanged in ritual, and no new ambiguity was introduced in place of the old one.)

Summarizing what this discourse accomplishes in a chart, we have the following:

<u>Function 1</u>	<u>Function 2</u>
<i>Accomplish a decisive, centrifugal transition from sky/divine-oriented to ritual-oriented imagery with centripetal phraseology to “grease the wheels”</i>	<i>Replace former ambiguous orientation of phraseology of first discourse (sky/divine oriented but increasingly evoking ritual imagery) with ambiguous animacy level of certain participants/components in ritual</i>
<u>Formal/Phraseological Tactics for Function 1</u>	<u>Formal/Phraseological Tactics for Function 2</u>
- Structuring Device(s) 4/5: Breaking up a sky/divine-oriented collocation and transforming it into a ritual-oriented one	- Structuring Device 6: highlighting syntactic and semantic ambiguity that supports different understandings of the animacy of ritual participants
- Structuring Device(s) 4/5: framing an implied metalinguistic equation that replaces sky/divine-oriented terms with others more suited for a ritual-oriented discourse; highlights poetic repair	- Structuring Device 6: antanaclasis OR implied metalinguistic equation, connecting one decisive centrifugal turn (complete with poetic repair) to new types of ambiguity
-Poetic repair	-Etymological figure reinforces 1 interpretation -Parallel syntax reinforcing other interpretations

9.8 Structuring Device 2 and the hymn’s final rhetorical task

To begin to understand the extent to which the “hub,” formally and functionally, prepares a listener for the messages highlighted by our final structuring device, one may note that a number of key words and phrases from the “hub”—*ásvāh*, whose arrival was highlighted by Structuring Device(s) 4, 5 and 6, and *dádhāti rátnam vidhaté*, a folk-etymological figure which supported one particular interpretation of *váhnibhiḥ*—are also the first words that belong to Structuring Device 2. The repetitions of these words, plus those of the other lexical element included in Structuring Device 2, terminate in the following half-stanza:

7.75.8a nú no **gómad**² vīrávad **dhehi**² **rátanam**²

7.75.8b úšo **ásvāvad**² purubhójo asmé

*Now, bestow for us a treasure consisting of cows, of heroes,
and of horses o Dawn, you who provide much nourishment to us.*

The most obvious transition articulated within this structuring device is the move from a present indicative verb that describes a reciprocity relationship in the abstract/in general terms—*dádhāti rátnam vidhaté jánāya*, “She bestows treasure for the stewardly gens”—to an imperative pertaining to the unfolding ritual, *nú no... dhehi rátnam*, “Now, **bestow** for us **treasure**.” In some respects this technique may remind us on functional grounds of epithet-based homologies, which connected descriptions of *general* attributes to predicates or vocatives communicating something about the unfolding scene. It is certainly the case that the analysis of more hymns would lead to the identification of a separate verbal homology type (one that Elizarenkova would associate with bridging the explicative-appellative divide, just as nominal homologies do). However, a comparative treatment of 7.75 and 7.77 requires no such analytic category.

While acknowledging that some Rigvedic hymns can fluctuate between these two types of formulations seemingly at random, we should recall that in 7.77 and 7.75, imperatives that arrive ahead of the hymns’ major transitions can typically be interpreted metaphorically as “requests” for Dawn to dawn, i.e. to do what she does naturally for all regardless of their prowess in ritual. Reformulating this observation a bit, we could also say the following: it seems to take a great deal of work to get to a rhetorical position where imperatives that do *not* lend themselves to metaphorical interpretation can be comfortably and successfully uttered in the presence of a god. That being the case, it makes sense to look for some type of rhetorically advantageous developmental process between Verse 6 and Verse 8; in other words, we should endeavor to discover what has transpired to make the poet and fellow officiants (and the patron who

supports them) seem like the “stewardly gens” that is entitled to the treasure now requested—how the poet creates this perception without insisting upon it in a way that might be dangerous given the power differentials at play. Of course, much depends on the semantics of this “stewardly” dative recipient *vidhaté*, from \sqrt{vidh} . If one subscribes to the view that \sqrt{vidh} derives from $ví + \sqrt{dhā}$ (explored further in Section 7.3), i.e. that what I am translating as the “stewardly gens” could also be translated as the *distributor-gens*—then what should be implied (and not presumed) is that the poet and fellow officiants keep goods circulating (perhaps back up to Dawn); if “stewardly” is a synonym for “worshipful” in a more general sense, then it is the skillful agency of the officiants that is to be demonstrated (rather than openly claimed).

9.9: Instrumental ambiguities, again: fire’s flames throw a shadow over other agents and implements

The poet’s answer to this final rhetorical challenge begins in a manner that might at first seem counterintuitive: throughout the final structuring device and within the discourse framed by that device, the poet creates the perception of successful and *treasured* stewardship by implicitly eliminating his own agency from the equation. He has divine allies on the ritual ground whose services rendered must be beyond reproach. Deploying phraseology that focuses on these partners, the poet communicates success without relying on the presumptive assertion that he himself is particularly successful. These particular partners—Agni’s deified flames—also double as shining chattel, a sort of analog to the livestock the poet desires (for his patron, his colleagues and himself) as remuneration for his ritual obeisance—goods the officiants can claim they are circulating just by kindling their ritual fire. A series of possible implied metalinguistic equations in between the first and second half of Structuring Device 2 helps maintain and cultivate this double vision, which identifies naturally suitable forms of reciprocity independent of any explicitly stated desire of the poet’s. This tactic actually begins with the first three fourths of Stanza 7.

7.75.7a satyá satyébhir mahatí mahádbhir ,

7.75.7b deví devébhir yajatá yáatraiḥ

7.75.7c rujád dīḥāni+ dádad usrīyāṇām

True along with the true ones, great with the great

Goddess with the gods, worship-full with the worshipful –

She broke the fastnesses, she will give of the dawn-red (cows):

Featuring a chain of polyptoton in which every other form is an instrumental plural, these pādas will surely retrospectively affect the interpretation of *vāhñibhiḥ* above.

First note that these instrumentals can hardly be interpreted as anything other than instrumentals of accompaniment and/or means (depending on animacy judgments), rather than instrumentals of agency. In fact, the use of repeated polyptoton alternating between animate nominative and instrumental forms is a common way of expressing the semantics of accompaniment in particular; we have already seen another such example in *RV* 6.32.3, quoted at the beginning of Section 9.6 above. In 7.75.5d, as in each successive round of polyptoton in Verse 7, a nominative feminine form (*gr̥ṇāná* in 5d; e.g. *mahatī* in 7a) is juxtaposed with a masculine(/neuter) instrumental plural (*váhnibhiḥ* in 5; e.g. *mahádbhiḥ* in 7a).

While the reversal of the order of these two juxtaposed elements—*váhnibhir̥ gr̥ṇāná* vs *mahatī mahádbhiḥ*, etc.—is among the factors that make it impossible to directly superimpose the syntax and semantics of Verse 7 onto pāda 5d, it is not unlikely that an interpretation of *váhnibhiḥ gr̥ṇāná* that features the semantics of means or accompaniment—i.e. “the praised (goddess), along with the conductors,[shines]”—would be floating around in a listener’s mind by analogy with the constructions in Verse 7.

How that particular interpretation stacks up to the previously discussed formulaic uses of participial forms of \sqrt{gr} in conjunction with an explicitly expressed animate agent depends on other contextual factors. Whether or not the semantics of means/accompaniment assert themselves completely at any given moment, the two passages do have enough in common in syntax and morphology to suggest, if not insist upon, the existence of implied metalinguistic equations between *váhnibhiḥ gr̥ṇāná* and the four analogous phrases in pādas 7a-c. This is especially the case because the interpretation of the instrumental in 5d is a conspicuous point of contention and the repetition of instrumentals in Verse 7 is a prominent formal feature.

To the extent that the instrumental in pāda 5d is associated with analogous forms in Verse 7, those latter forms would support a different subset of not only syntactic interpretations, but also animacy judgments for *váhnibhiḥ* from those reinforced by the form and content of Verse 6 (promoting different understandings of its relationship with *ásvāḥ...váhantaḥ*). Recall that the three most possible interpretations were the following.

- 1) Less animate; one entity: **“horses...conducting” in 6ab is the primary metaphor for the flames** of the ritual fire that lead Dawn through the morning sacrifice; **in a compatible, secondary characterization, the flames** are “conductors” in 5d, conceived of as **the means by which or attendants with whom Dawn shines**.

2) More animate; one entity: the “conductors” in 5d are the primary metaphor for/understanding of flames, conceived of as deified, crackling ritual agents by whom Dawn is praised; in a compatible, secondary characterization, the flames are (neighing) horses, conduct Dawn through the ritual.

3) Two entities with different levels of animacy: the “conductors” can be human ritual agents by whom Dawn is praised; in contrast less-animate “horses,” i.e. flames, conduct Dawn through the ritual.

Whereas Verse 6 strongly supported interpretations 1 and 3, I will argue that the rounds of polyptoton in Verse 7—and in particular, the instrumentals *mahádbhiḥ*, “with the great,” and *devébhiḥ*, “with the gods,”—primarily support interpretations 1 and 2, because of usage trends involving these forms that suggest lesser animacy (for *mahádbhiḥ*, supporting interpretation 1), an association with fire’s flames (for *devébhiḥ*, supporting interpretations 1 and 2), and the semantics of accompaniment or means (supporting interpretation 1). The final pāda of Verse 7, combined with the association of the instrumental plural *devébhiḥ* with fire’s flames, supports interpretation 2 in particular. After the reinforcement of these two particular interpretations to the exclusion of the third, fire’s flames—conceived as divine ritual agents, or as shining chattel equivalent to the horses the poet will desire (see above on “double vision”)—become the focus of the ritual imagery.

Let us first examine *mahádbhiḥ*. Four out of the six instances of this form outside of 7.75 are clearly inanimate, and used to express instrumentals of means. Take the following example.

4.22.3a yó devó devátamo jáyamāno

4.22.3b mahó vājebhir mahádbhiś ca śúṣmaiḥ

The god who, being born as the best of gods,

is great by reason of his prizes and his great explosive powers

Note that before the arrival of the enclitic conjunction *-ca*, “and,” *mahádbhiḥ* would be taken with *vājebhiḥ*, “prizes,” and some degree of association probably lingers. Similarly, in 3.36.1d, Indra becomes well-famed by means of his *great* deeds; in 4.41.2d, Indra becomes far-famed by means of *great* “forms of help”; in 6.32.4b, the sense of the instrumental is one of accompaniment, but the semantics remain inanimate: “As great one, drive here to the singer...with your *great* unbridled power.”

Not to suppress data: there is in fact one instance in which the form *mahádbhiḥ* refers to entities that are high up on the animacy hierarchy (“sons” in 1.72.c). A further passage displays some degree of ambiguity:

10.70.5c uśatīr dvāro mahinā mahádbhir

10.70.5d devaṃ ráthaṃ rathayúr dhārayadhvam

*Eagerly, o Doors, with your greatness and **with the great (gods? horses?)**
seeking the chariot, hold fast the divine chariot.*

The ambiguity of *mahádbhiḥ* in this passage is based not only on the lack of a substantive accompanying this form, but the presence of two possible candidates for referent in prior verses of the same hymn: the horses by which (instrumental) the gods are conveyed to the ritual grounds, and the gods themselves (“horses” are in the instrumental case two times, in Verses 2 and 3; “gods” are present in nearly every verse, but in other grammatical cases). I would lean toward (the less-animate) “horses” as an instrumental of means (of conveyance) because they are in the correct case in prior appearances, but there is definitely ambiguity.

Four clearly less-animate usages out of a total of six might not seem like so robust a trend as to guarantee a similar interpretation of the “great” ones in 7.75. But there is another factor working in favor of a less-animate interpretation of *mahádbhiḥ* in 7.75.7. To understand it, we should briefly return to *RV* 4.22, quoted above. In this hymn, the use of juxtaposed stems from *máh-* to encode items of various levels of animacy is a trick that the poet uses twice. Here is the second instance.

4.22.5a tá tú ta indra **maható maháni**

4.22.5b víśveṣu ít sávaneṣu pravácya

*These great (deeds) of you, the great one, o Indra,
are to be proclaimed at all the pressings.*

Similarly, *mahatí mahádbhiḥ* in 7.75.7 would represent the last of a series of alternations between the use of *maghá/máh-* to describe Dawn, and then to describe inanimate and even abstract ideas, like the “great good faring” and “great good fortune,” that “gift-grand” Dawn is supposed to be able to confer: see the discussion of related homologies in Section 9.2. Of course, these earlier alternations/homologies were highlighted by a structuring device, which heightens their influence upon the perceived semantics of *mahat í mahádbhiḥ* in Verse 7. So, it would seem reasonable to assume that *mahádbhiḥ* in 7.75 would be interpreted as elliptical for “with great (gifts, strengths, “good fortune,” “good faring,” etc.)—and that to the extent that *mahádbhiḥ* is interpreted as a gloss for *váhnibhiḥ*, those prior “conductors” would refer to things that are similarly not-so-animate, i.e. to (fiery) chattel along with/by means of which Dawn shines, renamed as “conducting horses” in Verse 6. In the broader context of the second half of 7.75, this would seem to be a description of flames of the ritual fire intended to frame that fire as an analog, or form, of the very type of remuneration that will ultimately be requested.

But *mahádbhiḥ* is not the only instrumental in Verse 7 with usage trends relevant to the question of animacy. That the instrumental *devébbhiḥ*, “with the gods,” could only be used to describe higher-ups on the animacy hierarchy is self-evident—but on multiple occasions this form appears to reference Agni’s flames specifically. *RV*3.24 contains one of the clearest examples.

- 3.24.4 ágne víśvebhir **agníbbhir**
devébbhir mahayā gírah
yajñéṣu yá u cāyávaḥ
O Agni, together with all the fires,
with all the gods, exalt out songs
and (together with) those who are the respected in the sacrifices

Needless to say, these gods are the type that could conduct ritual “hymning” (here, they accompany and amplify Agni as he “exalt[s] out songs.” A similar example (one which however does not reference the fires’ crackling song) occurs in 6.11.6.

- 6.11.6a daśasyá naḥ puruaṇíka hotar
6.11.6b **devébbhir** agne **agníbbhir** idhānáḥ
Be favorable to us, o Hotar of many faces,
along with the gods, the fires, upon being kindled, o Agni

In 3.15.6c (3.15 being an Agni-hymn as well), *devébbhiḥ* should likely be interpreted in much the same way: i.e. *devébbhir deva surúcā rucānáḥ* could be rendered as, “Aflame with good flame, o god with the gods (=fire-flames).” Jamison and Brereton interpret 3.40.3b in a similar vein, though I do not insist upon that example.

To the extent that *devébbhiḥ* in Verse 7 is taken to be a gloss for *váhnibhiḥ* in Verse 5, the “conductors” would be deified flames—flames by whom Dawn is hymned in crackling tones, or by whom Dawn is accompanied (if the semantics of accompaniment also retrospectively influence the interpretation of 5b); the “horses...conducting” Dawn through the ritual in Verse 6 would be taken as a different characterization of the same entities. This interpretation provides an interesting and instructive segue into the final pāda of Verse 7.

- 7.75.7d práti **gáva**² uśasaṃ vāvaśanta
The cows keep bellowing in response to Dawn.

The passage about the breaking of fastnesses in pāda 7c, quoted in Section 9.8 above, seems to be a reference to the Vala myth, and this last pāda might be taken to be an extension of that reference. But on the other hand, if *devébbhiḥ* is taken to provide the animate gloss of *váhnibhiḥ* required to interpret the “

conductors” as ritual agents who hymn Dawn, the “cows,” just like their equine conductor counterparts (who renamed fire’s crackling flames), may here be taken to adopt a vocal role in hymning. What they would represent in that instance is of course an open question—it could be Dawn’s light intermingled with the flames and portrayed as “crackling” along with them, and/or the light and noise produced when a substance is thrown into the sacrificial fire, etc.—but I think the main point here is that one interpretation of *váhnibhiḥ grṇānā́*, “[Dawn] hymned by the conductors (=flames/horses),” and this pāda, i.e. “The cows keep bellowing in response to Dawn” reinforce one another.

The promotion of the above-described interpretations is a tactic that goes a long way toward answering the question posed in 9.8: How does one move from the abstract statement—*dádhāti rátnam vidhaté jánāya*, “She bestows treasure for the stewardly gens”—to a concrete demand, *nú no... dhehi rátnam*, “Now, **bestow** for us **treasure**,” without displaying some degree of presumptuousness regarding the skill of one’s “stewardly gens”? An exploration of just how many different identities the ritual fire can embody—and particularly this exploration, in which both things and entities embodied by fire’s flames accompany Dawn, according to the instrumental semantics of Verse 7—is a good way to show, rather than presume or openly claim, that the poet and his compatriots are good distributors, who circulate goods back Dawn’s way via that fire: after all, as we have had many occasions to discuss since Section 5, the kindling of the fire is one of the few kinds of uncontested agency that the poet possesses, so much so that his other claims to agency are formulated in terms of this one. “Distributor” is just one of the possible glosses for the “stewardly” dative recipient *vidhaté*; if being “stewardly,” at least synchronically, amounts to being “worshipful” in a more vague or multifaceted sense, the highlighting of the role of *divine* flames as ritual agents goes one step beyond the cross-culturally common framing tactic of “by the power of [insert god’s name here] I do this,” attenuating even the idea of a supporting role for human agents in ritual hymning; this way, the quality of the (divinely performed) hymn is more or less unassailable.

The reader will note that there are four instrumentals in Verse 7, but so far I have only examined the usage patterns of two. There is only one other instance of the instrumental *satyébhiḥ*, but if we expand our discussion of usage patterns to include the alternative instrumental *satyaíḥ*, we can say that the other instances of instrumentals from *satyá-*, “true/real,” are the following. We have two inanimate uses: *RV* 1.67.5b *mántrebhiḥ satyaíḥ*, “(props up heaven) with mantras (made) true” and 10.111.1c *satyaíḥ... kṛtébhiḥ* “(we will rouse Indra) with deeds (made) true”; we have two animate uses: *RV* 10.15.9d *satyaíḥ kavayaíḥ pitṛbhir gharmaśadbhiḥ* “with the poets, the forefathers, who are true, who sit by the gharma drink.

” There are two other instances of the form *yájatraiḥ*, but one of them occurs in 4.56, as part of a stretch of hymns that have already been shown to be dependent upon Vasiṣṭha’s corpus of Dawn hymns (or vice versa).¹⁶¹ This does not seem to be enough of a basis on which to establish a trend; however, other plural forms of *yájatra-* seem to describe animate, primarily divine entities. One also might note of the final instrumental, *yájatraiḥ*, that it is the only one that differs in suffixation from the juxtaposed nominative singular feminine: *yajatá*. The instrumental bears the *-tra* “tool suffix” (with *mántra-*, literally a “tool for thinking,” being the go-to example for its semantics)¹⁶², meaning that it once meant “tool for worship”. While synchronically both forms can mean “worshipful,” or “worthy of worship,” and serve as epithets for gods, more etymological “tool-suffix” semantics certainly complement both interpretations supported by this chain of polyptoton: both deified flames and less-animate shining chattel would seem appropriately characterized as “tools of worship.”

So, to recapitulate: the juxtaposition of nouns in the nominative feminine singular and nouns in the instrumental masculine(/neuter) plural in Verse 7 suggests that this polyptotic chain is in part intended to (via an implied metalinguistic equation) spur a reconsideration of the semantics of *váhnibhiḥ grṇānā* in Verse 5, and by extension those of *ásvāḥ...váhantaḥ*. The two instrumental forms in Verse 7 that have noticeable usage trends support two of the three most possible readings of *váhnibhiḥ*. Usage patterns and hymn-internal context relevant to the forms *mahádbhiḥ* and *devébbhiḥ* support the following interpretation:

- 1) Less animate; one entity: **“horses...conducting” in 6ab is the primary metaphor for the flames** of the ritual fire that lead Dawn through the morning sacrifice; **in a compatible, secondary characterization, the flames are “conductors” in 5d, conceived of as the means by which or attendants with whom Dawn shines.**

Usage patterns as well as the inherent semantics of the form *devébbhiḥ* additionally support the following reading.

- 2) More animate; one entity: the **“conductors” in 5d are the primary metaphor for/understanding of flames,** conceived of **as deified, crackling ritual agents by whom Dawn is praised;** in a compatible, secondary characterization, the flames are (neighing?) horses, conduct Dawn through the ritual.

¹⁶¹ A footnote toward the end of Section 2.2 established this.

¹⁶² It might not be appropriate to appeal to the *etymology* of this form so much as the synchronic meanings of other Vedic words that bear this suffix (meanings which might be influential in an environment where contrasts in derivational morphology modulate attention toward the suffix).

The final reinforcement of interpretation 2, which characterizes “horses” (i.e., flames) as having a *vocal* role in ritual arrives in the last pāda of Verse 7, where cows, too, are described as bellowing.¹⁶³

Overall, then, Verse 7 maintains the ambiguity between more and less animate characterizations of the “conductors,” but, through the use of this semantic reinforcement in the final pāda, this verse would likely induce the mind to dwell upon the idea of more animate deified flames (and other ritual substances) as singing ritual agents. The ritual contributions of divine flames, unlike those of human ritual agents, are unquestionably a job *well done*; by centering *their* agency as opposed to his own, the poet manages to depict the task of hymning as impeccably performed while avoiding rhetorically problematic boasts about his role in performing it.

9.10 Structuring Device 2, Nominal homologies and commodified companions

So, by the end of Verse 7, we are sure that this stewardly gens deserves a reward for the service they were able to muster—but what sort of treasure should be bestowed? In a technique that should remind us

¹⁶³ Because so much depends on case semantics, it is very difficult to construct an English equivalent that has many of the formal characteristics of the Sanskrit. The things we can imitate are the following: 1) syntactic (augmented by metrical) parallels between the translation of Verse 7 and prior passages that cause the translations of *vāhnibhiḥ grṇānā* and *ásvāḥ...vāhantaḥ* to be interpreted in such a way as to disfavor the idea that the “conductors” are distinct from horses/flames; 2) a rendering of *mahatī mahādhibiḥ* in which *mahādhibiḥ* **almost** certainly refers to less animate things (“the gods’-gifts-to(o),” intended to provide a faintly-heard suggestion of the 2 animate readings we noticed for *mahādhibiḥ*, i.e. “They are the gods’ gifts to (humanity)”); parallels between the role of the conductor/horses and the cows: the former “flare up on / high,”; the latter “kine bellow on /low.” All together then, we have the following (on the right-hand side, with the first half of the translation juxtaposed on the left-hand side for comparison):

Conductors hymnal-singing	The giver, grand-gift granting
Horses shine, flare up on high, conduct dawn through;	goddess; gods pull out the stops; the gods’-gifts-to(o)— the worship-full; the worshipful; the Truth; those who are
true In chariot- colors, blazing, Dawn proceeds;	Dawn pulls out all the stops; stays in the red
She serves and treasures men who staff the service.	Kine bellow on low right at Dawn.

of 7.77, Vasiṣṭha will pull the answer out of prior imagery (describing ritual exchange). Witness the links below, articulated through Structuring Device 2.

7.75.6a práti dyutānām aruṣāso **ásvās**²

7.75.6b citrá adṛśrann uṣāsaṃ váhantaḥ

*Opposite, the **horses**--ruddy*

Bright—were seen to blaze, conducting the flashing Dawn.

7.75.7d práti **gáva**² uṣāsaṃ vāvaśanta

The cows keep bellowing in response to Dawn.

7.75.8a nú no **gómā**² vīrávad dhehi² rátnam²

7.75.8b úšo **ásvāvad**² purubhójo asmé

*Now, bestow for us a treasure **consisting of cows**, of heroes,*

*and of **horses** o Dawn, you who provide much nourishment to us.*

Section 9.9 established that in the wake of Verse 7, the first appearances of *ásva*- and *gó*- would be taken to describe animate companions/officiants conducting Dawn through the ritual and participating in “hymning” her. By the end of the hymn, however, these companions are commodities: the preferred currency of the “treasure,” *rátna*-, described at the end of Verse 6 and then demanded in Verse 8, by which point the poet has proven that he and his associates are “stewardly” enough to deserve it. (As discussed in Section 9.8, both the description and the demand are encapsulated within Structuring Device 2.)

In 7.77 a similar type of transition was articulated, except that there, the repetitions in question belonged to the second half of Structuring Device 4, which cut across two discourse units. Reproducing them here.

7.77.3b **śvetám**⁴ náyantī sudṛśīkam **ásvam**⁴

*Leading a **bright horse** lovely to see*

7.77.5c-d *dádhatī...gómā **ásvāvad** ráthavac ca rádhaḥ*

*Bestowing (for us)...largesse **in cattle, horses** and chariots*

The first passage to be quoted above was the second half of a type-b homology; so, here we’re observing a kind of tag-team effect between two homology types. This particular instance of a tag-team effect, articulated throughout Structuring Device 4 of 7.77, was (accurately) labeled “antanaclasis” in Section 4.5. Yet again we see that the same strategies underlie antanaclasis and homology: so much so that antanaclasis can be just the cumulative effect of a series of formally expressed homologies (see section 9.2 for a discussion). In all of these cases, Dawn’s companions, her animate (if animalian) fellow “officiants,” become a currency for exchange. The primary difference between the technique in 7.75 vs. that in 7.77 is

where the transition begins. In 7.75, the transition is between the ritual-oriented imagery of the hymn's hub, which depicts some elements of *agency*, and ritual-oriented imagery that shows the livestock in a less ambiguous role as chattel; in 7.77, the homology begins with imagery that still seems primarily oriented toward events above the horizon, where Dawn dawns. This is a natural difference to emerge between a tripartite and a dipartite hymn, respectively.

On the basis of these examples, we can identify some traits of what I will call "type-c" or "nominal" homologies.

- 1) (thematic) this homology links two entities at different positions in at least one of the following hierarchies
 - a) altitudinal hierarchy: sky/atmosphere vs. ritual grounds
 - b) animacy hierarchy: (divine or human) ritual entourage vs. ritual goods and exchangeable chattel
- 2) (formal) one half of the relevant round of repetition is a noun
- 3) (formal) the other half of the relevant round of repetition is a nominal formation (noun or adjective)

The objectives behind such a formal tactic are obvious, and have been noted on a prior occasion. For 7.77, which links entities in different altitudinal *and* animacy hierarchies: Dawn can part with some members of her entourage, particularly if she has managed to secure the service of human analogs ("conductors," "singers," and so on). The newly created link between this entourage of Dawn's (itself a metaphor for rays of light) and the down-to-earth *pecuniary* needs of the singer make it easier to imagine Dawn fulfilling that request. An English paraphrase that might mimic the effect of nominal homologies in 7.77 would be the following: "**Horses**, your **prized companions**, were seen conducting you down; bestow upon us a **prize** of **horses** and a **company** of heroes." For 7.75, much the same could be said, except that it is the agents and entourage that the ritual *fire* provides for Dawn that she is then expected to part with; in other words, the same sort of chattel is circulating between Dawn and the officiants, and the poet paid it forward when he and fellow officiants kindled the fire.

9.11 Summary: Characterizing the final discourse units of 7.75 (and, to a lesser extent, 7.77)

There appears to be at least one formal technique that distinguishes the final discourse unit of both 7.77 and 7.75 from what came before: the use of structuring devices to suggest that the desired currency of exchange is near at hand. Such a technique is at home in a discourse unit that begins with descriptions of ritual interactions and culminates in specific, down-to-earth demands for remuneration. We will have a chance to re-examine some elements of the final discourse unit of 7.77 in conjunction with other hymns

attributed to Vasiṣṭha (*RV* 7.76 and 7.86); for right now, 7.75's additional complexities include the use of implied metalinguistic equations, framed by a structuring device and a chain of polyptoton, to narrow previously introduced ambiguities in animacy, before linking two specific readings via homologies. Beyond preparing for those final nominal homologies, this “narrowing” had the effect of removing even suspected direct references to the human officiants’ agency at an opportune moment: in the gap between a stated reciprocity relationship indicating that the “stewardly” should be rewarded and a related imperative implying there were those on the ritual ground who had earned such a reward. (The reciprocity relationship and the related command were both articulated via a structuring device.) By promoting interpretations that highlighted the flames’ *divine* agency and their great gifts, the poet guaranteed that his own sacrificial “stewardliness” would not be focused upon and found wanting.

The chart below summarizes all these tactics in 7.75 and the roles of structuring devices in furthering them; at the bottom of the chart, I make note of the formal and functional parallel we have found in the last discourse of 7.77.

<u>Function 1</u>	
<i>Posing the poem’s final rhetorical challenge, revolving around the question of the poet’s “stewardliness”:</i>	
<u>Formal tactic for Function 1</u>	
<u>7.75:</u>	
- Structuring Device 2: Connects an indicative expressing a reciprocity relationship to a situation-specific imperative	
<u>Function 2.</u>	
<i>Answering that rhetorical challenge: displaying “stewardliness” both in terms of worshipful agency and gift distribution</i>	
<u>Function 2a</u>	<u>Function 2b</u>
<i>Eliminating references to human ritual agency and promoting references to divine agency right after listeners divine) are invited to evaluate the sacrificers’ stewardliness</i>	<i>Transitioning from ideas of ritual agency/animate entourages to exchangeable chattel, connecting that exchangeable chattel with the flames the officiants kindled, i.e. distributed</i>
<u>Formal /phraseological tactics for Function 2a</u>	<u>Formal /phraseological tactics for Function 2b</u>
<u>7.75:</u>	
-Polyptoton/ implied metalinguistic equations, particularly connecting <i>váhnibhiḥ</i> and <i>devébhiḥ</i>	-Polyptoton/ implied metalinguistic equations, connecting <i>váhnibhiḥ</i> and <i>mahádbhiḥ</i>
- Structuring Device 2: introduction of the lowing cows (analogous to crackling divine flames/ <i>horses</i>)	- Structuring Device 2: nominal homologies
<u>7.77:</u>	
	- Structuring Device 4: nominal homologies

PART III. CASE STUDIES: VASIṢṬHA'S OMPHALOS HYMNS

1. 7.76 TEXT AND TRANSLATION

7.76.1a	úd u jyótir ⁴ amṛtaṃ viśvájanyam ⁴	The immortal light belonging to all generations/gentes —
7.76.1b	viśvánaraḥ savitá devó aśret	He who belongs to all men, god Savitar, has just propped it up.
7.76.1c	krátvā devánām ⁴ ajaniṣṭa ⁴ cákṣur	In accordance with his will, the gods' eye has just been generated .
7.76.1d	āvīr akar ³ bhúvanaṃ viśvam uṣáḥ	Dawn has just made the whole world visible.
7.76.2a	prá me pánthā devayānā adṛśrann	The paths leading to the gods have just become visible to me—(paths that
7.76.2b	 ámardhanto ¹ vásubhir ¹ iṣkṛtāsaḥ ³	Are) not negligent and made orderly by/with the good ones/things .
7.76.2c	ábhūd u ketúr uṣásaḥ purástāt	The beacon of Dawn has just appeared from the east.
7.76.2d	pratīcí ágād ³ ádhi ³ harmiyébhyaḥ	She has just come here, facing west from her habitations.
7.76.3a	 tánid ¹ áhāni bahuláni āsan ¹	Those were the days—the many through
7.76.3b	yá prācīnam údítā súriyasya	Which, at the rising of the sun, toward the east-facing (sacrifice)
7.76.3c	yátaḥ pári jārā ivácārantī	Faring forth from there, as if (a maiden) toward a lover,
7.76.3d	úṣo dadṛkṣé ná púnar yatīva	Not like one going (home) again, you were seen, O Dawn.
7.76.4a	 tá ^{1,4} id ¹ devánāṃ sadhamáda āsann ¹	Those were the gods' feasting companions:
7.76.4b	ṛtāvānaḥ kaváyaḥ pūrviyásaḥ	The sage poets of old, provided with truth.
7.76.4c	gūlham jyótiḥ ⁴ pitáro ánv avindan	The fathers discovered the hidden light .
7.76.4d	satyámantrā ajanayann ⁴ uṣásam	With the mantras that come true, they generated the Dawn.
7.76.5a	samāná ūrvé ádhi ³ sámgatāsaḥ ³	Come together here in a common pen,
7.76.5b	sám jānate ⁴ ná yatante mithás té	Those genuinely agree , not marshalling in opposition.
7.76.5c	té devánām ⁴ ná minanti vratáni	Those do not transgress the gods' commandments,
7.76.5d	 ámardhanto ¹ vásubhir ¹ yádamānāḥ	(They who are) not-negligent and united with the good ones .
7.76.6a	práti tvā stómair īlate vásiṣṭhā ²	In response to you the Vasiṣṭhas reverently invoke you with praises,
7.76.6b	uṣarbúdhaḥ subhage tuṣṭuvāṃsaḥ	When, waking at dawn, they have praised you, well-portioned one.
7.76.6c	gávāṃ netri ² vājapatnī na ucha ²	Leaderess of cows, mistress of prizes, dawn for us
7.76.6d	 úṣaḥ ² sujāte prathamá jarasva	O well-born Dawn . Be the first (who is) awake.
7.76.7a	eṣá netri ² rádhasaḥ sūnṛtānām	She, the leaderess of largesse, of liberalities,
7.76.7b	 uṣá ² uchánti ² ribhyate vásiṣṭhaiḥ ²	Dawn, while dawning , is crackled to by the Vasiṣṭhas .
7.76.7c	dīrghaśrútaṃ rayím asmé dádhānā	As she establishes wealth of long fame in us –
7.76.7d	yūyám pāta suastíbhīḥ sádā naḥ	Do you protect us always with your blessing.

2: FORMS OF STRUCTURING DEVICES IN 7.75

2.1 Complementary nested rings

The first set of structuring devices should be familiar to us from *RV*7.75: a complementary set of nested rings. The first ring encompasses Verses 1-5. One round consists of a fixed phrase (*ámardhanto vásubhiḥ* “non-neglectful with goods(/good ones)”); the second round consists of the verbal form *āsan*, “[they] were,” the particle *íd*, and two forms of the pronoun *tá*; in other words, both rounds consist of redundant repetitions.

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5
	ámardhanto vásubhiḥ	táníd...āsan	tá íd ...āsan	ámardhanto vásubhiḥ

The second nested ring encompasses the last two verses. The outer ring consists of two forms of the proper name *vásiṣṭha-*, “Vasiṣṭha(s),” a repetition made perceptible by the factor of proximity. The middle ring is a bit more complicated: it includes juxtaposed forms of *uśás-*, “Dawn,” and *ucha-*, the etymologically related present verbal stem of \sqrt{vas} “shine,” along with the by now familiar nominative singular form *netrī*, “leaderess.”

Verse 6	Verse 7
vásiṣṭhāḥ	netrī... uśá uchántī
netrī..ucha/ úśaḥ	vásiṣṭhaiḥ

Though one would be well-advised not to count repetitions of the name of the god to whom a hymn is dedicated as by themselves significant, here the name of Dawn is part of an etymological figure consisting of *two* forms from the *same* pair of stems derived from \sqrt{vas} ; the redundancy of such a figure guarantees that it will stand out, and the recency/proximity of the relevant pairs of repetitions further enhances their perceptibility. As far as perceptibility goes, the repetitions of *netrī* and *vásiṣṭha-* likewise have the factor of recency on their side. The previously mentioned infrequency of feminine agent-noun stems ensures that *netrī* in particular will stand out; the positioning of the forms of *vásiṣṭha-* in between a metrical break and trisyllabic verb with mediopassive endings lends those repetitions a kind of redundancy.

The matter of grouping repetitions into individual *rounds* may be a little less clear initially. Given that each form *netrī* is separated from at least one of the juxtaposed forms of \sqrt{vas} by nearly a *pāda*, including a metrical pause, the reader may wonder what is behind the decision to count the three stems *netrī*, *uśás-* and *ucha-* as a single round of repetition—that is, beyond the obvious appeal of the claim that this hymn, like the previously analyzed Dawn hymns (also attributed to Vasiṣṭha), includes two complementary structuring devices of the same type.

In prior case studies, I have made fairly explicit the various possible bases for grouping repetitions into a single structuring device—but I have spent relatively little time discussing why various sub-groups of repetitions seem to cohere into separate rounds/rings *within* a single structuring device.¹⁶⁴ Of course, the Gestalt principles of similarity and proximity guarantee that two juxtaposed, etymologically related stems will be grouped together; but one’s default assumption would be that more distinct lexical elements that are not juxtaposed would constitute different rounds of repetition. An alternative grouping judgment reflecting this assumption appears below.

Verse 6	Verse 7
vásiṣṭhāḥ	netrī
netrī	uṣá uchántī
ucha/ úṣaḥ	vásiṣṭhaiḥ

This does not yield a nested ring.

The following are some principles that have tacitly guided my ideas about grouping judgments in other cases. I assume that some combination of temporal (/prosodic) *and* syntactic proximity—like inclusion in the same hemistich and in the same noun or verb phrase—would facilitate the inclusion of two unrelated stems into the same round of repetition.¹⁶⁵ In other instances, I assume that the use of different forms to encode the same agent, entity or action within the same verse heightens the chance that those forms will be grouped into the same round of repetitions—we might call this *referential* proximity.¹⁶⁶

Behind these types of judgment calls is the understanding that even though poetic grammar is distinct from the constructions and associations that are common to all registers of a particular language, it is nonetheless rooted in those basic linguistic building blocks. Poetic grammar may create new modes of association and privilege some old ones, but on the whole it does not contravene the fundamental grammatical rules of the language. When natural language processing (which relies on morphological

¹⁶⁴ Sometimes the type of structuring device obviates the need to even discuss what constitutes a separate round; such is the case with concatenation.

¹⁶⁵ It is such a combination of factors that connect the pronominal and verbal forms in the inner round of this hymn’s first nested ring. For another example, see, for instance, Structuring Device 1 in 7.75; in two out of three rounds, *vísṣvam* is not directly juxtaposed with *prá-*; but given that in those cases *prá-* is the preverb attached to a participle that governs *vísṣvam*, I have assumed they are part of the same round of repetitions.

¹⁶⁶ See Structuring Device 2 in *RV*7.86, discussed in Part I, Section 4.8 and outlined in a section below. The pair of forms on each side of this redundant ring refer to the same agent(s)—in the case of the verbal form, the subject of that form is the agent in question.

markers, prosodic units, etc., to detect associations) already paves the way for strong associations between a set of forms, then they are more likely to be grouped into the same round of a poetic structuring device as well.

Each instance of *netrī* is in the same hemistich as the corresponding pair of forms from \sqrt{vas} , and referential proximity is definitely a factor that works to connect *netrī* with *uśás-*. Also, both the hemistichs 6cd and 7ab permit (although do not demand) interpretations that cast *netrī* as an appositive to *uśás-*.¹⁶⁷ In other words, two to three types of basic linguistic associations (prosodic, referential, and perhaps syntactic) would help quickly connect the three interior forms. Given that a grouping judgment based on these connections also yields a conventional structuring device type, it is likely that a listener would regard the instances of *netrī* and *uśás-* as a single round of repetition.

2.2 Lexical and grammatical relay

The next structuring device runs through Verses 1-5, i.e. through the same stretch of territory covered by the first nested ring. It consists of two analogous forms from the roots $\sqrt{kṛ}$ and $\sqrt{gā}/\sqrt{gam}$ (“do” and “go/come,” respectively):

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5
akar	īṣkṛtāsah			
	āgād⁴ ādhi			ādhi sámgatāsah

The first round of repetitions unites *akar*, the aorist active indicative third singular form of $\sqrt{kṛ}$, with a nominative plural masculine compound adjective formed off the basis of the past participle *kṛtā-*. The factor of recency would guarantee that this repetition is perceived.

Recency does not work in favor of the next round of repetitions, which connect analogous aorist indicative and adjectival forms from (the frequently associated roots) $\sqrt{gā}$ and \sqrt{gam} .¹⁶⁸ However, the

¹⁶⁷ In another perfectly valid interpretation of 6cd, the vocative *úśah* is instead connected to the verb *jarasva* “be awake.” In another perfectly valid interpretation of Verse 6, the form *netrī* is the predicate of a copulative sentence *eśā netrī*, “She (is) the leader,” rather than an appositive connected to *uśā* “Dawn.”

¹⁶⁸ On treating $\sqrt{gā}$ and \sqrt{gam} as identical roots: while I have not successfully located any cases of folk-etymological figures decisively tying these two roots together, forms of \sqrt{gam} are sometimes used close to forms of *gātú-*, “way,” which is derived from $\sqrt{gā}$ (1.151 2c, 6b and 7c; 3.31.14c and 15d). This includes at least one hymn in which the *way* to go (in order to emerge from the womb) is of major thematic importance: 4.18 (2b, 3b and 10d). There is also, for instance, I.65.2-3, in which *ánu* + \sqrt{gam} is used of following Agni, and *ánu* $\sqrt{gā}$ is used of (the gods) following commandments, in a section that treats the theme of Agni’s “flight and rediscovery by the gods” in the words of Jamison and Brereton (2014).

presence of the adverbial form *ádhi*, “here”—an adverb that appears nowhere else within this hymn—lends an element of redundancy that facilitates the recognition of this repetition. This is reminiscent of the role of certain pronominal forms in heightening the perceptibility of rounds of repetition within a geometric ring in *Rig Veda* 7.75—there too, the highlighted forms happened to be from the root $\sqrt{gā}$.¹⁶⁹

The Gestalt factor of similarity (which we have also called “redundancy”) would cause these two rounds of repetition to be grouped with one another: the analogous forms are isosyllabic; the compound adjectives are further derived in similar ways (via the addition of a preverb to a past participle), and each appear before a metrical break; etc. Because there is no element analogous to the adverb *ádhi* surrounding the first round of repetitions, in my view this perceptible repetition would not be grouped with the structuring device (though it serves to highlight a particular round of repetition within the device); in this respect too, its role is reminiscent of the pronominal forms in *RV* 7.75.

2.3 Redundant lexical rings

The fourth and final structuring device within this hymn is also the most complex, though all of its components are analogous to things we have already encountered. It consists of two redundant rounds of repetitions. Each round contains a stem from the verbal root \sqrt{jan} , “generate,” or from a root that is closely phonologically (and, it will turn out, thematically)¹⁷⁰ related: $\sqrt{jñā}$, “know.” In one round, the additional element is *jyótiḥ*, “light”; in the other round, the additional element is *devánām*, “of the gods.”

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5
jyótiḥ...-janyam			té (íd) devánām	-jānate...té/té devánām ná minanti vratáni
devánām ajanīṣṭa cákṣuḥ			jyótiḥ... ajanayan	

The reason that a number of word forms within this chart are *not* put in bold is that (I claim) ultimately they would not be grouped into the structuring device. However, their temporary association with the words that make up this device have a crucial catalytic effect in helping certain repetitions be perceived and in developing the connections between repetitions that finally stabilize into the grouping judgments mentioned above.

Note that this is a somewhat different type of claim than we made for *ádhi* in Structuring Device 2 or for *etá-* and *tiyá-* in 7.75: here, the idea is that in the course of the recognition of a particular structuring

¹⁶⁹ This is discussed at length in Section 7.5 of Part II; the relevant pronominal stems were *etá-* and *tiyá-*

¹⁷⁰ See sections 2.7 and 4.5 for more on the relationship between \sqrt{jan} and $\sqrt{jñā}$.

device, grouping judgments might shift to include and then exclude certain forms and phrases. Note also that one such form, the *té* included under Verse 4, is the same *té* that was included in Structuring Device 1 (the first nested ring in 7.76)—in other words, in order for it to act as part of a “catalyst” for this structuring device, it would have to temporarily be disassociated (and then re-associated) with the prior one. A brief outline of the assumed processes underlying these claims would seem to be in order, and I have performed it in an appendix.¹⁷¹ For now, note that each round of repetitions proposed has similarity and redundancy in its favor *if* the reader assumes the repetitions would be perceived. In what follows, I will outline an unexamined variant on the Gestalt factor of proximity that influences into grouping judgments *and* broader interpretive matters: “thematic proximity.” In 7.76, interrelated bits of phraseology articulating a particular theme surround the structurally significant repetitions listed above; the affinities between these chunks of phraseology help the listener detect the repetitions and group them into particular rounds. Because thematic proximity partially involves the *semantics* of the phrases surrounding and connecting repetitions, this type of proximity would be recognized last of all—but that also means it has the opportunity to act as a particularly decisive factor in grouping judgments. (Appendix 1 provides a detailed account of how thematic proximity relates to other factors responsible for the recognition and grouping of repetitions associated with Structuring Device 4.)

2.4 Thematic proximity in Structuring Device 7.76

In the passages from *RV* 7.76 that are especially relevant to Structuring Device 4, there is phraseology associated with two different types of thematic content/two different discourses. There is a discourse about mythological discoveries and the generating of light, involving divinities and semi-divine “founding fathers,” as it were (more literally rendered “finding fathers”). There is also a discourse about comradely collaboration among gods and humans, and adherence to certain precepts out of fear of the gods’ all-seeing, sky-high eye. Both of these discourses are essentially divine-oriented; the contrast between them exists separately from the more typical human/divine, celestial/ritual oppositions. That said, the preponderance of one type of divine-oriented imagery over another will ultimately affect what divine feats and traits serve as models for human behavior.

¹⁷¹ See Appendix at the end of this dissertation.

Both divine-oriented discourses *could* involve at least three of the four key lexical elements of this structuring device, i.e. \sqrt{jan} , $\sqrt{jñā}$ and *devá-*—but many of the relevant forms participate in specific collocations that are associated with one or the other discourse. It is these collocations that ultimately determine how the phonologically similar groups will be organized. Below I will expand upon these two themes/discourses and their relevance to Structuring Device 4.

2.5 The discourse of discoveries: \sqrt{jan} and *jyótiḥ* in light of \sqrt{vid} and \sqrt{guh}

Verse 4 is rife with lexical elements typically used to encode an episode in which divinities, semi-divine ancestors, or human ritual participants generate or liberate the Dawn or other forms of light (such as fire)—or else they find a path (usually one that sends them on their way toward generating or liberating). Relevant mythological stories include the Vala myth; of course, none of this is incompatible with simultaneous allusions to the kindling of the ritual fire, and the resultant appearance of Dawn. Below I quote the verse for reference; this time, the forms that I put in bold will turn out to be elements of standard phraseology encoding this “discourse of discovery.”

7.76.4a tá íd devánāṃ sadhamáda āsann

7.76.4b ṛtāvānaḥ kavāyaḥ pūrviyāsaḥ

7.76.4c **gūlhám jyótiḥ** pitáro **ánv avindan**

7.76.4d satyámantrā **ajanayann** uṣásam

Those were the gods’ feasting companions:

The sage poets of old, provided with truth.

*The fathers **discovered the hidden light.***

*With the mantras that come true, **they generated** the Dawn.*

Consistently present within similar episodes throughout the *Rig Veda* are \sqrt{jan} , “generate,” *jyótiḥ*, “light,” and \sqrt{vid} , “find.” In the examples below, each of the three key words is highlighted, along with forms of *devá-* (since their involvement in this phraseology might be relevant to Structuring Device 4).

3.34.4 índraḥ suvarṣá **janáyann** áhāni

jigáyośígbbhiḥ pṛtanā abhiṣṭíḥ

prárocayan mánave ketúm áhnām

ávindaj jyótir bṛhaté ráṇāya

*Indra, winning the sun, **generating** the days,*

Conquered in the battles along with the fire priests, as superiority (itself).

He made shine for Manu the beacon of the days;

***He found the light** for lofty joy.*

5.14.4 agnir **játó** arocata
ghnán dásyūñ **jyótiṣā** támaḥ
ávindad gá apáḥ súvaḥ
*Agni shone **as soon as he was generated**.*
*Smashing Dasyus and darkness **with his light**.*
***He found** the cows, the waters and the sun.*

7.90.3ab rāyé nú yam **jajñátū** ródasīmé
rāyé **deví** dhiṣāṇā dhāti **devám**
*The one whom these two world-halves **generated** for wealth*
*(**That**) **god** will **the goddess**, the holy place, position for wealth.*

7.90.4a uchánn uśasaḥ sudínā aripṛá
7.90.4b urú **jyótir vividur** dīdhiyānāḥ
7.90.4c gávyam cid ūrvám uśijo ví vavrus
The dawns dawned, day-bright and stainless.
*(The men) **have found** broad **light** while reflecting.*
The fire priests have opened up the cowpen.

These are just a few of the passages in which in an allusion to the Vala myth (+/- hints of ritual), the roots and stems of \sqrt{jan} , “generate,” *jyótiḥ*, “light,” and \sqrt{vid} , “find” are used to describe the birth of a god (Agni or Vāyu, the latter being the god to whom the first morning pressings are offered) or the generation of days along with the discovery of light or the dawn-cows. If we count the number of times in which a similar type of discourse is articulated using at least one of these lexical elements alongside synonyms substituted for the others, the examples proliferate. What is more, many examples of the latter type include other roots found in 7.76.4, particularly \sqrt{guh} , “hide,” from which *gūlḥám* in pāda 4b is derived. Below is just one of many such examples:

4.58.4 trídḥā hitám pañibhir **guhyámānaṃ**
gávi **deváso** ghṛtám ánv **avindan**
índra ékaṃ sūrya ékaṃ **jajāna**
venád ékaṃ svadháyā niṣ ṭatakṣuḥ
Triply deposited, **being hidden** by the Pañis—
The gods discovered the ghee in the cow.
Indra **generated** one; the Sun **generated** one;
From the seeker they fashioned one through their own power.

So basically then, \sqrt{jan} and *jyótiḥ*, when surrounded by forms from \sqrt{vid} , “find,” and \sqrt{guh} , “hide,” would most certainly find themselves affiliated with this discourse.

There is no particular allusion to this theme in the phraseology surrounding \sqrt{jan} and *jyótiḥ* in Verse 1, but since pādas 1a and 1b have no strongly contradictory connotations,¹⁷² and the forms *jyótiḥ* and *viśvájanyam* are on the grounds of prosodic proximity and phonological similarity associated with each other and with the other instances of \sqrt{jan} and *jyótiḥ*, these forms might retrospectively be imbued with similar thematic content: for instance, once the other co-occurrence of \sqrt{jan} and *jyótiḥ* is associated with the “discourse of discoveries,” the description *jyótiḥ viśvájanyam* could be taken to retrospectively hint at the debt that Dawn owes to the mythical “founding fathers,” who *generated* (\sqrt{jan})/discovered her *light* (*jyótiḥ*)—on which, see more under Section 4.4.

There are two more key lexical elements in Structuring Device 4: *devá-* and $\sqrt{jñā}$. But before we can show how associations between forms from *devá-*, $\sqrt{jñā}$ and \sqrt{jan} in 7.76 would form, we need to know more about a competing divine-oriented discourse that also threads its way through Verses 4 and 5.

2.6 The discourse of directives, and of all-seeing eyes: *devānām* in light of \sqrt{caks} , $\sqrt{mī}$ ($\sqrt{mā}$) and *vratá-*

In 7.76.1bc and 5a-c, a different set of phraseology can be detected: phraseology which, as we will shortly see, is connected to the theme of divine directives and the overseers that enforce them. The relevant passages are quoted below; here too, the words in bold are those that turn out to be connected to the theme in question, rather than those that participate in a structuring device.

7.76.1b viśvānaraḥ **savitá** devó aśret

7.76.1c krátvā **devānām** ajaniṣṭa **cákṣur**

*He who belongs to all men, god **Savitar**, has just propped [the light] up.*

*In accordance with his will, **the gods’ eye** was just generated.*

7.76.5a **samāná** ūrvé ádhi sámgatāsaḥ

7.76.5b sám jānate ná yatante mithás té

7.76.5c té **devānām** ná **minanti vratáni**

*Come together here in a **common** pen,*

Those genuinely act together, not marshalling in opposition.

*Those do not **transgress the gods’ commandments**.*

¹⁷² The aorist-tense formations in these pādas and the reference to Savitar, the god of the rising and setting sun, can be associated with other celestial/divine-oriented discourses—but that is neither here nor there with regard to the discourse split currently being discussed.

The most suggestive root that we have not seen before in a Dawn hymn is $\sqrt{m\bar{i}}$, “diminish, change, confound, transgress” found in the form *minanti*, “transgress.” My claim is that this root, in conjunction with particular stems derived from $\sqrt{cakṣ}$, “see” (or other synonyms), is crucial to the expression of the “discourse of divine directives.”

In the first example from other hymns, the key roots $\sqrt{cakṣ}$ and $\sqrt{m\bar{i}}$ are joined by another word from 7.76.5: *samāná-*, “common.” Note also that one form of $\sqrt{cakṣ}$, *cákṣuḥ*, “eye,” is used with a genitive construction, with the two genitives being the names of divinities (*mitrásya váruṇasya*, “of Mitra and Varuna”), which might remind us of *devánām...cákṣuḥ*, “the gods’ eye,” in 7.75.1c. Finally, notice the multiple appearances of *devá-*, and the reference to Savitar, the god featured in Verse 1 of 7.76.

7.63.1a úd ū eti subhágo viśvá**cakṣāḥ**

7.63.1b sádhāraṇaḥ súriyo mánuṣāṇām

7.63.1c **cákṣur** mitrásya váruṇasya **devás**

Upward he rises, bringing good fortune and **with his gaze on** everything,

The shared support of the sons of Manu, the sun,

The god, the eye of Mitra and Varuna

7.63.3cd eṣá me **deváḥ savitá** cachanda

yáḥ **samānáṃ** ná **pramináti** dháma

He appears to me as the god Savitar,

Who **does not violate** the **common** institute,

In the following example, culled from *RV* 10.10, Yama, the primordial divine twin, explains to his sister Yamī why they cannot sleep together (an act which eventually would produce the human race); the passages below contain some of Yamī’s retorts, which discount the divine precepts that this discourse highlights. This hymn, though late, is particularly instructive given the additional lexical elements it shares with 7.76.5, including the key root \sqrt{jan} , in addition to *vratá-*, “commandment,” which governs a pronoun referring to a god in the genitive, just as is the case with the phrase *devánām...vratáni*, “the gods’ commandments,” in 7.76.5c.¹⁷³ The form (*prá*) *minanti* is from $\sqrt{m\bar{i}}$, *mimīyāt* is from $\sqrt{m\bar{i}}$ as well, though this latter form shows a different semantic valence of the root.

10.10.5a gárbhe nú nau **janitá** dámpatī ka

10.10.5b devás tváṣṭā **savitá** viśvárūpaḥ

10.10.5c nákir asya **prá minanti vratáni**

¹⁷³ In 10.10.5c, *asya*, “his,” refers to Tvaṣṭar, who is also called *savitár*, literally, “the impeller,” used in this case as an epithet rather than a proper name.

*Even in the womb **Progenitor** made us two a married couple.*

*The God **Tvaṣtar**, **the Impeller** who provides all forms.*

*No one **transgresses his commandments**.*

10.10.9b sūryasya **cákṣur** múhur ún **mimīyāt**

*She could for an instant **trip up** the eye of the sun.*

Pāda 9b above is a particularly pointed response to the fears expressed by Yama in the immediately preceding verse (Verse 8):

10.10.8a ná tiṣṭhanti ná ní miṣanti eté

10.10.8b **devánāṃ** spáśa ihá yé cáranti

They do not stand still; they do not blink—

*The spies **of the gods** who roam about here.*

Here the spies of the gods who do not blink are clearly a parallel to the ocular imagery of the “eye of the sun” from pāda 9b, which does not look down benevolently so much as check for those who defy the gods’ commandments.

In a variant on this theme, the Maruts (not unlike Yamī) are spoken of as transgressing or confounding (*prá minanti* again, from \sqrt{m}) the eye of the sun.

5.59.5 ásvā ivéd aruṣáśaḥ sábandhavaḥ

śúrā iva prayúdhaḥ prótá yuyudhuḥ

\ máryā iva suvídho vāvḍhur náraḥ

sūryasya **cákṣuḥ prá minanti** vṛṣṭibhiḥ

Like reddish horses [flames of fire], they are of the same lineage,

Like champions in the vanguard, they have fought in advance

Like very strong young bloods, the men have grown strong.

***They confound the eye** of the sun with their rains.*

Obviously, this is referring to the storm-gods’ ability to cloud a clear sky, but passages like the following in 10.111 suggest another layer of meaning.

10.111.4aíndro mahná maható arṇavásya

10.111.4b**vratáminād** ángirobhir grṇnāḥ

Indra, by his greatness, the great flood’s

***Commandments confounded**, while being hymned by the *Aṅgirases*.*

The ability to push for a change in the status quo, or in conditions—atmospheric or otherwise—is apparently a trait that some gods possess to their credit.

Others display that trait to their peril. Even semi-divine Yamī initially invokes the precedent of the womb to make incest seem like a continuation of the status quo, rather than a transgression of

commandments or directives (*vratāni*). What we have been calling the “discourse of directives” appears to treat at least three things:

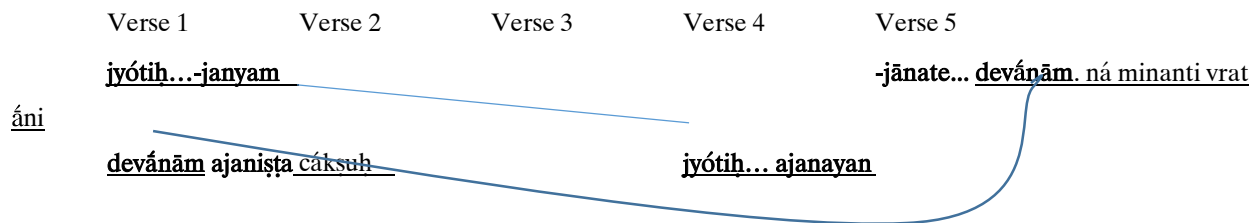
- 1) Humans (or demigods) sticking to particular daily rhythms, honoring divine directives, **maintaining certain types of relationships while avoiding others**;
- 2) Certain gods’ special abilities to felicitously change those rhythms, bringing rain, or releasing light;
- 3) **The eye of the sun, or the god Savitar, or a related entity as embodiment and enforcer of divine directives.**

By comparing these passages with 7.76.1 and 7.76.5, we have a tentative inventory of the following key elements in this discourse: $\sqrt{cakṣ}$, “see,” $\sqrt{mī}$, “diminish/change/confound” and *vratā-*, “commandment.” We also see that both *vratā-*, “commandment,” and *cákṣuḥ*, “eye,” frequently govern a name of a god in the genitive case. (Finally we have a possible substitute root for $\sqrt{cakṣ}$, namely $\sqrt{(s)paś}$, “see,” from which derives the root noun *spás-*, “spy.”)

One important result of this particular inquiry is that the instances of the form *devánām* in 7.76.1c and 7.76.5b are associated with phraseology that encodes the “discourse of directives”: *devánām...cákṣuḥ*, “the gods’ eye,” in the case of pāda 1c, and *devánām...vratāni*, “the gods’ commandments,” in pāda 1b. In addition to the expression, “the gods’ eye,” Verse 1 of 7.76 also references Savitar, a figure or force that has frequently been associated with the theme of divine directives; and of course, Verse 5 also has $\sqrt{mī}$.

While the phraseological elements found in Verse 1 (and the word *vratā-*, for that matter) surface elsewhere in Dawn hymns without any other particularly strong references to the discourse of divine directives, the introduction of the verb $\sqrt{mī}$ would reorient all of these collocations around that theme.

So far, then, we have clarified how *thematic* proximity would reinforce associations between the underlined elements from this modified chart of Structuring Device 4.



What remains to be shown is how thematic proximity helps group the forms *devánām ajaniṣṭa* and (*saṃ*) *jānate...devánām* into a round of repetition—in other words, how the “discourse of directives” incorporates these two forms of \sqrt{jan} and $\sqrt{jñā}$.

2.7 The discourse of directives, and the forms (*sam*) *jānate* and *ajanista*

There are only four hymns with instances of the *sám* + present-middle $\sqrt{j\ddot{n}ā}$ in the entire *Rig Veda*. All are from either the first or the tenth maṇḍalas; which would make one suspect that usage trends emerged rather late in the chronology of *Rigvedic* composition. Nonetheless, they appear to be highly relevant to the form's use in 7.76.5, both because of surrounding lexical elements, and due to their general semantics. The first two instances quoted below are each from Agni-hymns, and they each describe coordinated ritual activity in Agni's presence or (in the case of parts of 1.76) the gods' search in order to recover Agni.

1.68.8ab ichánta réto **mithás** tanúṣu

sám jānata sváir dákṣair ámūrāḥ

*They seek the seed **mutually** among themselves;¹⁷⁴*

*No fools—**they agree/act in unison**, each according to his own skill.*

1.72.5ab **samjānānā** úpa sīdann abhijñú

pátnīvanto namasíyaṃ namasyan

***Coming to an agreement**, they approached him on bended knee;*

Along with their wives, they did reverence to the one worthy of reverence.

Note the use of *mitháh*, “mutually,” in 1.68.8a; this word also appears in 7.76.5b.

The next example, from the tenth maṇḍala, occurs within a hymn dedicated to the Waters/to Apām Napāt; the relevant passage treats the waters *used in a soma-ritual*.

10.30.6 evéd yúne yuvatáyo namanta

yád im usánn usatír éti ácha

sám jānate mánasā sám cikitre

adhvaryávo dhiśáṅápas ca devíḥ

Just in that way young women accede to a young man,

When he [=the Adhvaryu] goes to them who are eager as he is eager.

They are agreed in mind and perceive alike—

The Adhvaryus, the Holy Place, and the divine waters.

¹⁷⁴ This hymn is from a cycle dedicated to Agni Vaiśvānara, “Agni Belonging-to-all-men,” the fire that symbolizes the unity of clans in (temporary) alliances. As Stephanie Jamison (forthcoming) has recently shown, the use of the adverb *mitháh* and of medial forms like *sám jānata* reflect the cooperation of the clans in the co-production of the fire and in other matters. The specialized nature of this usage of *sám* + $\sqrt{j\ddot{n}ā}$ might be a strike against the interpretation of Verse 5 advanced in Section 4.5 below—but another interpretation is favored on other grounds as well.

The final example, also from the tenth maṇḍala—in fact from the climactic last hymn in the *Rig Veda*—is in a hymn dedicated to both Agni and Unity—a hymn whose references to a new, more centralized sociopolitical order are rather obvious.

10.191.2 **sám gachadhvam** sám vadadhvam

sám vo mánāṃsi **jānatām**

devá bhāgām yáthā púrve

samjānāná upásate

Come together, speak together;

together let your thoughts agree,

Just as the gods of long ago, (who) their porton

Approach, agreeing together.

This phrase deploys not only *sám* + present-middle *√jñā* but also *sám* + *√gam* (form: *sám gachadhvam*) to emphasize accord between human beings; the latter is also found in 7.76.5a in the form *sám gatāsaḥ* (on which, see further under “Function,” in Section 4.3). A second usage of *sám* + present-middle *√jñā* invokes a divine precedent for the desired state of accord between humans. Surrounding this passage are even more references to agreement—the word *samāná-*, “same” –found in 7.76.5a and in 7.63.3d, within passages associated with the “discourse of directives”—occurs fully eight times in Verses 3 and 4 of the hymn.

So far, then, we have a kind of nebula of phraseology manifested in 7.76.5ab and other passages with *sám* + present-middle *√jñā*. That nebula includes the words *samāná-*, “same,” *mitháḥ*, “mutually/ in opposition” and perhaps *sám* + *√gam*, “come together.” Among the (abovelisted) attributes of the “discourse of divine directives” were the emphasis on continuity in daily rhythms, on the maintenance of certain types of relationships and the avoidance of others; finally, there was a highlighting of the power of the “gods’ eye” (= the sun or a related deity) to embody and enforce these priorities. If, in other instances of the “divine directive” discourse, a deity is seen embodying and preserving collaborative relationships, or discouraging antagonistic ones, then we would have some pretty big points of contact between this discourse of directives and the thematics of *sám* + *√jñā*.

Below I will argue that these two themes and their associated phraseology do indeed intersect, because of repeated intimations that *hostilities* are violations of divine commandments (*vratá-*) and/or can be solved by a god who (explicitly) preserves those commandments. I begin with Verse 1 of 10.191 (Verse 2 was quoted above in association with *sám* + present-middle *√jñā*), in which Agni is portrayed as *more or*

less coercively manufacturing the vaunted *consent* between parties that the poet spends the rest of the hymn describing.

10.191.1a sám-sam íd yuvase vṛṣann

10.191.1b ágne vísvāni aryá á

Over and over, you bull, you wrest together

All things from the stranger, o Agni.

This calls to mind a so-far suppressed example of an Agni-hymn which was full of phraseological elements associated with the “divine directives” discourse: including √ *mī*, “confound, transgress (/change),” √ (*s*)*paś* and √ *caḥṣ*, “see,” and *devānām vratá-*, “commandments of the gods.”

5. 2.1cd ánīkam asya ná **mináj** jánāsaḥ

puráḥ **paśyanti** níhitam arataú

*His face is not **one that changes** (its face); the peoples*

See it in front, set down in the circle of spokes.

After a few verses describing Agni’s birth from a chief wife (likely the churning stick, according to Jamison and Brereton), and among young women who become grey (firewood, presumably), we get allusions to Agni’s (and/or his analog, the sun’s¹⁷⁵) captivity and release: *yá īṃ jagṛbhúr áva té sṛjantu / ájāti pasvá úpa naś cikitvān*, “They who have kept hold of him, let them release him / The watchful one [a common epithet for Agni] will drive the animals to us.” Key here is that in a world without this *unchanging* Agni, hostilities between peoples emerge:

5. 2.6 vasám rájānaṃ vasatīm jánānām

árātayo ní dadhur mártiyeṣu

bráhmāṇi átrer áva tám sṛjantu

ninditáro nindiyāso bhavantu

(Down) the king of the dwellings, the dwelling place of the peoples

Hostilities among mortals have set (them) down.

Let the formulations of Atri release him.

Let them who scorn become those to be scorned.

I have highlighted the form *árātayaḥ*, “hostilities” because in multiple other hymns—*RV*2.38, 8.11, 7.83, and 10.57—this term, or a synonymous form *árātīḥ*, appears along with references to the commandments (*vratá-*) of the gods. They appear in close proximity in 2.38, a hymn dedicated to Savitar:

¹⁷⁵ The reference to Atri would at least suggest that sun-mythology is peripherally involved in 5.2.6; a more explicit reference to the discourse of directives can be found in 5.2.8, quoted immediately below.

2.38.9 ná **yásya** índro váruṇo ná mitró
vratám aryamá ná **minánti** rudráḥ
ná **árātayas** tám idám suastí
huvé devám **savitáram** námobhiḥ
*Of whom neither Indra nor Varuṇa, neither Mitra nor
Aryaman, nor Rudra violates the commandment,
Nor do hostile powers—for well-being, him
I call here with homage: the god Savitar.*

(Note that here too, we have the construction *vratá* + [genitive referring to a deity], with the latter component being *yásya*, “of whom”; the post-cedent is Savitar.)

In keeping with the hymn’s focus on Savitar, other verses of 2.38 name a variety of entities who do not violate (*√mī*) Savitar’s commandments (*vratá*-), so that *árātayaḥ* might seem like an incidental member of a much longer catalog. However, in 7.83 (from the same maṇḍala as 7.76), a hymn which recounts aspects of the Battle of the Ten Kings (in which, as nearly as we can gather from our fragmentary knowledge, Vasiṣṭha played a decisive role), the hostile parties are central to the focus of the hymn, with the form *árātayaḥ* appearing in both Verses 3 and 5, and thematically similar content pervading most of the remaining verses. After outlining the stakes of current hostilities and likening them to the Battle of the Ten Kings, in Verse 5 the poet calls on Indra and Varuṇa to help him amidst the *árātayaḥ* (pāda 5b); later, the poet intimates in what capacity the two gods have been called.

7.83.9ab vṛtrāṇi anyāḥ samithéṣu jīghnate
vratāni anyó abhí rakṣate sádā
*The one [=Indra] smashes vrtras (“obstacles”);
The other [=Varuṇa] ever guards his vratas (“commandments”).*

So, *árātayaḥ* and *vratāni* can also be coupled when the hymn’s overall focus is not on *vratāni*. Collectively the passages in 7.83 would suggest that some forms of hostilities (particularly those against the poet and his comrades and compatriots) are actionable violations of divine commandments, commandments which demand that the poet’s desired social order prevail.

Given all this, we should not be surprised when in *RV* 5.2, the “protector of **the gods’ commandments,**” *devánām vratapá* (who turns out to be Indra in this context), provides the key to finding Agni.

5. 2. 8a ḥṛṇiyámāno ápa hí mád aiyeh
prá me **devánām vratapá** uvāca
índro vidvámś ánu hí tvā **cacákṣa**

*Because, becoming angry, you had gone from me
 The protector of the **gods' commandments** announced that to me.
 The knowing Indra has **kept you in his sights***

After this point, Agni almost literally rains fire and brimstone upon the ungodly, guileful, evasive fools who broke those commandments and set houses in ruin (Verses 9-10).

In *RV* 8.11 as well, the epithet *vratapá* is used, this time of Agni himself (Verse 1). Shortly afterwards, hostilities are called “ungodly,” suggesting that at least some kinds of conflict are themselves a violation of divine commandments.

8.11.3bc yuyodhí jātavedaḥ
ádevīr agne árātīḥ
*...O Jātavedas, wrest away*¹⁷⁶
Ungodly hostilities, O Agni

So, one might say in 5.2, Agni in his **unchanging/un-transgressing** ($\sqrt{mī}$) nature embodies the commandments of the gods—so much so that the protector of those commandments (*vratá-* + $\sqrt{pā}$) always keeps an eye on him ($\sqrt{cakṣ}$), and when he is absent *hostilities* (*árātayaḥ*) arrive and social orders fall apart. In 8.11 he himself is the protector of commandments (*vratapá*) and wrests away (\sqrt{yu}) hostilities; in 10.191, he wrests together people (also \sqrt{yu}) to produce accord (*sám* + *jñā*). In other hymns (e.g. 2.38, 7.83, 10.57), other gods (e.g. Savitar, Varuṇa or Soma) help the poet overcome hostilities (*árātayaḥ*) by enforcing commandments (*vratá-*). In short, there is a great deal of thematic overlap between the phraseology of social accord and the discourse of directives. The roots and stems used to convey both sets of ideas appear to be complementary—and not infrequently, Agni burns at the places that they come into contact.

In keeping with this observation, it seems relevant to mention that both *sám* + $\sqrt{jñā}$ and *sám* + \sqrt{jan} can be used to describe the generation of Agni. We find the first collocation in 1.69.9, in an unusually complex compound epithet *sámjñātarūpa-* “one whose form is (generated) from genuinely agreeing.”¹⁷⁷

1.69.9a uṣó ná jāró vibhāvā usráḥ
 1.69.9b **sámjñātarūpaś** cíketad asmai

¹⁷⁶ Incidentally (or perhaps not incidentally) the verb form that I am translating as “wrest away,” *yuyodhí*, is from a root \sqrt{yu} , “separate” that is homophonous with the root \sqrt{yu} “unite” found in 10.191 above (form *yuvase*), also used to describe Agni’s actions.

¹⁷⁷ See footnote above about the significance of *sám* + $\sqrt{jñā}$ as terminology relating to Agni Vaiśvānara.

*Ruddy and far radiant like the lover of Dawn,
He will be very conspicuous to him (as) **the one whose form is (generated) from genuinely
agreeing.***

Notice that even though the element that is formally included is $\sqrt{jñā}$, there is (according to one interpretation, anyway) a generative (\sqrt{jan}) idea implicit in this epithet. (Notice also the mention of the “lover,” *jārāḥ*, of Dawn, a metaphor that also shows up in 7.76.3c.) The role of the root \sqrt{jan} is more explicit in this similar passage about Agni.

5.7.2 kútrā cid yásya sámṛtau
raṇvā náro nṛṣádane
árhantaś cid yám indhaté
saṃjanáyanti jantávaḥ
*At the encounter together with whom, wherever (it be),
Delighting men [=priests] unite in the session of men [=the sacrifice]
And whom even the worthy (gods) kindle
And our **gentes generate together.***

This will ultimately affect our interpretation of 7.76.1cd and 7.76.5 (see Section 4.5)—but for now, note that the final verbal form highlighted by Structuring Device, (*sám +*) *jānate*, does indeed align with the discourse of directives. Given that this discourse of directives already connected the forms of *devānām* in Verse 1 and Verse 5, prosodic proximity, phonological similarity and the appeal of symmetry would finally rein in *ajaniṣṭa*.

3. CHART OF STRUCTURING DEVICES

V	Nested rings	Lexical/grammatical rep	Redundant lexical rings
1		akar³	jyótiḥ⁴...-janyam⁴ devánām⁴ ajaniṣṭa⁴ cákṣuḥ^{***}
2	ámardhanto¹ vásubhiḥ¹	íṣkṛtāsaḥ³... ágād³ ádhi*	
3	tánīd¹...āsan¹		
4	tá¹ íd¹...āsan¹		té** (íd)devánām** jyótiḥ⁴... ajanayan⁴
5		*ádhi sámgatāsaḥ³	jānate⁴...té** devánām⁴ ná minanti vratá ni***
	ámardhanto¹ vásubhiḥ¹		
6	vásiṣṭhāḥ² netrí²..ucha²/ úṣaḥ²		
7	netrí²... uṣá² uchántí² vásiṣṭhaiḥ²		

*Rather than being part of the structuring device itself, the adverb *ádhi* makes one of the relevant rounds of repetition more perceptible.

**These forms are only temporarily associated with the structuring device in question; later, other associations take over, but in the mean time these forms make certain rounds of repetition perceptible.

***These forms (most notably *vratá-√mī* and *√cakṣ*) are connected to a particular discourse whose associated phraseology also incorporates some of the material in the structuring device. By activating this discourse, they enhance the attentional resources devoted to certain rounds of repetition.

4. FUNCTION OF STRUCTURING DEVICES

4.1 Preliminary remarks

All structuring devices but one terminate in Verse 5. The remaining device, a nested ring that complements a prior nested ring running through Verses 2-5, is initiated in the first pāda of Verse 6, and ends in Verse 7. In such instances, one is tempted to operate on the assumption that at least the two nested rings are demarcative, indicating the beginning and end of particular discourse units. According to this assumption, Verses 6-7 would represent a discourse unit that stands in contradistinction to a discourse that begins in Verse 2, or possibly in Verse 1, and ends in Verse 5 (with the controversy in the putative boundary of the first discourse unit relating to whether one privileges the complementary nested rings or also allows the other two devices to help index discourse boundaries).

In my view this is not wrong, so much as it is insufficient. Recall that in *RV* 7.77 the consistent use of particular tenses helped confirm discourse boundaries initially posited on the basis of structuring devices' initiation and termination points. This did not work so well for 7.75, however. *RV* 7.76 presents similar difficulties, with the aorists in Verses 1-2 giving way to imperfects in Verse 3-4 and to present-tense verbs in Verse 5—all within the putative first discourse unit. On the other hand, the hymn's only two imperatives are found in Verses 6-7 (the putative second discourse unit), and the indicative verbs in Verses 6-7 are all in the present tense and semantically relate to ritual exchange. Verb tenses must be relevant to the hymn's overall schema—but they hardly point toward a neatly definable bipartite organization.

Similarly, while one is initially tempted to call Verses 6-7 an “appellative” and/or “ritual-oriented” section, varied thematic content joins the diversity of indicative tenses in Verses 1-5 to strongly suggest that labels such as “descriptive” and “divine-oriented” hardly capture the more fine-grained discourse shifts happening within those verses. Those two designations overlap most neatly in hymns that contain many second-person indicative verbs with gods as the subject, of which Verses 1-5 have exactly one (in pāda 3d). Alongside the organized tense-shifts in third-person verbs alluded to above, which defy the formal hallmarks of a descriptive, divine-oriented discourse, the split of “divine-oriented” categories into a “discourse of discoveries” and a “discourse of directives” complicates the thematic end.

Recall that in the case of both *RV* 7.77 and 7.75, catalogues of formal homology types could reliably be combined with information on structuring devices to characterize discourse units and identify discourse shifts that characterized each hymn's beginning, ending, and “hub” (if applicable). Applying a

similar technique to *RV7.76* yields meaningful, though quite different results. Taking Verses 1-5 as some sort of semi-independent unit on the basis of the three structuring devices that begin and end in this hymn section, we see that the peripheral Verses 1-2 and 4-5 display the types of homologies that characterized other Dawn hymns' divine-oriented discourses.

However, Verses 3-4—indexed as separate by the unique use of the imperfect tense, and identified as central on the basis of the nested ring that surrounds them—are the locus of explicit shifts along animacy hierarchies of the type that characterized the second half of other Dawn hymns. The midpoint of this central two-verse stretch, bisecting as it does the nested rings and the redundant rings in the first discourse unit, and containing the only 2nd-person encoding of Dawn in this discourse unit, can be regarded as a central turning point. Stephanie Jamison (2007) has used the word *omphalos* (originally applied by Calvert Watkins to a Pindaric syntactic construction), the Greek word for *navel*, as a term for such a turning point.¹⁷⁸

While a second-person verb and vocative addressing Dawn at the center of Verses 3-4 function as some sort of formal pivot point, it is groups of officiants—in the (celestial or ritual) present and the (mythological) past—that seem to dominate the subsequent Verses 4-5. In other words, within *RV7.76* there are two competing types of formal organization: one linear, the other more circular. The hymn's structure does encourage the mind's eye to follow Dawn from the sky to the ritual grounds, but it takes a detour along a lateral axis to dwell upon the poet's peers and recast them in terms of their forebears' long shadows.

Within such a developmental schema, two different structuring-device types play differing roles. The symmetrical structuring devices that pervade Verses 1-5 and 6-7 move each discourse unit's central images up and down human-divine and animacy hierarchies. The asymmetrical structuring devices found scattered along the boundaries of Verses 1-5 articulate other, more straightforward topical shifts toward a ritual-oriented discourse. Accordingly, I will divide my discussion of the function of structuring devices into symmetrical/central and asymmetrical/peripheral devices, beginning with the more familiar (but here, peripheral) types of transitions articulated by the latter type.

¹⁷⁸ I will continue to use the Greek word as a nod to both Jamison and Watkins, but if the reader prefers, the Sanskrit cognate is *nābhi*. Jamison identifies the pādas 4cd as the precise omphalos of this hymn, but with the symmetry of the animacy shifts in Verses 3-4 and the centrality of the rhetorical shapeshifting in the same stretch, I'd rather pin the bellybutton on the exact midpoint of the two-verse stretch.

4.2 Asymmetrical structuring devices part 1: Structuring Device 3 and aorist-based homologies

The first asymmetrical structuring device (numbered Structuring Device 3) connects aorist singular indicative forms in Verses 1 and 2 with predicative adjectival forms (past passive participles plus preverbs) in Verses 2 and 5.

7.76.1d āvīr **akar**³ bhúvanaṃ vísvam uṣāḥ

*Dawn **has just made** the whole world visible.*

7.76.2ab prá me pánthā devayānā adṛśrann

ámardhanto vásubhir **īskṛtāsaḥ**³

*The paths leading to the gods have just become visible to me—(paths that Are) not negligent and **made orderly** by/with the good ones/things.*

7.76.2d pratīcī **āgād**³ ādhi harmiyébhyaḥ

*She **has just come** here, facing west from her habitations.*

7.76.5ab samānā ūrvé ādhi **sámgatāsaḥ**³

sám jānate ná yatante mithás té

***Come together here** in a common pen, they*

Genuinely act together; they do not marshal themselves in opposition.

Recall that the following were the traits of aorist-based homologies:

- 1) (Thematic) The explicit focus is on a description of **Dawn appearing**;
- 2) (Formal) **One half** of the relevant round of repetition is an **augmented aorist indicative verbal form**;
- 3) (Formal) **The other half** of the relevant round of repetition is a **present verbal form** or part of a present participial phrase that connotes a more sustained ritual interaction.

Both formal and semantic criteria will need a bit of tweaking to accommodate the particularities of *RV* 7.76, but it is at least intuitively clear that something along the same lines is going on in the examples above.

The semantics of the round of repetition involving \sqrt{kr} are particularly closely aligned with the above criteria. Given the fact that *īskṛtāsaḥ*, “**made orderly**,” is at the end of the hemistich on which it depends, a listener would immediately know that *pánthā(h) devayānāḥ*, “paths leading to the gods,” are what has been made orderly. The combination of the root \sqrt{kr} and the particle *īś-* is also fairly rare. These two factors combined mean that the interpretation and divine or ritual orientation of *īskṛtāsaḥ* largely depends upon the semantics of *pánthā(h) devayānāḥ*.

These “paths leading to the gods” would have to cross the stretch from the ritual grounds to the sky, so clearly in some sense we are still dealing with a divine-oriented scene focusing on the arrival of Dawn. Yet the phrase *pánthā(h) devayānāḥ*, also suggests ritual activity, both via certain implications of its denotations (which virtually appoint the poet as a *ponti-fex* making human-divine ritual interactions possible) and because of usage patterns within the *Rig Veda*. Normally, this collocation is used in the instrumental, and describes the route by which gods travel preceding or following their arrival onto the ritual scene and partaking of sacrifice.

4.37.1ab úpa no vājā adhvarám ṛbhukṣā
 dévā yātā **pathíbhīr devayānāiḥ**
Toward our rite, o Vājas, o Ṛbhukṣans,
*Travel o gods, **along the paths the gods travel***

5.43.6cd mádhōr mādāya bṛhatīm ṛtajñām
 āgne vaha pathíbhīr devayānāiḥ
The lofty knower of truth [Aramati, devotion deified]—for the exhilarating drink of honey,
*Bring her hither, Agni, **along the paths the gods travel.***

7.38.8cd asyā mádhvaḥ pibata mādāyadhvaṃ
 tṛptā yāta **pathíbhīr devayānāiḥ**
Drink of this honey here; make yourselves exhilarated.
*Satisfied, drive **along the paths the gods travel** [addressed to the “prizewinners,” i.e. the Maruts].*

In light of such examples, it becomes clear that in 7.76.2ab the description of the “paths” is still a reference to a divinity appearing. The switch of focus from “Dawn **has just made** the world visible” to the “paths the gods travel, **made** orderly” maintains the explicit divine-oriented focus while strongly foreshadowing Dawn’s active participation in ritual—in other words, accomplishes just the sort of semantic shift that we associate with aorist-based homologies.

With respect to the formal criteria, the problem is that there is no explicit present-tense verb; in fact, formally speaking, *ískṛtāsaḥ*, “**made** orderly,” is built off of a past passive participle. However, it is clear that the past action described via this participle has resulted in a state that endures within the (ritual) present, since in fact the whole of *pāda* 2ab describes the enduring qualities of those paths. So, modifying our formal criteria for aorist-based homologies, we could accommodate this example in the following manner:

- 1) (Thematic) The explicit focus is on a description of **Dawn appearing**;
- 2) (Formal) **One half** of the relevant round of repetition is an **augmented aorist indicative verbal form**;

- 3 (Formal) **The other half** of the relevant round of repetition is a **present verbal form**, part of a present participial phrase, or part of a **predicative adjective referring to a present condition**, which connotes a more sustained ritual interaction.

In formal terms, the second round of repetition—connecting the aorist indicative active form *ágāt* in Verse 2 with an analogous adjectival participle *sámgatāsaḥ* in Verse 5—presents an almost identical case, except that the present reference of this participle is made even clearer by the explicitly present-tense clauses with which it is connected.¹⁷⁹ Repeating the crucial hemistich here, we have the following:

7.76.5ab samāná ūrvé ádhi **sámgatāsaḥ**³

sám jānate ná yatante mithás té

Come together here in a common pen, they

Genuinely act together; they do not marshal themselves in opposition.

However, the *semantics* and in particular the orientation of *sámgatāsaḥ* are initially more difficult to establish

4.3 Aorist-based homology #2: sám + √gam and a “more perfect union” of ritual and divine connotations

First note that unlike in the prior case, there is no explicit subject of the adjective in question; also, since *sámgatāsaḥ* appears at the end of an adjectival phrase separated from the rest of its clause by a metrical break, it can initially be interpreted independently of the finite verbs that follow (including *sám + jñā*, discussed at length in Section 2.7).

A second distinction from the case involving *ís-* + *√kṛ* is at least equally important: *sám + √gam*, “unite (“jell”),” has a considerable number of attestations, and manifests specific usage trends. With a very few exceptions—one of which (10.191.2a) has already been introduced above (Section 2.7)—uses of *sám + √gam* fall under one of the following categories:¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ And, just as a reminder, there is also the matter of the *folk*-etymological connection between *√gam* and *√gā*.

¹⁸⁰ Exceptions are few and far between; there are a couple of instances in which *sám + √gam* is used in reference to a less-animate ritual substance, but involves an instrumental construction; one instance is a variant on the formulaic reflexive uses mentioned above. 1.20.5a, describing *mádāsaḥ* “exhilarating draughts” that unite *índreṇa* “with Indra” ; another instance, 10.5.2b, metaphorically characterizes a ritual substance (Agni’s flames or the kindling sticks) as “bullish buffaloes” *vīṣaṇaḥ* uniting *árvatībhiḥ* “with mares” sexually, adhering to another usage pattern described below. Of more concern to the generalizations being made in this section are examples that involve *mortals* who unite in a reflexive sense, rather than being involved in a (more intimate or stable) union *with* (instrumental case) a divinity or an inanimate object. Outside of 10.191, one of the very latest Rig Vedic hymns, the few examples of this seem to involve human beings in martial conflict (e.g. 1.74.2b, which is like 1.119.3a except that the actors are human rather

- **A) Reference: human; explicit or (if singular) implicit object or (usually divine) entity in the instrumental**—“unite *with*”; examples: 1.23.23b; 5.51.15d; 6.54.2a; 7.81.2d; 8.91.4d; 10.14.8a; 10.14.8d; 10.16.15d.
- **B) Reference: divine; explicit or (if singular) implicit object or entity in the instrumental**—“unite *with*”; examples: 1.6.7b; 1.164.8b; 9.64.30b; 9.93.1d; 10.61.7b.
- **C) Reference: divine; meaning is reflexive, with no external object in the instrumental;** examples: 1.119.3a; 1.185.5a; 10.82.6b; 10.97.6a; 10.97.21c .
- **D) Reference: less-animate ritual substance (e.g. songs soma drinks, goods); meaning is reflexive, with no external object or entity in the instrumental;** examples: 1.36.5c; 1.80.16d; 4.34.1d; 4.34.2c; 6.19.5c; 6.34.1a; 7.73.4c; 8.78.8a; 9.14.7a; 10.6.6a; 10.91.12b.

Within this list there is a notable absence of instances of human-oriented usages of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} with that do not involve an ancillary instrumental construction. **If we accept this result despite the existence of a few exceptions, the usage of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} without an instrumental in 7.76.5a would likely connote a union of ritual substances or of divinities.**

What makes this particular analyst secure about the significance of this result despite the occasional exception is the sort of semantics it points to: namely, the use of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} to describe a “more perfect union” than humans voluntarily enter into with each other. To get an idea of the range of these semantics, it might help to quote a few examples of the best-represented usages—Category A and Category D (which are also the only usage types to be represented in other hymns in the seventh maṇḍala). An example of Category A can be found in another Dawn hymn attributed to Vasiṣṭha:

7.81.2 úd usríyāḥ sṛjate súrīyaḥ sácāṁ
 udyán náḡsatram arcívát
 távéd uṣo víuṣi súrīyasya ca
 sám bhakténa **gamemahi**
 The sun sends the ruddy (cows) surging up together,
 As that heavenly body goes up with its rays.
 O Dawn, at your first flush and that of the sun,
 May we be united with what is apportioned.

The implication here is that the ritual officiants—spoken of in the first person plural—will be united with their apportioned share of goods—i.e. with things that lack sufficient animacy to part ways with the officiants once this unity has been achieved.

than divine). These unions, like sexual unions, involve a kind of (unfortunately violent) intimacy with permanent results.

Something similar seems to be going on with the recurrent use of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} to exhort the recently deceased to unite with their (currently being cremated) body—e.g. in 10.14 and 10.16. The other recurrent formulaic usage of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} with reference to human activity involves uniting with various gods (e.g. in 5.51, 6.54, and 8.91)—there, a similar difference in levels of human vs. divine agency seems capable of cementing a permanent union (even if “permanent” might sometimes be a euphemism for “inescapable” on the human end). **This might help explain the seemingly mandatory instrumental construction that accompanies human-oriented uses of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} : when human beings—each with agency, animacy, and frequently conflicting intentions—unite (in the simple, reflexive sense), their unity tends to be less complete, and unstable or shortlived.** That sexual metaphors often overlay uses of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} (whatever the animacy of the referents in question) would seem to be compatible with this idea: after all, sexual unions are unlike most social alliances in their level of intimacy and their permanent results (to say nothing of the typical differentials in agency along gendered lines).

Also compatible is the frequent usage of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} to describe the union (i.e. admixture) of inanimate or less-animate ritual substances during sacrifice—i.e. Category D usages (according to the designations above). Such a usage can be found in an *Aśvin* hymn attributed to *Vasiṣṭha*.

- 7.73.4 úpa tyá váhnī gamato vísaṃ no
rakṣoháñā sámbhṛtā vīlúpāñī
sám ándhāṃsi **agmata matsaráñi**
má no mardhiṣṭam á gataṃ sívéna
These two chariot-horses will come to our clan—
demon-smashing, fully equipped, having hard hooves.
The **exhilarating** (soma-)stalks **have just gathered together**.
Do not overlook us! Come with benevolence!

Exhilarating stalks or draughts are repeatedly spoken of as coming together (*sám* + \sqrt{gam})—e.g. in 4.34 (twice). Other repeated usages of this type involve goods (*vásūni*—e.g. in 10.6 and 8.78), or songs and hymns (e.g. 6.34 and 10.91)—i.e. standard currencies of ritual exchange between human and divine partners. I will close off this portion of the argument by quoting a particularly telling implicit contrast between *sám* + \sqrt{gam} and typical human social interactions in 6.34:

- 6.34.1 **sám** ca **tvé jagmúr** gíra indra pūrvír
ví ca tvád yanti vibhúvo manīṣāḥ
purá nūnāṃ ca stutáye íṣiṇām
paspr̥dhrá índre ádhi ukthaarká

*Many songs **have converged over you**, Indra,
And out from you go inspired thoughts far and wide.
Previously and now, the seers' songs of praise,
their recitations and hymns, **have contended over Indra**.*

The songs *converge* (*sám* + \sqrt{gam}); but as soon as the agency of the seers comes into the picture, they are rather said to “contend” (\sqrt{sprdh}).

Returning to the matter of *RV* 7.76: considered in isolation, the use of *sámgatāsaḥ* without an instrumental would seem most likely to connote an admixture of ritual substances, such as the exhilarating draughts (*mádāḥ*) discussed in 4.34 (an alternative form *mádāsaḥ* is found in 1.20.5a), particularly since the two match in their masculine gender and plural number. A secondary possibility is that a plural group of gods is being referenced. These possibilities are not mutually exclusive, as the examples of *sám* + \sqrt{gam} in reference to deified plants (10.97) would indicate (though the plants in question are in point of fact feminine). But given the default ritual-oriented connotations of the masculine plural gender in Dawn hymns, it does seem that *sámgatāsaḥ* would more strongly connote substances intermingling over the ritual fire (much like the form *jigāti* in 7.75).

Counterbalancing these connotations is the immediately preceding phrase in pāda 5a: *samāná ūrvé*, “in a common pen.” This phrase evokes images of cattle, including first and foremost the dawn cows. The word *ūrvá-*, “pen,” is most typically juxtaposed with *gávya-*, “pertaining to cows” (this collocation occurs seven times, not including variants like *ūrvá- gávām/gónām*, “of the cows”). Most frequently, the phrase is used in the context of telling the Vala-myth, in which coordinated efforts on the part of several divine figures secure the release of the *dawn-cows* from their pen. *RV* 7.90 can serve as something of a representative example.

7.90.4 uchánn uśasaḥ sudínā ariprá
 urú **jyótir vividur** dīdhiyānāḥ
 gávyaṃ cid **ūrvám** uśijo ví vavrus
 téśām ánu pradívaḥ sasrur ápaḥ
The dawns dawned, day-bright and stainless;
*(The men/Aṅgirasas) **have found** broad **light** while reflecting.*
*The fire-priests gave opened up the **cowpen**;*
The waters have flowed for them on a distant day.

Other variants highlight the role of Saramā (e.g. 1.72.8c and 9.87.8ab) or Indra (e.g. 3.12.16d 5.30.4d) in the Vala myth, but in any case narrations of this myth are the most common context for the word *ūrvá-*.

Note that *RV*7.90.4 also includes the collocation *jyótiḥ + √ vid*, which figures prominently in the “discourse of discovery” that dominated Verse 4 in 7.76 (as described above, and recapitulated briefly below). Vala-related imagery can hardly be irrelevant to 7.76.5a. Keep in mind also that in a number of hymns, including *RV*7.78 (also attributed to Vasiṣṭha), Dawn’s lights can be described using the masculine plural noun *ketávaḥ*.¹⁸¹

Pāda 5a, in which Structuring Device 3 terminates, thus combines phraseology associated with the release of the Dawn-cows with the form *sámgatāsaḥ*, which strongly connotes—but does not directly express—the admixture of ritual substances during the sacrifice. Within such a pāda, the form can still be taken to describe *Dawn*’s lights appearing, rather than human officiants performing the sacrifice—just, ever so subtly, images of Dawn’s lights give way into hints of brewing draughts.

Note that this means that pāda 5a, and the aorist-based homology contained within it, also serves as a kind of explicit transition point between the “discourse of discoveries” in Verse 4 and the phraseology of accord “discourse of directives” in Verse 5, which includes phraseology that is increasingly reminiscent of human social accord and ritual collaboration.

4.4 Asymmetrical structuring devices part 2: Verbal, Deverbative, and Re-verb-erant reciprocal homologies

The time has come to analyze the two pairs of repetitions into which Structuring Device 4 is divided, and to identify a new homology type that they represent: one that implies reciprocal interactions and thus reciprocity relationships between human and divine partners. Ultimately, we will have occasion to notice a new form of poetic repair.

Pair 1 involves pādas in Verse 1 and 4 that are associated with what we have above called the “discourse of discoveries.”

7.76.1a úd u **jyótiḥ**⁴ amṛtaṃ viśvájanyam⁴

7.76.1b viśvánaraḥ savitá devó aśret

The immortal **light** belonging to all **generations/gentes**—

He who belongs to all men, god Savitar, has just propped it [=the light] up.

¹⁸¹ It is probably not a coincidence that in the verse immediately following this characterization of Dawn’s lights (in 7.78.2a), masculine agents including the fire and the inspired poets are described as acting *in response* to Dawn’s appearance. On the intermingling of such imagery in Dawn-hymns, the reader might wish to further consult Section 5 of Part II of this dissertation; on a very craftily constructed riddle of reference involving another masculine plural form, see Section 9.6.

7.76.4c gūlham **jyótiḥ**⁴ pitáro anv avindan .

7.76.4d satyámantrā **ajanayann**⁴ uṣásam

*The fathers discovered the hidden **light***

*With the mantras that come true, **they generated** the Dawn.*

Notice that there is an obvious reciprocal feel to these two passages connected by the structuring device: the “fathers,” the mythical semi-divine forebears of the current ritual officiants, discovered and *generated* the light of Dawn; in turn, Dawn provides herself for all successive *generations/gentes* of men. Given that “light” and “Dawn” (*jyótiḥ* and *uṣásam*) are presented as more or less interchangeable by the identical syntax and comparable semantics of the successive clauses that frame them, one is tempted to encapsulate the reciprocal feel of these sentences in the following manner: “The fathers **generated** the (dawn-)light that now belongs to all **generations**.”

Transforming this interpretive hunch into a formal homology type presents a methodological difficulty that we have not directly encountered in other cases. The other homologies were modeled on types of repetitions that could be observed in contiguous pādas, in an effort to take advantage of the more secure status of such repetitions according to both Sanskrit and Western European analytic categories. We have already had a chance to observe the typical format for reciprocal relationships expressed in close proximity: a finite verb or participle, with a related verbal noun in the dative: e.g. in 7.75.6d *dádhāti rátnaṃ vidhate jánāya*, “She **bestows** treasure for the **stewardly** gens.” This is obviously not directly comparable to (what I argue is) an implied reciprocity relationship of the type we find in 7.76.1ab and 4cd.

This is not the first time we have seen related forms in structuring devices that seem to *imply* rather than assert some kind of reciprocal interplay in a ritual context. For instance, at least according to one interpretation, the human “conductors,” who sing Dawn’s praises in 7.75 immediately before the explicit reciprocity relationship in pāda 6d, are counterposed to divine agents “conducting” Dawn through the ritual. See Part II, Section 9.6-8 for the long version of the treatment of this passage; reproducing the key lines here, we have the following:

7.75.5d uṣá uchati **váhnibhir** gṛṇāná

*Dawn dawns, being hymned by the **conductors** (of songs/oblations)*

7.75.6a práti dyutānán aruṣáso ásvās

7.75.6b citrá adṛśrann uṣásam **váhantaḥ**

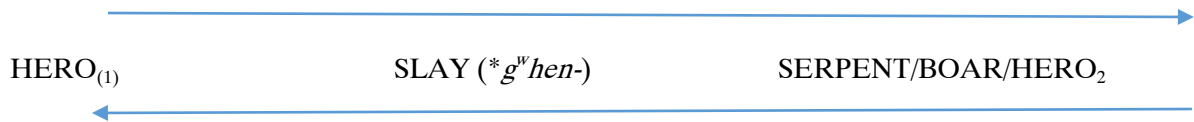
Opposite, the horses—ruddy,

*Bright—were seen to blaze, **conducting** the flashing Dawn.*

A number of contextual cues—most obviously, the reciprocity relationship more directly encoded in 7.75.6d—suggested that we interpret *váhnibhiḥ*, “by/with the conductors,” as a human/humanoid ritual agent syntactically coupled with the participle *gr̥ṇānā́* “being hymned”; the horses leading (*váhantaḥ*) Dawn would then become divine attendants on the other side of the exchange.¹⁸²

This interpretation is also reinforced by phraseology from elsewhere in the *Rig Veda* that describes one or the other half of the exchange in terms of \sqrt{vah} . In other hymns—e.g. 5.79(.4b), and 1.48(.11d), both dedicated to Dawn—the verb \sqrt{gr} “to hymn” is coupled with the noun *váhni-*, “conductor” to describe the activity of human ritual agents specifically. The use of the verb \sqrt{vah} to indicate the conveyance of gods by attendants of various types is so widespread as to hardly require citations; in an example in a nearby Dawn-hymn, 7.78.4d, horses (*ásvāsaḥ*), conduct (*váhanti*) Dawn’s chariot to the ritual grounds.

The reader may be familiar with the notation developed by Calvert Watkins to describe a reconstructed reciprocal formula for dragon(/boar/opponent) slaying. Reproducing that notation from *How to Kill a Dragon*, Chapter 31, we have the following:

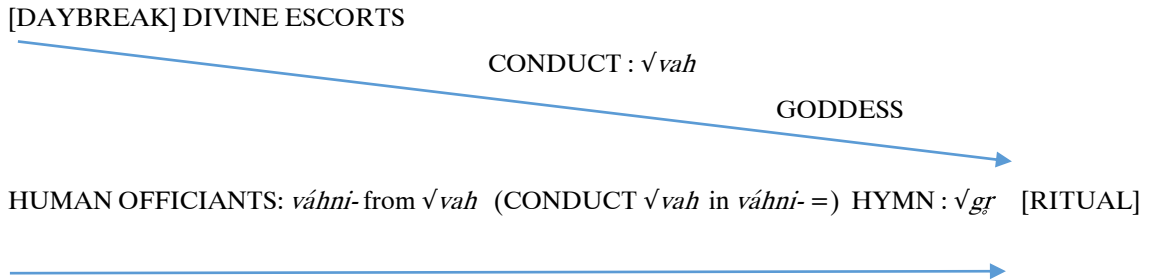


This rather violent reciprocity relationship was reconstructed partially on the basis of passages that introduced both possibilities (e.g. *RV* 7.59.8 or 8.84.9), even if (for obvious reasons) one tended to be negated or introduced as a *desire*; but he also reconstructed it on the basis of a much larger number of passages that introduced one *or* the other side of the cycle of violence (e.g. *RV* 10.99.6, in which a hero slays a boar, vs. Bacchylides 5.115.6, in which the opposite is true).

Like the deep-structure formulas that Watkins was characterizing in this manner, the reciprocity relationships revolving around the act of conducting (\sqrt{vah}) most often surface in parts, and (particularly on the divine side of things) involve a number of different agents who can be characterized according to their generic semantics. So, it seems fitting to adopt something like this notation to portray what is going on here. Our diagrams will have a second dimension to them, because the ritual grounds act as a site to or at which different types of conducting are performed. In this and all subsequent charts, parentheses around

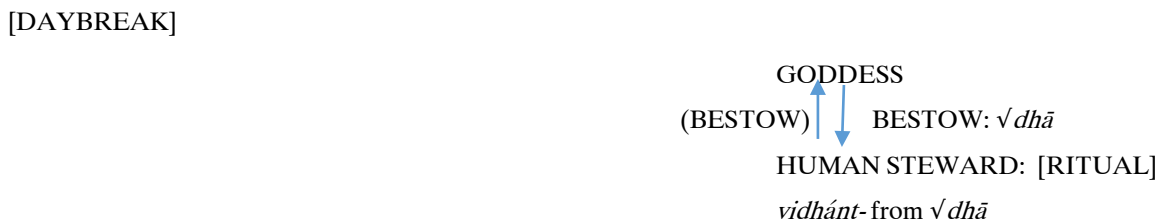
¹⁸² We could convey (no pun intended) the (possibly) implied ritual partnership in 7.75.5d-6ab with the following paraphrase: “Dawn dawns while her praises are sung; our conductors direct the accompaniment. Bright horses accompanied Dawn, conducting her down.” Recall that in Verse 7 of the same hymn, this company of horses then becomes part of the poets’ requested reward for the ritual praise.

English glosses—as in, “(CONDUCT)”—mean that the root is expressed in a nominal (or anagrammatic) rather than a verbal form; and brackets indicate items that are not directly expressed in any form within the passage in question. “Daybreak” and “ritual” are meant to denote the time and place at which divine activity during a ritual begins and ends, respectively: (beginning in the sky; ending near the ritual grounds).



In such cases, human and divine partners are not performing analogous actions directly upon each other, but performing those actions toward or at the site of ritual. The reciprocity is in co-producing the ritual rather than in a direct action and counteraction.

Note that in order to depict both agents situated along a stratospheric hierarchy and actions that position them at the same setting over time, this chart has used the y-axis to depict and separate human or divine entities. So, a chart like Watkins’ that shows a direct action and counter action would have to be rotated by 90 degrees to be accommodated within this system. For instance, the chart for *dádhāti rátnaṃ vidhaté jánāya*, “She **bestows** treasure for the **stewardly** gens, would look like this.



One side of this reciprocal transaction (the divinity bestowing something to the human) is expressed through the finite verb form *dádhāti*; the other is expressed more obliquely through the related nominal stem *vidhánt-* (hence “bestow” is put in parentheses in the chart).

This is just a visual way of (once again) acknowledging that the reciprocity relationship involving $\sqrt{dhā}$ (in 7.75) is more directly expressed than the one involving \sqrt{vah} . The *implication* of the homology of \sqrt{vah} is that there are human and divine agents approaching the ritual grounds with skills similar enough to facilitate a transaction, but the homology does not go so far as to describe the transaction itself: strictly

speaking, one divine-oriented expression (the “conducting” of Dawn) is being counterposed to one human-oriented expression (the “conductors” hymning).

Something similar is being articulated in a structuring device from 7.77, except that one side of the reciprocity relationship is anagrammatically expressed and must be reconstructed on the basis of phraseology in other passages. (It is for such anagrammatic expressions that I added the resegmented adjective “re-verb-erant” to the name of this homology.) Here I am referring to the phonetically overlapping *á bharā vāsūni* “bear your wares” and *matībhir vasiṣṭhah* “the Vasiṣṭhas with prayers (raise Dawn)” in 7.77.4c and 6b, respectively.¹⁸³ In Section 4.6 of Part II, we learned that the former expression draws upon a collocation $\sqrt{bhṛ} + vāsu-$ that is used in other places for ritual goods/wares brought to humans by gods, or sometimes vice versa (see 7.25.2cd for a nearby example of the divine-oriented variant).

Previously, I suggested that the juxtaposition of the Vasiṣṭhas—whose name is etymologically related to *vāsu*, “good”—with the phonemes/allophones *-bh-* + *-r-* conveyed the message that the Vasiṣṭhas by their very nature had the “goods” for a reciprocal exchange, i.e. came bearing *wares* that were suitable to give to Dawn. That is still the basic claim, but in this context it would be particularly useful to note that there is a human-oriented variant to this formula that specifies the particular type of good that is brought to the ritual grounds; and that good is none other than a *matī-*, i.e. a prayer, the same noun we find in the anagrammatic formulation in 7.77.6b. The formula $\sqrt{bhṛ} + matī-$ is in other hymns attributed to Vasiṣṭha, e.g. in the two passages below. In the first passage, $\sqrt{bhṛ}$ is inflected into a second plural imperative form addressed to surrounding officiants.

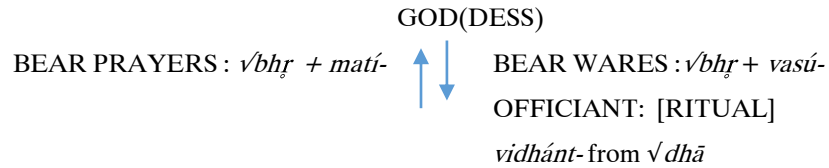
7.4.1ab prá vaḥ śukráya bhānāve **bharadhvaṃ**
 havyaṃ **matīm** ca agnáye súpūtam
To the flaming light, bring forth your
Offering and prayer, well purified to Agni

The second passage features $\sqrt{bhṛ}$ in the second person singular, as the poet addresses himself (“(O) Vasiṣṭha”).

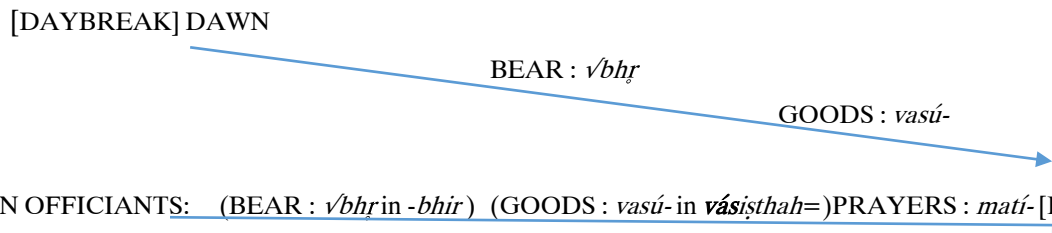
7.88.1ab prá śundhyúvaṃ varuṇāya práyiṣṭhām +
matīm vasiṣṭha mīlhúṣe **bharasva**
To Varuṇa a carefully preened, much loved
Thought—bear (it) to the generous (Varuṇa), Vasiṣṭha

¹⁸³ This phonological overlapping was noted in Sections 2.1 and 3.7 and 7.7 of Part II, but this is the first time we have spelled out the implications of such a twinning, except to note the etymological connection between *vāsūni* and *vasiṣṭhah* (discussed under a different guise in Part II, Section 4.7).

So, within Rigvedic phraseology in general, we have a definite reciprocity relationship involving the root \sqrt{bhr} , in which goods of various types are exchanged directly between gods and humans in a sacrificial context.



However, in Verse 4 of 7.77, this relationship is presented indirectly: Dawn is asked to bear wares as she comes down to the ground, but there is no explicit recipient stated; and the other side of the exchange in Verse 6 is encoded anagrammatically. In consequence, a chart focusing on the expressions in this particular passage would look something like what we have below. Once again, one side of the exchange is put in parentheses because it is expressed anagrammatically rather than directly through a clear verbal form of \sqrt{bhr} .



Defining this type of homology then, we could say it has the following traits:

- 1) (thematic) the **focus is on commonalities in the roles/performed actions of parties in different places within the human/divine hierarchy;**
- 2) (formal) there is a **key verbal root** that can be shown to clearly apply to both sides of a specific exchange or interaction in multiple Rigvedic passages;
- 3) (formal) In the case in question, **at least one relevant interaction** between parties on different positions of the human-divine hierarchy **is clearly encoded by a verbal form of the root in question.** If the corresponding reactions or counteractions are not directly encoded by a verbal form—for instance, if expressed anagrammatically, or expressed through etymologically linked forms which nonetheless do not imply any particular type of interaction—they may be inferred on the basis of Rigvedic phraseology.

With regard to the third criterion, one should note that any claim that two etymologically linked forms are articulating actions and counteractions should be assessed against the backdrop of Rigvedic phraseology as a matter of course—it’s just that this cross-checking is particularly essential in the case that one action is obliquely encoded in the passages in question.

As we will soon see, more often than not Vasiṣṭha’s verbal reciprocal homologies are characterized by obliqueness, so that we must frequently study Rigvedic phraseology to remind ourselves of the meanings and associations that a listener could hear between the lines. This obliqueness—the chief source of dissimilarity between verbal homologies and reciprocity relationships expressed within the same verse or pāda—is probably related to a distinction in rhetorical goals. As examples in *RV* 7.76 and 7.86 will suggest, many of Vasiṣṭha’s verbal homologies use descriptions of human-divine interactions as a means of inviting the *audience* to characterize the relationships between the poet, fellow officiants, and other *human* actors in attendance. Because the point of verbal homologies is to *suggest* rather than assert or demand a particular form of collaboration or reciprocity, these homologies come in the form of phraseological puzzles that are left for the audience to solve. While the phraseology limits the number of characterizations that would come to the audience’s mind (always in a way that works to the poet’s advantage), the audience’s own identity and the roles they are capable of playing function as these puzzles’ missing pieces, the key to resolving hinted-at relationships into a precise image. In short, Vasiṣṭha’s verbal homologies allow for the audience to exert their own interpretive agency by repairing these puzzles—and through this act, to assert other forms of agency that they possess (which also work to the poet’s advantage). In Bakhtinian terms, the language of these homologies is usually somewhat *centrifugal*, but this gives the audience room to adjust these expressions in a way that re-centers themselves.

Finally we can return to the first case from 7.76:

7.76.1a úd u **jyótir**⁴ amṛtaṃ viśvájanyam⁴

7.76.1b viśvánaraḥ savitá devó aśret

*The immortal **light** belonging to all **generations**—*

He who belongs to all men, god Savitar, has just propped it [=the light] up.

7.76.4c gūlham **jyótiḥ**⁴ pitáro ánv avindan

7.76.4d satyámantrā **ajanayann**⁴ uśásam

*The fathers discovered the hidden **light***

*With the mantras that come true, **they generated** the Dawn.*

The first criterion that we have set forth seems to more or less be met: these passages seem to be exploring commonalities in actions of the god Savitar and the mythological fathers who (though semi-divine) are analogous to latter-day human ritual officiants. The second criterion is met: there is a key repeated root \sqrt{jan} . With our third criterion in mind, let us examine whether Rigvedic phraseology could permit one side of a generative (\sqrt{jan}) interaction to be heard within *viśvájanya-*, the compound adjectival stem.

Outside of a structuring device or particular passage that pairs the stem *viśvájanya-* with a verb form from the root \sqrt{jan} , one would not automatically be tempted to associate this compound with the idea of a generative (inter) *action*. Typically translated as “belonging to all people,” the adjectival stem (which is not terribly well represented within the *Rig Veda*) tends to modify words for gifts requested from gods. *RV* 7.100.2ab is typical in this respect. Here, the stem modifies *sumatí-*, “(divinely bestowed) benevolent thought.”

7.100.2a *tuvám viṣṇo sumatím viśvájanyām*

7.100.2b *áprayutām evayāvo matím dāḥ*

You, Viṣṇu, benevolent thought meant for all generations(/gentes)

Give—concentrated thought; (you,) traveling your ways.

In *RV* 3.57.6d, the adjective is again used to modify *sumatí-*. In other passages, it modifies other divinely bestowed boons: *rádhaḥ* (in context, a bounty originating from Indra, and redistributed to poets through patrons) in 6.47.25; *śurúdhō góágrāḥ*, “riches tipped in cows” in 1.169.8; etc. More rarely, it is used as an epithet for a god; we see this usage in 7.10.4c (where the god in question is Aditi). At least once, in 6.36.1ab, it must mean “originating *from* all people/generations.”

6.36.1a *satrá mādāsas táva viśvájanyāḥ*

6.36.1b *satrá ráyo ádha yé párvhivāsaḥ*

Completely yours are the exhilarating (drinks) originating from all generations/gentes

Completely the riches that come from the earth.

If we are to argue that the third criterion in the definition of verbal reciprocal homologues is met, we must suppose that *viśvájanya-* is obliquely referring to a generative act—a reference that (if this argument is to succeed) must be detectable against the backdrop of Rigvedic phraseology. Here is another way of posing the question. In glossing *viśvájanya-* as “belonging to all gentes/generations” or “stemming from all gentes, generations,” we may hear in this compound an echo of the common phrase *viśve jánasaḥ*, “all gentes/generations.” Of course, these glosses are primarily supported by the derivational morphology within the compound itself, rather than by the existence of related phraseology: they are meanings arrived at by analysis, rather than through intuitive associations. Nevertheless, one could ask oneself whether there are there other less standard combinations of *viśva-* and \sqrt{jan} that a listener could more intuitively connect to this compound, particularly within a biasing context or a pointed structuring device—and if so, whether some of these combinations reference *acts* of generation that benefit the audience that is taking the time to explore these intuitive connections.

My answer begins with *RV* 2.23, a hymn dedicated to *Bṛhaspati* (aka *Brahmaṇaspati*), a kind of ancillary/spinoff god who got his start as an epithet and alter-ego of Indra's.

2.23.2cd usrá iva súriyo jyótiṣā mahó

viśveṣām íj **janitá** bráhmaṇām asi

As the great sun is (the progenitor) of ruddy (dawn) through its light,

*You are the very **progenitor of all sacred formulations***

2.23.17a **viśvebhyo** hí tvā bhúvanebhiyas pári

2.23.17b tváṣṭá**janat** sámanaḥ-sámanaḥ kavīḥ

*Since, **for all –from all** beings,*

*From each Sāman-chant, the sage Tvaṣṭar **generated** you,*

In this hymn, we find two other combinations of *viśvá-* + *√jan*. One refers to *Bṛhaspati*'s role as *progenitor of all* sacred formulations. The other refers to his role as a god *generated for* and/or *from all* by another divinity: the form *viśvebhyah* is initially ambiguous between the dative (“to/for”) and ablative (“from”) cases in a way that might remind us of the similarly ambiguous semantics of *viśvájanya-* in the examples above. While the arrival of the preposition *pári* eventually disambiguates the case in favor of the ablative, i.e. the “from” meaning, I believe the structure of the line up until that point—dative juxtaposed to an accusative—would favor a dative interpretation, because of the large number of Rigvedic lines structured in a similar fashion that end up meaning: “To/for [recipients] a [a gift/boon] [give(s)/grant(s)/apportion(s)].” In fact, one such line occurs right in the immediately preceding verse of the same hymn: 2.23.16a reads, *má na **stenébhyo** yé abhí druhás padé:* “(Give) us not to thieves who (lurk) in the track of deceit.”

I am moving towards suggesting that in addition to analyzing *jyótiḥ...viśvájanyam* in 7.76.1ab as “light belonging to *all gentes/generations*,” listeners might hear within *jyótiḥ...viśvájanyam* a promise of a Dawn that is either *generated for/from all gentes*, in the manner of 2.23.17ab, or else a Dawn that is the *progenitor of all* manifestations of a certain component of ritual that all *gentes* use, in the manner of 2.23.2cd. In other words, they would hear within *√jan* a double meaning, with the second meaning being one or the other of these generative ideas.¹⁸⁴

Rig Veda 2.23 is a particularly attractive starting point from my perspective because both thematic and lexical overlap make the first passage quite comparable to 7.76.1ab, in which Savitar, the god of the

¹⁸⁴ Compare this suggestion to the end of Section 2.7, we heard a generative (*√jan*) idea in the epithet *sámjñātarupa-*, “one whose form is (generated) from genuinely agreeing,” even though all that was formally included in the compound was *sám* + *√jñā*, “genuinely agree.”

(rising and setting) sun, creates Dawn, or at least the morning light (*jyóti-*)—but it is far from the only hymn that plays with multiple meanings of *vísva-* + \sqrt{jan} . In *RV* 1.113, which is another Dawn hymn, there is a pair of passages that have many lexical elements in common with 7.76.1, and that deploy \sqrt{jan} in conjunction with *vísva-*.

1.113.1 idám śréṣṭham **jyótiṣām jyótir** ágāc

citráḥ praketo **ajaniṣṭa** víbhvā

yáthā **prásūtā savitúḥ saváyaṁ**

evá rátrī uṣāse yónim āraik

This fairest light of lights has just come here.

*The bright sign, wide-reaching, **has just been generated.***

*Just as she [=Dawn] is **impelled forth from the impulsion of Savitar** [lit. The Impeller],*

So Night has left behind the womb for Dawn.

1.113.19 mātá devánām áditer ánīkam

yajñásya ketúr bṛhatí ví bhāhi

praśastikṛd **bráhmane no** ví ucha

á no **jáne janaya víśvavāre**

Mother of gods, face of Aditi,

Beacon of the sacrifice, lofty--shine forth

*As creator of lauds, dawn forth **for our sacred formulation***

Generate it among our generation/gens; O you who bring all valuables.

The lexical parallels between these two verses and *RV* 7.76.1ab are particularly striking. Given these lexical parallels, we should pay special attention to the use of \sqrt{jan} and *vísva-* in *RV* 1.113.19 when we try to determine the secondary connotations of *visvájanya-* in 7.76. The last two pādas of 1.113.19 ask Dawn to *generate* a sacred formulation (*bráhma-*) *among* the poet’s *gens/generation*—in other words, they show exactly the sort of double sense of \sqrt{jan} that we have been looking for. Then, Dawn is called *visvavāre*, “O you who bring all valuables.” (C.f. Vasiṣṭha’s use of the vocative *visvavāre* in *RV* 7.77.) This seems to pattern with *RV* 2.23.2cd, in which Bṛhaspati was called the “progenitor of all ritual formulations.” So, if there is a verbal homology to be detected in 7.76, we should probably test the idea that *visvájanya-* connotes Dawn’s ability to *generate all* needed ritual formulations and/or goods for the benefit of *all* members of *the gens* of the Vasiṣṭhas or for *all generations* of the Vasiṣṭhas.

In other words, it remains to be shown that there are passages involving the specific compound *visvájanya-* that activate the same sorts of ideas explicitly expressed in *RV* 2.23 and 1.113. There are at least

two such passages, both from within the tenth maṇḍala (so, rather late hymns within the general scheme of Rigvedic relative chronology—but that need not preclude them from being instructive).

10.67.1 imāṃ dhīyaṃ saptáśirṣṇīm **pitá** na

ṛtáprajātām bṛhatīm **avindat**

turíyaṃ svij **janayad viśvájanyo**

ayásiya ukthám índrāya sáṃsan

*This seven-headed insightful thought here, **did our father***

***Find**, (the thought) born of truth and lofty.*

*The fourth one [=esoteric, unpronounced part of speech] indeed **did the one (generated) for all gentes generate**,*

The Irrepressible One, as he was pronouncing a solemn speech for Indra.

Notice that four of the key stems present in 7.76 1ab and 4cd are also present in the passage here: *pitár-* “father,” *ávinda-* “found (imperfect active),” *janáyá-* “generated (imperfect active),” and *viśvájanya-* “(generated) for all gentes/generations.” The idea explicitly being communicated here is quite similar to what we find in 2.23.2cd and 1.113.19cd, namely that the god—in 10.67 as in 2.23, Bṛhaspati,¹⁸⁵ described here as a god “for all gentes/generations” *viśvájanya-*—has generated the sacred formulation (for these gentes/generations to deploy). While this god’s generative act is the only one being explicitly expressed, the context of the verse, which refers to a primordial father, might also encourage a listener to detect within *viśvájanya-* an allusion to the generation of the god by such a father—much as Tvaṣṭar generated Bṛhaspati in 2.23.17ab.

The other suggestive passage involving *viśvájanya-* is in a hymn devoted to Agni rather than Bṛhaspati.

10.2.6 víśveṣāṃ hí adhvaráṇām ánīkaṃ

citrāṃ ketúm **janitā** tvā **jajāna**

sá á yajasva nṛvátīr ánu kṣá

spārhá íṣaḥ kṣumátīr **viśvájanyā**

Because as the face of all the rites

*The **progenitor has generated** you,*

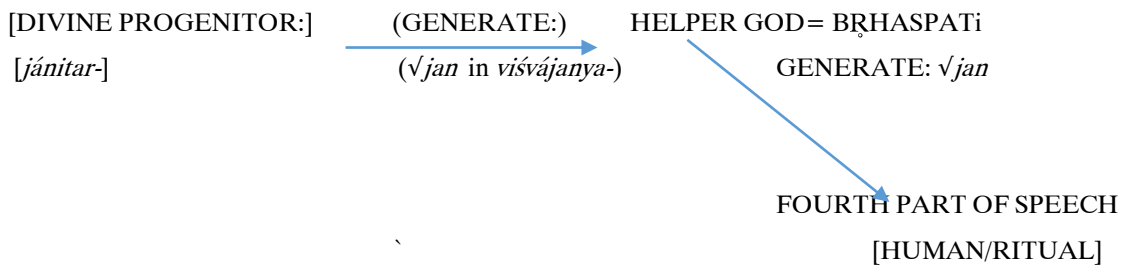
So, throughout the lands filled with superior men, win by sacrifice

*Eagerly sought cattle-rich refreshments (**generated**) for all gentes/generations*

¹⁸⁵ Also known as Brahmanaspati, the Lord of the Sacred Formulation, originally an alter-ego of Indra, Bṛhaspati is referred to above by the divine-oriented epithet the Irrepressible One (*ayásiya-*), an epithet that is frequently ascribed to Indra. The use of this epithet clues us into the fact that the subject of the second clause is the divinity.

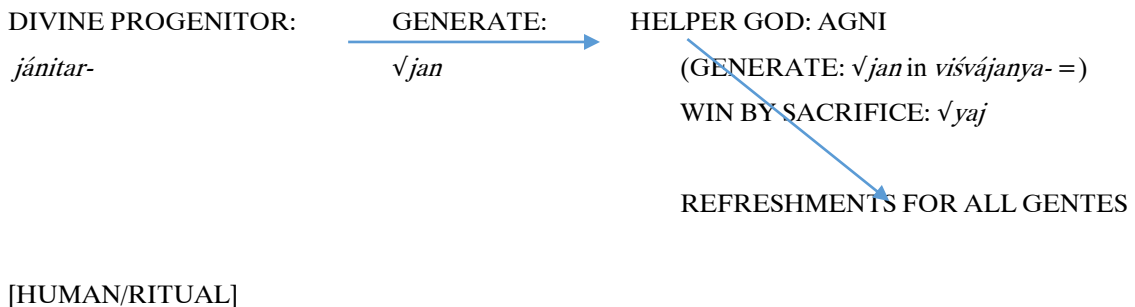
This time, it is the primordial father/progenitor whose generative act (analogous to Tvaṣṭar’s in 2.23.17ab) is described explicitly; the epithet *viśvájanya-* might be taken to allude to Agni’s followup act, which is to *generate* (i.e. “win by sacrifice”) *all* the necessary means and rewards of ritual worship used by human generations—much like Bṛhaspati does in 2.23.2cd, and like Dawn does in 1.113.19cd.

These two passages do seem to communicate the same type of chain of generative acts that were described in *RV* 2.23 and 1.119: a primordial father/fashioner/progenitor, or else Savitar the Impeller, generates a helper-god for all gentes and generations, in order that the same helper-god could generate tools of worship for use by these gentes and generations. Within these passages a verbal form of *√jan* directly states one or the other part of this chain; *viśvájanya-* can be taken to conjure up images of the missing link. This chain between an analogous action and a reaction is a homology connecting the interrelated roles of greater (primordial) and lesser (latter-day “helper”) divinities; it is charted out below. Starting with the version in *RV* 10.2.6 specifically, we have the following:



In the case of 10.2.6 the generative act of the helper god is directly expressed, and the generative act of the primordial Progenitor obliquely alluded to through *viśvájanya-*.

The passage from *RV* 10.2 operates within basically the same phraseological matrix, but the parts that are explicitly stated are different, and more akin to what we find in *RV* 113.19cd. In this case, it is the generative act of the primordial Progenitor that is directly stated, and the generative act of the helper god that is indirectly expressed through the epithet *viśvájanya-*.



It now seems far more reasonable to claim that the epithet *viśvájanya-* is capable of obliquely communicating one side of a verbal reciprocal homology. Repeating the key passages one more time:

7.76.1a úd u **jyótir⁴** amṛtaṃ viśvájanyaṃ⁴

7.76.1b viśvánaraḥ savitá devó aśret

*The immortal **light** belonging to all **generations/gentes-***

He who belongs to all men, god Savitar, has just propped it [=the light] up.

7.76.4c gūḥám **jyótiḥ⁴** pitáro ánv avindan .

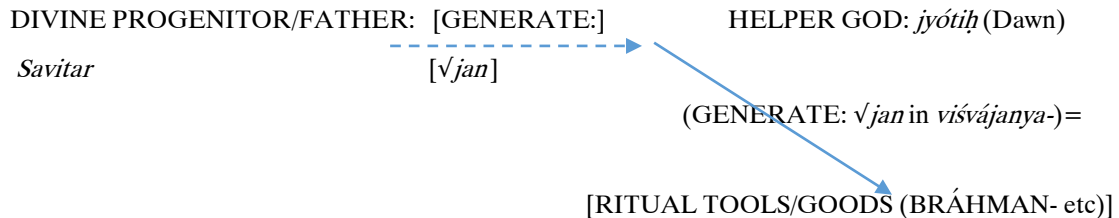
7.76.4d satyámantrā **ajanayann⁴** uśásam

*The fathers discovered the hidden **light***

*With the mantras that come true, **they generated** the Dawn.*

Now, on a thematic level, the role of the singular agent Savitar in pāda 1b would seem to be the most analogous to the primordial divine progenitor/father that we have seen in related phraseology above. So, within Verse 1, *viśvájanya-* could be intuitively connected with the phraseological matrix in the following fashion.

Normal Format—Verse 1



Note that it is never directly said that Savitar *generated* the light of Dawn (hence the dashed line in the first part of the chart). The agents that the overall verbal homology actually places in that role are the *plural semi-divine* fathers. The listener would likely notice this substitution—especially since the formulation *pitáraḥ...ajanayan* is unusual in other ways: the sizeable majority of active forms from the stem *janáya-* are singular and have gods as their subjects, and those that are plural tend to be governed by divine (grammatical) subjects as well.¹⁸⁶ The skewed phraseology is represented below:

¹⁸⁶For such divine-oriented singular forms in Maṇḍala 7, see 7.5.6b, 7.5.7c and 7.41.3c; similar divine-oriented singular forms abound in other maṇḍalas, especially Maṇḍala 9. For plural active divine-oriented forms, see 5.58.4b, 10.61.7c, 10.88.13b, and 10.122.2d.

Homology—Verses 1 and 4

[DIVINE PROGENITOR/FATHER]

[*jānitar-* /*pitár-*]

SEMI-DIVINE FATHERS:

GENERATE:

√jan

HELPER GOD: *jyótiḥ*/DAWN

(GENERATE: *√jan* in *viśvájanya-*)

[RITUAL TOOLS/GOODS (BRÁHMAN- etc)]

Verse 1 thus gives Dawn one kind of progenitor, and the homology supplies another progenitor—the latter more closely resembling Vasiṣṭha’s human audience and likely appreciated by them on those grounds. (Because of the surrounding phraseology associated with the “discourse of discoveries”—chiefly forms from *√guh* and *√vid*—that also centers groups of ancestors resembling the current-day human audience, this homology centripetally adheres to the discourse of discoveries to the same extent that it departs from the phraseological relay just discussed. All this is to say that the poet’s departure does not produce a jarring malapropism, so much as a flattering re-centering of a particular micromyth around more human figures.)

4.5 The verb *√jan* and the birth of the sun: verbal homologies and the discourse of directives

There is a similarly obliquely expressed, but nonetheless undeniable reciprocal aspect to the two passages connected by the other round of repetitions in Structuring Device 4—particularly against the backdrop of knowledge of the “discourse of directives” that thematically connects these passages.

7.76.1b *viśvānaraḥ savitá devó aśret*

7.76.1c *krátvā devānām⁴ ajaniṣṭa⁴ cākṣur*

He who belongs to all men, god Savitar, has just propped it [=the light] up.

In accordance with his will, the gods’ eye was just generated.

7.76.5b *sám jānate⁴ ná yatante mithás té*

7.76.5c *té devānām⁴ ná minanti vratáni*

Those genuinely act together, not marshalling in opposition.

Those do not transgress the gods’ commandments.

Once the eye of the gods is generated, the (likely human or humanoid) ritual actors genuinely act together, which, as we have seen, is connected to the fact that they do not transgress the commandments of the gods.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷ Recall from Section 2.7 above that hostilities between humans and in particular the toppling of hierarchical human “houses” are often framed as a transgression of these *commandments*, that the “eye of the gods” helps report

There are at least two aspects of obliqueness of this possible verbal reciprocity relationship. This time around, we see the use of the root $\sqrt{j\ddot{n}\bar{a}}$ in place of $\sqrt{j\bar{a}n}$; while the two forms would be grouped together in a structural sense, their semantic distinction remains and will turn out to be important to understanding what is being communicated here. Essentially, $s\acute{a}m\ j\bar{a}nate$ can be interpreted as a kind of *ersatz* for phraseology involving $\sqrt{j\bar{a}n}$ —an *ersatz* that acts as an invitation for the audience’s creative interpretations.¹⁸⁸ (Though the extant *Rig Veda* provides too little evidence to establish this for sure, one wonders if behind these types of alternations are collocations like “kith and kin,” $j\ddot{n}\bar{a}s-$ + $saj\bar{a}t\bar{a}-$ of which we have one attestation in *RV*1.109.1b, and the related $\acute{a}j\ddot{n}\bar{a}\ asaj\bar{a}t\bar{i}y\acute{a}$ “without kith and kin” in 10.39.6c. In other words, perhaps knowledge of a “kith-and-kin”-type collocation allows $\sqrt{j\ddot{n}\bar{a}}$ to encode acts of generation ($\sqrt{j\bar{a}n}$) when the point is to highlight social ties in action.)

In addition, the agents on both sides of the putative reciprocity relationship are not transparently encoded in 7.76: the form $ajani\ddot{s}ta$, “has just been generated,” requires that listeners supply an agent; the third plural subject of $s\acute{a}m\ j\bar{a}nate$, “genuinely agree,” is also never explicitly clarified, nor is the fruit of this collaborative labor made clear. All these things must be supplied by the audience, whose imagination is constrained by the phraseology that informs these passages (but simultaneously spurred on by their self-interest or sense of self-importance).

Given that the context of the first half of this homology (pāda 1bc) involves the naming of Savitar as an agent, we can probably infer that the same divine agent is responsible for the sun’s birth. In other words, it seems reasonable to suppose that Savitar’s generation of the sun is the act that initiates any reciprocity relationship at play here. This can hardly be irrelevant to determining the nature of the relationship at work: recall from the discussion of the first verbal reciprocal homology in 7.76 that Savitar’s presence in Verse 1 helped a listener access a particular pattern of phraseology in which a helper god, generated by a divine male “father,” “progenitor,” or “impeller (i.e. $sav\ddot{i}t\bar{f}-$),” in turn generates ritual tools or gifts. (In *RV*1.113, for instance Dawn was generated— $ajani\ddot{s}ta$ —from the impulsion of Savitar.)

violations of these *commandments*, and also that powerful humans (who implicitly have *command* of both the ritual and *command* the obedience of most social strata) are frequently framed as having a hand in the *generation* of the Dawn and sun, i.e. the “gods’ eye” (by way of the analogous ritual fire).

¹⁸⁸ As alluded to in previous footnotes throughout this section, medial forms of $s\acute{a}m-$ + $\sqrt{j\ddot{n}\bar{a}}$ do have a secure place within phraseology describing human activity around Agni Vaiśvānara—but Agni Vaiśvānara is not the subject of this hymn.

However, there is another layer of significance to the naming of Savitar that might more directly relate to any kind of reciprocity relationship at work between pāda 1c and Verse 5, i.e. in passages thematically united by the “discourse of directives.” Active forms of the root \sqrt{jan} that encode the birth of the sun generally refer to divine actions in mythological contexts; typically the agent is Indra, or another male divinity (see 7.99.4b, 2.19.3c, and 6.20.5d among other passages)—and crucially, the generation of the sun is one of the “well-done deeds” that seem to be cited as reasons why even the other gods do not violate Indra’s commandments.

3.32.8 índrasya kárma súkṛtā purúṇi
 vratāni devā ná **minanti** víśve
 dādhāra yāḥ pṛthivīm dyām utémāṃ
 jajāna sūryam uśāsam sudāmsāḥ
 Many are the well-done deeds of Indra
 *The All Gods do not **violate the commandments** (of him),*
 Who upholds the earth and this heaven.
 *Of wondrous power, **he generated** the sun and the dawn.*

Note that in 3.32.8 b the by now familiar collocation involving *vratā-* and $\sqrt{mī}$ is used to describe adherence to commandments; this is also what appears in 7.76.5, although in 3.32.8 the other gods are subject to the commandments rather than co-authors/possessors of them.

Other comparable examples involve hymns devoted to Agni Vaiśvānara—“Agni Belonging to All Men” (compare the semantics of *viśvājanya-* in 7.76.1)—for instance, *RV* 6.7 and 6.8. It’s notable that in both instances, mention of *commandments* occurs in conjunction with allusions to the birth or discovery of Agni’s sky-bound manifestation specifically, i.e. of the sun.

6.8.2 sá **jāyamānaḥ** paramé víomani
 vratāni agnir **vratapá** arakṣata
 ví antárikṣam **amimīta** sukrátur
 vaiśvānaró mahiná nákam aspṛśat
 ***While being born** in the highest distant heaven,*
 *Agni, as protector **of commandments** guarded the **commandments**.*
 *He, the very effective one, **measured** out the midspace;*
 Vaiśvānara touched the vault with his greatness.

In this instance, *amimīta* comes from an at least synchronically distinct root $\sqrt{mā}$, “measure.” Forms from this root are quite phonologically close to forms from $\sqrt{mī}$, and there would seem to be an intuitive connection between the ideas of measuring and (not) changing or confounding. At any rate, the two roots

can show up in the same hymn and respond to one another in relevant ways: for instance, in *RV*2.12.2,5. In Verse 2 of that hymn, Indra measures ($\sqrt{mā}$) the midspace; in Verse 5, Indra diminishes ($\sqrt{mī}$) the possessions of the miser.

The maintenance of this correlation between *commandments* and a god’s generation of the *sun* specifically is particularly striking in the case of *RV*6.7, given that throughout the hymn different rounds of repetition of the root \sqrt{jan} describe different forms of the birth of Agni (or Agni’s metaphorical “birthing” of officiants).

6.7.5 vaiśvānara **tāva tāni vratāni**
mahāni agne nákir á dadharṣa
yáj **jāyamānaḥ pitarór**+ upásthe
āvindaḥ ketúm vayúneṣu áhnām

6.7.6ab vaiśvānarasya **vīmitāni cákṣasā**
sānūni divó amṛtasya **ketúnā**
*Vaiśvānara, these **commandments of yours,***
Great (commandments), Agni, no one dares (venture) against,
*Since, **while being born** in the lap of your **two parents***
*You **found the beacon** of the days in the (ritual) patterns.*

By the eye** of Vaiśvanara have been **measured out
*The backs of heaven; **by the beacon** of the immortal one.*

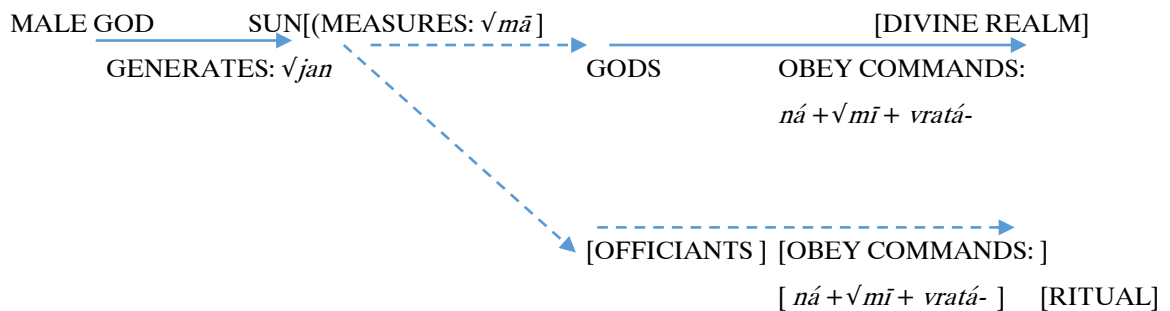
Agni’s association with the beacon *of days* (*ketúm...áhnām*), his possession of an eye (*cákṣas-*) and his measuring of the backs of *heaven* (*divó*) in Verses 5-6 contrast with his association with the beacon of sacrifice (*yajñāsya ketúm*) and the charioteer of the ceremonies (*rathíyam adhvarāṇām*) in 6.7.2. This contrast, summed up most neatly in 6.7.1 via two juxtaposed characterizations of Agni: *mūrdhānaṃ divó aratím pṛthivyáḥ* -- “the head of the sky and the wheel-spoke of the earth”—is a contrast between Agni’s identities as the sun and the ritual fire. We can be sure that in Verses 5-6, we are dealing with the former, celestial Agni.

In both 6.7 and 6.8, then, descriptions of the feat of generating the *sun* are juxtaposed with elements of the discourse of directives, including *vratá-* “commandments.” The root $\sqrt{mā}$, “measure” (in 6.8.2c and 6.7.6a) seems to be alluding to the normal phraseological complement of *vratá-*. While 6.8 does not explicitly reference obedience born out of awe or intimidation using the collocation *ná +√mī*, “not transgress,” the notion of measuring the midspace, encoded by the root $\sqrt{mā}$ “measure,” would seem to

obliquely suggest this idea: something to the effect of, “The sun measures up and out”—with the additional unstated implication being, “and you don’t measure up (*ná +√mī*)—so don’t disobey (*ná +√mī* “transgress”).” Also note that in 6.7.6 the “beacon” (*ketú-*) found by Agni is renamed as his eye (*cáksaḥ-*, from the previously seen root *√caks*). In 6.7, the reference to the kindling sticks as the “two parents”—more literally, the “two fathers”—when combined with the use of the verb *√vid* in the imperfect tense, would seem to refer to a feat of mythical proportions quite like that discussed in 7.76.4 (where, in point of fact, the same two lexical elements are used in a different syntactic construction).

Two important points have been introduced: 1) the generation (root *√jan*) of the sun is most frequently portrayed as a divine, mythological act, with a male divinity as the progenitor; 2) the promise or the threat implicit in the magnitude of this act encourages adherence to the progenitor’s commandments; because of this, the theme of the generation of the sun often prompts the surfacing of the “discourse of directives.” In other words, a *generation* of sun-like beings phraseologically anticipates the mention of obeying commandments. The relationship between this action and reaction falls under the widened umbrella of deflected reciprocity relationships discussed above—and there might be a case to be made that the phonologically similar roots *√mā* “measure” and (*ná +*) *√mī*, “(not) transgress,” articulate two halves of a reciprocity relationship between the sun and the gods and/or humans it watches over.

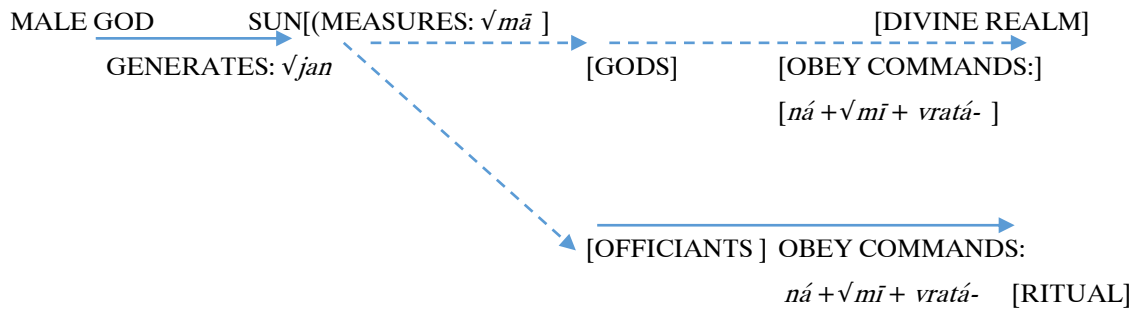
These phraseological trends and interrelationships do not directly answer our question about the nature of any reciprocity relationship that a listener could detect in the homology connecting *ajaniṣṭa* and *sám jānate*—but whatever that relationship is, it would have to follow the same general contours as the reciprocity relationship connecting *ajaniṣṭa* “[the sun] has just been generated” and “*ná minanti vratáni*” “[they] do not transgress the commandments.” Below I chart out these reciprocity relationships as they are articulated in 3.32.8 specifically (solid lines indicate formulaic elements present).



A male god generates the sun, which then implicitly measures out (*√mā*) the “backs of heaven” and (in the form of Agni) the “midspace.” Upon seeing the sun fill up this expanse, gods and humans alike decide not

to transgress the commandments (*ná + √mī + vratá-*). In *RV*3.32, the acts of measuring out/filling up the vault of heaven and the midspace are inferred on the basis of Rigvedic phraseology; likewise with the obedience of *human* officiants.

In the case of 7.76.5, both forms of obedience (human and divine) would be capable of acting as a model from which to supply a subject for *ná minanti* “[they] do not transgress” in pāda 5b; but the identification of the commands as being “the gods’,” *devánām*, i.e. associated with the gods in general, in pāda 5c (*té devánām ná minanti vratáni*) would suggest that *humans* are doing the obeying. So, ultimately, the divine half of this chart would be in brackets and dashed lines, and the human half would be the one that is marked as directly articulated.



Whatever type of homologous reciprocity *sám jānate* is taken to reference, then, it should be *along the same lines* as the obedience compelled when the sun, having been generated by a god, fills the full measure of the midspace.

One obvious form of *obedient* generative activity, which operates *along the same lines* as the actions and reactions above in other ways, as well, entails the generation of the sun’s ritual analog, the fire. Recall that officiants regularly *generate* the sun’s ritual double, the fire.¹⁸⁹ This generative act can be encoded in (formally, anyway) middle-voice forms (see, for instance, *agním... janayanta*¹⁹⁰ in *RV*7.1; *sám jānate* is a middle form); sometimes, the collaborative nature of this action is encoded with the addition of the preposition *sám-* (see below).

¹⁸⁹ In fact, the simultaneity of the appearance of both the sun and fire is often encoded using forms of *√jan*: in a mythological context in 4.3.11d, we have the following: *āvīḥ súvar abhavaj jāté agnau* “The sun became visible when the fire was generated”; in a ritual context in 7.13.2b, we have “Agni”—i.e. Agni as the fire *and* the sun—filling *both* world-halves (i.e. the earth *and* the sky) as he **is generated**. *á ródasī aprṇā jāyamānah*.

¹⁹⁰ The form *janayanta* is likely not semantically middle, but rather an *-anta* replacement for “poorly marked” *janayan*. See Jamison (1979).

A particularly useful pair of examples were introduced above in Section 2.7; these examples suggested that *sám* + $\sqrt{jñā}$ can be used to describe the (re)generation of Agni through collaborative action in a *ritual* context, perhaps by analogy with *sám* + \sqrt{jan} . Recall that there is an example of the first collocation in 1.69.9, in an unusually complex compound epithet *sámjñātarūpa*-“whose form is (generated) from genuinely agreeing,” which is being used to refer to Agni (Vaiśvānara).

1.69.9a uṣó ná jāró vibhāvā usrāḥ

1.69.9b **sámjñātarūpaś** cīketad asmai

Ruddy and far radiant like the lover of Dawn,

*He will be very conspicuous to him, (as) **one whose form is (generated) from genuinely agreeing.***

As mentioned in a prior context, even though what is formally present is $\sqrt{jñā}$, there is a generative (\sqrt{jan}) idea implicit in this epithet. In a similar passage, the collocation *sám* + \sqrt{jan} encodes the ritual generation of Agni, through activity which is explicitly and repeatedly characterized as collaborative.

5.7.2 kútrā cid yásya sámṛtau

raṇvá náro nṛṣádane

árhantaś cid yám indhaté

samjanáyanti jantávaḥ

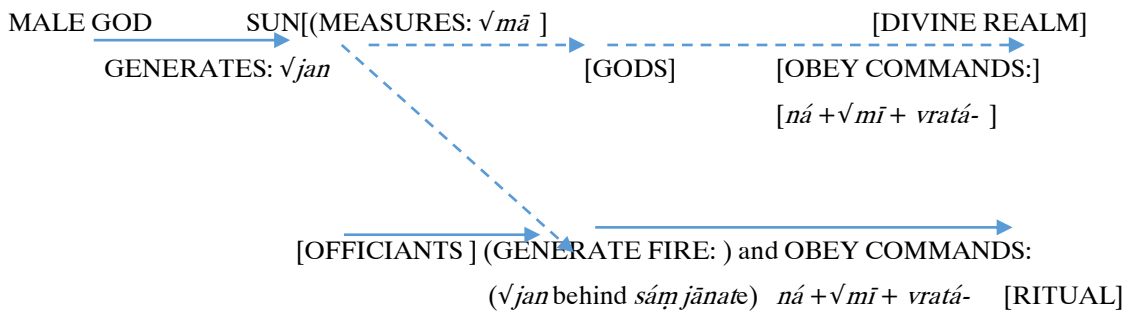
At the encounter together with whom, wherever (it be),

Delighting men [=priests] unite in the session of men [=the sacrifice]

And whom even the worthy (gods) kindle

*And our **gentes generate together.***

In sum, then, it would not be unreasonable for an audience to hear behind *sám jānate* an allusion to their own capacity to collaborate in the generation of the ritual fire. We could chart this interpretation of the obliquely expressed generative homology as follows.



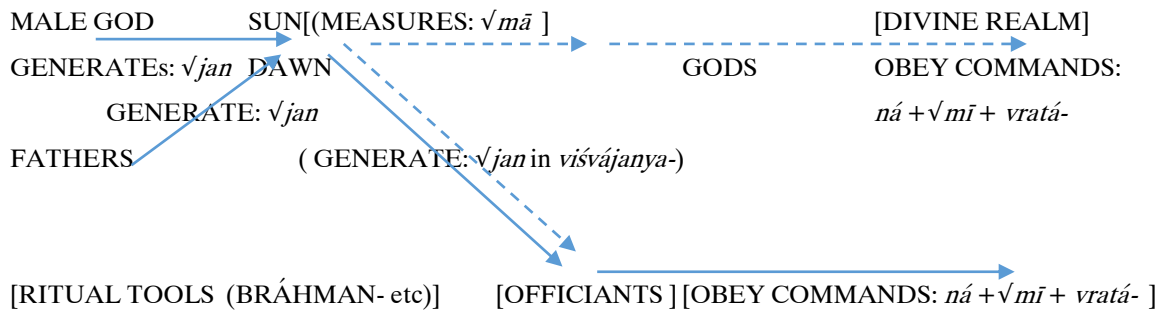
Notice that, according to this interpretation of *sám jānate*, the homology connecting Verses 1 and 5 would evoke two different types of parallels between celestial and terrestrial actions and agents: one articulated through the root \sqrt{jan} , and one through *ná + $\sqrt{mī}$ + vratá-*. Interpreting *sám jānate* as a

reference to parallel *powers* of generating (the sun; the fire) carves out a slightly more aggrandizing role than taking *sám jānate* at face value—and this, of course, is part of the draw of such an interpretation.

4.6 Agency in ritual, agency in interpretation: *sám + √jñā, √jan + bráhma-* and the Vasisthas' imagination

Not the only interpretation; not even the most likely one, given that another relevant formula is evoked by the *other* generative verbal homology that begins in Verse 1—and further given that this same formula references a type of ritual power that, from a phraseological perspective at least, seems to be unique to the Vasisthas. In other words, if the Vasisthas wish to hear behind *sám jānate* a reference to their collective *proWess* in addition to their deference before a divinity, they could do better than imagining the basic skill of the kindling of fire.

Notice that the verbal reciprocal homology connecting Verses 1 and 4 operates along quite similar lines as the relationships evoked by pādas 1bc and Verse 5. In pādas 1bc and Verse 5, a male god generates the sun; the sun would then measure the midspace (implicit $\sqrt{mā}$); afterwards, humans do not transgress commands ($ná + \sqrt{mī} + vratá-$). The first two parts of this progression have their analogs in the first verbal homology connecting pādas 1ab with Verse 4: a male god and/or the semi-divine fathers generate (the light of) Dawn (\sqrt{jan}); the Dawn generates (\sqrt{jan} in *viśvájanya*) all ritual tools, such as the *bráhma-*.



One is therefore tempted to ask—is there a way to interpret *sám jānate* as an action that responds to the fathers' (+ Savitar's) generation of Dawn and Dawn's generation of ritual tools, in the same way that the obedience to commands ($ná + \sqrt{mī} + vratá-$) responds to Savitar's generation of the Sun and the Sun's measuring ($\sqrt{mī}$) of the midspace?

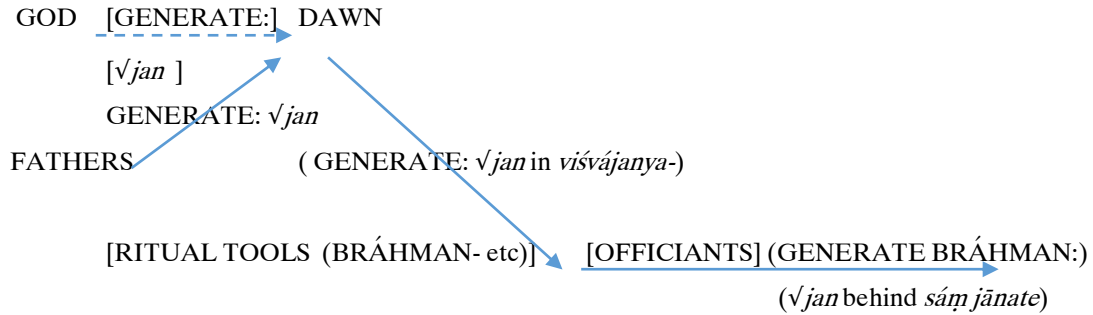
The short answer is, yes—there is one such specific *generative* action—one that rather directly responds to the Dawn's generation of helper tools, and particularly to her generation of the *bráhma-*, i.e. the sacred formulation, as explicitly mentioned in *RV* 1.113. Specifically within the seventh maṇḍala, the creation of a sacred formulation (*bráhma-*) by human ritual agents is encoded using a form of \sqrt{jan} . For

reasons that will become clear in a moment, the collocation that encodes this action is one that the Vasiṣṭhas would be especially inclined to hear in the phrase *sám jānate*.

The collocation in question, $\sqrt{jan} + bráhma-$, is itself not terribly common. However, given the middle voice of *sám jānate*, it is significant that this formula accounts for two of the three of all the *middle-voice* forms of the causative stem *janáya-* that refer to human ritual action (7.22.9b, 7.31.11b) in Maṇḍala 7, and that a third such form (in 7.26.1c) refers to the generation of another sort of sacred formulation: a hymn (*ukthá-*).¹⁹¹ (The relevant passages will be quoted below.) A reexamination of the possible roles of *sám jānate* within the broader network of reciprocity relations articulated in 7.76.1a-c, 4cd and 5bc will show that the collocation $\sqrt{jan} + bráhma-$ has a relationship with all relevant phraseological clusters as well as the thematic ideas that they represent.

First, I will consider the idea that a listener could interpret *sám jānate* to represent what human officiants do in response to Dawn being generated and generating gifts, just as *ná minanti vratáni* represents what humans do in response to the sun being generated and measuring the sky—i.e. the idea that this phrase could be heard as a third part to the verbal reciprocal homology that connected pādas 1ab and 4cd. In the phraseology evoked by that prior homology, the sacred formulation (*bráhma-*) is one of the ritual tools generated by Dawn and other helper gods (after the god(s) had been generated by a divine father or by semi-divine fathers). *RV* 1.113.19 was perhaps the most relevant comparandum given that in that instance, Dawn was the helper god who generated the formulation. If *sám jānate* is regarded as a human response to that prior chain of divine and semi-divine generative acts—already suggested by the fact that the beginning of both *generative* homologies hovers around pādas 1a-c, and around the figure of Savitar in pāda 1b—then it would make sense for a hearer to detect behind that form a collocation like $\sqrt{jan} + bráhma-$. In other words, this collocation fits in quite comfortably as a third component within the following matrix of verbal homologies:

¹⁹¹ The fourth form, in 7.1.1b, refers to the generation of Agni. This is another sort of generative act that the Vasiṣṭhas could detect behind the form *sám jānate*, as subsequent footnotes to this section will explain. However, for reasons that I hope will soon become clear, I am claiming that the Vasiṣṭhas in particular will detect $\sqrt{jan} + bráhma-$ in *sám jānate*, because that interpretation allows them to insert themselves into the hymn.



Now, let's revisit a different but compatible set of associations; namely, the possible role of *sám jānate* within the discourse of directives, i.e. the idea that it expresses something *along the same lines* as the collocation *vratá + ná +√mī*. A relevant example in 7.31.11bc seems particularly easy to connect to the discourse of directives in 7.76.5.

7.31.11b índrāya **bráhma janayanta** víprāḥ

7.31.11c tásya **vratáni ná minanti** dhírāḥ

*For Indra, the inspired poets **generated** a **sacred formulation***

*His **commandments** the clever **do not transgress**.*

In the passage above, *√jan* is in the pāda that immediately precedes the collocation *vratá + ná +√mī*, suggesting a certain affiliation with the discourse of directives (and of course, in 7.76.5bc, *√jñā* is in the pāda preceding that collocation). In Section 4.5, it was suggested that the divine generation of the sun is phraseologically associated with obeying commandments (*vratá-*) because the latter concept is a kind of ersatz for true reciprocity *in the face of an awe-inspiring a boon of mythological proportions*. It turns out that that there is evidence for 1) the use of the formula *√jan + bráhma-* to describe a reciprocity relationship with divine parties and 2) the idea that this particular type of generative act is compared unfavorably with the capabilities of the gods. So in that way, too, the collocation *√jan + bráhma-* is a response that operates along the same lines as *vratá + ná +√mī*, the form of (lexically) analogous reciprocity offered in lieu of actually “measuring” (*√mā*) up. In addition, since the use of the formula *√jan + bráhma-* to encode a reciprocity relationship between humans and divinities seems to be restricted to the Vasiṣṭhas’ Maṇḍala-7 hymns, the Vasiṣṭhas can carve out a special sort of agency for themselves within *RV7.76* if they hear *sám jānate* as a stand-in for this particular collocation.

Starting with the first point: the collocation *bráhma- + √jan* is indeed one of a number of versions of the human end of a reciprocity relationship in which (gift-grand) gods, upon enjoying (*√juṣ*) an offering, may decide to grant gifts.

7.26.1a ná sóma índram ásuto mamāda

nābrahmāṇo maghāvānaṃ sutāsaḥ

tāsmā ukthāṃ **janaye** yáj **jújoṣan**

Soma, unpressed, does not exhilarate Indra,

*Nor do pressings **without sacred formulations** (exhilarate) the gift-grand one.*

*For him **I generate** a hymn that **he will enjoy**.*

Now, this is neither the only nor the dominant collocation involving *bráhman-* in Maṇḍala 7: \sqrt{kr} and \sqrt{bh} + *bráhman-* provide comparable officiant-oriented expressions (there are others), and the divine-oriented \sqrt{ju} + *bráhman-*, “to enjoy a formulation,” eclipses all of these alternative formulations. But what *is* interesting about *bráhman-* + \sqrt{jan} is that it seems to be absent from other maṇḍalas. A quick search of Maṇḍalas 3-6 yields exactly zero instances. Other maṇḍalas are lacking in instances too, excepting occasions already discussed in conjunction with helper gods like Brahmaṇaspati and Dawn.

One is tempted to connect the adaptation of *bráhman-* + \sqrt{jan} to a human-oriented formula describing ritual exchanges (in Maṇḍala 7 specifically) with the story of the birth, or *generation* of the Vasiṣṭhas, as described in *RV* 7.33.

7.33.11a utāsi maitrāvaruṇó vasiṣṭha

urvāsyā **brahman** mánasó 'dhi **jātáḥ**

drapsāṃ skannám **bráhmaṇā daíviyena**

vísve deváḥ púṣkare tvādadanta

And you are the descendant of Mitra and Varuṇa, O Vasiṣṭha,

***Born** from Urvaśī, from her mind, **you formulator**.*

*A drop spurted forth: **with a heavenly formulation***

All the gods took you into a lotus.

The repetition of *bráhman-*, “formulation” (also in the form of the derived animate noun *brahmán-*, “formulator”) in pādas 11bc is an echo of a prior redundant repetition of *bráhman-*, “formulation” in the similarly contiguous pādas 3d-4a (the only other instances of this word in *RV* 7.33). In those earlier verses, Indra is said to have aided the side of Sudās and the Vasiṣṭhas in the Battle of the Ten Kings *by reason of the sacred formulation (bráhmaṇā)* of either the Vasiṣṭhas (pāda 3d) or their *forefathers (pitṛṇām* pāda 4a). The primary subject of 7.33 and of two additional hymns attributed to the Vasiṣṭhas (7.18 and 7.83) is the role of the Vasiṣṭhas’ ritual prowess, i.e. of their creation of sacred formulations, in winning this battle; it is one of the feats that characterizes this family. So in 7.33, we have a situation in which the echoing of

bráhmaṇ- connects the Vasiṣṭhas’ successful courting of Indra—with the use of their signature sacred formulations—to the similar manner in which they themselves were *generated*.¹⁹²

So far, then, we have shown that *bráhmaṇ-* + *√jan* not only generally describes initiating a reciprocal ritual exchange with the gods, but that it highlights the portion of the exchange in which the Vasiṣṭhas *in particular* pay forward the favor of their birth and tap into the particular talent with which that birth endowed them. So, this would seem to be a key phrase for listening Vasiṣṭhas who are wondering where their ritual prowess fit into the broader picture of gods generating gods generating mundane resources and rituals.

What remains to be shown (if we are to connect the phrase *√jan* + *bráhmaṇ-* to the relevant homologies in the “discourse of directives”) is the second point, namely that whatever the magnitude of talent that Vasiṣṭhas show for this type of ritual gift, it is nonetheless characterized as a kind of *lesser* reciprocity offered up by humans in the wake of divine feats—just like the following of commandments. There is a passage in Book 7 that produces this impression.

7.22.8 nú cin nú te mányamānasya dasma
 úd aśnuvanti mahimānam ugra
 ná vīryam indara+ te ná rādhaḥ
*Never (to that) of you, o wondrous one, you are considered to be--
 (Never) do they (quite) reach up to (that) greatness, o strong one
 Nor to your heroism, Indra, nor to your generosity,*

7.22.9 yé ca pūrva ṛṣayo yé ca nūtnā
 índra **bráhmāṇi janáyanta** víprāḥ
 asmé te santu sakhiyá śiváni
*Neither the old seers nor the new ones,
 The inspired poets, who **created sacred formulations**, Indra.
 Let there be friendly fellowship of you for us.*

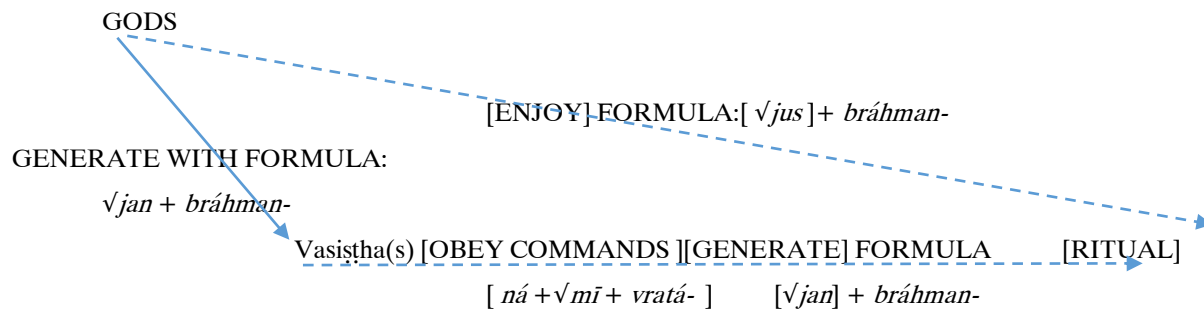
We can sum up the substantiated claims about *bráhmaṇ-* + *√jan* that are relevant to our interpretation of 7.76.5 in the following manner:

¹⁹² C.f. the expressions in the following phrases, which use *√jan* plus *bráhmaṇ-* to implicitly associate the family with the act of making formulations.

7.72.3ab úd u stómāso aśvīnor abudhrañ
jāmi bráhmāṇi uśásaś ca devīḥ
*The praise songs of the Aśvins have awakened,
 But also **our family/gens, (our) formulations** and the Dawns, the goddesses.*

- This collocation references a unique way in which the Vasiṣṭhas in particular can mirror the generative activity of helper gods like Dawn.
- This collocation describes a method of initiating reciprocity relationships with gods—and in fact this particular method can be said to be characteristic of the Vasiṣṭhas as a family of poets.
- While the Vasiṣṭhas are talented at generating formulations, this act explicitly pales in comparison to the closest divine analogs.
- This is likelt what is behind the juxtaposition of \sqrt{jan} + *bráhma*n- with obeying commandments: obedience to these commandments is frequently explained as a reaction to awe-inspiring (/terrifying) generative (\sqrt{jan}) acts of the gods.

The involvement of *bráhma*n- + \sqrt{jan} in deverbative homologies within Maṇḍala 7, and the connection between the gods’ generation of the Vasiṣṭhas on the one hand and the gods’ entitlement to at least a little reciprocity (in the form of formula-generation) on the other, are depicted in the chart below. The chart depicts 7.31.11bc and 3d-4a specifically, which affects which expressions are in brackets vs. which expressions are not. Note that while there is no verbal homology, i.e. no double occurrence of \sqrt{jan} , associated expressions from elsewhere in Maṇḍala 7 and Rigvedic phraseology generally trace out an implied reciprocal exchange in a ritual context, set into motion by a divine generative act (the begetting of Vasiṣṭha).¹⁹³



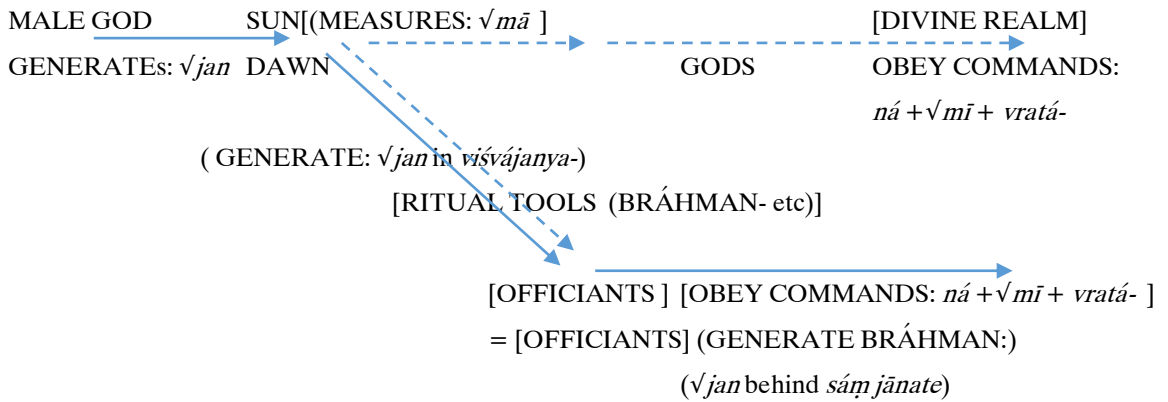
Finally, note that within *RV* 7.33, the double occurrence of *bráhma*n- in pādas 3d-4a partially fleshes out the two other sides of this triangle, despite the absence of \sqrt{jan} and other key terms from the “discourse of directives.”

¹⁹³ And in fact, the lines charted above appear right after a verse that deploys a verbal homology to describe a similar reciprocal exchange.

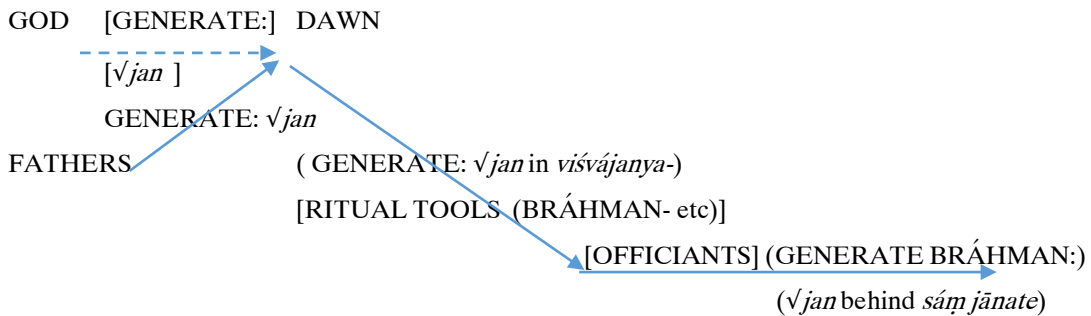
7.31.10 *prá vo mahé mahivédhe bharadhvam
 prá cetase prá sumatīm kṛṇudhvam
 vísaḥ pūrvīḥ **prá carā carā**ṣaṇiprāḥ
 (Sacrificers,) bear forth your (offering) for the great one of great strengthening;
 For the forethoughtful put forward your good prayer.
 (Indra,) **fare forth** to the many clans, as the one **filling** up the **settled** domains.*

Returning at last to 7.76.5: my claim is that *sám jānate*, “genuinely act together,” would likely be interpreted by audience members who identified as Vasiṣṭhas as an allusion to the Vasiṣṭhas’ (i.e. their own) formula-generating ($\sqrt{jan} + bráhma-$) abilities, structurally connected as it is with another generative (\sqrt{jan}) verbal/deverbative homology which evokes similar phraseology, and juxtaposed as it is with $ná + \sqrt{mī} + vratá-$. The charts below are all replicated from earlier parts of this discussion. They illustrate the place of this interpretation within chains of verbal homologies connected to the discourse of directives, and also connected to the discourse of discoveries.

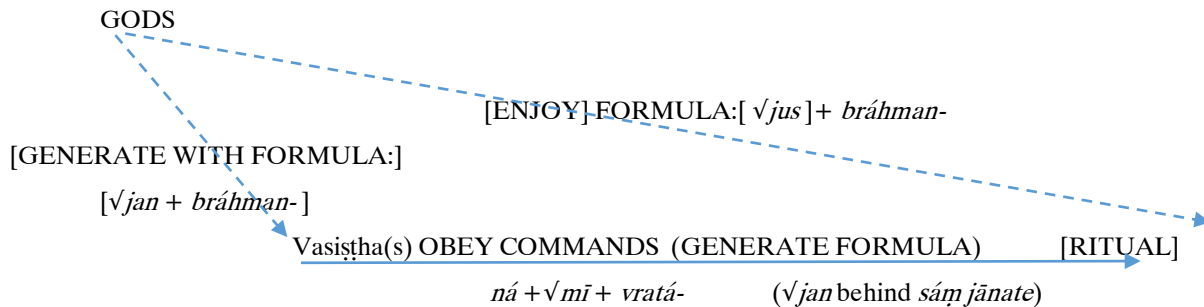
Discourse of Directives



Discourse of Discoveries



Vasiṣṭha Mythology

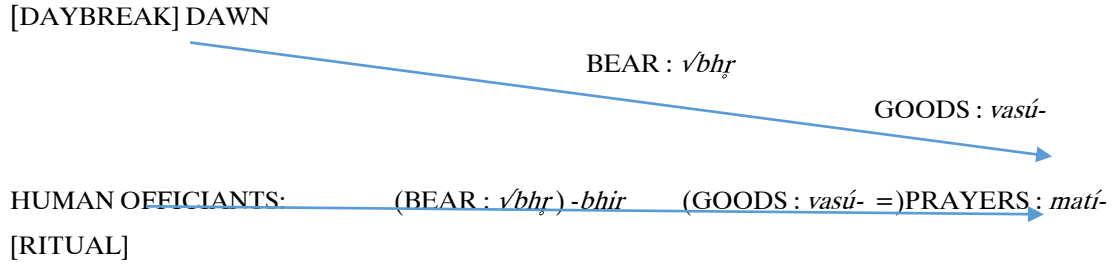


Fully three different types of parallels between divine actions and the reactions of the Vasiṣṭhas operate along the same lines, and culminate in $\sqrt{jan} + bráhma-$; this heightens the listener’s sense of both the Vasiṣṭhas’ power/agency and their indebtedness/obligations to the gods.

To recapitulate: this understanding of the lines taps into the birth story of the Vasiṣṭhas, which yields the impression that *whatever* is associated with $\sqrt{jan} + bráhmaṇ$ —in this case, $sám + \sqrt{jñā}$, “genuinely agreeing”—is an ersatz for reciprocity owed to the gods many times over. This debt is coupled with the ones implicit in the discourse of discoveries and the discourse of directives—i.e. in the knowledge that a) the “founding fathers”(/ “finding fathers”) generated Dawn; b) Dawn generated the *bráhmaṇ*; c) Savitar generated the sun, which was so expansive as to measure out the midspace. All this further impresses upon a listening Vasiṣṭha how fully obedient and agreeable he should be. It is difficult to find an English paraphrase that captures even a bit of this skillful leveraging of (both expressed and implicit) phraseology as a mechanism of social control (visually depicted above as lines transferring all their energy to the maintenance of the horizontal “status quo” at the bottom).

Probably needless to say, both of the discourses on which these homologies are drawing connect the manifestation of the Dawn and sun to the successful performance of ritual activity—displaced into the mythological past in the discourse of discoveries, brought back into the present and recast as more expansive obedience and coordinated activity in the discourse of directives. But one thing that these charts make particularly clear is that of all the relevant phraseology available to the poet to effect these transitions, the portions that are being explicitly stated (as opposed to conjured up by association) refer a) to the divine generative acts that trigger feelings of obligation, and b) to the most expansive expressions of what those obligations entail. (Remember also that in between these two discourses is the adjective *sámgatāsaḥ*, which here carries some *connotations* of mixing ritual substances, *but* can also more expansively refer to a human or divine “coming together” in other contexts—so it gets us no closer to the specifics of ritual exchange) The many available formulaic expressions of specific ritual exchanges between the humans and the gods are all being withheld.

Compare this to the way that similar transitions toward ritual topics worked, for instance, in Structuring Devices 5-6 of 7.77. I reproduce the chart below. Note that one full formula dealing with a specific currency of ritual exchange ($\sqrt{bhr} + vasú-$), is explicitly expressed; half of a further formula $\sqrt{bhr} + matí-$ is expressed directly (*matí-*), and the other half anagrammatically (*-bhir*):



This is a much higher degree of explicitness than we observe in 7.76. Such departures from the way similar transitions were made in 7.77 and 7.75 make one suspect that the current ritual occasion is being used as a chance to have a broader implicit conversation about reasons why, and various (divine, mythological, and less-animate ritual) models for, human officiants and clansmen coming together in agreement more generally.

Thinking further along these lines: as mentioned above, because of the allusion to $\sqrt{jan} + bráhmān$ embedded in *sám̐ + √jñā*, we know by pāda 5b that the Vasiṣṭhas are the implicit referents for at least half of this discussion (i.e. Verse 5); but it is interesting that they are only directly referenced after the conclusion of this many-layered (phraseological, mythological and metaphorical) implicit argument, i.e. at the beginning of the final discourse unit in Verse 6. The obliqueness with which the poet encourages the Vasiṣṭhas to “come together” suggests to this interpreter that, for whatever reason, the poet’s clansmen were an audience that would initially resist these arguments if they were more directly presented.

4.7 Summary of results for asymmetric/peripheral structuring devices; phraseological repair

Structuring Device 3 deployed aorist-based homologies to rework the manifestation of Dawn into images of static, multipartite, masculine-gendered ritualesque configurations, including orderly paths (*pánthāḥ...íṣkṛtāsaḥ*) leading to the gods, and unspecified (literally or figuratively) “jelling” (*sám̐gatāsaḥ*) entities that Rigvedic phraseology links with melting, intermingling ritual substances. The images thus produced are of inanimate or less-animate components fitting or flowing together to facilitate a sacrifice—a less-animate assemblage rather than an assembly of ritual agents. However, a combination of surrounding syntax and thematics (connecting *sám̐gatāsaḥ* with the agents in Verse 5) and implied metalinguistic equations (connecting *pánthāḥ...íṣkṛtāsaḥ* with the same agents in Verse 5) eventually ties these images to images of ritual agents. The images of less-animate, stable assemblages and melting-together substances act as precursors for description of collaboration between ritual agents, precursors that would positively affect the listener’s ability to conceive of a more expansive and stable allegiance between those agents.

Structuring Device 4 uses parts of reciprocal verbal/deverbative homologies to suggest (mythologically derived but) ritually continued partnerships, partnerships that, according to related Rigvedic phraseology, naturally culminate not only in the co-production between Dawn, the eye of the sun, and human officiants of all the elements of sacrifice, but also in *agreement and obedience among the Vasiṣṭhas more generally*. Once these divine-oriented components of generative (\sqrt{jan}) homologies are running through the listeners' minds, they are likely to jog memories of reciprocal human-oriented acts: of obligatory forms of collaboration owed to the gods (but also benefitting their human interlocutor). In other words, homologies in Structuring Device 4 not only involve the use of explicit poetic repair, but provide inducements towards listener-participant/audience-centered interpretive repair—a mental filling-in of blanks and recentering of the poet's centrifugal circumlocutions, making certain types of collaboration sound more attainable, and even obligatory.

One particularly strong inducement toward interpretive repair is a subtle riddle posed by *sám + $\sqrt{jñā}$* “genuinely agree.” This riddle is eventually explicitly resolved by the poet, when “do not transgress commandments” arrives as a sort of gloss in the following hemistich; but in the intervening time, the riddle also tempts the listeners themselves to enter into a kind of partnership with the poet, mentally “repairing” his lines, i.e. co-producing the unspoken nebula of ritual-oriented generative phraseology that expresses reciprocal relationships only obliquely evoked by the homologies. The collocation *sám + $\sqrt{jñā}$* is thematically related to the discourse of directives that surrounds it, in that it describes accord, which can be regarded as a form of obedience to those directives; however it is not part of the inventory of phraseology associated with that discourse—so while it is not out of place, it is not *entirely* at home, either; it functions as a sort of lacuna between more secure bits of phraseology, a gap into which a listener can insert his own ideas. Within the broader *Rig Veda*, $\sqrt{jñā}$ and \sqrt{jan} are juxtaposed in at least one collocation; within this hymn, *sám + $\sqrt{jñā}$* is structurally connected to three instances of the root \sqrt{jan} , forms which, with various degrees of (in)directness, encode divine generative actions that can trigger human, ritual-oriented generative responses. So, phraseological, structural, and thematic considerations create the expectation of a fourth, ritual-oriented \sqrt{jan} . For these reasons, one supposes that a listener might hear in $\sqrt{jñā}$ an oblique expression of a ritual-oriented instance of \sqrt{jan} , and mentally supply a more direct formulation.

In fact, likely candidates for this imaginative emendation include a kind of metapragmatically related expression, *\sqrt{jan} + bráhma-*, “generate formulation,” a collocation that seems to reference ritual co-production *among the Vasiṣṭhas*, specifically—i.e. which connotes their reciprocal obligations to the

gods, who generated the Vasiṣṭhas using a formulation (*bráhmaṇ-*). This collocation appears in close proximity to *ná +√mī + vratá-* elsewhere in Maṇḍala 7. To the extent that listeners themselves imagine this emendation, the idea that they *owe* it to the gods to collaborate instead of quarrel would take hold deeper in their minds than any externally suggested solution, which, in a contentious environment, might meet with resistance—and if the formulation that the listener hit upon was specifically “generate *formulation*,” the connection between the imaginative act they just performed and the one the formula(tion) describes would have a particular resonance.

This is just one of a number of phraseologically possible paths. Whatever solution to this riddle is imagined by the listener, the poet does finally provide the standard formula from the discourse of directives that emphasizes accord: *ná +√mī + vratá-*. This explicit emendation is the final act of poetic repair: a supplying of phraseological material that the listener up until that point had to guess about based only on distorted fragments. The repair has the added benefit of making the most expansively described notion of ritual communion sound perfectly natural and *expected*, at a time when (one infers) attainment of the social accord being described may have been anything but a foregone conclusion.

4.8 Symmetric/central structuring devices: nominal homologies, poetic repair; aligning images and allyship

If the simplest characterization of the role of Structuring Devices 3 and 4 is that they use verb-based homologies to facilitate transitions from divine, celestial and mythological themes to human, ritual ones, the symmetric structuring devices can be said to instead use (pro)noun-based homologies to navigate a different hierarchy, one connecting more and less animate elements of celestial and ritual scenes. Because the bulk of these homologies (those in Structuring Device 1) are articulated through implied metalinguistic equations, and because the final such homology (in Structuring Device 2) reverses the order of more- and less-animate characterizations, these links are better characterized as a kind of sustained, almost static double vision than a transition.

I will ultimately make the argument that these homologies are a more elaborate version of the technique implicit in the use of the adjective *sámgatāsaḥ*: both nested rings encourage the comparison of less-animate imagery with imagery of human or anthropomorphic ritual agents acting in unison, with the point being the provision of viable-*sounding* images of “a more perfect union,” in the sense in which I used the phrase above. While the rhetorical effectiveness of this strategy in part depends on the fact that not all

such comparisons explicitly involve the Vasiṣṭhas, the overall strategy may be clearer if we start with the double-image that (I argue) these structuring devices are intended to reinforce.

The last two verses, which in 7.75 and especially 7.77 had been devoted to introducing the preferred currency of exchange between the goddess and the officiants (implicitly via their proxy, the patron), are framed by two different characterizations of the agency of the Vasiṣṭhas:

7.76.6a *prāti tvā stómair īlate vásiṣṭhā²*

*In response to you **the Vasiṣṭhas** reverently invoke you with praises*

7.76.7b *uṣá² uchánti² ribhyate vásiṣṭhaiḥ²*

Dawn, while dawning, is crackled to by the Vasiṣṭhas

In the first line, the Vasiṣṭhas are the grammatical subjects of a middle verb with a direct object. In the second line, the Vasiṣṭhas are still the semantic agents, but they are in the instrumental case, and the verb is passive. That this is at least a slight demotion of the level of agency (and therefore, perhaps, animacy) granted to the Vasiṣṭhas can be seen from the fact that in pāda 6a the instrumental case was used to encode the *means by which* the Vasiṣṭhas praise Dawn: *stómairiḥ*, “with praises.”

But what is particularly telling is the use of the form *ribhyate*, from \sqrt{ribh} , a verb which is not very common and hence can be assumed to be deliberately chosen for effect. This form, which can be translated as “crackle,” or “rasp,” (also, as “sing”) is primarily applied to the sound made by Agni (e.g. 8.44.20b; 10.3.6d) or Soma (9.96.6d and 17d; 9.97.1b, 7d and 47d); when it is applied to poets, it is applied to poets who are in the company of Agni (7.18.22d; 10.61.24b). The imagery introduced in pāda 7d of 7.76 is then comparable to the connotations of *sámṅatāsaḥ* in pāda 5a—except, in 7d, the Vasiṣṭhas and their praises are more directly being recast as crackling ritual substances. Note that the basic technique of using nominative and instrumental forms to refer to more or less animate characterizations of essentially the same entities is something we have already seen in 7.75: Sections 9.6 and 9.9 of Part II describe this well. We might go so far as to say that this sort of structurally highlighted linking of nominative and instrumental designations for (possibly) the same entities is a sub-type of nominal homology. In fact, on the basis of the examples manifested in 7.75-7.77, I would propose the following modified description of nominal homologies.

- 1) (Thematic) This homology links two entities at different positions in at least one of the following hierarchies:
 - a) altitudinal hierarchy: sky/atmosphere vs. ritual grounds;

b) animacy hierarchy: (divine or human) ritual entourage vs. ritual goods and exchangeable chattel;

- 2) (Formal) One half of the relevant round of repetition is a noun;
- 3) (Formal) The other half of the relevant round of repetition is a nominal formation (noun or adjective);
- 4) (Formal) Perhaps because issues of agency and animacy are at stake, **the relevant nominal formations tend to be in direct cases (nominative or accusative) or in the instrumental case.**

4.9 Nominal homologies, poetic repair, and “animated” allyship

As Stephanie Jamison has previously explained,¹⁹⁴ another rather uncommon lexical item plays a pivotal role in Structuring Device 1, the symmetrical/central device that molds Verses 1-5 into a formally cohesive unit. The relevant passages are the following:

7.76.2a prá me pánthā devayānā adṛśrann

7.76.2b **ámardhanto**¹ **vásubhir**¹ íṣkṛtāsaḥ

The paths leading to the gods have become visible to me—(paths that
Are) **not negligent** and made orderly **by/with the good ones/things.**

7.76.3a **tánid**¹ áhāni bahulāni **āsan**¹

7.76.3b yá prācīnam úditā súriyasya

Those were the days—the many through
Which, at the rising of the sun, toward the east-facing (sacrifice)

7.76.4a **tá**^{1,4} **íd**¹ devānāṃ sadhamāda **āsann**¹

7.76.4b ṛtāvānaḥ kavāyaḥ pūrviyāsaḥ

Those were the gods’ feasting companions:
The sage poets of old, provided with truth.

7.76.5c té devānāṃ ná minanti vratāni

7.76.5d **ámardhanto**¹ **vásubhir**¹ yádamānāḥ

Those do not transgress the gods’ commandments,
(They who are) **not-negligent** and united **with the good ones.**

As Jamison pointed out, the outer ring of this device contains the rare adjective *ámardhant-*, “non-negligent,” which is composed of an (otherwise unattested) present participial form from $\sqrt{mṛdh}$, “neglect,” plus the privative prefix. The semantics of the first occurrence of this stem in pāda 2b are rather strange.

¹⁹⁴ Jamison 2007: 85-6.

Even though there are not enough instances of this stem to make any secure claims about usage patterns, it is probably safe to suppose that the semantics of “non-negligent” are more easily comprehended when the (non-)negligence in question is attributed to someone/something with enough animacy and agency to be able to actively neglect a duty. In other words—Jamison’s, to be precise—“non-neglectful paths’ is, to say the least, an arresting expression.”¹⁹⁵ The identity of the animate masculine beings in 5cd is not made explicit—above, I made a case for why the audience could infer it is the Vasiṣṭhas—but it is still obvious that they are agents and capable of negligence, since, for instance, they are explicitly capable of transgressing the gods’ commandments (in point of fact, though, they manage to avoid both forms of folly). For this reason, Jamison says that “the second occurrence of *ámardhantaḥ* ‘repairs’ the first.”¹⁹⁶

I would like to suggest that the other structurally significant repetition in pādas 2b and 4d, the instrumental form *vásubhiḥ*, poses a different sort of riddle, one which should be familiar to us after the study of *RV7.75*: in pāda 2b, the semantics of this instrumental—i.e. whether it refers to more or less animate entities, and whether it describes accompaniment or agency/means—are entirely unclear. Eventually, the carefully controlled and explicit animacy contrasts in the rest of the device help solve the riddle in time for the form’s reemergence in 5d.

RV7.76 initially pits different types of phraseological and contextual cues against one another to ensure that the form *vásubhiḥ* is ambiguous in its reference. In the vast majority of instances, the stem *vásu-* in the masculine/neuter instrumental plural refers to animate beings, and bears semantics of accompaniment; as a substantive, it refers to a group of gods called the Vasus—literally, the “good ones,” who are often mentioned in the same breath as Indra. The following can be taken to be a representative case.

7.10.4 índraṃ no agne **vásubhiḥ** sajóṣā
 rudráṃ rudrébhir á vahā bṛhántam
 ādityébhir áditim vísvájanyām
 bṛhaspátim ṛkvabhir vísvāvāram
*O Agni, convey Indra to us along **with the Vasus**,*
Lofty Rudra along with the Rudras,

¹⁹⁵ Jamison 2007: 85.

¹⁹⁶ Jamison 2007: 86.

*Aditi belonging to all peoples along with the Ādityas,
And Br̥haspati granting all wishes along with reciters of verses.*

In many such examples, the Vasus are just one group among a series of gods in the instrumental plural (elsewhere in Maṇḍala 7: 7.5.9; 7.35.6; 7.44.4d), and other elements, such as a *sajóṣāḥ*, “in harmony along with” (7.5.9), often make the semantics of accompaniment even more explicit. Even when these elements are not present (e.g. in 7.47.2c), the semantics of accompaniment are usually unmistakable.

The semantics of the form in 7.76.2b are far less “unmistakable.”

7.76.2a prá me pánthā devayānā adṛśrann

7.76.2b ámardhanto **vásubhir** íṣkṛtāsaḥ

*The paths leading to the gods have just become visible to me—(paths that
Are) not negligent and made orderly **by/with the good ones/things.***

For one thing, none of the explicit cues (lists of other gods; mention of Indra; *sajóṣāḥ*) suggest that the Vasus are the entities/things being referred to. In cases where the animate referents are different, *vásubhiḥ* tends to be an adjective modifying a noun—e.g. in 5.3.8d, *devó mártair vásubhir idhyámānaḥ*, “(Agni), a god **kindled by good mortals.**” For another thing, *íṣkṛtāsaḥ* “made orderly”—like any variant of a past participle from the root \sqrt{kr} , “make”—does not exactly invite semantics of accompaniment: one would rather expect an instrumental expression of agency or means. So a reading of accompaniment would most likely take *vásubhiḥ* with *adṛśran*, “(the paths) have just become visible, along with the Vasus/good ones.” This is not impossible—but particularly given the likely divine reference, it sounds a bit strange—as if one said, “See the red carpet along with the stars,” as opposed to, “See the stars on the red carpet.”

If we were to switch interpretations entirely—to inanimate/less-animate things or entities by means of which the paths are made orderly, we would find a couple of precedents for this usage of *vásubhiḥ*, for instance in *RV*7.90.

7.90.6 íśānáso yé dádhate súvar ṇo
góbhir áśvebhir **vásubhir** hiraṇyair
índravāyū sūrāyo vísvam āyur
árvadbhir vírair pṛtanāsu sahyuḥ

*They who, having dominion over (them), confer their sun(light) upon us,
Through cows, horses, and golden **goods,**
o Indra and Vāyu, those patrons through their whole lifetime
should prevail in battles with steeds and horses.*

Here too, *vásubhiḥ* is one of a series of disambiguating instrumentals—in this case, less-animate entities that are clearly being named as desired ritual counter-gifts.

In other words, no interpretation is clearly preferable over its rivals—and I believe the passage has been constructed to produce this type of uncertainty. What begins to clarify the intended meaning in 7.76.2 is the recognition that *vásubhiḥ* is part of a nested ring whose inner round features a carefully structured contrast between more and less animate entities. This inner ring is quoted below.

7.76.3a **tánīd¹ áhāni bahulāni āsan¹**

7.76.3b yá prācīnam úditā sūriyasya

Those were the days—the many

Through which, at the rising of the sun, toward the east-facing (sacrifice)...

7.76.4a **tá¹ íd¹ devānām sadhamāda āsann¹**

7.76.4b ṛtāvānaḥ kavāyaḥ pūrviyāsaḥ

Those were the gods' feasting companions:

The sage poets of old, provided with truth.

Notice that the same demonstrative pronoun and particle and the same verb form (minus inflectional differences to match the gender of the noun, and *sandhi* variants of the verb form's ending) frame two otherwise very different noun phrases in the nominative: *áhāni bahulāni*, “the days—the many” and *devānām sadhamādaḥ* “the gods' feasting companions.” This is clearly another type c homology; additionally, in prior instances, I used the term “implied metalinguistic equation” to describe an overlap in lexical elements that frame noun phrases in the same case (See Part II Sections 7.3 and 9.4 for more on this). The unspoken additional criterion for such a reading¹⁹⁷ is that the semantics of the two equated words are comparable. I am not sure that this is the case for *áhāni bahulāni* and *devānām sadhamādaḥ*.

What I would rather propose is that the formal parallel drawn between the two phrases acts as a key through which other contrasts within the same nested ring can be registered. We have already discussed the initially ambiguous *pánthāḥ...ámardhanto vásubhir íṣkṛtāsaḥ* (“paths...(that are) non negligent and made orderly by/with the good ones/things”); the parallel phrase in 5cd is *té...ámardhanto vásubhir yádamānāḥ*, “those (who are) not negligent and united with the good ones.” Notice that the semantics of accompaniment and animacy in the latter instance are immediately clear: regardless of whom we take “the good ones” to be, the operative pronoun is definitely “who(m).” Notice also that the pronominal form *té* is the same masculine plural form that we find in the second half of the inner round of repetition in this nested

¹⁹⁷ Mentioned in the introduction: Part I, Section 6.10.

ring (though in that case, the external sandhi renders it *tâ*); this is another explicit formal tie that helps the inner ring serve as a key for the outer.

Making use of this key would entail attributing entirely inanimate or less-animate semantics to the structurally highlighted phrases in Verse 2: in other words, the interpretation of *pánthāḥ...ámardhanto vásubhir íṣkṛtāsaḥ* becomes, “paths (that are) not negligent and made orderly with goods.” The more phraseologically standard semantics of *vásubhir yádamānāḥ*, “(those) united with the good ones,” could then repair the unusual inanimate instrumental of means, just as the latter use of *ámardhantaḥ* repairs the use of “non negligent” in Verse 2. Notice that the shift in the meaning of *vásu-* is nearly the reverse of a type of transition we have seen before, where more-animate companions would be recast as ritual currency.

Though the direction of this shift is unexpected for us, like the other instances of poetic repair that we have so far encountered in separate hymns, this one is designed to make a particular line of thought sound more expected or plausible. Because pāda 5d, the locus of this repair, is sandwiched right in between the pāda in which we see the first implicit reference to the Vasiṣṭhas (i.e. the allusion to $\sqrt{jan} + bráhma$ n in 5b) and the pāda in which the Vasiṣṭhas are implicitly named (6a), this pāda—i.e. the phrase *ámardhantaḥ vásubhir yádamānāḥ*, “(those) non-negligent ones, united with the good ones”—can be taken to “repair” an image of stable, parallel paths in the sky adorned with goods by connecting it to an image of the Vasiṣṭhas operating in harmony with the (etymologically connected) “Vasus/Good Ones.” This is a type of implied metaphor that would be rendered more explicit by an antithesis formulated in this fashion: “It is not non-negligent paths made orderly with goods, but non-negligent men united with the good ones”; for this reason, the term “implied metalinguistic *antithesis*” might befit this turn of phrase.

We have already taken note of the image of a more perfect union of ritualesque substances imbedded in *sámgatāsaḥ* in pāda 5a, and of fire-like “crackling” of the Vasiṣṭhas in pāda 7b. In pādas 2ab as well, there is a ritual-type image of a static configuration of paths and goods in pāda 2c; and just like the other such images, this one is being projected upon the possibly restive Vasiṣṭhas, whose union with the “Good Ones” simultaneously urges the former to live up to their family name’s etymology (see Part II, Section 4.7 for more on the etymological relationship between the stems *vásu-* and *vásiṣṭha-*).

4.10 Summary of the Role of Structuring Devices 1 and 2 within 7.76

We began the discussion on function by observing that there are two competing types of organization in the hymn: linear and circular. We can now observe that these structural elements give birth

to two different strategies of deploying centripetal, celestial/divine-oriented imagery in the service of centrifugal, terrestrial, human-oriented ends: a) *transition*; and b) *alignment*, or conflation.

The first, more familiar type of strategy, operating through Verses 1-5 and Structuring Devices 3 and 4 (see section 4.7 for a summary), casts celestial/divine imagery and terrestrial/increasingly anthropomorphic imagery as different stages in one temporal sequence: in other words, one evolves into the other or causes the other. Aorist-based homologies effect a transition from expressions of the moment of Dawn appearing to descriptions of sustained dawnlight; here, the main difference between 7.76 and other dawn hymns is that the descriptions of sustained dawnlight do not cast that light as an interactive agent or an exchangeable good, but instead denote or connote static, less-animate (though male-gendered) ritual props or substances. In a related type of transition that weaves through the same span of verses, reciprocal verbal homologies frame desired human behaviors as the natural effects or proper responses to divine actions.

The second type of strategy, articulated primarily through nominal homologies in Structuring Device 1, connects the different stages and open ends of these transitions into layers of analogous images: some centripetal, celestial, and divine; others more centrifugal, terrestrial and human. The overall effect is to make desired human behaviors seem like the natural, expected analog to similar actions and arrangements in higher realms and different stations. The unusually elaborate nested ring that comprises the structural frame of in the hymn's largest discourse unit—Structuring Device 1, running through Verses 1-5—uses nominal homologies to conflate more animate and less animate imagery, deploying less-animate imagery to provide models for ritual collaboration and general accord among humans.

Framing the same information in a slightly different fashion, we could say the following: aside from the nested ring that demarcates the hymn's final discourse unit, i.e. Structuring Device 2, all structuring devices and homology types terminate in Verses 4-5 with images of masculine, animate entities and agents intermingling and acting collaboratively. Establishing these images as both plausible and attractive to human listeners, first and foremost fellow Vasiṣṭhas, seems to be the hymn's primary rhetorical goal. Structuring Devices 1, 3 and 4 differ primarily in the formal techniques, phraseological norms and (sometimes) implicit arguments they deploy to make collaboration sound or seem natural and desirable.

To smooth out the centrifugal turn from descriptions of less-animate configurations to expressions of active human collaboration, Structuring Device 1 deploys two instances of poetic repair, both operating within nominal homologies: first, an explicit shift in the use of the adjective *ámardhantaḥ*, “non-neglectful,

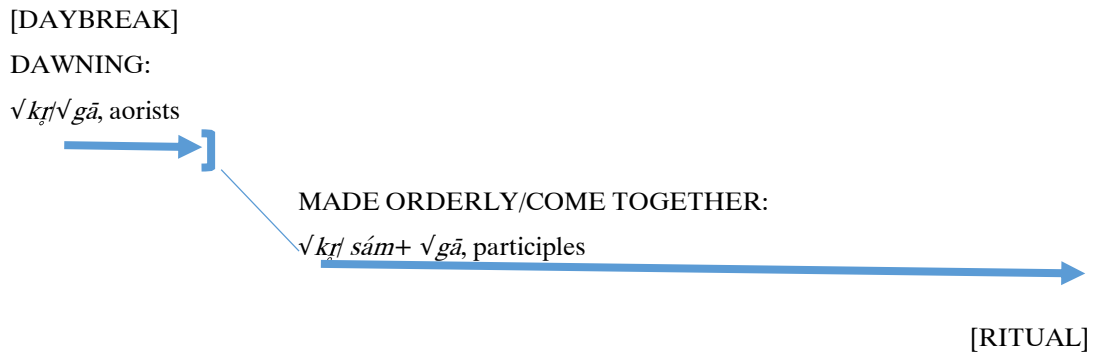
” toward describing animate agents (more natural-sounding than its first use to describe less animate “paths”); and additionally, a similar but implicit shift in the substantival use of the form *vásubhiḥ*, “with the good(one)s,” toward a more phraseologically common animate meaning (i.e. “with the good ones” as opposed to the prior meaning of “with the goods”). The connection between this last stem *vasú-* and the family name of the poet and (at least) part of his audience makes this last round of poetic repair particularly pointed.

Structuring Device 2, which demarcates a second discourse unit, itself deploys a similar tactic both formally and functionally: a nominal homology links two different characterizations of the Vasiṣṭhas’ agency—one that portrays standard *human* ritual activity, and one that portrays human agency more obliquely: the use of a passive verb centers the act of “crackling” over the (human) agents doing the “crackling.” The highlighting of and alignment of these two more- and less-animate characterizations of ritual activity, with the less-animate characterizations serving as a model for unity that more contentions humans could aspire to, seems to be the primary goal of this last segment: while the penultimate pāda does make a vague mention of wealth (*rayí-*) that Dawn establishes, there is no attempt to itemize any specific gifts desired by the human parties to this exchange.

5. ON CHARTING HOMOLOGIES

Because of the role that unexpressed phrases play in shaping an audience’s reaction to verbal/deverbative reciprocal homologies, charts were absolutely necessary toward explaining their function; but this method of explanation would naturally raise the question of how other homology types could be visually represented. Since my interpretation of 7.86 depends crucially on both an understanding of the interplay between *different* expressed and implied homology types (as well as the influence of related Rigvedic phraseology that is evoked by but not expressed in certain verses), now might be a good time to explore ways to chart out other homology types, and also how to visually depict the ability of an expression to be interpreted as being more than one homology type.

The description of verbal/deverbative reciprocal homologies differs from the others in that two types of links are equally emphasized: those between entities at different positions in (human-divine) hierarchies *and* those between celestial(/mythological) and ritual actions. Other categories of homologies that we have discussed primarily articulated one of those two types of links. So, for instance, the aorist-based homologies would turn already-accomplished manifestations into sustained, ritual-like events or configurations, but would stay in the celestial realm: they would convert a complete manifestation into an ongoing process or state along the temporal axis. Below is a chart of the aorist-based homologies within Structuring Device 3 of 7.76.



The visual representation I am using for a completed action involves an arrow bounded by a single bracket (representing its terminal point). The arrows representing each verbal form are in bold; the line representing the homology is not. Because of the ritual-oriented connotations of the form *sámgatāsaḥ* in addition to contextual factors in Verse 5, I have charted out the line representing that continued state closer to the level of the ritual grounds; but the fact remains that the primary transition is articulated along the other dimension.

On the other hand, links between celestial horses and largesse in horses (i.e. the nominal homologies found in the second half of 7.77 and 7.75) would be links made primarily along the opposite, altitudinal/ hierarchical dimension. Below I chart out the two rounds of nominal homologies linking *sudṛśīkasamḍrk*, *sudṛśīkam áśvam* and *áśvāvat...rādhaḥ* in 7.77 (in pādas 2c, 3b and 5d, respectively; see Part II, Sections 4.5 and 9.10).

[DAYBREAK- SKY] LOVELY (DAWN):

(sudṛśīkasamḍrk)

[DAWN IN DESCENT] LOVELY HORSE:

(sudṛśīkam) (áśvam)

LARGESSE IN HORSES

(áśvāvat...rādhaḥ)

[RITUAL]

(Notice that the visual representation I am choosing for nominal homologies involves a link between two bracketed items with *no* arrows.) If we wanted to depict the same transition in terms of only animacy hierarchies, abstracting away the less crucial feature of a descent down to the ritual grounds, it would look like the following.

[DIVINE-MOST ANIMATE] LOVELY (DAWN):

(sudṛśīkasamḍrk)

[DIVINE-LESS ANIMATE] LOVELY HORSE:

(sudṛśīkam)

(áśvam)

[CURRENCY: LEAST ANIMATE] LARGESSE IN HORSES:

(áśvāvat...rādhaḥ)

(The different columns represent a change in which lexical elements are participating in the chain of homologies.)

Epithet-based homologies are a bit trickier to represent within this scheme, given that, for instance, some connect entities to actions, and others connect attributive epithets to vocatives. I will first chart out two epithet-based homologies found in 7.77, the first connecting pāda 2c with pādas 3bc, and the second connecting pādas 3cd and 4d (see Part II, Sections 4.2 and 9.2 for more on these). Beyond rounding out a section in which all remaining three homology types have been categorized, these two charts are meant to explore sets of transitions across two different types of (sometimes) related categories: the divine-celestial/human-ritual hierarchy on the one hand, and 1st, 2nd and 3rd-person referential relationships on the other. The relevant passages are quoted below:

7.77.2c híraṇyavarṇā **sudṛśīkasamḍrk**

(Dawn), golden in color, a sight lovely to see

7.77.3b śvetāṃ náyantī **sudṛśīkam** áśvam

7.77.3c uṣá **adarśi** raśmībhir víaktā

7.77.3d citrá**maghā**¹ víśvam ánu prābhūtā

*Leading a bright horse **lovely to see**,*

*Dawn **has just been seen**, adorned with rays.*

*Possessing bright, **grand gifts**, projecting through toward all (the world).*

7.77.4d codāya rádhō² grṇatē **maghoni**¹

*Impel largesse for the singer, **you gift-grand one**.*

Note that Lines 2c and 3b were also part of a nominal homology charted above. As that chart indicates, the more down-to-earth peripheral details surrounding the main verb *adarśi*, “has just been seen,” situate this manifestation somewhat closer to the ritual grounds than was the case for prior aorist verbs. Below is the chart for the first epithet-based homology, connecting *sudṛśīkasamdrk* to the verb *adarśi*.

[DAYBREAK- SKY] LOVELY-TO-SEE (DAWN):

[sudṛśīkasamdrk] from *√dṛś*

[IN DESCENT] HAS JUST BEEN SEEN:

adarśi from *√dṛś*]

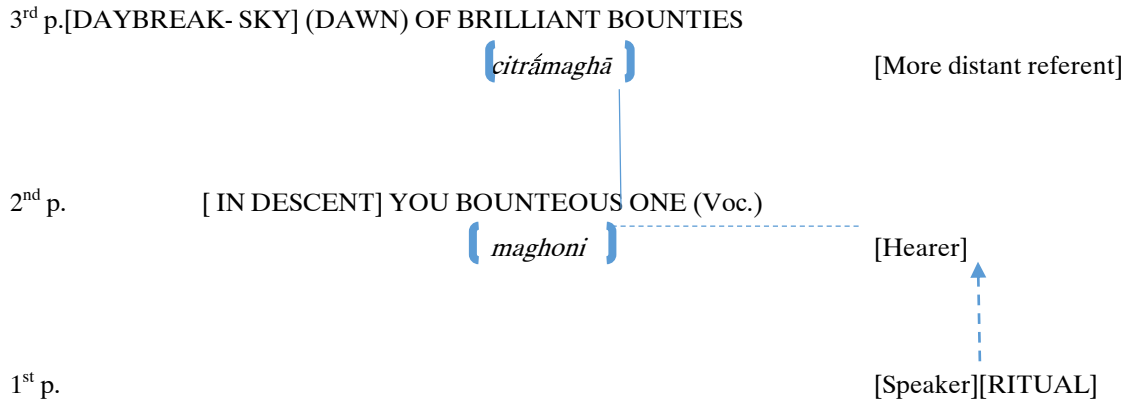
[RITUAL]

In this case, the epithet for Dawn has been connected with an aorist third-person verb (and, via another homology type charted above, with a noun phrase—*sudṛśīkam aśvam* “lovely to see horse”—that securely situates the aorist action closer to the ritual grounds).

On a number of occasions (including in Sections 4.2 and 9.2), we have seen that other epithet-based transitions link attributive third-person epithets to either *vocatives* or *imperatives*, i.e. to nominal and verbal forms associated with the second person. Additionally, we have noted that (while in Vasiṣṭha’s Dawn hymns this is not a hard-and-fast rule), imperatives and second-person forms in general tend to disproportionately occur toward the second half of the hymn, i.e. after other devices have made a more receptive interlocutor out of Dawn. For these reasons, we can think of a kind of 1st-2nd-3rd-person referential hierarchy that (in some contexts, at least) seems to operate alongside the celestial-divine/ritual-human hierarchy, and/or the associated animacy/agency hierarchies. The 1st-person speaker would be situated at the bottom; third-person descriptions (for instance, of Dawn in the sky) would be situated at the top; 2nd-

person vocatives and imperatives would be toward the middle, with an implied phatic action connecting them to the speaker on the ritual grounds.

Below, a chart illustrates an epithet-based homology that operates along both a *referential* and a *celestial-divine/ritual-human* hierarchy (taken from 7.77.3d and 4d, both quoted above).



The dotted arrow represents the implicit phatic act connecting the speaker with the addressee/ “hearer.”

¹⁹⁸ The dotted line between the vocative *maghoni* and the term “hearer” indicates that the use of this vocative term has categorized Dawn as an audience in earshot as opposed to a more distant 3rd-person referent.

Had the epithet-based homology terminated in an imperative verb phrase referring to an interaction between Dawn and officiants, there would be a solid verbal arrow pointing back down at an (explicit or implicit) recipient; this recipient would be connected to the role of “speaker” via a dotted line. And of course, this third type of epithet-based homology exists. Consider an example from 7.75 that is anchored by the same *citrāmaghā* epithet featured above (See Part II, Section 9.2).

¹⁹⁸ I am using the term “hearer” here as a nod to Ronald W. Langacker, from whose (2008) work on charting out referential relationships and imperatives I draw (particularly Chapter 13). My visual representations will not be the same as Langacker’s for a number of reasons: charting out homologies is a different goal from charting out primarily syntactic and derivational relationships; and Langacker’s system of representations would take a significant amount of time to motivate and explain, with comparatively little yield given their limited use here. But for instance, the representation for the vocative chosen in this chapter is influenced the following pronouncements:

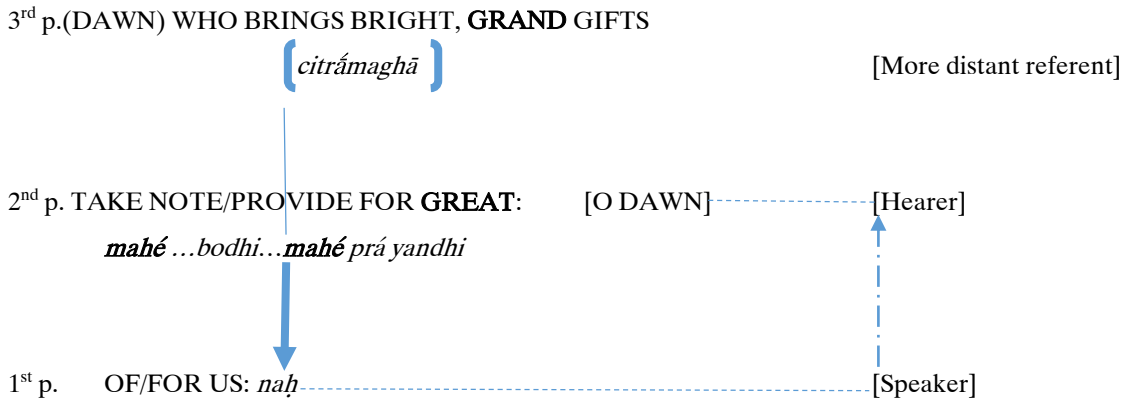
Vocatives are not a separate type of expression, but a matter of names being recruited for interactive use. By addressing Joe as *Joe* (instead of *you*), I indicate that his status as interlocutor is not secure...I can call his name to attract his attention and establish him as the addressee...Joe is an onstage participant in an otherwise tacit scenario—the visible tip of an interactive iceberg.

Following Langacker, I will visually represent such a “tacit scenario” when a vocative indicates a definite shift in the speaker’s relationship with a power figure, or when for instance, a vocative can be a “tip of the iceberg” reference to a formula that involves explicit interactions between a speaker and a listener.

7.75.2ab **mahé**¹ no adyá suvitáya bodhi
 úšo **mahé**¹ saúbhagāya prá yandhi
*For our **great** good faring take note of us today;*
*O Dawn, for our **great** good fortune provide (for us).*

7.75.5b citr**amaghā**¹ rāyá íse vásūnām
*(Dawn) who brings bright, **grand gifts**, has dominion over wealth, over goods*

This example operates most clearly a *referential* hierarchy.

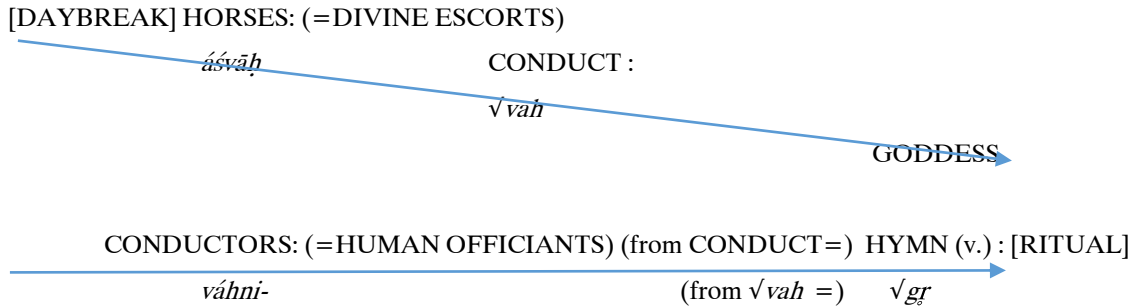


(The putting of the brackets and line in bold are meant to indicate the nominal and verbal nature of the words connected, as opposed to the connection itself, which is indicated by a line.)

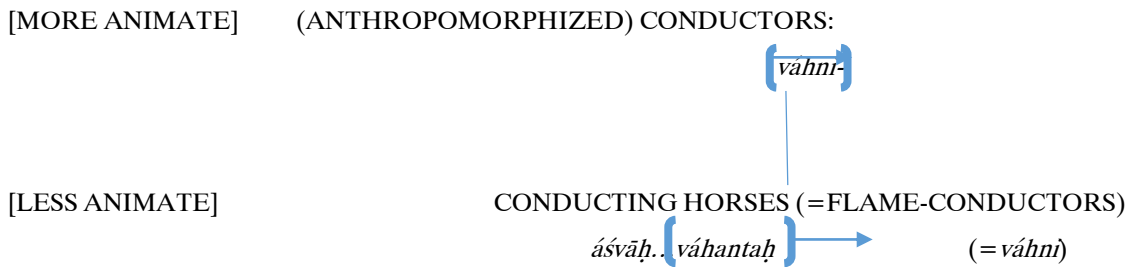
The implicit interaction between the speaker and addressee that stands behind both vocatives and imperatives will be important to remember when examining 7.86 and the Gāthās, because in those examples of liturgy much of the discourse revolves around such interactions, which are made *explicit* through ritual formulas. In those contexts, movements up and down a referential hierarchy shift power relations along other hierarchies as well.

Finally, one should note that experimenting with these different types of notations also allows us to present alternative interpretations of the same set of structurally significant repetitions. These alternative interpretations exist first because homologies are inevitably reductionist abstract categories imposed upon phrases that relate to each other in a variety of ways at once, but also because certain types of stems straddle two parts of speech; finally, syntactic and semantic ambiguities can further complicate the picture.

Take for, instance, the two forms of \sqrt{vah} in the structural “hub” of 7.75: one a participle, the other a noun.¹⁹⁹ Recall that according to the interpretation of 7.75.5d-6b in which the two forms represent different animate ritual partners, the two interconnected forms follow the pattern of a reciprocal verbal/deverbative homology. In this case, the participial form attached to the divine (equine) escorts is the more explicit side of the homology, whereas the reciprocal action is encoded as a deverbative noun. Below is the representation of this homology given in a prior section:



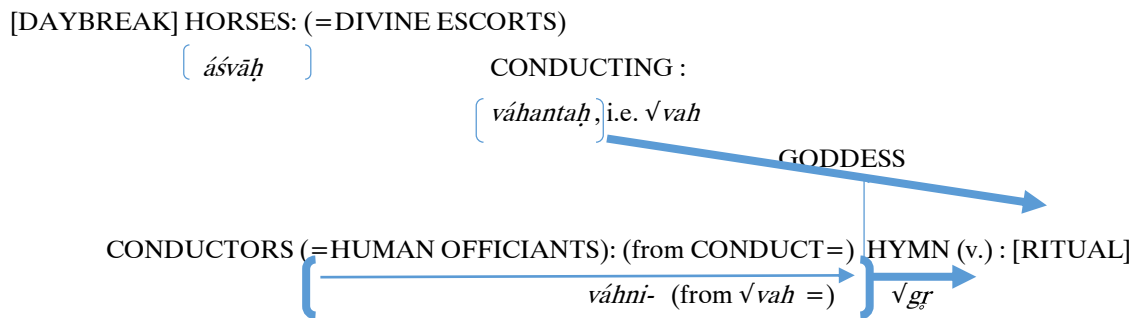
We will soon have occasion to modify this representation—but first: there was another interpretation of the connection between the forms of \sqrt{vah} in 7.75, an interpretation alluded to above and explored more fully in Sections 9.6 and 9.9 of Part II: one in which the two forms encoded the same ritual attending/accompaniment conceived with varying degrees of animacy: as anthropomorphized *conductors*, or as conducting flame-horses. (This is similar to the type of double vision around which most of *RV*7.76 was constructed.) In that instance, it would be the deverbative noun *vāhni-* “conductor” that more directly encodes a side of the nominal homology; the participial form is taken to be nominal, equivalent to *vāhni-*.



¹⁹⁹ Below I provide the text for the sake of convenience; but keep in mind the fact that the translation obscures many of the ambiguities at play.

- 7.75.5d uṣá uchatī **vāhñibhir**⁶ grṇānā
*Dawn dawns, being hymned by the **conductors** (of songs/oblations).*
- 7.75.6a práti dyutānām aruṣáso ásvās
- 7.75.6b citrá adṛśrann uṣásam **vāhantaḥ**⁶
*Opposite, the horses--ruddy,
 Bright—were seen to blaze, **conducting** the flashing Dawn.*

The nominal *and* verbal nature of the participial form is represented by an arrow attached to the brackets around the form—but with the brackets in bold, to indicate which aspect of participial semantics is highlighted in this homology.²⁰⁰ The implicit verbal semantics in the noun *váhni* is represented by an arrow *within* the brackets (but again, with the brackets in bold). Note that the ability of this round of repetitions to straddle two categories of homologies is due to this ambivalent affiliation(s) of the participial form, in combination with the syntactic and semantic ambiguities discussed in great detail in Part II. If we wanted to redraw the verbal reciprocal homology chart to reflect this ambiguity, we could have the following:



Here, the verbal semantics of *váhni* are supplemented by \sqrt{gr} and additionally highlighted by a more verbal instance of \sqrt{vah} , depicted via the same arrow-bracket duality; now the bracket is highlighted.²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ The basic principle of highlighting elements that are profiled by various parts of speech (as a way of differentiating forms from the same root) is taken from Langacker 2008; however, the contours of the representations of each part of speech differ from Langacker’s (my representations are oversimplifications that obscure many contrasts that would be relevant to anyone searching for a more complete way to visually represent a language).

²⁰¹ The verb \sqrt{gr} can perform this role because in this particular reading, *váhni-* is an instrumental agent construed with the verb “to hymn”; in the more nominal rendering above, the instrumental is likely construed with the verb “to shine.” Additionally, the matter of categorizing the relationship as a *verbal* vs. a *nominal* homology is related to whether or not we permit the two images to represent contrastive derivational categories as well as semantic categories. Recall the three possible interpretations for these two forms:

- 1) Less animate; one entity: **“horses...conducting” in 6ab is the primary metaphor for the flames** of the ritual fire that lead Dawn through the morning sacrifice; **in a compatible, secondary characterization, the flames** are “conductors” in 5d, conceived of as **the means by which or attendants with whom Dawn shines**.
- 2) More animate; one entity: the **“conductors” in 5d are the primary metaphor for/understanding of flames**, conceived of as **deified, crackling ritual agents by whom Dawn is praised**; in a compatible, secondary characterization, the flames are (neighing) horses, conduct Dawn through the ritual.
- 3) Two entities with different levels of animacy: the **“conductors” are human ritual agents by whom Dawn is praised**; **in contrast less-animate “horses,” i.e. flames**, conduct Dawn through the ritual.

The chart for the first and second interpretations would look essentially the same, and are represented above as a nominal homology; in the third interpretation, which is the one behind the verbal/deverbative reciprocal homology, the two entities belong to much more semantically distinct categories; and we have just seen that in that instance their categorization as a verbal reciprocal homology depends on the privileging of the verbal side of the participle as opposed to the nominal stem *váhni-*.

6. 7.86 TEXT AND TRANSLATION

7.86.1a	dhīrā tú asya mahinā janúṃṣi	<i>Insightful are the races through the greatness of him</i>
7.86.1b	vī yás tastāmbha ródasī cid urvī	<i>Who propped apart the two wide world-haves.</i>
7.86.1c	prá nákam ṛṣvám nunude bṛhántam	<i>He pushed forth the vault of heaven to be high and lofty,</i>
7.86.1d	dvitá náksatram papráthac ca bhúma	<i>(And) the star once again, and he spread out the earth.</i>
7.86.2a	utá sváya ¹ tanúvá ¹ sám vade tát ⁴	<i>And I speak that/thus with my own person/self:</i>
7.86.2b	kadá nú antár váruṇe bhuvāni	<i>When will I be within Varuṇa?</i>
7.86.2c	kím me havýam áhṛṇāno ⁴ juṣeta	<i>Might he take pleasure in my offering, become free of anger?</i>
7.86.2d	kadá mṛṇīkām + sumánā abhí khyam	<i>When shall I, with good thoughts, look upon his mercy?</i>
7.86.3a	prché tát ⁴ éno ⁴ varuṇa didṛkṣu	<i>I ask myself about this guilt, o Varuṇa, wanting to see;</i>
7.86.3b	úpo emi ⁴ cikitúšo ² vipṛcham	<i>I approach the perceptive in order to ask.</i>
7.86.3c	samānám ín me ⁴ kaváyaś ² cid āhur	<i>The Kavis have said the very same one thing to me:</i>
7.86.3d	ayám ha túbhyam ⁴ váruṇo hṛṇīte ⁴	<i>This Varuṇa is angry with you.</i>
7.86.4a	kím ága ³ āsa varuṇa jyáyiṣṭham ³ +	<i>What was that highest crime, Varuṇa,</i>
7.86.4b	yát stotāram jígḥāmsasi sákhāyam	<i>That you wanted to slay (your) praiser, (your) friend?</i>
7.86.4c	prá tán ⁴ me ⁴ voco dūlabha svadhāvo ¹	<i>You'll voice this to me, hard-to-deceive, force-all-your-own!</i>
7.86.4d	áva ⁴ tvānená ⁴ námasā turá iyām ⁴	<i>With reverence I would swiftly appease you, free from guilt</i>
7.86.5a	áva ⁴ drugdhāni pítriyā sṛjā no	<i>Down, away release our fathers' misdeeds/deceptions (and)</i>
7.86.5b	áva ⁴ yá vayám cakṛmá tanúbhiḥ ¹	<i>Down, away those we've done by ourselves/with our bodies/persons:</i>
7.86.5c	áva ⁴ rājan paśutṛpaṃ ná tāyúṃ	<i>Down and away, like a cattle-stealing thief, o King--</i>
7.86.5d	sṛjā vatsám ná dámano vásiṣṭham	<i>Release Vasiṣṭha, like a calf, from the bond.</i>
7.86.6a	ná sá svó ¹ dáksḥo varuṇa dhrútiḥ sá	<i>This (was) not one's own devising, nor was it deception, Varuṇa:</i>
7.86.6b	súrā manyúr vibhídako ácittih ² ...	<i>(It was) liquor, frenzy, dice, lack of perception...</i>
7.86.6c	ásti jyáyan ³ kániyasa upāré	<i>The higher-up is in the offense of the lower;</i>
7.86.6d	svápnaś canéd ánṛtasya prayotá	<i>Not even sleep (is) a warder-off of untruth.</i>
7.86.7a	áram dāsó ná mīlhūṣe karāṇi	<i>Like a servant, I will give satisfaction to the Generous (master);</i>
7.86.7b	ahám deváya bhúrṇaye ánāgāḥ ³	<i>I, free(d) of criminality, to the Ardent One.</i>
7.86.7c	áchetayad ² acito ² devó aryó	<i>The noble god made the unperceptive perceptive/perceived</i>
7.86.7d	gṛtsam ráyē kavítaro ² junāti	<i>The Better Kavi speeds his Clever One to the riches.</i>
7.86.8a	ayám sú túbhyam varuṇa svadhāvo ¹	<i>This is for you, Varuṇa, force all your own,</i>
7.86.8b	hṛdí stóma úpaśritaś cid astu	<i>Let (this) praise song be set within your heart.</i>
7.86.8c	śám naḥ kṣéme śám u yóge no astu	<i>Let there be fortune in settlement, fortune in war for us—</i>
7.86.8d	yüyám pāta suastíbiḥ sádā naḥ	<i>Do you protect us always with your blessings.</i>

7. 7.86: CHART OF VASISHTHA'S STRUCTURING DEVICES

*RV*7.86 was already the subject of investigation in this dissertation's introduction (Part I, Section 4). The chart below summarizes the results of this methodology when applied to 7.86: namely, perceptible repetitions are grouped into four structuring devices, distinguished below using columns and superscripts.

STRUCTURING DEVICE # AND TYPE

V	1: Geometric	2: Redundant ring	3:Nested ring	4:Redundant Concatenation
1				
2	sváyā tanúvā¹			tát⁴ áhṛṇānaḥ⁴
3ab		<i>pr̥ché**...cikitúṣaḥ² vip̥rcham**</i>		tát⁴ énaḥ⁴ emi⁴
cd		kaváyaḥ²		me⁴ túbhyam⁴ hṛṇīte⁴
4ab			ágah³ jyáyiṣṭham³	
cd	svadhāvaḥ¹	<i>vocaḥ**</i>		tát⁴me⁴ áva⁴ tvā⁴anenāḥ⁴iyām⁴
5ab	tanúbhiḥ¹			áva⁴ naḥ⁴ áva⁴ vayám áva⁴
5cd				
6	sváh¹		jyáyān³	
7ab		<i>ácittiḥ^{2*}</i>		
cd		ácetayat² acítaḥ² kavítaraḥ²	ánāgāḥ³	
8ab	svadhāvaḥ¹			

*I have not yet argued that the repetition *ácittiḥ* would definitely be perceived or grouped with the other repetitions of \sqrt{cit} in this column; see below.

**The forms *pr̥che*, *vip̥rcham* and *vocaḥ* are phraseology associated with a particular discourse. They play a role similar to the role of *vrata-* \sqrt{m} and $\sqrt{cakṣ}$ in 7.76: by activating a discourse in which forms like *cikitúṣaḥ* and *ácittiḥ* also participate as phraseology, they allow that round of repetitions to be perceived; see immediately below for more.

In the “Form” section of the dissertation’s introduction (Part I, Sections 4.3 and 4.5), we discussed the role that infrequency played in facilitating the repetitions that make up Structuring Device 1, and the conventionality of the geometric ring into which they could be grouped. As we have seen, redundancy fosters the perception and grouping of the repetitions in Structuring Device 2. We have also seen that infrequency and density (or the lack thereof) both play a role in increasing the perceptibility of repetitions in Structuring Device 3, and that the conventionality of nested rings facilitates the grouping of those repetitions into a separate structuring device. Recency and redundancy both argue for the perceptibility of repetitions in Structuring Device 4, and redundancy also argues for the grouping of those repetitions into a single structuring device.

There is one further form *ácittih* (“thoughtlessness, unperceptiveness, ignorance, lack of wisdom”) whose perceptibility and whose grouping with the redundant ring in Column B have so far remained unexplained. As was the case with some of the instances of *devánām* in 7.76,²⁰² this repetition’s perceptibility and association with the others depends largely on the prominence of the root \sqrt{cit} “know, perceive, appear” in a discourse that is demonstrably operative throughout *Rig Veda* 7.76, starting with the structurally highlighted forms in Verse 3.

Quite frequently in the *Rig Veda*, interactions between unequal partners in a human-divine power hierarchy will be encoded using \sqrt{cit} , often alongside the roots \sqrt{vid} “know” and/or \sqrt{vid} “find.” Repeatedly intersecting with this theme is a demonstrably archaic phatic formula involving $\sqrt{praś}$, “ask,” manifested above in the forms *prché* and *vipřcham*, as well as \sqrt{vac} (manifested as *vocah*) and/or other words for “speak.” We might call this the “discourse of understanding, and of shoulder-standing understudies” (with the last second phrase alluding to the idiom “standing on the shoulders of giants [or in this case, gods]”). Exploring the ways in which power dynamics are portrayed and negotiated within such a discourse will prove essential not only to grasping the second structuring device, but to perceiving how form and function intersect throughout 7.86.

Soon we will attend to the relevant Rigvedic phraseology of understanding, and of understudies jockeying for power;²⁰³ but before we can do that, a few words must be said about the general contours of

²⁰² Although in 7.76, there are a few more moving parts: some of the relevant issues are discussed in Sections 2.3-7; the rest in Appendix 1. The basic point in common is that a particular root or form’s association with a key cluster of phraseological elements can heighten the attention a listener pays to it.

²⁰³ See sections 8.3-5 below.

discourses in 7.86—so for now, I will ask the reader keep in mind that *ácittiḥ* will ultimately be regarded as part of Structuring Device 2, but that the grounds on which this claim is made have yet to be established.

8. 7.86 FUNCTIONS OF STRUCTURING DEVICES²⁰⁴

8.1 Preliminary remarks on form and function

One thing that distinguishes *RV* 7.86 from other hymns attributed to Vasiṣṭha is the absence of a set of complementary structuring devices of the same type that could at least *suggest* a rough boundary between a primary and concluding discourse. However, the distribution of other structuring devices, in combination with features already noted by other analysts, does point to a structural middle point or “omphalos” around which the rest of the hymn revolves.

We can see that in *RV* 7.86, the formal structuring devices circle around Verse 4, as if that verse is the hymn’s structural nucleus. More specifically, two out of the four structuring devices (1 and 4) begin to terminate in 4c, which contains an obviously pivotal moment of contact with Varuṇa:

7.86.4c prá **tán⁴** **me⁴** voco dūḷabha **svadhāvo¹**

*You’ll voice **this to me**, hard-to-deceive one, **force all your own!***

Note the presence of *vocah* “proclaim it!” in this passage—the first second singular verb in 7.86, which, like the first second-singular verb in 7.76, occurs right in the middle of the hymn. Three out of four structuring devices (Devices 2, 3 and 4) are initiated in the verse preceding this moment; they are part of the phrases that articulate Vasiṣṭha’s burning questions and failed attempts to acquire knowledge about the reason for the falling-out between him and Varuṇa.

7.86.3b úpo emi **cikitúṣo²** vip̄c̄ham

7.86.3c samānám ín me **kaváyaś²** cid āhur

7.86.3d ayám ha **túbhyaṃ⁴** váruṇo **hṛñīte⁴**

I approach the perceptive in order to ask around.

*The **Kavis** have said the very same one thing **to me:***

*This **Varuṇa is angry with you.***

7.86.4a kím **ága³** āsa varuṇa **jyéstham³**

*What was that **highest crime**, **Varuṇa***

After the central moment of contact, the same roots that were used to plead for answers about Vasiṣṭha’s culpability in this conflict with Varuṇa begin to be used in quite distinct ways: they place the

²⁰⁴ Parts of this case study initially appeared in *Proceedings of the 25th Annual UCLA Indo-European Conference* (Jamison, Melchert and Vine 2014).

blame on another figure (a “higher-up,” or “elder”), assert Vasiṣṭha’s innocence, and then imply that he is once more among the beneficiaries of the God’s wisdom.

7.86.6c ásti **jyáyān**³ kániyasa upāré

The **higher-up** is in the offense of the lower.

7.86.7a áraṃ dāsó ná mīlhúṣe karāṇi

7.86.7b ahám deváya bhúrṇayé **nāgāḥ**³

7.86.7c **áçetayad**² **acító**² devó aryó

Like a servant, I will give satisfaction to the Generous (Master)

I, free(d) of criminality, to the furious god.

The noble god **made the unperceptive perceptive/perceived.**

In other words, the central verse of the hymn also heralds a distinct change in discourse occasioned by an interaction in which Vasiṣṭha and Varuṇa seem to have sorted out their differences by finding fault in other culprits. (As mentioned, for instance, in Part III, Section 4.1, Stephanie Jamison has used the word “omphalos” for such a structural midriff and thematic turning point.²⁰⁵) Upon first glance, then, Vasiṣṭha’s structuring devices appear to draw attention to both the omphalos and the discourse change it occasions, i.e. to a movement from crisis to resolution.

The two roles of the structuring devices that we have so far detected—the circling around a key transitional moment in the hymn and the articulating of many of the key transitions—might remind us not only of the omphalos of 7.76, but also of the “hub” of 7.75. That hub—7.75.5-6—was the stretch in which all the hymn’s structuring devices terminated or were initiated; in addition, the structurally significant repetitions that pervaded the hub shifted the discourse decisively from sky-oriented/divine-oriented to ritual-oriented imagery; through these repetitions, the poet began to toy with the animacy levels of certain participants/components of the ritual, in a process which ultimately culminated in a transition from discussing divine companions to specifying acceptable ritual currencies.²⁰⁶ While 7.86 is a different sort of hymn, one which does not describe or motivate a particular sacrifice and reciprocal exchange of goods, it is clear that animacy categories are at play in 7.86, as well: see for instance, the contrast between *ágāḥ* ... *jyéṣṭham* “highest crime” in 4a, right before the crucial moment, and between *jyáyān* “higher-up (man)” and *ánāgāḥ* “crimeless (man)” in 6c and 7b. Here is where the similarity with 7.76 seems striking: in a number of cases, many of the relevant transitions seem to replace abstract/less-animate *concepts* with more animate *entities*, much like 7.76 replaced less-animate assemblages with more-animate assemblies.

²⁰⁵ Jamison 2007:80—9 and 95—100.

²⁰⁶ See Part II, Sections 7.9 and 9.7.

So far, then, preliminary impressions about the intersection of form and function support the following idea: this hymn has two basic structural units: a discourse alluding to Vasiṣṭha’s culpability in the eyes of the god Varuṇa, and a discourse that outlines the means of and reasons for his exoneration. Following the procedure established by the analyses of 7.75-77, we should now look for other types of formal transitions that could corroborate or undermine this understanding of the hymn’s discourses.

The tense of verbal forms is not a reliable indicator of discourse shifts in 7.86—nor is the person of verbal forms alone; but lexical repetitions are certainly not the only sign that Verse 4 is the hymn’s structural navel. Jamison identified a further type of formal criterion that also suggests the hymn has “symmetrical shape, leading up to and away from the omphalos vs. 4.”²⁰⁷ The technique in question is “referent shifting,” or, as I have termed it, “rhetorical shapeshifting”²⁰⁸—that is, patterns and modifications in the manifestations of the grammatical category of person (1st, 2nd, 3rd) as it is applied to both the poet Vasiṣṭha and the god Varuṇa. A basic principle governing this referent shifting remains constant across stanzas: each progressive move to and from the center involves a change in the “person” of either Vasiṣṭha or Varuṇa, toward or away from the most intimate, structurally central pairing of the poet in the 1st singular and the god in the 2nd singular. Jamison’s chart runs as follows.

	Vasiṣṭha	Varuṇa
vs.1	--	3 rd [nameless]
vs. 2	1 st	3 rd
vs. 3a	1 st	2 nd
bcd	1 st /2 nd	3 rd
vs. 4 (omph.)	1st	2nd
vs. 5ab	1 st pl.	2 nd
cd	3 rd	2 nd
vs. 6	3 rd	2 nd
vs. 7ab	1 st	3 rd
cd	3 rd	3 rd

Jamison characterizes the referent shifting as “progress from distance to intimacy and back.”²⁰⁹ (96). We might further note that the central hemistich, in which the human speaker Vasiṣṭha (encoded in the 1st

²⁰⁷ This technique, and the chart that summarizes its structural role in 7.86, are treated in Jamison 2007: 100.

²⁰⁸ See Part I, Section 6.3.

²⁰⁹ Jamison 2000: 96.

singular) addresses the divinity Varuṇa in the 2nd singular, expresses a moment in which Varuṇa has become receptive enough to be within earshot of Vasiṣṭha's pleas. Such a moment is of course a fitting place to transition between guilt and alienation from the god and expiation and reconciliation with that god. We can be fairly confident, then, in our characterization of the hymn's basic structural contours and discourses.

We will take a new sort of trajectory when fleshing out the details of this hymn. For previous hymns, I have tended to structure discussions of form around specific structuring devices or around separate groups of structuring devices, because different structuring devices have tended to deploy different types of homologies to at least somewhat different ends. In *RV*7.86, most structuring devices deploy variations on a single type of (nominal) homology, toward a variety of complementary ends, which all have to do with exonerating the poet or deflecting blame away from him. The nucleus (or, perhaps, omphalos) of the section on "function"—i.e. Sections 8.7-8.10—will deal with how familiar homology types facilitate these transitions—i.e. it will be organized around that technique, rather than the separate devices that instantiate it.

Though involved in the rounds of nominal homologies referenced above, one device—Structuring Device 2—does quite a bit more in addition; in consequence, it is with this structuring device that we will both begin and end the discussion. Aside from tying up some loose ends in our discussion of the inventory of forms that belongs Structuring Device 2, at least two issues should be treated.

One of these issues involves an unanswered question generated by Stephanie Jamison's analysis of the referential relationships in 7.86. Structuring Device 2 is initiated in pāda 3a; a consultation of Jamison's chart reveals that for a brief instant in that pāda, the most intimate referential relationship of 1st-person poet/2nd-person god *is* in fact attained—and this a full verse before the omphalos arrives. The question becomes, why was that not the pivotal moment—or what is the relationship between that moment of intimacy and the pivotal one in Verse 4?

Another issue concerns the relationship between the formal characteristics and functions of Structuring Device 2 on the one hand, and what I called the "asymmetric/peripheral" structuring devices in *RV*7.76 on the other. Structuring Device 2 connects pādas slightly before the omphalos with pādas close to the end of the hymn. Phraseology from a "discourse of understanding and of shoulder-standing understudies" aids in forging these connections. Two of the key forms thusly connected are verbal and refer to the actions of a singular god (the finite verb *ācetaṃ* in Verse 7) and those of a masculine plural group

of agents (the participle *cikítúṣaḥ* in Verse 3). All this is extremely reminiscent of the formal features of Structuring Device 4 in 7.76 (which connected passages close to the *beginning* of the hymn with passages just *after* the omphalos). In our discussion of 7.76, it became apparent that in that hymn, the poet used such verbal repetitions to target *implicit* human interlocutors rather than the explicit divine addressee: in particular, the verbal reciprocal homology in Structuring Device 4 was meant to indirectly persuade the restive Vasiṣṭhas that their power was in their ability to *unite* in ritual activity, and that they further owed it to the gods to exercise this power. In 7.86, a second audience of “perceptive poets” is explicitly referenced starting in Verse 3—in the very same phrases in which that first moment of intimacy with Varuṇa is achieved, and *via a verbal form associated with Structuring Device 2*. This raises the following question: how do verbal forms in Structuring Device 2 characterize the status and role of Vasiṣṭha’s human audience, and are verbal reciprocal homologies involved? Alongside this question we have the following one: does contact with the god change Vasiṣṭha’s position in relation to his human interlocutors? These questions will structure the second part of our treatment of Structuring Device 2, and it is with this discussion that we will close.

8.2 Rhetorical shapeshifting and implicit addressees: Structuring Device 2, part 1

Structuring Device 2 consists of repetitions of *√cit*, “perceive, be perceived; wisen, be wise,” and *kaví-*, “sage poet; Kavi.” The crucial passage before the *omphalos* is the following:

7.86.3a pṛché tād éno varuṇa didīkṣu

7.86.3b úpo emi **cikítúṣo**² vipṛcham

7.86.3c samānám in me **kaváyaś**² cid āhur

7.86.3d ayám ha túbhyaṃ váruṇo hṛṇīte

I ask myself about this guilt, Varuṇa.

*I approach the **wise/perceptive** in order to ask around.*

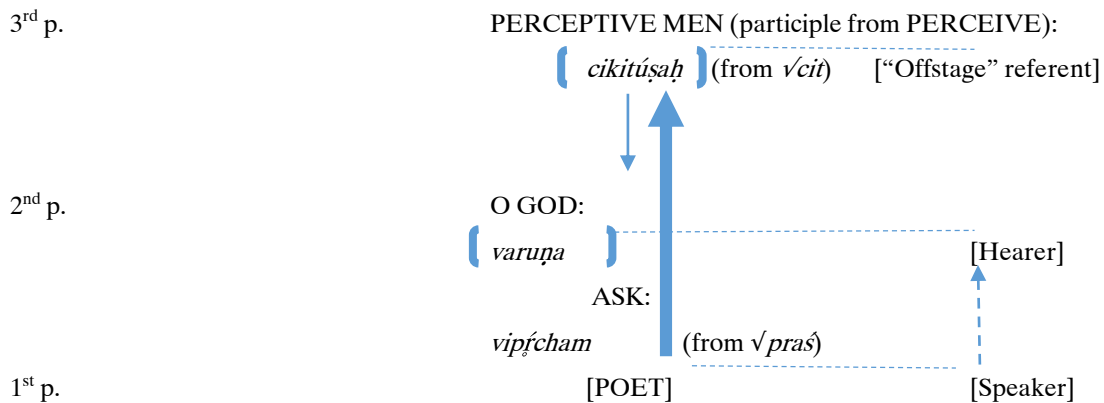
*The **Kavis** have said the very same one thing to me:*

This Varuṇa is angry with you.

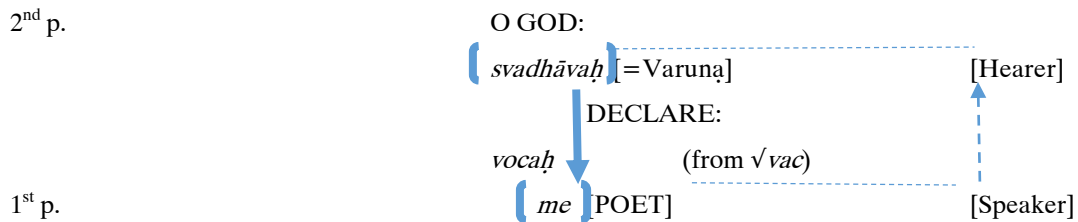
Note that this passage also contains a vocative referring to the divinity Varuṇa (*varuṇa* “(O) Varuṇa”), and two first-person forms of the verb *√praś*, ask: *pṛché*, “I ask (for) myself,” and *vipṛcham*, “in order to ask around/in order that I ask around.”

While the people to whom the 1st-person speaker is explicitly directing his questions are wise men—encoded with the accusative plural of the perfect participle *cikítváṃs-*, “Having perceived, perceptive, wisened, wise, attentive,” from *√cit*—the vocative introduces another on-stage hearer (and

potential/implicit addressee for these questions). Below I chart out the range of interlocutors expressed via *√cit*, the vocative *varuṇa*, and the form *vip̄c̄ham*, a chart constructed in the manner introduced above in Section 5. (The ambiguous semantics of the middle form *pr̄ché*—which could be reflexive, implying the poet is an addressee, or could simply indicate that the poet is asking for his own benefit—will be dealt with subsequently, in Section 8.8.)



(In this chart, the participial form has bolded brackets, which indicate the dominance of its nominal semantics, and a secondary thin arrow indicating its verbal semantics; this is in contradistinction to the thick verbal arrow symbolizing the verbal form *vip̄c̄ham*.) This is the moment of seemingly premature 1st-person/2nd-person intimacy in pāda 3a—but notice that while the god has been pulled onstage, no actual human-divine interaction is being described or portrayed. Thus (as this chart shows) pāda 3a is subtly setting up the configuration for a future interaction, while holding back from portraying that interaction explicitly. Compare this to the directness of the interaction in the 1st-person/2nd-person contact in the omphalos proper (quoted immediately above in the previous section).



So, just by examining the wording of the first round of Structuring Device 2, in comparison to the omphalos, we have at least a partial answer to one of the questions that motivated this section: pāda 3a is clearly building up to, rather than constituting, a direct moment of interaction between the 1st-person poet and the 2nd-person divinity.

8.3 Thematic proximity and phatic formulas: loose ends in Structuring Device 2

The closing round of this structuring device is the following.

7.86.7c **á**cetayad² **ac**ító² devó aryó

7.85.7d gr̥tsaṃ rāyé **kavítaro**² junāti

*The noble god **wisened the unwise/made the unperceptive perceive.***

*The **better Kavi** speeds his clever one to the riches.*

In addition, I will contend that the repetition of *√cit* in the following passage (after the omphalos, but before the final round of Structuring Device 2) is a part of this structuring device.

7.86.6a ná sá svó dákṣo varuṇa dhrútiḥ sá

7.86.6b sūrā manyúr vibhídako **ácittiḥ**

This (was) not one's own devising nor was it deception, Varuṇa:

*(It was) liquor, frenzy, dice, **lack of perception/wisdom***

This contention is based upon the idea, now to be demonstrated, that *thematic proximity* would cause this repetition to be perceived. More specifically, *cikitúṣaḥ* and *ácittiḥ* occupy closely interconnected positions within Rigvedic phraseology, and in particular within a “discourse of understanding and understudies” that has grown up around an Indo-Iranian formula involving the root *√praś*, “ask,” and possibly *√vac*, “say, tell.”

In the *Rig Veda*, the act of asking with the root *√praś* is typically a deferential gesture, a hierarchically configured “phatic”²¹⁰ act of contact between the addresser, who is typically a party at the lower end of a power differential, and the addressee, who is typically on the higher end (so, a god or a “perceptive” man). It is further based upon the idea that this power differential between interlocutors is not infrequently expressed by encoding them as antonyms—e.g., as the *unperceptive* man asking the *perceptive*. If these two things are true, the placement of blame in the speaker’s *ácittiḥ* “lack of perception” would catch the reader’s attention and be associated with *cikitvāms-*, because it comes close to explicitly stating what the phatic expression “I approach the wise/perceptive men in order to ask around” implied: the speaker is a humble unperceptive person (*acít-*) addressing his betters. Now is the time to demonstrate the grounding for this last idea by outlining the phraseology and usage trends that characterize what I called the “discourse of understanding and (shoulder-standing) understudies.”

²¹⁰ See Part I, Sections 6.4-6.7 and/or Part IV, Section 4.3.

8.4 Speaker, hearer and knowledge+power differentials: the “discourse of understanding and understudies,” and phatic acts encoded by $\sqrt{praś}$, \sqrt{vac} , \sqrt{vid} , \sqrt{cit} , and $kaví-$

I should first mention that, colorful new name notwithstanding, half of the discussion of this discourse revolves around (and risks reinventing) a rather squeaky interpretive wheel. To the extent that this discourse involves the root $\sqrt{praś}$, “ask,” scholars from Renou to George Thompson would associate it with types of *brahmodya*, “brahman-utterance,” formalized in later Vedic literature. The later *brahmodyas* ranged from ritualized question-and-answer series to debates and examinations, i.e. they tended to be “a type of verbal contest,” structured as a showcase of “the interrogator’s intention...to challenge his respondent,” often including “public notification of the challenge,” and culminating in “the knower’s self-assertion.”²¹¹ The notification and self-assertion are often expressed via the alternating use of the forms *prchāmi*, “I ask,” from the root $\sqrt{praś}$, and *veda*, “I know,” from the root \sqrt{vid} . Note that this is somewhat different from the idea I introduced during the last section: the later *brahmodyas* are interchanges that provide room for explicit self-assertion of *both* the addresser and the addressee.

As Thompson points out, the ritualized use of a first-person form of the root $\sqrt{praś}$ probably relates to a long-recognized feature of Indo-European poetics involving the use of the reconstructed root * \sqrt{prek} “ask” “to introduce sometimes quite extensive interrogation sequences, as part of verbal contests.”²¹² Examples can be found not only throughout older strata of Sanskrit literature, but also in Avestan liturgy, and even in the Old Norse *Poetic Edda*. Thompson highlights *RV*7.86 Verse 3 as a case in point, where a series of *brahmodya*-like questions are introduced by first-person forms of $\sqrt{praś}$. Key for Thompson are the first two pādas, in which the first-person forms *prché* and *vipřcham* appear.

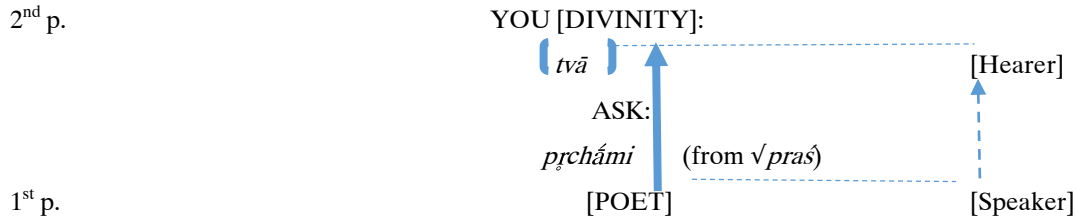
In a prior section of the same article,²¹³ Thompson quotes *RV*1.164.34-35 as an example of the use of *prchāmi tvā* (“I ask thee”) to introduce a series of test-questions and responses (in Verse 34, *prchāmi* appears four times, twice explicitly accompanied by *tvā*, “thee”). While the identity of the speakers is difficult to establish, the questions and answers straddle the horizon and touch upon sites of human-divine interaction: the 1st-person speaker asks the addressee about the farthest end of the earth (*páram ántam pr thivyāḥ*), and the world’s navel (*bhúvanasya nābhiḥ*), etc.; the addressee names “this altar” (*iyám védīḥ*) as

²¹¹ Thompson (1997: 13 and 18), paraphrasing Renou.

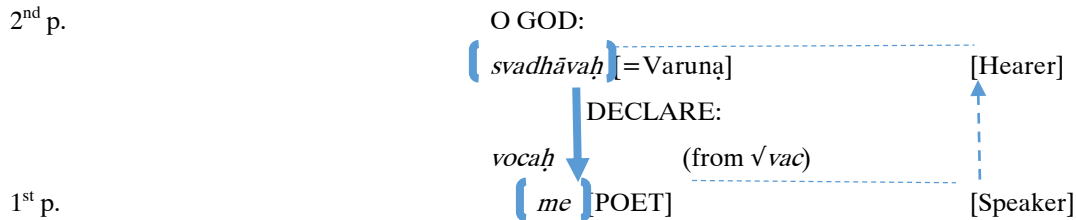
²¹² Thompson (1997: 23-25), expanding upon Schmitt.

²¹³ Thompson 1997: 17.

the farthest end of the earth and “this sacrifice” (*ayám yajñáh*) as the world’s navel. This seems significant particularly given the fact that the Avestan equivalent of *pr̥chámī tvā, taṭ θwā pərəsā* “(This) I ask Thee,” is repeatedly used to introduce interactions between a human speaker and a divine addressee throughout a pair of Gāthic *hāitis* (*Y31* 14-16, with some ellipsis of “Thee” as in *RV1.164.34*; c.f. *Y44* 1-20). Assuming on this basis that an Indo-Iranian version of the phatic formula, “this I ask Thee” was typically used for human-divine contact, we could chart out its Vedic version in the following manner.



Note how much more direct this setup is than the configuration of interlocutors in 7.86.3 (charted above); this too suggests there was a sort of carefully crafted tentativeness to that earlier moment of intimacy (a tentativeness that Jamison’s chart was not designed to highlight). Notice, too, how similar in its directness this formula is to the configuration of the moment of contact in Verse 3. Below I reproduce the the chart from the preceding section.



This is no accident: if *Y44* 1-20 (among any number of other passages) is any indication, there is an optional second half to the Indo-Iranian phatic formula, one that involves an imperative form of \sqrt{vac} built off of the same stem as the injunctive form that appears in 7.86; in Avestan, it appears as *vaocā*, “tell”; in *Y44*, it appears in the broader repeated phrase *ərəś mōi vaocā ahurā*, “Tell me truly, Lord,” addressed to the divine Lord Wisdom, and immediately following the repetition of *taṭ θwā pərəsā*, “This I ask Thee.” See also *Y31*, a second *hāiti* in which there are instances of the same form (*vaocā*) being used in the same way (in *Y.31.3,5*); in this *hāiti* too (i.e. in *Y31*) the phatic formula *taṭ θwā pərəsā*, “This I ask Thee,” appears in subsequent verses.

In just a moment, we will have occasion to examine in more detail the use of the root $\sqrt{pras̥}$ in conjunction with \sqrt{vac} and/or thematically related roots within the *Rig Veda*—but first, with our slightly different aims in mind, I would like to draw attention to other passages from within *RV1.164*. Pādas 5ab

of that hymn use the form *pr̥chāmi* to introduce a question about the *devānām (enā)...nīhitā padāni*, the “hidden tracks of the gods,” hinting again at an interlocutor with a special connection to the divine realm. Pāda 7a uses the root \sqrt{vid} among others to encourage “who(ever) **knows**” (*yāḥ...véda*) to speak (*bravītu*, “let him speak,” using the root $\sqrt{brū}$ rather than \sqrt{vac}). But particularly key for our purposes are the preceding passages, in which the speaker and respondents are referred to antonymically: *nā vidvān*, “not knowing” as opposed to *véda* in *yāḥ...véda* (pādas 6b vs. 7a) and *ácikivān*, as opposed to *cikituṣaḥ* (both in pāda 6a).

1.164.5a **pākḥ pr̥chāmi** mánasāvijānan

devānām enā nīhitā padāni

Naïve, not understanding, in my mind I ask

About these imprinted hidden tracks of the gods.

1.164.6a **ácikivāñ cikituṣaś** cid átra

1.164.6b **kavīn pr̥chāmi vidmāne** ná vidvān

Unperceptive, about this I ask the perceptive

Kavis, in order to know, not knowing.

The lexical inventory established in 1.164.6ab in particular is a combination of the key roots that I claim are associated with *brahmodya* discourse in the *Rig Veda*. We have already repeatedly seen \sqrt{pras} in the form of *pr̥chāmi*, as it appears in 1.164.5a and 6b; we have also seen other brahmodya-like passages that involve \sqrt{vid} ; the latter root present in 1.164.5-6 in the forms *vidmāne* and (*nā*) *vidvān*. Additionally, 1.164.5-6 feature two words from 7.86.3 that are highlighted via a structuring device: *kavī-*, and \sqrt{cit} . Crucially, the root \sqrt{cit} is featured in 1.164.5-6 twice, via antonymic perfect participial stems *cikivāms-* and *ácikivāms-*, “perceptive” and “unperceptive.” The repeated presence of *kavī-* and \sqrt{cit} alongside \sqrt{pras} and \sqrt{vid} in *brahmodya*-like passages suggests that this cluster of four words is evocative of a variant of the *brahmodya* discourse that is specific to the *Rig Veda*.

While there are not many more passages involving \sqrt{pras} that directly contrast the asker and the asked parties using antonymic forms of \sqrt{cit} and/or \sqrt{vid} , there are other types of supporting evidence that suggest this formulation of the speech act taps into conventional phraseology, phraseology that a) conveys a power differential between the (humbler) asking party and the (higher) party being asked; and b) frequently encodes this power differential as a knowledge/wisdom differential using antonymic forms of the root(s) \sqrt{cit} and/or \sqrt{vid} . If this is the case, the phatic phrases *pr̥ché... úpo emi cikituṣo vip̥rcham* “I ask (on behalf of) myself...I approach the perceptive in order to ask around” in pāda 3ab would cause the

audience to anticipate a formulaic, antonymic characterization of the asker as “un-perceptive.” This is what we need to establish in order to be confident that a listener will perceive the round of repetition that connects *cikitúṣaḥ* and *ácittiḥ*.

One such type of evidence is presented by other passages involving $\sqrt{praś}$ that use \sqrt{cit} and \sqrt{vid} affirmatively to refer to a perceptive, powerful, asked party, in implicit contradistinction to an unperceptive, less powerful, asking party. These implicit contrasts can be inferred on the basis of other explicit antitheses to which they are tied. We have examples from multiple maṇḍalas, including Maṇḍala 7; I provide three below. The first is in an Agni-hymn, and the unnamed third-person referent is Agni himself. The passage begins with a second-person plural imperative through which the poet addresses his fellow officiants.

1.145.1 tám **pr̥chatā** sá jagāmā sá **veda**
 sá **cikitvám̐** īyate sá nú īyate
 tásmin santi praśíṣas tásmin iṣṭáyaḥ
 sá vājasya śávasaḥ śuṣmīṇas pátiḥ

1.145.2a tám ít **pr̥chanti ná** simó ví **pr̥chati**

1.145.2b svéneva dhíro mánasā yád ágrabhīt

Ask him: he has come; he knows.

As the one who perceives, he is implored; he is now implored here.

In him are our commands, in him our wishes (/offerings).

He is the lord of the victory prize and of unbridled power.

*Just him **do they ask**, but **he himself does not ask** in turn,*

Since, like a clever man, with his own mind he has grasped it.

Note that in this example, being the “one who perceives” (*cikitvám̐s-* from \sqrt{cit}) and the one who “knows” (*veda* from \sqrt{vid}) is linked to being the one whom they ask, and who does *not* ask; the antithetical framing of this last statement hints at the other unexpressed antitheses (he who knows vs. they who do not know and who therefore ask; the one who perceives versus they who do not perceive and who therefore ask). In subsequent verses, Agni’s status as the knowing and perceptive one is linked to his status as lord (*páti-*) of other affairs—i.e. a hierarchy of knowledge is tied to a hierarchy of power.

The second example comes from the Agni-hymn that opens up Maṇḍala 7. This case is especially interesting because the identity of the party who is asked is ambiguous: it could either be the poet or Agni. The patron, to whom the poet would normally (performatively, if not sincerely) defer, is definitely the asking party; nonetheless, in this context, *both* the poet and the divinity are constructed/encoded in such a

way as to appear more powerful than the asker. The operative power hierarchy is based on knowledge of skills relevant to divinities. The mortal officiant is portrayed as rich (=powerful) because of his ability to sacrifice to Agni, and Agni is portrayed as *knowing* the passage by which divinely bestowed wealth travels.

7.1.23 sá **márto** agne suanika reván
ámartiyē yá ājuhóti havyám
sá devātā vasuvániṃ dadhāti
yám sūrír arthī **pṛchámāna** éti

7.1.24a mahó no agne suvitásya **vidvān**

7.1.24b rayiṃ sūrībhya á vahā bṛhántam

*That **mortal** is rich, o Agni of the beautiful face,*

*(The mortal) who pours the oblation in **the immortal one.***

He [=Agni/the mortal] establishes him [=the mortal/Agni] as one who gains goods among gods,

*The one to whom the inquiring patron goes, **asking for his ends.***

***Knowing** of the great easy passage, Agni, to our*

Patrons convey lofty wealth.

Again, this knowledge- or skill-based power hierarchy is explicitly constructed in relationship to divinities: the rich mortal knows how to cater to the divine in a sacrificial context; and Agni is the knowing (*vidvān*) go-between of the “great easy passage” because of his divinity. In such a context, the explicit antithesis between the mortal (*márta-*) and the immortal (*ámartiya-*) is capable of evoking a similar, implied antithesis between the (explicitly referenced) knowing, powerful parties and the (implicitly) unknowing, less powerful patron.

In the third and final example below (from an Indra hymn), the explicit antonyms that structure our understanding involve the ability to traverse the (physical and temporal) distances that separate the human from the divine and the present era from mythological time.

6.21.6 tám **pṛchánto ávarāsaḥ páráṇi**
pratná ta indra śrútiyānu yemuḥ
árcāmasi · vīra brahmavāho
yád evá **vidmá** tát tvā mahántam

*The **closer ones, asking** about him, following those **distant***

***Ancient** acts (of yours), Indra, have guided themselves.*

You hero with the sacred formulation as your vehicle, we chant

*As far as **we know it**, that far (we chant) to you as the great one.*

In this verse, human officiants are portrayed as *closer* (*ávarāsaḥ*) in the same breath as they are portrayed as *asking* (*pṛchántaḥ* from √*pras*); this is in contrast to *distant* (*parāṇi*) ancient deeds of Indra, about whom

they ask. Likewise, human officiants' *limited* ability to traverse the distance separating them from Indra and his deeds is commensurate with their *partial* knowledge of a group; this partial knowledge is encoded in the first-person and including the poet-speaker, the latter being expressed in the clause *yáđ evá vidmá*, “as far as we know it,” using a form from \sqrt{vid} . The prior verse coupled “ancientness” with having power in a human-divine hierarchy, i.e. with being nearly on par to and familiar with the god Indra: there is talk of Indra's *pratnásaḥ...sákhāyaḥ*, “ancient comrades.” Through these two passages, latter-day, nearby human officiants, whose knowledge only carries them so far—the men who are said to be *asking*—are implicitly cast as relatively *humble and un-knowing*.

Other types of ancillary evidence involve the use of semantically related words to assign the asker and ask different places in a divine hierarchy (something along these lines happens in around 3 out of every four examples of \sqrt{pras} in the *Rig Veda*), and the use of antithetical forms of \sqrt{cit} to encode/complement explicit power differentials in contexts that do not involve \sqrt{pras} . One particularly noteworthy example of the first type involves the use of the word *kaví-* to encode the more knowledgeable older generations of poets to whom the speaker turns for answers and inspiration in 3.38.1cd-2ab (3.38 is an Indra-hymn). The key utterance is a self-directed imperative *inótá pṛcha janimā kavīnām*, “**Ask** also the powerful generations **of Kavis**.” Maṇḍala 7 contains an example of the second type, with antithetical forms of \sqrt{cit} appearing without \sqrt{pras} .

7.60.6 imé mitró váruṇo dūḷábhāso
acetásam cic **citayanti** dáksaiḥ
 ápi krátuṃ **sucétasam** vátantas
 tirás cid áṃphaḥ supáthā nayanti

7.60.7ab imé divó ániṃṣā pṛthivyás
cikivámso acetásam nayanti

These hard to deceive—Mitra, Varuna—

*Cause even **the unperceptive man to perceive** through their skills.*

*Fully knowing the resolve based on **good perception**,*

They lead on a good path even across narrow straits.

Of heaven and earth, these unwinking,

Perceptive ones lead the unperceptive man

Here the “perceptive ones” are clearly gods, *leading* a less perceptive man. Also noteworthy in this context is another example from Maṇḍala 7, from the hymn about the Battle of the Ten Kings, which we have already had occasion to mention in prior sections (e.g. in Section 4.6). While not entirely clear in their

reference, the relevant passages describe a contingent of treacherous forces who provoke the wrath of the gods and are drowned in a river that jumps its banks. Key in this context is that the gods ultimately decide how the *unperceptive* ones (*acetásah*) will be perceived (*citásah*):

7.18.8ab durādhīyo áditim sreváyanto

acetáso ví jagrbhre páruṣṇīm

7.18.9cd sudása índraḥ sutúkām̐ amítrān

árandhayan mánuṣe vādhrivācaḥ

7.18.10a iyúr gávo ná yávasād ágopā

7.18.10b yathākṛtām abhí **mitrām citásah**

7.18.10c pṛśnigāvaḥ pṛśninipreṣitāsaḥ

The ill-intentioned ones causing Aditi to abort,

Those without perceptiveness, diverted (the course of the river) Paruṣṇī...

Indra, for Sudās, made those without alliance (to us) easy to sweep away,

Who, (though) in Manu's (race), were of gelded speech.

The went like cows without a cowheart from a pasture,

Though being perceived to go towards an alliance properly concluded.

The Pṛśnigus, propelled down to the dappled one [P(a)r(u)ṣṇī]...

8.5 Perception and grouping of *cikitúṣah*, *ácittiḥ* and (eventually) *acítah*

In sum, we can fairly well anticipate that the combination of all of these usage trends—implicit and explicit contrasts between perceptive and unperceptive parties, layered onto or triggered by the power differentials surrounding $\sqrt{praś}$ —would lead a listener to expect references to the speaker's lack of perception as soon as the clause *úpo emi cikitúṣo vipṛčham*, “I approach the perceptive in order to ask,” is uttered. While the expected *form* of the reference might be a substantive referring to unperceptive humans, the element of surprise presented by abstract semantics of the noun *ácitti-*would only add to its prominence in the listener's mind.

It now seems reasonable to suppose that the creation and (partial) fulfillment of phraseological expectations that unites *cikitúṣah* and *ácittiḥ* would be more than enough to guarantee that these repetitions would be detected. As for the matter of grouping—it is likely that *ácittiḥ* would eventually be more strongly associated with the form *acítah*, “unperceptive,” which finally surfaces in Verse 7 (factors of prosodic proximity and phonological similarity point in that direction, as do the particularly strong thematic associations between “lack of perception” and “unperceptive (men)”). In other words, this is still one redundant ring of repetition—just, the second half of the ring has three forms of \sqrt{cit} instead of one.

(Compare this, for instance, to Structuring Device 1, which is classified as a geometric ring mainly because the various forms of *svá-* are so diffusely distributed and initially appear to occupy more distinct thematic spaces.)

8.6 Phatic formulas, indirection, and poetic repair—the additional yield for Structuring Device 2

While the question of the perceptibility and affiliation of *ácittiḥ* was the occasion for the examination the “discourse of understanding and shoulder-standing understudies,” this discussion of course yields much more than that. For one thing, we have the idea that a formulaic speech act framed around $\sqrt{praś}$, “ask,” and encoding the asked parties as *cikitúṣaḥ*, “perceptive ones,” implicitly characterizes the asker as someone who is unperceptive (from \sqrt{cit} , e.g. *ácikivāms-*, *acít-* or *acetás-*), and deferent in consequence. This in turn means that there is a nominal homology connecting not only the addressees, but also (more implicitly) the addresser, to *ácittiḥ*, lack of perception. While we will have occasion to discuss the nature of the relationships between *ácittiḥ*, the addresser and the addressee at length, for our current purposes it is worth knowing that in the context of Verse 6, the abstract quality of “lack of perception” is granted a surprisingly high degree of agency: it is compared to *impulses that drive* the poet along quite apart from his own will—impulses powerful enough to *counteract* a (hapax) agent noun *prayotár-*, “warder-off (or untruth)” (an agent noun derived from *prá* + \sqrt{yu} , “separate, keep away, ward off”).

7.86.6a ná sá svó dákṣo varuṇa dhrútiḥ sá

7.86.6b sūrā manyúr vibhídako **ácittiḥ**...

7.86.6d svápnaś canéd áṅtasya **prayotá**

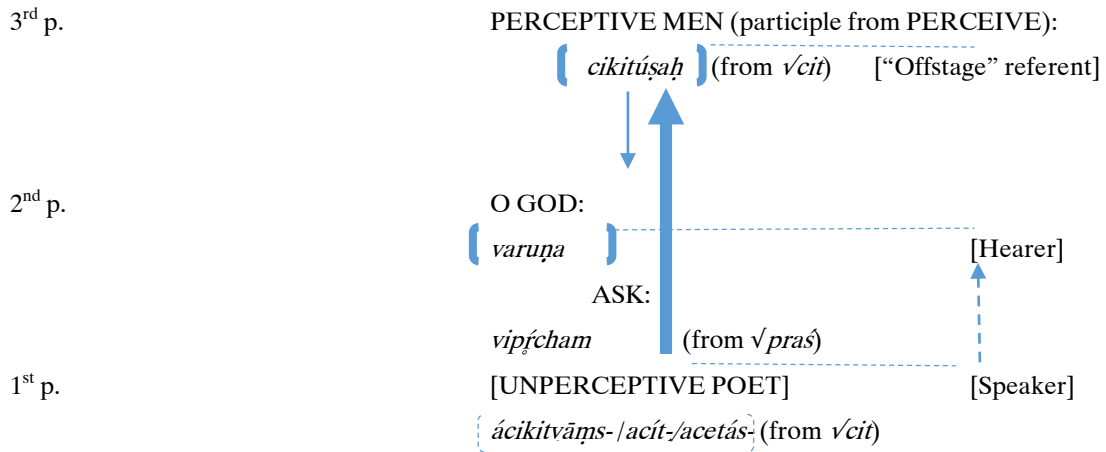
This (was) not one’s own devising nor was it deception, Varuṇa:

*(It was) liquor, frenzy, dice, **lack of perception**...*

*Not even sleep (serves as) **a warder-off** of untruth*

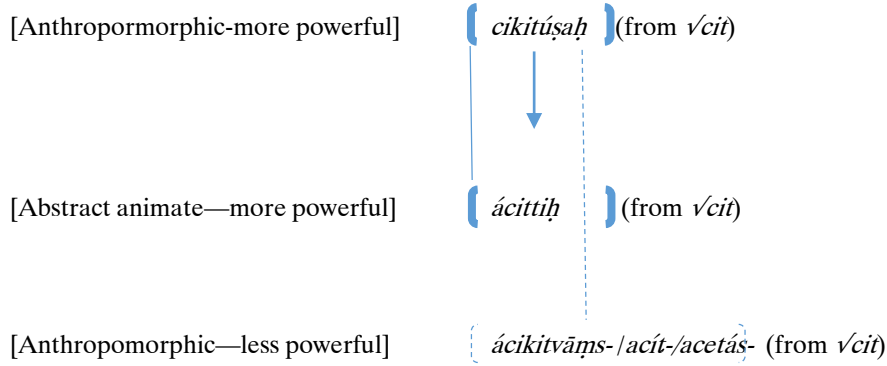
I chart out these two results below: first, in a modified chart of Verse 3; then, in a chart of implicit and explicit components of the nominal homology articulated through the first two rounds of Structuring Device 2 (i.e. up to Verse 6). Note that the abstract noun *ácittiḥ* is portrayed as higher up on the animacy/agency hierarchy than the speaker.

Verse 3—Construction of Interlocutors



(Within this chart specifically, the direction in which the smaller arrow attached to the participle *cikitúṣaḥ* is pointing is essentially arbitrary; it is just there to acknowledge the nominal *and* verbal nature of the participle.)

Nominal Homology in Structuring Device 2, Up through Verse 6



The difference between the implicit and explicit nominal homology (indicated by the solid vs. dotted line) is that the latter avoids directly labeling the poet as unperceptive: all that is voiced is a reference to a (perhaps fleeting) unperceptive*ness* that took hold of him. Considering the fate that can await those who are deemed more incorrigibly lacking in perception (see 7.18 above), one can understand how the explicit framing would be rhetorically advantageous—particularly in a setting where the wrath of gods is already an explicit subject.

So far, then, we have discovered that Structuring Device 2 highlights (at least) two strategies of indirection: one in which the explicit (third-person, human) addressees distract from the subtle establishment of the god Varuṇa as an “on-stage” interlocutor; and another in which the implied status of the speaking poet as a deferent, *unperceptive* inquirer—a status established by the selection of “*perceptive*

poets” as the party being asked—is overshadowed by an explicit abstract noun that portrays this unperceptiveness as the real culprit.²¹⁴

Given the strategies of indirection that the poet deployed to tiptoe around the problematic idea that a wrathful Varuṇa and an implicitly un-perceptive poet are interlocutors—i.e. given the now evident sensitivity of the matter of representing an interaction between these two parties—one might wonder what makes the poet bold enough to finally portray direct contact between Vasiṣṭha and Varuṇa in a subsequent poetic moment.

Part of the answer to this question lies in an act of poetic repair that we have already discussed without referring to it as such. The repair centers around referential relationships in the Indo-Iranian phatic formula that couples $\sqrt{praś}$, “ask,” with \sqrt{vac} , “say, tell.” In the first half of this instance of the Indo-Iranian phatic formula—as represented by *cikitúṣo vip̄čham* (recall that we are temporarily setting aside the question of *pr̄ché*)—the typical direct 1st person-2nd person relationship between addresser and addressee is changed into a 1st-person/3rd-person relationship. The second half, (*tán*) *me vocah*, “Say (it) to me,” shows the normal direct formula 1st-person/2nd-person encoding. This makes the act of direct (phatic) contact *sound* more natural than the more oblique expressions that preceded it. We call such a return to a more typical referential relationship (in this case, typical of confessional hymns) “rhetorical repair.”

As we are about to see, the second half of the development of 7.86 is largely concerned with resolving this problem at greater length—that is, it focuses on dissipating any resistance a listener may feel or display to the idea that the (formerly?) enraged Varuṇa engaged in a tête-à-tête with the prodigal poet Vasiṣṭha. For the time being, we will skip over the second half of Structuring Device 2, and its continued role in dissipating this resistance, devoting ourselves to a different technique deployed throughout all the structuring devices in the second half of this hymn: the use of nominal homologies to play with animacy categories until Vasiṣṭha is split into two selves—a higher self, connected with Varuṇa, and a lower self, probably corporeal, definitely lacking agency, at the mercy of (animate) forces beyond his control. These two selves, which might be likened to the proverbial willing spirit and weak flesh, provide a scapegoat—either for blame or for rehabilitation—and a peer for Varuṇa to help empower.

8.7 Nominal homologies, animacy contrasts, and agency hierarchies: Distorted phraseology and deflection of blame in Verses 3-4

Given that we are still trying to answer questions about Verse 4 and (to a lesser extent) Verse 3, it would seem fitting to start by examining the nominal homology that runs through both of these key

²¹⁴ Of course, this confounds listeners’ expectations to a certain extent, and a repair may be anticipated.

passages, before proceeding with a verse-by-verse account of similar homologies as they would present themselves.²¹⁵

Structuring Device 4 highlights a nominal homology and associated contrastive uses of other lexical elements in pādas 3ab and 4cd, i.e. in the hemistichs that house the key moments of contact between Vasiṣṭha and Varuṇa.

7.86.3a pṛché **tád éno** varuṇa didṛkṣu

7.86.3b **úpo emi** cikitúṣo vipṛcham

*I ask myself (/for my own benefit) about **this guilt**, o Varuṇa, wanting to see;*

*I **approach** the perceptive in order to ask.*

7.86.4c prá **tán** me voco dūlabha svadhāvo

7.86.4d **áva tvānená** námasā turá **iyam/iyām**

*You will declare **this** to me, you hard-to-deceive, force-all-your-own!*

*With reverence I **would** swiftly **appease** you, (having become/until I become) **free from guilt**.*

Within this round of the structuring device there are at least two forms of antithetical language. One of them we can identify as a nominal homology: we have the connection and counterposition of *énaḥ*, “guilt,” (pāda 3a) and *anenáḥ*, “free from guilt” (pāda 4d). We have a complementary prepositional contrast between *úpa*, “towards” (pāda 3b) and *áva*, “down from” (pāda 4d).

There is one interpretive difficulty that is an artifact of transmission: some, most recently Jamison and Brereton (2014), amend a metrical irregularity at the end of pāda 4d by replacing the received form *iyām*, “I would go” from \sqrt{i} , “go,” with *iyām* from one of two roots $\sqrt{yā}$: one meaning “go, drive,” and another meaning “appease.” While the forms could mean the same thing in isolation, *áva* + *iyām* takes on the specialized meaning of “appease.” (Regardless of which interpretation we follow, I will count *emi* and

²¹⁵ Since this verse-by-verse account also involves the recollection of certain prior passages in the hymn, now might be a good time for a reminder of the primary and secondary comprehension processes that my method of analysis assumes are adopted as a matter of course. A listener will automatically try to interpret particular expression on the basis of the immediate context—on the level of the pāda, hemistich, verse, or (probably maximally) pair of verses. This is to say that he will start with the fresh verbal content currently circulating through his phonological loop, initially trying to make sense of a difficult phrase on the basis of the semantics and usage trends of recently-heard words. Then, he will try to interpret the phrase on the basis of the semantics of and usage trends surrounding words in structurally connected passages—i.e., in passages that patterns of repetition structurally highlight, signal as related to the current phrase, and help his mind to recall after they have faded from his working memory. Most communicative strategies that we have explored in these case studies rely on a combination of these two comprehension processes.

īyām as lexical repetitions, just as I count forms of the synchronically different roots \sqrt{gam} and $\sqrt{gā}$ as repetitions.)

This is an emendation that I too will adopt, primarily because verbal and nominal forms from *avā-* + $\sqrt{yā}$ “appease” appear in a number of contexts that are not only thematically but also phraseologically similar to 7.86. Compare first another example from Maṇḍala 7, containing the related nominal form *avayāḥ*, “appeasement”:

7.40.5ab asyá devásya mīlhúšo **vayá**
 víṣṇor eśásya prabhṛthé havírbhiḥ
*There is **appeasement** of this generous one (Rudra)*
At the ritual offering to quick Viṣṇu, with oblations.

Note that this passage also contains the form *mīlhúsaḥ*, “of the generous one,” from the same adjective (*mīlhváṃs-*) as the dative *mīlhúse* that we get in 7.86.7b. A similar example from *Rig Veda* 4.1 ascribes to the appeaser, Agni, the epithet of *vidván*, “knowing one,” which of course connects to the “discourse of understanding” that is operative within 7.86. Here too, the god being appeased is Varuṇa.

4.1.4ab tuvám no agne váruṇasya **vidván**
 devásya hélo **áva yāsisīṭhāḥ**
*For us may You, Agni, the **knowing one**, Varuna-*
*the-god’s rage **appease**.*

More examples could be adduced—but the point is that a form like *áva+īyām*, “I would appease,” would be highly expected in the context of a hymn like 7.86.

The form would indeed be expected in 7.86—but the manner in which it is used is not without its idiosyncrasies. One thing that the two examples above seem to suggest—and that would be confirmed if we adduced more such examples of *áva + √yā*²¹⁶—is that typically, it is a god who acts as a go-between to appease another god. It might be worth quoting one more example that more explicitly expresses the divine-oriented nature of the role of appeaser, here encoded via the agent noun *avayātár-*, derived from the same verb and preposition.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ See, for instance, 1.94.12, 6.66.5, 8.48.2, etc.

²¹⁷ With points to come in mind, it might be worth quoting the entire stanza.

1.129.11 pāhí no indara+ suṣṭuta sridhó
 avayātá sádám íd durmatínám
 deváḥ sán durmatínám
 hantá pāpásya rakśásas

1.129.11a pāhí no indara+ suṣṭuta sridhó

1.129.11b **avayātá** sádám íd durmatínám

1.129.11c deváḥ sán durmatínám

*Protect us, well-praised Indra, from failure,
(You who are) always **an appeaser** of bad thoughts
As a god (an appeaser) of bad thoughts,*

We might suppose that the imagery underlying this expression for (divine-oriented) “appeasement” in the *Rig Veda* involves a divine peer or near-peer presenting himself in supplication—in other words, this orientation might reflect a notion that in order for that supplicatory gesture to be meaningful, it has to start at eye-level.

The idea that in 7.86.4 the speaker is presenting (some part of) himself as on par with his divine addressee finds further support in the other two Rigvedic instances of the epithet *anenás-*, “guiltless,” which, like the role of appeaser, is given to the speaker in 7.86.4. One of those instances is in *RV* 1.129 (pāda 5e), i.e. in the very same hymn quoted immediately above for its clearly divine-oriented usage of *avayātár-*; in this hymn, the epithet renames Indra. The only other instance is in another hymn from Maṇḍala 7; there, the epithet is associated with Varuṇa himself.

7.28.4cd práti yác cáṣṭe ánr̥tam **anená**

áva dvitá váruṇo māyí naḥ sāt

*When **the guiltless one** [= Varuṇa] observes untruth,
once again Varuṇa, master of untruth, (will) unloose us (from it).*

Notice also the presence of the key preposition of *áva* + ($\sqrt{sā}$, “unloose us”) in this expression.

trātá víprasya mávataḥ

ádhā hí tvā janitá j̥janad vaso

rakṣohánaṃ tvā j̥janad vaso

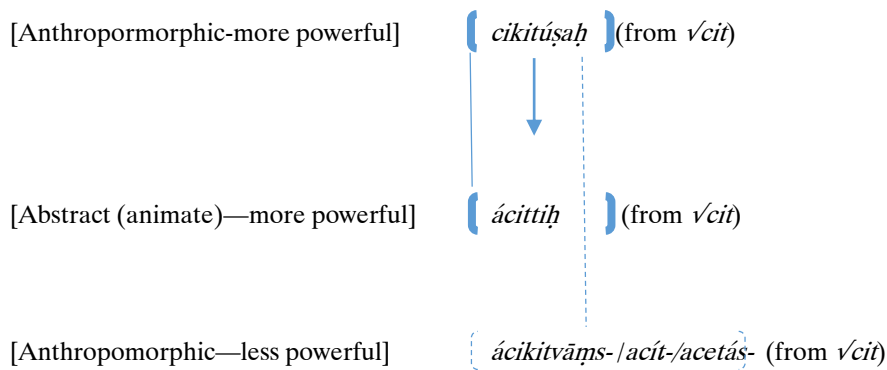
*Protect us, well-praised Indra, from failure,
(You who are) always **an appeaser** of bad thoughts
As a god (an appeaser) of bad thoughts,
A smasher of the evil demon,
A rescuer of a poet like me.
For the progenitor has generated you for this reason, o Good One:
Has generated you as a smasher of demons, O Good one.*

Notice the parallel drawn between the “demon” and the bad thoughts (highlighted the parallel agent nouns of *avayātár*, “appeaser,” and *hantár*, “smasher”), and the separation of the poet from the bad thoughts.

We can combine this newly gained knowledge of the divine orientation of *áva + √yā* and *anenás-* with previously noted observations to get a better idea of the contrast articulated by the nominal homology connecting the forms *énaḥ* and *anenáḥ*.

In previous sections, we observed that usage patterns involving *√pras* produce the impression that the asking party is likely lower in status than the asked party. The first-person self who is asking about his guilt, *énaḥ*, is therefore of lower status even than the human wise men, *cikitúṣaḥ*, whom he asks. Contrast this with the impression produced by the usage patterns of *áva + √yā* and *anenás-*, namely that the first-person party who is characterized as “guiltless” (*anenáḥ*) in Verse 4 is in some sense divine. The first-person party in Verse 3 would therefore sound as if he is at nearly the opposite end of the human-divine hierarchy as the first-person party in Verse 4. There is of course a sense of self-contradiction produced by a first-person party that discusses his guilt, *énaḥ*, and then characterizes himself as guiltless, *anenáḥ*—but when we layer on the conflicting usage patterns of the phraseology in pādas 3ab vs. pāda 4d, we have the impression that we are talking about fully contradictory *selves* (plural).

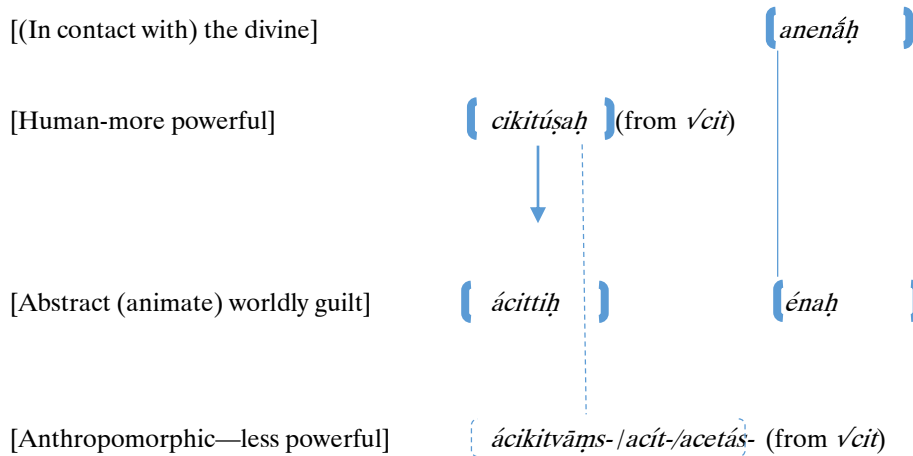
In the immediately preceding section, we concluded that the usage patterns of *√pras*, combined with the level of animacy ascribed to *ácittiḥ*, create the impression that the nominal homology in Structuring Device 6 articulates a tripartite animacy hierarchy. The word that articulates the intermediary node of this hierarchy, *ácittiḥ*, would not be registered until Verse 6, but given the attention we have already devoted to it I see no point in suppressing it from this chart.



As we have just seen, usage patterns of *√pras* also help articulate a contrast between the guiltless (*anenáḥ*) and implicitly divine 1st-person party in Verse 4 and the very same “less powerful,” unperceptive 1st-person party from Verse 3 that is featured on the bottom rung of this other nominal homology—so we might suppose that the two homologies help structure one another. The contrast between the *anenáḥ*, “guiltless” party and the (implicitly) *ácikitvāms-*, “unperceptive” asking party and would add another upward step and

human-divine semantic contrast to this animacy hierarchy; and the abstract semantics of *énaḥ*, “guilt,” would facilitate an association between it and *ácittiḥ*, “lack of perception,” once the latter word is uttered in Verse 6.

Below I chart out the alignments between these nominal homologies. Within this hierarchy, Vasiṣṭha’s guilt, *énaḥ* is a *worldly* cause of Vasiṣṭha’s current suffering (so, something that, like the unperceptiveness discussed in Verse 6, holds sway *over* him, which he has to go to the superior Kavis to discuss). This worldly guilt that seems to cease to be relevant once Vasiṣṭha’s higher self attains contact with Varuṇa (along with some sort of parity to Him).



8.8 The weak flesh and the willing spirit: Divine, corporeal, and human selves in Structuring Device 1

The next rounds of homologies would be perceived by the time that the first hemistich of Verse 5 is uttered; they unite passages from Verses 4 and 5 with prior passages in Verse 2.

7.86.2a utá **sváyā**¹ **tanúvā**¹ sám vade tát

7.86.2b kadá nú antár váruṇe bhuvāni

*And I speak that/thus **with my own self**:*

When will I be within Varuṇa?

7.86.4c prá tán me voco dūḷabha **svadhāvo**¹

*You’ll voice this to me, hard-to-deceive one, **force all your own!***

7.86.5a **áva**⁴ drugdhāni pítriyā sṛjā no

7.86.5b **áva**⁴ yá vayám cakṛmā **tanúbhiḥ**¹

***Down and away** release our fathers’ misdeeds/deceptions*

Down and away** those we have committed **by ourselves/ with our bodies/persons

As was discussed in the introduction to this dissertation (Part I, Section 4.3), *tanú-* can mean “self” in an abstract animate sense (i.e. it can be used as a reflexive pronoun), or “body” in a more concrete corporeal sense (the English word that comes closest to capturing this polysemy might be “person”—as in “who he is as a person” versus “on his person”). As mentioned previously, the instrumental phrase *sváyā tanúvā* only appears once elsewhere in the *Rig Veda*, and it appears in the corporeal sense of “with (one’s) own body” ; in fact, this is the sense that the instrumental singular *tanúvā* has in almost every case. Within 7.86.2a, however, it must mean “self”/ “person,” given that the speaker is casting himself as his own interlocutor.

The fact that the speaker is casting himself as his own interlocutor has some important consequences, particularly given the “contradictory selves” that Structuring Devices 2 and 4 have helped us to perceive. Consider that pāda 2a—in which we encounter the expression *sváyā tanúvā*—is the first of two pādas with identically inflected 1st-person singular, present middle indicative verbal forms encoding speech acts. **In other words, consider that (*sám*) *vade* in pāda 2a corresponds to *pṛché* in pāda 3a.**

7.86.2a utá sváyā tanúvā sám **vade** tát

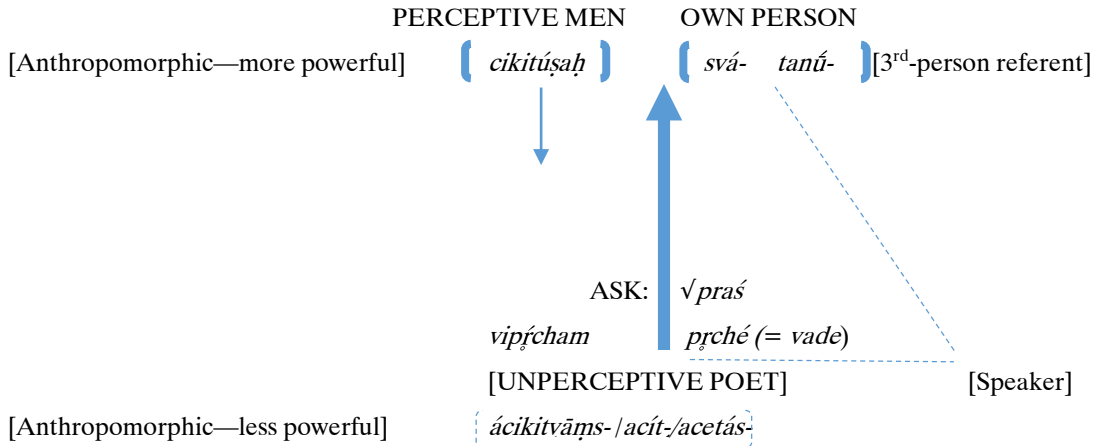
And I speak that/thus with my own person

7.86.3a **pṛché** tát éno varuṇa didīkṣu

I ask myself (/for my own benefit) about this guilt, o Varuṇa, wanting to see;

It would seem hard to avoid the impression that these are two expressions encoding essentially the same speech act. Once the speech acts encoded by *pṛché* (from $\sqrt{praś}$) and *vade* are equated, the hierarchical dynamics involved whenever a form of $\sqrt{praś}$ is used in the *Rig Veda* would also start to structure our understanding of the interaction between Vasiṣṭha and his “own person.” (As an aside, we can now confirm the reflexive sense of *pṛché*, because now we have a reflexive interlocutor to whom the question is addressed—*svá- tanú-*, “(my) own person”). Vasiṣṭha is using Structuring Device 4 to construct one portion of himself (the speaker) as subordinate to another portion (the addressee, encoded as *svá- tanú-*), in the same way that he as a speaker is subordinate to the wise men whom he asks ($\sqrt{praś}$). I chart the connection between *svá- tanú-* and the hierarchical homology that developed around $\sqrt{praś}$ below.

Verses 2-3—Construction of Interlocutors



The fact that the semantics of $\sqrt{praś}$ are once again at play additionally suggests that there is a way of connecting it to the broader hierarchies expressed via the other nominal homologies (those articulated in Structuring Devices 2 and 4). The question now becomes, do the other forms of *svá-* and *tanú-* in Structuring Device 4 articulate additional rungs in a hierarchical nominal homology, and if so, does this homology communicate the same human-divine and animacy contrasts that we detected in the other nominal homologies?

The easiest way to begin to answer this is by focusing on the round of Structuring Device 1 (up through Verse 6) that most obviously relates to human-divine hierarchies:

7.86.4c prá tán me voco dūḷabha svadhāvo¹

You'll voice it to me, hard-to-deceive one, force all your own!

Related to the first member of the collocation *svá-* + *tanú-*, i.e. the reflexive adjective *svá-* that I am translating as “(one’s) own,” the epithet *svadhāvant-*, (translated here as) “force all (one’s) own,” combines this reflexive element with a stem derived from the verb $\sqrt{dhā}$, “put, bestow.” It is a thoroughly divine-oriented epithet in the *Rig Veda*, one that is attached to Varuṇa in this context. It appears in the same hemistich as the other divine-oriented lexical items we have had occasion to examine, i.e. *anenás-* and *áva* + $\sqrt{yā}$. We can definitely add a divine rung to our putative hierarchical nominal homology involving *svá-* and *tanú-*, even if the first epithet that articulates it refers to Varuṇa rather than to Vasiṣṭha’s higher self.

What about a lower, less-animate rung? The first use of *tanú-* in 7.86 is repaired by the more semantically versatile *tanúbhiḥ*—yet another instrumental plural that can be construed to have various levels of animacy, as indicated by the alternative translations presented at the beginning of this section (“by ourselves,” “by our persons,” “by our bodies”). In 7.86.5b, it initially seems like the meaning should be

that of a reflexive pronoun, referring to deceptions committed “by ourselves,” i.e. through our own (animate) agency, as opposed to the deceptions that are *pítiryā*, i.e. attributed to our “fathers.” However, the picture changes once we realize that the instrumental plural of *tanú*—much like the English phrase “our own persons”—seems to always connote some sort of corporeality, even when animacy is at play as well. Ultimately, I will conclude that the “repair” in 7.86 is in the direction of a more corporeal, less animate meaning.

The following passage, which mentions body parts in the immediately surrounding context, and hence refers to the “persons” in a primarily physical sense, is representative of a number of other examples.

4.2.14 ádhā ha yád vayám agne tuvāyá
 paḍbhír hástebhiś cakṛmá **tanúbhiḥ**
 ráthaṃ ná kránto ápasā bhuríjor
 ṛtām yemuḥ sudhíya áśuṣāṇáh
Then while we, o Agni, in serving you
*Have acted **with our** hands, feet, and **bodies/persons***
Like those making a chariot with the work of (our/their) two arms,
Those of good insight have held fast to the truth, panting over it.

Other times (e.g. in 7.57.3), the instrumental is surrounded with references to shining or glittering, or to unguents, which clarifies its physical sense. Other sorts of contrasts make the physical sense of *tanú*- the primary one in a passage like the following.

1.165.11 ámandan mā maruta stómo átra
 yán me naraḥ śrútiyam bráhma cakra
 índrāya víṣṇe súmakhāya máhyaṃ
 sákhye sákhāyas **tanúve tanúbhiḥ**
The praise song here has exhilarated me, o Maruts
The formulation worthy to be heard that you created for me, o Maruts
For me, Indra, the bull and strong combatant,
*For (me), your companion, as companions, **for (my) person/body by (your) persons/bodies***

It seems to me here that the Maruts are securing Indra’s *allegiance*, but also his *physical* aid—and that the two contrasting phrases in pāda 4c are hence referring first to the social bond, and then to the physical effects produced by the soma offering—with the latter being described using *tanú*.

A minority of passages, possibly including 7.86.5, seem to encompass *both* the corporeal meaning and the abstract/animate sense of the reflexive pronoun; the following pair of verses does so explicitly.

5.70.3 pātám no rudrā pāyúbhir

utá trāyethāṃ sutrātrā

turyáma dásyūn **tanúbhiḥ**

Protect us, Rudra, by your protections,

And rescue us, Good rescuers/

We with our own persons/bodies would overcome the Dasyus

5.70.4 mākásya adbhutakratū

yakṣám bhujemā **tanúbhiḥ**

má śéśasā má tánasā

O you of undeceived will, May we not

With respect to our persons endure (becoming) the specter of a nobody,²¹⁸

Not with respect to our remains, not with respect to our lineage.

Considering the appeal to Rudra expressed in 5.70.3, the first *tanúbhiḥ* in 5.70 can hardly mean “by ourselves”; and certainly the second *tanúbhiḥ* in Verse 4 encompasses both (individual) physical and social survival after death (i.e. survival *śéśasā*, “with respect to remains,” and survival *tánasā*, “with respect to lineage”).

All this is to say that because of broader phraseological trends in the *Rig Veda*, despite the specific contrast between the fathers’ sins and the sins that “we (ourselves) committed” in 7.86.5, it is hard to believe that *tanúbhiḥ* would not have corporeal connotations, conveying the physical *means* by which “we” might commit sins at least as much if not more than the possibility of *personal agency* in their commission. This would be all the more true considering that the instrumental appears after (and at least *sounds* as if it repairs) a phrase that was twisted into having an uncharacteristically non-physical meaning (*sváyā tanúvā*).²¹⁹

I think that *tanúbhiḥ* does occupy the lowest rung in a tripartite human-divine and animacy hierarchy much like the one articulated by the nominal homologies in Structuring Devices 2 and 4. This

²¹⁸ This follows Jamison and Brereton’s reading of *mā(k)ásya* as *mā + akásya* fused by sandhi.

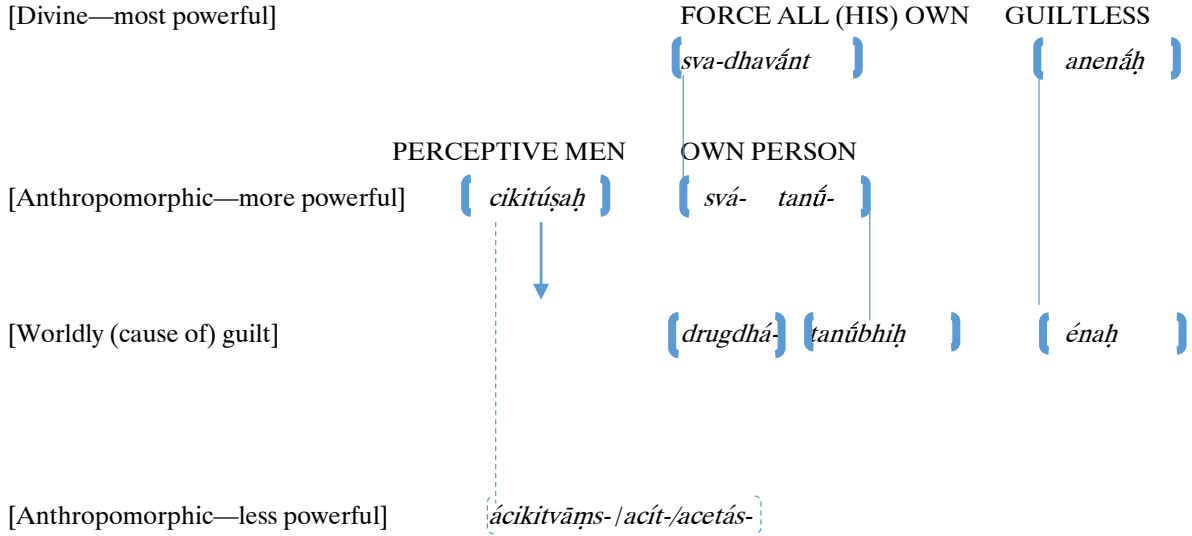
²¹⁹ If English equivalents are helpful thinking tools for the current reader, suppose that I said, “I speak with myself, one **on one, on my person**,” (with the normal physical sense of “on my person” being skewed by a context in which it blends with “one on one”); then, suppose I later said, “Our fathers’ sins, and those **on us persons**”; *both* the usage trends of “on...persons” and the echo of the earlier “on my person” would make it very difficult to hear in “on us persons” only the abstract agentive sense of, “those (sins that are) on us” (i.e. “our fault”)—and this despite the meaning that the immediate context *forces* “on my person” to have, and the meaning that immediate context *suggests* for “on us persons.”

time, the other rungs are expressed by the other forms of *svá-* and *tanú-* in Structuring Device 1. As of Verse 5, this particular hierarchy also connects Varuṇa to different conceptualizations of Vasiṣṭha’s “self,” conceptualizations that are allotted different statuses and shares in blame for Vasiṣṭha’s misdeeds. The lowest rung is the scapegoated corporeal “person”; then there is the in-between rung, encoded as *sváyā tanúvā*, that, much like the “perceptive men” in an adjacent pāda, serves as a go-between interlocutor; the highest rung, represented by *svadhāvant-*, an epithet for Varuṇa, also seems to suggest the idea that *svá-* as a reflexive element is divine-oriented within this particular hymn. (This will have consequences for the subsequent verse.)

So, to summarize the types of connections that we have just observed between terms in Structuring Device 1 and the nominal homologies articulated through Structuring Devices 2: the forms *anenāḥ* and *svadhāvaḥ* are epithets for the divine and human interlocutors in the moment of direct contact (pādas 4cd); *cikitúṣaḥ* and *svá- tanú-* encode analogous lofty human interlocutors who are “asked” by the lowly speaker (even though one of those interlocutors is an alter-ego of Vasiṣṭha); *ácittiḥ*, *énaḥ* and now *drugdhāni* are abstract nouns that articulate the guilt, its nature or cause. The corporeal sense of *tanú-* as it manifests in the (likely) instrumental of means, *tanúbhiḥ*, “with our persons,” occupies a rung below both the divine-oriented epithet *svadhāvant-* and the collocation *svá + tanú* within its respective hierarchical homology, in much the same way as the other abstract nouns occupy a space below divinities and more powerful anthropomorphic agents; and the shared non-masculine (neuter/feminine) genders of *éna-*, *drugdhá-*, *ácittiḥ* and *tanú-* would further suggest that (in the absence of counter-evidence) they should pattern together.

The chart below outlines the hierarchical homology articulated through Structuring Device 1, in comparison with the homologies articulated through Structuring Devices 2 and 4, as of Verse 5.

Verses 2-3—Construction of Interlocutors



8.9 Nominal homologies and lower agencies: Verse 6

By the end of Verse 6, a new hierarchical homology has been articulated through Structuring Device 3; in addition, new forms associated with Structuring Devices 1 and 2 appear, helping coordinate this new homology with the others:

7.86.4a kím ága āsa varuṇa **jyáyīṣṭham**³

7.86.4b yát stotāraṃ jíghāmsasi sákhāyam

*What was that **highest** crime, Varuṇa,*

That you wanted to slay (your) praiser, (your) friend?

7.86.6a ná sá **svó**¹ dáḁṣo varuṇa dhrútiḥ sá

7.86.6b sūrā manyúr vibhídako **ácittiḥ**²...

7.86.6c ásti **jyáyān**³ kániyasa upāré

7.86.6d svápnaś canéd áṅṛtasya prayotá

This (was) not one's own devising nor was it deception(/seduction), Varuṇa:

*(It was) liquor, frenzy, dice, **lack of perception**...*

*The **higher-up** is in the offense of the lower;*

Not even sleep (is) a warder-off of untruth

First let us remind ourselves of something explored in more length in the introduction to this dissertation (Part I, Section 4.3): the *pejorative* use of the superlative *jyáyīṣṭha-* (metrically restored from *jyéṣṭha-*) to mean “highest/most egregious (crime)” is not in keeping with Rigvedic phraseology, in which

this superlative from $\sqrt{jyā}$, “overcome” is almost always an honorific title or positive attribute (in the other cases, it can be construed as neutral, but not pejorative).

Pāda 6c’s apparent use of the comparative *jyāyaṃs-* in a more neutral sense, to denote superior power or social capital (i.e. in contradistinction to *kānīyaṃs-*, “younger, less powerful”) is definitely more in keeping with Rigvedic phraseology: the two terms are contrasted in similar ways within a number of other hymns. This latter use of the root $\sqrt{jyā}$ “overpower”—which appears to deflect blame away from Vasiṣṭha and onto a greater power of some sort—would definitely sound more natural. The question becomes: who or what is that greater power, and how does he/it fit into the broader scheme of shapeshifting qualities and entities being described?

The conversion of a neuter-gender abstract form—(*āgaḥ*) *jyāyīṣṭham*, “highest (crime)” —to an animate masculine-gender substantive *jyāyān* reminds one greatly of the change from *énaḥ* to *anenāḥ*, especially given the semantic similarity of “guilt” and “highest (crime)” —but then, there is a crucial difference: in one case, the animate figure is being completely absolved of blame (and associated with divinity), and in another case he is being charged with it. To understand what this twist means for making sense of both homologies, let’s examine other passages in which the antonyms *jyāyaṃs-* and *kānīyaṃs-* are contrasted. The first example is from Maṇḍala 7:

7.20.7 yád indra púrvo áparāya śíkṣann
 áyaj **jyāyān kānīyaso** dayiṣṇám
 amṛta ít pári āsīta dūrám
 á citra cítriyam bharā rayiṃ naḥ
*When, o Indra, a predecessor will be doing his best for his successor
 And a more important man will embark upon giving to a lesser one,
 Should the immortal be the only one sitting it out that far away?
 Bright one, bring bright wealth here to us.*

In this context, the contrast between the *jyāyaṃs-* and *kānīyaṃs-* is juxtaposed with, but distinct from, two other contrasts: one explicit contrast between an older predecessor and a younger successor, and another implicit one between an immortal god and mortal officiants (i.e. *naḥ*, “us”). In another example from Maṇḍala 7, the “greater” (*jyāyaṃs-*) element is an abstract quality or less-animate item imparted by a god to his lesser mortal partners.

7.32.24 abhī ṣatás tád á bhara
 índra **jyāyaḥ kānīyasaḥ**
 purūvásur hí maghavan sanád ási

bháre-bhare ca hávīyaḥ

To those who are, Bring here this

Greater (good), to those (who are) lesser, Indra.

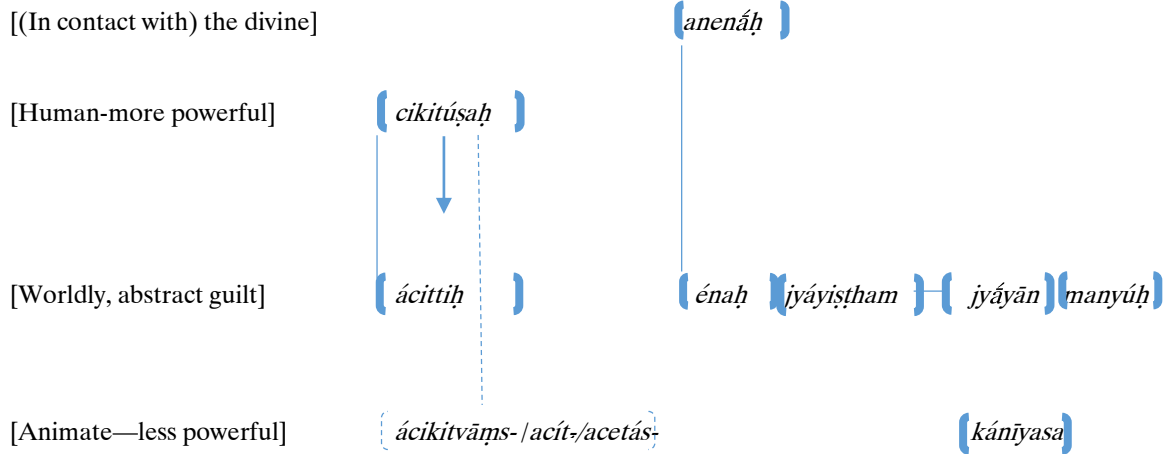
For you, o bounteous one, are from of old one with many goods,

And one to be called upon at every raid.

So, the comparative adjective *jyāyāms-* can be used substantively to describe either anthropomorphic entities or abstract concepts.

Other contexts that do not include *kānīyāms-* show similarly versatile applications of *jyāyāms-*. The adjective is used for animate anthropomorphic entities (human or divine) in many different hymns: see, for instance, 4.30.1ab and 6.30.4ab, in which the term is used of a *nonexistent* hypothetical being greater than Indra. The adjective is used of an abstract (neuter *or* masculine) quality in multiple other places as well: see 5.44.8ab (*jyājāmsam...ṛṣisvarām*, “the higher sonority of the singers”) and 6.26.7b (*jyāyaḥ...sumnām ójaḥ* “greater favor and might”).

Returning now to Verse 6 to determine the identity of the “greater” and “lesser” parties there: it is certainly possible to interpret both parties as male anthropomorphic (human or divine) substantives—but if that were the only interpretation, the speaker would run the risk of implying that a particular interlocutor bears the blame for Vasiṣṭha’s crime/lack of perception. Not surprisingly, then, other possibilities present themselves. Notice that of the five abstract (or at least non-anthropomorphic) qualities/entities mentioned as culprits in Verse 6, two—*manyúḥ*, “intention, frenzy” and also *vibhídakaḥ*, “dice”—are masculine-gendered, and thus (at least grammatically speaking) candidates for the referent of *jyāyān*. “Frenzy” (*manyúḥ*) seems like an appropriate enough culprit; in this interpretation, then, the “highest/most egregious (crime)”—formerly attributed to Vasiṣṭha—is recategorized as an abstract but very animate “frenzy” that can overpower (*√jyā*) unsuspecting humans. The concomitant arrival of *ácittiḥ* renames this higher “frenzy” at the same time as it connects these contrasts with the hierarchical homology associated with Structuring Device 2; and this connection helps suggest how this latest homology contributes the broader schema that these structuring devices are jointly articulating.



(Within this chart, lines indicate homologies explicitly articulated by formally linked terms. The relationships between other terms are partially formally determined too, dependent as they are on the semantics of shared morphological categories: *énaḥ* and (*ágaḥ*) *jyáyiṣṭham* are semantically comparable neuter abstracts; *jyáyams-* and *kánīyams-* antonymic masculine comparatives.)

We see then that the nominal homology connecting *jyáyiṣṭham* and *jyáyān*—while bridging a gap in an animacy hierarchy inherent in the contrast between neuter and (masc/fem) animate genders—does not articulate a contrast along the by-now familiar agency or human-divine hierarchies; instead, it reframes the notions of guilt and an abstract animate impetus (*ácittiḥ*) into something that *sounds* perfectly capable of overcoming a weaker person (a masculine-gendered “higher-up” that in other contexts does describe an anthropomorphic agent). It is this transition that poetic repair is deployed to facilitate, and with good reason: this is one way to make these abstract agents more convincingly deflect blame away from any of the poet’s alter-egos (but still without impugning actual higher-ups, such as the god or the perceptive men).

Another important consequence of the introduction of this masculine “higher-up” (*jyáyān*) is the sort of clarity that it retrospectively lends to the double-simile in the preceding verse.

7.86.5 áva⁴ drugdháni pítiryā sṛjā no
 áva⁴ yá vayam cakṛmá tanúbhiḥ¹
 áva⁴ rájan paśutṛpam ná táyúm
 sṛjá vatsám ná dámano vásiṣṭham
Down and away release our fathers’ misdeeds (and)
Down and away those we have committed *by ourselves/with our bodies/persons*
Down and away, like a cattle –stealing thief, o King—
Release Vasiṣṭha, like a calf, from the bond.

Typically, the last two seemingly contradictory similes “like a cattle-stealing thief” (*paśutṛpam ná tāyúṃ*) and “like a calf” (*vatsám nā*)—are both interpreted to describe Vasiṣṭha. While they undoubtedly do characterize the poet in one sense or another, my syntactic interpretation of this passage is different. I believe the listener would retrospectively associate the masculine-gendered *thief* (*tāyú-*) with the neuter-gendered *misdeeds* (*drugdhāni*) in light of the association that develops between the guilty masculine-gendered “higher-up” (*jyāyān*) and the neuter-gendered highest (*jyāyīṣṭham*) crime (*āgas-*), along with other semantically similar neuter-gendered words like *éna-* and *tanū-*.²²⁰

In contrast, the other simile involving a masculine-gendered noun, *vatsám nā* “like a calf” (in pāda 5d) would gravitate toward *vásiṣṭham*, “Vasiṣṭha”—and I argue that in doing so, it characterizes Vasiṣṭha’s guiltless, godlike half as more fundamental to his identity than his sinful, thieving half. This may sound counterintuitive at first: one’s first inclination may be to associate the calf with the “lesser” one (*kānīyaṃs-*) from Verse 6 due to the difference in agency between the calf and the thief (*tāyú-*)—but our treatment of 7.77 would suggest otherwise. In a long footnote to Part II, Section 2.2, I quoted and cited passages that suggest that the “calf” in Rigvedic phraseology is often a reference to the *god* to whom cows (read: hymns, sacrificial substances, or officiants) devote themselves. I repeat just two of many examples below.

²²⁰ One may consider the differing structure of the first three pādas versus the fourth as a cue to construe 5a-c as one syntactic unit and 5d as another. The first three pādas begin with the preposition *áva*, and all the referents described could be syntactically construed with the imperative form *śjā* in pāda 5a, whereas the last does not begin with this preposition, having a second instance of *śjā* in its place.

On an at least peripherally related note: the verb *áva + √śj* typically has both a downward directional meaning, in which various elements or entities are sent down and away from an elevated enclosure, and a meaning of divinely-accomplished liberation from a type of bondage. Typically these two meanings are jointly present—but given the repetition of *áva-* in the first three pādas, one might suppose that the downward directional meaning might be more keenly felt within those pādas, as if the misdeeds (that are like a “cattle-stealing thief”) are husks that are cast down to reveal Vasiṣṭha’s calf-like higher self. The verb *áva + √śj* is the same one used for when Indra releases waters or cows, which emerge from a mountain (often encircled by a serpent), and flow down toward the sea or the ground. To take one of many examples:

6.30.4c áhann áhim pariśáyānam árṇo

6.30.4d **ávāśjjo** apó áchā samudrám

You smashed the serpent that lay around the flood

You released the waters down and away toward the sea.

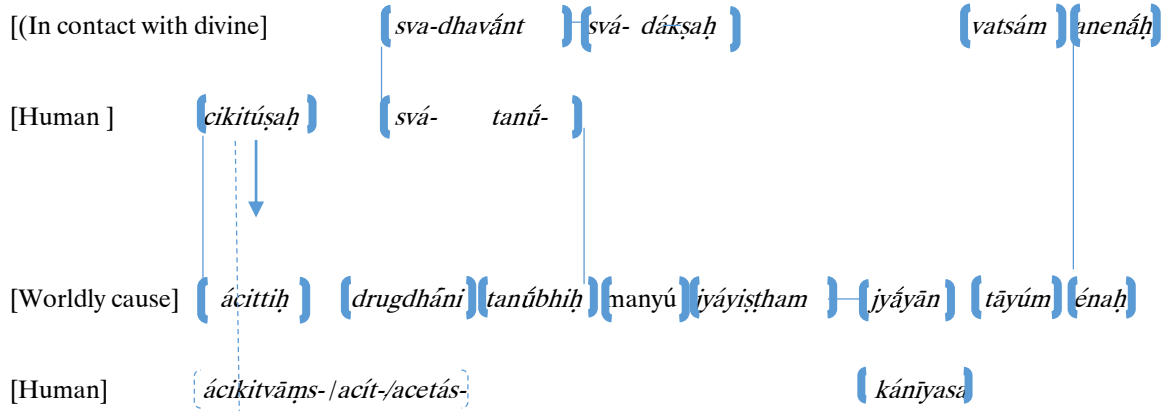
See also, for instance, 6.43.3a-c, in which the **cows** (*gáḥ*) that Indra is said to have released (*áva + √śj*) are explicitly *antár áśmanaḥ...dṛḥhāḥ* “firmly fixed...within a rock”—a passage also featuring the same preposition *antár* that frames the question that Vasiṣṭha poses to his better half (*svá- tanū*) in 7.86.2ab: *kadā nú antár Váruṇe bhuvāni*, “When will I be within Varuṇa?”

- 3.41.5 matáyaḥ somapám urúm
 rihánti śávasas pátim
 índraṃ **vatsám** ná **mātáraḥ**
Thoughts/prayers the wide Soma-drink
Lick, and (they lick) the lord of strength,
*Indra, like **mothers** a **calf**.*
- 9.12.2 abhí víprā anūṣata
gávo vatsám ná **mātáraḥ**
The wordsmiths bellowed
*Like **cow-mothers** to **calves**.*

So any mention of the *calf-like* Vasiṣṭha would in fact evoke that higher self, encoded by the divine-oriented adjective *anenás-*, and by the adjective *svá-*, which Structuring Device 1 connects with the divine-oriented epithet *svadhāvanta-*. At the same time, Verse 6 provides a new phrase involving *svá-* that can be interpreted to refer to Vasiṣṭha’s higher self: *svó dáksaḥ*, “(one’s) own devising,” which is explicitly absolved of blame (and implicitly capable of being in contact with the divine).

8.10 Summary: Nominal homologies and agency hierarchies:

In short, then, the interconnected homologies articulated via the hymn’s first six verses via *all four* structuring devices serve not only to deflect blame away from the poet and onto other abstract agents, thieving parties, and miscreant “persons,” but actually carve out a part of Vasiṣṭha’s identity that would be on par with Varuṇa if only the god would release it from its bonds with all the rest: a guiltless appeaser, a prized calf, a pristine intent, left when all the lesser portions have been cast down (from within the stronghold that was Vasiṣṭha’s integrated persona; see the footnote on *áva + √sṛj*). The role of poetic repair within this schema has been to make the establishment of this unusually stratified and fine-grained agency hierarchy *sound* more natural: the uneasy marriage of corporeal substance and animate agency represented by *sváyā tanúvā* practically begged for a stabilizing stratification, and the natural-sounding transition between *jyáyiṣṭham* and *jyáyān* helped recast abstract forms of guilt attributed to the poet into animate agents that were capable of *overpowering* him.



Looping back to the question that initiated this whole section—namely, what makes Verse 4 a “more intimate” moment than Verse 3 from anything beyond a purely formal perspective—we can see that the crucial hemistich, i.e. pādas 4cd, contain the designation for Varuṇa that ultimately encompasses a part of Vasiṣṭha’s *own* (*svá-*) identity, namely, the vocative *svadhāvaḥ*, “force all (your) own.” It also contains the divine-oriented idiom for “appease,” *áva jyām*; the divine-oriented nature of that idiom, and of the epithet *anenáh*, further paves the way for an understanding of Vasiṣṭha as a poet caught between his weak flesh and his willing, wily spirit. In other words, in retrospect, this hemistich contains what will prove to be the most decisive ingredients of the implicit solution to Vasiṣṭha’s problem of estrangement.

Even after all of this, though, at least one question still remains: what is to say that the god would actually *answer* the call to action in Verse 5—i.e. free his prized calf Vasiṣṭha from the sins and sinfulness that surround him, revealing a peer that could be accepted *within* Varuṇa’s *own* (*svá-*) self? Or, to put the question another way, what would make Vasiṣṭha’s human audience, some of whom Vasiṣṭha felt a need to deferently describe as the “perceptive ones,” consent to a solution that enables Vasiṣṭha to go over their heads?

8.11 Verse 7: The first hemistich, the final nominal homology, and the listener’s own interpretive agency

As it turns out, the second half of Verse 7 will go a long way towards answering this last question—but first we need to examine one last homology that gives listeners the option of subtly reconfiguring their understanding of Vasiṣṭha’s identities.

7.86.7ab áraṃ dāsó ná mīlhúṣe karāṇi
 ahám deváya bhúrṇaye **ánāgāḥ**³
Like a servant/Dāsa, I will give satisfaction to the Generous (Master);
I, free(d) of criminality, to the Ardent God.

What we should immediately recognize is that this passage allows another repetition that is part of Structuring Device 3 to articulate a second homology, connecting *ágaḥ*, “crime” (neuter-gendered) with *ánāgāḥ*, “free(d) of criminality” (masculine-gendered).

7.86.4a kím **ága**³ āsa varuṇa **jyáyiṣṭham**³

7.86.4b yát stotáram jígḥāmsasi sákhāyam

*What was that **highest** crime, Varuṇa,*

That you wanted to slay (your) praiser, (your) friend?

This might initially appear to be articulating exactly the same type of hierarchical contrast that we saw in the forms *énaḥ*, “guilt,” and *anenáḥ*, “guiltless”—but from a phraseological perspective, there is in fact a key difference. Whereas *anenáḥ* is a divine-oriented (and rather rare) epithet in the *Rig Veda*, *ánāgas-/ánaga-*, “free(d) of criminality,” is a mostly human-oriented epithet: if and when it is applied to divinities, it is primarily in their capacity as intercessors on behalf of equally crimeless humans (see 7.60.1 for an example of that type). The bulk of examples look like the following two from Maṇḍala 7.

7.62.2cd prá no mitráya váruṇāya voco

ánāgaso aryamṇé agnáye ca

To Mitra and Varuṇa You [= god Sūra, the Sun] will proclaim us

(To be)free of criminality, and to Aryaman and to Agni.

7.97.2 á daíviyā vṛṇīmahe ávāṃsi

bṛhaspátir no maha á sakhāyaḥ

yáthā bhávema **mīlhúṣe ánāgā**

yó no dātá parāvataḥ pitéva

We choose divine help.

For us, o comrades, Bṛhaspati holds himself

*So that we can become **free(d) of criminality to the Generous One.***

Who is a giver to us from afar, like a father.

Notice that this last example juxtaposes the adjective *ánāga(s)-* with another form from 7.86.7, the divine-oriented *mīlhúṣe* (from *mīlhváṃs-*, also discussed above in conjunction with *áva + √yā*).

The most notable feature of the passages above, a feature present in most similar examples that could be adduced, is that *humans* who are described as *ánāga(s)-* explicitly require a divine intercessor to convince another divinity that they are in fact free of criminality. In other words, this word portrays Vasiṣṭha as something very different from the blameless (*anenás-*) godlike appeaser (*áva + √yā*) of Verse 4. We might take it to encode the lesser, corporeal half that needs the intercessor represented by Vasiṣṭha’s divine half and that needs to perform certain types of propitiation to make things right. It sounds as if Vasiṣṭha is

intentionally bringing himself down a notch, ascribing to himself a lower form of agency in a manner more reminiscent of Verse 3 than the intervening verses.

The second epithet ascribed to Vasiṣṭha in this hemistich, *dāsá-*, translated above as “*servant/Dāsa*,” is even more pointed in this regard. This word—which also appears as *dāśa-*, with a different accent—is most frequently used to refer to one of the primary despised Others in the *Rig Veda*—i.e. to a member of an enemy race, or a foe to be slain. Examples of this use from Maṇḍala 7 include 7.19.2, 7.83.1, and 7.99.4. (All involve the alternative accentuation of *dāśa*.) Below I will quote 7.99.4 exclusively, but it is representative of the tenor of the remaining examples, which also describe violent opposition to Dāsa targets under the aegis of Indra.

7.99.4 urúṃ yajñáya cakrathur ulokám
 janáyantā sūryam uśásam agním
 dāsasya cid vṛṣaśiprasya māyá
 jaghnáthur narā pṛtanájiyeṣu
 You two [=Indra and Viṣṇu] made a wide place for the sacrifice,
 While you were generating the sun, the dawn, the fire.
 *The magical wiles even **of the Dāsa** Vṛṣaśipra*
 Did you smite in battle drives, you two superior men.

Note the juxtaposition of a mythological example of generative (*√jan*) ritual agency with a kind of sorcery, i.e. a sinister analog from outside the normative sociopolitical order and human-divine hierarchy. There are frequent contrasts between Dāsa agency and Ārya agency (see, for instance, 7.83.1, which mentions these two contrastive classes of foes of the king Sudās).

As for the form *dāsá-* that we find in 7.86: the overwhelming majority of examples of this form too are found in passages that describe violent conflicts with Indra. The most common collocation involving this form describes removing the head (*śiraḥ*) of a Dāsa (*dāsásya*).

2.20.6ab *sá ha śrutá índaro + nāma deva / ūrdhvó bhuvan mánuṣe dasmátamaḥ*
 2.20.6cd *áva priyám arśasánásya sāhvāñ / chíro bharad **dāsásya** svadhāvān*
 The god famed as Indra by name / He the most wondrous, rose upright for Manu.
 *The able one, the force all his own, carried off the **head** of the **Dāsa** Arśasana.*

So also in 4.18.9, 5.30.7-8, etc.

Note in conjunction with this that the word *bhūrṇi-*, used to describe Varuṇa in pāda 7b, connotes a bestial sort of energy (paired as it is with *pasú-*, “animal,” in 7.87.2b; *ásva-*, “horse,” in 8.17.15c; *mṛgá-*, “beast,” in 8.1.20c; and *gó-*, “cow,” in 9.41.1a). At least sometimes that energy is turned toward explicitly

violent ends: in 9.17.1b, *bhūrṇi-* is used to describe surging soma juices smashing obstacles that stand in their way—and the words used for “smash” and “obstacle” are the same words used to encode the smiting of Indra’s foe *Vṛtra* (*√han* and *vṛtrá-*).

Now, there *is* at least one possible alternate interpretation of this passage. In a small minority of passages, the *Dāsa* are a fully subservient class that lives in fear of the *Ārya* sociopolitical order, but does not necessarily suffer the full brunt of its wrath.²²¹ One example follows.

5.34.6cd *índro vísvasya damitá vibhíṣaṇo*
*yathāvaśám nayati **dásam** áriyaḥ*
Indra (is) the dominator of all, spreading fear;
*the Ārya leads the **Dāsa** as he wishes.*

So in their rosiest characterization, the semantic valences of *dāsá-* would be comparable to similar valences of a word like English “humbled,” which can be deployed as an expression of deference—one can be “humbled” by a complement—but which can also be used as a synonym for “humiliated”—as in “humbled/humiliated the enemy.” (However, “humbled” has positive connotations of deference far more frequently than *dāsá-* could.)

The first two *pādas* of Verse 7, then, show quite a marked departure from the rhetorical strategy deployed in Verses 4-6. Rather than configuring a first-person interlocutor on par with *Varuṇa*, *Vasiṣṭha* chooses a human-oriented descriptor to rename himself as he (in the first person) describes his interactions with the god; what is more, in the same hemistich he compares himself to a *Dāsa*, a type of Other with a tenuous at best place in the *Rigvedic* sociopolitical hierarchy. To the extent that these descriptors can be reconciled with the agency hierarchy fleshed out in prior verses, they would pattern with *Vasiṣṭha*’s *implicit* self-characterization as unperceptive—a self-characterization that we extrapolated on the basis of related phraseology that he deployed (see Sections 8.4-6 above). In prior segments of the hymn, *Vasiṣṭha* seems to have taken pains to keep that self-characterization *implicit*, i.e. to paint unperceptive*ness* and other abstract agents as the culprit rather than risk the bitter fate often reserved for the incorrigibly unperceptive

²²¹ As a *far* more remote possibility, we might compare the word *dāsá-* to phonologically similar standard phraseology encoding a relationship with a god built on ritual service, via a pair of verbal/participial stems, *daśasy-* and *dāśvāms-*: e.g. in 7.37.5a-d: *sánitāsi praváto **dāśúṣe** cit... kadá na indra rāyá á **daśasyeḥ*** “You regularly gain the river courses just **for you (pious) server**... When, o Indra, **would you serve** (some) of your wealth to us?” We might speculate that the use of *dāsá-* is some sort of oblique reference to this formula, or at least inspired by it—an extraordinarily self-deprecating variant, perhaps.

(Section 8.6). Therefore, one might wonder what would account for the marked departure represented by such a self-designation as “Dāsa,” which would seem to run the same sort of risk.

As we are about to see, these departures are meant to put Vasiṣṭha on par with his human audience, who for the first time since Verse 3, will soon be tempted to hear a reference to themselves in one of Vasiṣṭha’s lines. In the last two padas of Verse 7, the adjective *acít-*, “unperceptive,” is finally explicitly used—but rather than characterizing Vasiṣṭha, it names a group of masculine plural agents reminiscent of those audience members who were previously referred to with a nearly antonymic designation: *cikitúṣaḥ*, “perceptive.”

Essentially, these audience members will be invited to imagine that their current perceptiveness is a result of an interaction with Varuṇa, who (in a move reminiscent of “Amazing-Grace”) is said to have made the unperceptive perceive. Or, some such thing is said: as always, the devil’s in the details, and so are the dangers. As previously noted, in Rigvedic phraseology, those coded as “unperceptive” are often as doomed as the Dāsas. Perhaps in temporarily comparing himself to a Dāsa, the poet is encouraging listeners to run the risks that come with this second self-identification. Of course, Vasiṣṭha himself stands to gain if they do: if listeners grow to think that Varuṇa saved them from a former unperceptive state, they can hardly offer resistance to the idea that Varuṇa might do the same in the case of Vasiṣṭha’s unperceptiveness.

8.12 Pādas 7cd: Structuring device 2, verbal homologies, and listeners’ own relationships to Varuṇa

Pādas 7cd mark the first time since Verse 3 that an animate plural masculine substantive has been referenced—i.e. they offer the first opportunity for the “perceptive” listeners to once again hear references to themselves in Vasiṣṭha’s verses.

7.86.7cd *āceta*yad² *acít*o² devó aryó

gr̥tsam̐ rāyé *kavítar*o² junāti

The noble god made the unperceptive perceptive/made the unperceptive perceive.

The better Kavi speeds his Clever One to the riches.

The connections between pādas 7cd and Verse 3 run deeper than that, however: recall that in Verse 3, *both* the roots *√cít* and the stem *kaví-* were used to encode the third-party human listeners.

7.86.3bc úpo emi *cikitúṣ*o² vip̥c̥ham

samānám ín me *kaváyaś*o² cid āhur

I approach the perceptive in order to ask.

The Kavis have said the very same one thing to me:

There is a kind of symmetry uniting the hierarchical relationship between *kaváyaḥ* “Kavis” (in Verse 3) and *kavítaraḥ*, “better Kavi” (in Verse 7) on the one hand, and *cikítuṣaḥ* “perceptive men” (in Verse 3) and (*yáḥ*) *áacetayat... deváḥ*, “the god... (who) made perceive/perceptive” (in Verse 7) on the other. This would allow the listeners who have been encoded as Kavis to suppose that the god who *made perceive/perceptive*, i.e. Varuṇa, is also being called the *kavítaraḥ* “better Kavi”—and in consequence, that Varuṇa is the same basic sort of entity as the Kavis themselves, just a notch higher in a hierarchy of knowledge and power. (The stem *kavítaraḥ*, “better sage poet,” is a hapax, and as such, would provide little resistance to listeners’ efforts to hear the presence of the god within it.)

So, in the second hemistich, what is first of all clear is that Vasiṣṭha gives his audience of Kavis an opportunity to pay themselves a compliment by connecting themselves to the Better Kavi, Varuṇa. It will by now come as no surprise to the reader that Vasiṣṭha himself stands to gain from this arrangement: in hearing the god as the better Kavi, they assign another divine-oriented epithet to Vasiṣṭha by the process of elimination. The direct object *gṛtsam* that is counterposed to the *kavítaraḥ* (“Better Kavi”) comes from an adjective *gṛtsa-*, “clever,” which has a very firm usage pattern: in all other passages, this adjective is exclusively used as an epithet for a god.²²²

²²² Other divine-oriented instances of *gṛtsa-* include: 3.1.3d; 3.19.1b; 3.48.3c; 4.5.2c; 7.4.2a; 7.87.5c; 10.25.5c 10.28.5b. In consequence, Jamison and Brereton (2014) take *gṛtsam* to refer to Varuṇa; but of course we might take the adjective to reference the more godlike half of Vasiṣṭha. Even if a listener attempts to retrospectively fit Vasiṣṭha into the role of the (possibly mortal) “better Kavi” in order to attribute divine qualities exclusively to Varuṇa, he runs into problems. Because *kavítaraḥ* is a hapax, the usage trends of the verb for which it serves as the subject would be most keenly-felt cue to the (human or divine) nature of the agency of this “better Kavi.” A quick survey of present-stem forms of the verb $\sqrt{jū}$ (like *jūnāti* in 7.86.7d) reveals that they often refer to *gods* quickening humans (or less-animate entities, like rain, clouds, chariots). So the clause *gṛtsam rāyé ...jūnāti*, “(He) speeds the clever one to the riches,” patterns with, for instance, 1.71.6d, *yásad rāyá saráthaṃ yám jūnāsi*, “He whom **you** (O Agni) **speed** will drive in the same chariot **with wealth**.” For similar uses of $\sqrt{jū}$ in Maṇḍala 7, see also 7.40.3c and 7.56.20a; from elsewhere in the *Rig Veda*, see for instance 1.27.7b; 1.169.3b; 2.31.4b; 4.11.4d; and 5.58.3b.

A second usage trend, which seems to be restricted to Maṇḍala 7, might initially seem to offer more options for a listener who is keen on denying Vasiṣṭha the divine-oriented title of *gṛtsa-*: within this maṇḍala, the same stem from $\sqrt{jū}$ can be used in conjunction with references to human patrons, e.g. in 7.67.9ab: *asaścātā maghávadbhyo hí bhūtām | yé rāyiyá maghadéyaṃ jūnānti*: “(O Ásvins) be unfailing for the bounteous ones, /Who **speed** their gift of bounty **with wealth**.” See also 7.20.10b and especially 7.21.10b. In both 7.20 and 7.21, the *maghávānaḥ* —“the bounteous ones,” a reference to the patrons—incite *naḥ* “us,” i.e. the officiants. So, if the speaker/poet Vasiṣṭha is indeed taken to be the “better Kavi” who *speeds* (*jūnāti*), he would sound as if he is a patron to the clever god.

However, that last example, *RV* 7.21, creates a problem for superimposing the connotations of patronage onto 7.86.7 (beyond the obvious one: that the speaker is a poet, i.e. Vasiṣṭha has a different sociopolitical role than

Listeners would have a harder time wrapping their hands around the the relationship between themselves as “perceptive ones” (*cikitúṣaḥ*) and Varuṇa as the god who “made perceptive” (*áçetayat*). It is certainly hierarchical, and potentially intimate: if the listeners hear themselves in *acítaḥ*, “the unperceptive ones,” i.e. the third person masculine entities who directly interact with Varuṇa in pāda 7c, then their subsequently acquired wisdom (embedded into the characterization of *cikitúṣaḥ*) is a god-given gift, and perhaps a sign of favor. What complicates things are the possible costs to the very same listeners of insisting on that particular interpretation.

We could rephrase this potential interpretation to say that these listeners may instinctively feel that *áçetayad acítaḥ*, in conjunction with prior forms of \sqrt{cit} , is obliquely referencing a reciprocity relationship between the god and themselves—one that had the ultimate result of converting formerly unperceptive men into the current *perceptive* listeners, whose place in the human-divine hierarchy is just below Varuṇa’s and who are therefore worthy of deference. From a formal perspective at least, the type of etymological figure seen here—an animate noun syntactically dependent upon a transitive verb—can be used to convey such a relationship.²²³

that of the patron—and, besides, wouldn’t acting like a patron to the god be a bit, well, patronizing?). The issue is that another verse in *RV* 7.21 (Verse 5) contrastively emphasizes the idea that other types of humans, *yātávaḥ* and *vāndanāḥ*, “sorcerers” and “sycophants,” do *not* “incite” (\sqrt{ju} , using the perfect stem) anyone to action. This contrastive reference in 7.21 to human agents beyond the typical sociopolitical fabric would seem to indicate that not all humans have the kind of agency being described—and that makes at least a slight additional problem for a reading that assumes *kavítaraḥ*, i.e. the subject of *junāti* in 7d, is coreferential with the *dāsá-*, i.e. with the Dāsas who live beyond the pale. Of course, this coreferentiality is a requirement if Vasiṣṭha is to play the role of the “better Kavi,” because he (or a part of him) is unquestionably the Dāsa in the first half of Verse 7.

One possible generalization about usage trends of the present stem of \sqrt{ju} in Maṇḍala 7 is the following: the agent who “speeds” or “incites” is at least a peer to the one being sped or incited; in fact, the agent is more likely to be a higher-up in a sociopolitical or human-divine hierarchy. So if *gṛtsa-* refers to Varuṇa, the “better sage” (*kavítaraḥ*) who “speeds” (*junāti*) him starts to sound like a peer of the god.

In other words, the firm usage patterns of *gṛtsa-* and the malleability of the *hapax*, whose sense must be affected by the verb with which it is connected, do not really provide the listener with an interpretation that erases Vasiṣṭha’s godlike side. That being the case, the natural way to resolve this ambiguity would be for the audience of Kavis to accept the divinity of both parties, and to assign to Varuṇa the label *kavítaraḥ*, which connects him with themselves.

If this argument is making problems for the reader’s intuition, here is an English adaptation that mimicks the problems created when one tries to read *only* the direct object *gṛtsam* as divine.

*The better sage breathes
Straight into the Creator's sails -
Quickens him toward the treasure.*

²²³ See, for instance, Watkins 1995: Chapter 37.

However, a few formidable obstacles present themselves to a listener who is leaning towards such an interpretation—obstacles which it would take a large amount of attention and even imagination to overcome. Recall that the criteria for verbal/deverbative reciprocal homologies were as follows:

- 1) (thematic) the **focus is on commonalities in the roles/performed actions of parties in different places within the human/divine hierarchy**
- 2) (formal) there is a **key verbal root** that can be shown to clearly apply to both sides of a specific human-divine interaction in multiple Rigvedic passages.
- 3) (formal) In the case in question, **at least one relevant interaction** between parties on different positions of the human-divine hierarchy is **clearly encoded by a verbal form of the root in question**.

The problems we encounter start right off with the first criterion, or even with the assumptions in which it is grounded: namely, that there is an *interaction* instead of a one-way action, and that there are two comparable *active* roles that we can ascribe to two different parties, instead of the diametrically opposed roles of agent and patient. It will soon become clear that while the verb \sqrt{cit} is sometimes used to describe reciprocal *acts* of perception leading *up* to an exchange between partners, and, in a *periphrastic way*, used to allude to ritual exchanges themselves, there seems to be no established Rigvedic discourse in which making someone perceive/be perceptive is clearly in and of itself a component of a reciprocity relationship.

In other words, to the extent that \sqrt{cit} is being used in 7.86.7 to communicate part of a verbal reciprocal homology, it is doing so in a way that appears to be unprecedented. This would not be the first novel turn of phrase that we have encountered in conjunction with Vasiṣṭha’s verbal homologies—recall, for instance, the interpretive labor required for a listener to understand the sense of *sám jānate* in 7.76—but here, as there, we have to ask what about the surrounding phraseology would guide and constrain the possible interpretations that sound likely to a listener’s inner ear.

A quick glance at usage patterns related to two forms of \sqrt{cit} found in 7.86.7c will sharpen our understanding of the relevant problems that Rigvedic phraseology poses. Within the *Rig Veda*, the stem *acít-* seems to have two senses. The dominant sense is quite like the sense of *acetás-* in 7.18 (quoted above in Section 8.4): **in other words, the “unperceptive” are enemies who must be punished for their harmful and incorrigible lack of vision**. This is the sense that we find in *RV* 7.104.1 and 9.97.54cd. Below I quote both examples.²²⁴

²²⁴ Cf. also a passage like 3.18.2c—although here the adjective is *acítta-*, not *acít-*, and the semantic valence is “imperceptible/invisible” rather than “unwise.”

3.18.2 tápo śú agne ántarāṁ **amítṛān**
tápā śáṁsam áraruṣaḥ párasya

7.104.1 índrāsomā tápataṃ rákṣa ubjátam
 ní arpayataṃ vṛṣaṇā tamovṛdhaḥ
 párā śṛṇītam **acító** ní oṣataṃ
 hatam nudétham ní śísitam atrīṇaḥ
Indra and Soma, scorch the demonic force, crush it!
Pin down those who grow strong in darkness, you bulls.
*Pound aside the **unperceptive ones**; burn them down.*
Smite, shove, grind down the voracious.

9.97.54c ásvāpayan nigútaḥ sneháyac ca

9.97.54d ápāmitrāṃś́ áp**ácító** acetáḥ

He [=Soma or Indra] put the challengers to sleep and “snowed” them.
*Turn back from here those without alliance (with us), back **those without perception**.*

The other sense of *acít-* appears to be more marginal, but we have it, for instance, in 7.61.5.

7.61.5 ámūrā vísvā vṛṣaṇāv imá vām
 ná yásu citráṃ dádrṣe ná yakṣám
 drúhaḥ sacante ánṛtā jánānām
 ná vām niṇyáni **acíte** abhūvan
O you two bulls, all these of yours who are never fooled—
Among whom has been seen neither sign nor wonder—
(These, your) deceptions!—(they) follow the untruths of men.
*There were no secrets to you two, (as if) **to (someone) unperceptive**.*

In this case, “unperceptive” means unable to perceive a specific thing, or lacking perception in some specific respects (which, presumably, could be addressed and corrected).

Notice how neatly the most ominous interpretations of *acít-* line up with the most negative valences of *dāsá*. For example, just as in 7.99, the *Dāsa* is described as having a kind of distorted, “magic” form of agency, parallel to but distinct from the ritual agency ascribed to humans and gods, the unperceptive often seem to form a social stratum alongside but emphatically distinct from the poet’s sociopolitical order. In both *RV* 7.18 and 9.97, a telltale sign that the incorrigibly “unperceptive” (*acít-* or *acetás-*) merit punishment rather than training is their exclusion from normal social circles: in these passages, the unperceptive are also *amíttra-* i.e. “without alliance.” A similar meaning can be gathered from the

tápo vaso **cikitāno acittān**
 ví te tiṣṭhantām ajārā ayásah
*Scorch those nearby **without alliance (to us)**;*
Scorch the recitation of the distant, ungenerous one.
*And scorch the **imperceptible ones as you become more perceptible**, Good (Agni).*
Let your unaging, irrepressible flames spread out.

descriptions of the unperceptive in 7.104 (quoted immediately above): they are characterized as *rákṣas-*, i.e. as part of a *demonic* force cut off from the human social order, and as *tamovṛdh-*, “growing in the darkness.” Note that the word for “noble” in 7.86 pāda 7c, i.e. *aryá-*, is related to *āriya-*, Ārya, which was contrasted with *dāsa-* (Dāsa) in 7.83.1 and elsewhere. If *dāsa-* is interpreted as the incorrigible other counterposed to the wrathful *noble* (*aryá-*) god—i.e. if the poet’s self characterization as a Dāsa is not read as deferently lowly, but as a sign that the poet should be laid low—it will not bode well for a listener who associated himself with the (formerly) *acītaḥ*.²²⁵

Conversely, if listeners, hearing themselves as the referents of *acītaḥ*, interpret the term to communicate a more limited and temporary unperceptiveness that *can* be corrected through instruction, this must brighten our Dāsa’s prospects as well. In other words, by tempting “perceptive” listeners to hear a version of themselves in a term whose usage trends align with those of *dāsa-*, and whose form is related to one of the causes of the poet’s predicament, Vasiṣṭha has bound his fate with theirs, and given them an increased stake in anticipating that his conflict with Varuṇa will be resolved. (Let us also not forget that the same structuring device connecting the *perceptive* listeners (*cikītuṣaḥ*) with the god who *makes* (people) *perceive* (*ācetaṃ*) also cites the poet’s *unperceptiveness* (*ācītiḥ*) as one of the abstract agents that led him

²²⁵ We might loosely compare the mutually reinforcing effect of *dāsa-* (in conjunction with *aryá-* and *bhūrṇi-*) and *acī-* when a listener fixates on the worst possible implications of pādas to the mutually reinforcing effect of “humbled” (in conjunction with “wrathful”) and “leveled” in the (more or less) analogously constructed lines below.

Now humbled, I bow before you

The wrathful

Lord leveled low heads -

“Bow before you” is used as a stand-in for “give satisfaction,” to help bring out the possible positive connotations of “humbled” in a way that sounds more natural in English. Here, “wrathful” with its ambiguous syntactic attachment is standing in for both *bhūrṇi-* and *aryá-*, the latter definitely connoting wrath against Dāsas at least. Key to this English adaptation is the fact that *mīlhuṣe*, “to the Generous (god),” is erased from this rendition, just as it would have to be ignored by the mind of a resentful listener who wishes the worst for Vasiṣṭha’s inner Dāsa (or outer Dāsa, if we are associating this alter-ego with *tanū*). “(The) Lord leveled low heads,” the analog of *ācetaṃ acītaḥ devó aryáḥ*, has two obvious valences, one negative and one positive. The most obvious meaning stems from the negative semantics of the form “leveled,” which connotes destruction—e.g. “That leveled him”; this meaning parallels the ominous valence of *ācetaṃ acītaḥ*, and could be paraphrased as “The Lord leveled them” or perhaps as “The Lord laid their heads low.” If we were interpreting the phrase in isolation, another meaning would be possible, one drawing from the phrase “level head,” according to which the clause could be paraphrased as “The Lord made low heads level”; this parallels the possible positive instructional (change-of-state) meaning in the Sanskrit phrase. But next to “humbled” and “wrathful” and in the absence of “Generous,” the negative valence of “leveled” unquestionably prevails.

astray—further suggesting that the fate of the poet and that of the (formerly) unperceptive in pāda 7c are closely intertwined.²²⁶)

The noun *acít-* is not the only ambiguous stem in this pāda: in addition, we cannot be sure of the sense of the causative stem *ceṭáya-*. In one usage, which would seem to be relevant here, this causative stem communicates a sort of prolonged general instruction leading to a change in state/status, i.e. a “making perceptive.” This is the sense that the stem has, for instance, in *RV*4.1.9 and 10.110.8; in both instances, a god is instructing mortals. I quote the first passage below (from an Agni-hymn).

4.1.9 **sá cetayan** mánuṣo yajñábandhuḥ
 prá tám mahyá raśanáyā nayanti
 sá kṣeti asya dúriyāsu sádhan
 devó mártasya sadhanitvám āpa
 ***He** as their tie to the sacrifice (of Manu) **makes men** (=latter-day Manus) **perceive**.*
 They lead him forth with a great halter.
 He dwells peacefully in his houses, assuring success;
 The god attains the fellowship of the mortal.

It is noteworthy that in both cited instances of this usage, the things that mortals are being made to perceive relate roles and rites within the *ritual* grounds, as opposed to, for instance, the forms and feats of gods in the sky.

²²⁶ The following loose and abridged renditions of pādas 3bc, 6ab, and Verse 7 attempt to imitate the broader structurally highlighted repetitions that make it impossible for a listener to hear himself in forms of *√cít* without simultaneously *perceiving* the interconnectedness of his fate and that of the speaker. (I put in bold the words that render structurally connected forms.)

3b *I go out to ask the **level-headed** -*
 3c *Even **sages** say that God is angry...*

6ab *It was not my will, God, but a **low point in my head**...*

7 *Now humbled, I bow before you*
 The wrathful
 *Lord **leveled low heads** -*
 *The **better sage** breathes wind*
 Straight into the Creator's sails,
 Quickens him toward the treasure.

(Here, “God” is being used as a stand-in for “Varuṇa”; and *ácittiḥ* is translated in such a way as to make evident its relationship with *acítaḥ*, which was already rendered as “low heads.”)

In another usage of the same stem, rather than *making perceptive*, the god makes something *perceived* or *perceptible*, with the agents who can then perceive it going in the dative (if they are expressed at all) *RV*3.34.5c is fairly representative of these sorts of examples.

3.34.5c **á**cetayad dhíya imá jaritré

3.34.5d prémám varṇam atirac chukráṃ āsām

He [i.e. Indra] **made** these insights **perceptible** to the singer;

He extended this bright hue of theirs [=insights].

See also *RV*9.97.13d and 1.3.12b; note that in all of these contexts, a god is making humans perceive a ritual tool (insights for the singer, words, “streams” as the gods descend to the ritual grounds) in the context of the ritual. Once again, it is not heavenly bodies that are being made to flash before the people’s eyes.

If we were to count middle forms of *cetáya-* used to encode gods’ attempts to make themselves perceived (*RV* 3.53.11 and 9.86.42.), this latter sense of “making perceived” would make up the preponderance of examples of this particular causative stem. Below I quote such a middle form as found in *RV*9.86 (a Soma-hymn).

9.86.42 só ágre áhnām hárir haryató mádaḥ

prá **cétasā cetayate** ánu dyúbhiḥ

duvā jánā yātáyann antár īyate

nārā ca śáṃsaṃ daíviyaṃ ca dhartári

At the vanguard of the days [=dawn] the tawny, delightful, exhilarating (drink)

*Makes himself **perceived with his perceived (appearance)** through the days.*

Setting in place the two peoples [=gods and men], he speeds between them

In upholding the “praise of men” and the heavenly (praise).

The form *á*cetayat in 7.86, however, is active.

In another context above, we have already seen two different but semantically comparable stems from \sqrt{cit} combine to mean something more positive; and in light of the last few quoted passages, it does not seem out of the range of possibility a listener might be able to imagine something similar for *acít-* in combination with *cetáya-*.²²⁷ What, then, are the next steps toward finding a less ominous interpretation?

²²⁷ I reproduce the relevant example here (the causative verbal form and nominal form with alpha privative are in pāda 6b).

7.60.6 imé mitró váruṇo dūlābhāso

acetásam cic **citayanti** dáḁṣaiḥ

ápi krátuṃ **sucétasam** vátantas

tiráś cid áṃhaḥ supáthā nayanti

7.60.7ab imé divó ánimiṣā pṛthivyás

It does seem that *benevolent* divine action in the face of the “unperceptive” is not easily found within Rigvedic phraseology—in fact, it might initially be nearly as counterintuitive as saying, “The Lord made the infidels act in good faith” (again—this is not the standard outcome!). Even if that were not a problem, the question becomes, how could the reader hear in this statement a reciprocity relationship that positively characterizes the audience’s social status in relationship to other human and/or divine parties? The final nominal homology in Structuring Device 2—connecting the Kavis from Verse 3 to the “Better Kavi” in Verse 7—favorably defined the audience’s status in relation to the god Varuṇa; in suggesting a verbal homology via the forms of \sqrt{cit} in the same structuring device and verse, does Vasiṣṭha give his audience a similar opportunity to feel *more* rather than *less* secure in their social status after hearing themselves in *acítaḥ*?

The rest of my treatment is far more tentative—but I hope to suggest that where the verb \sqrt{cit} is concerned, a little imagination—coupled with quite a bit of incentive to exercise it—can go a long way. What follows is an account of some more obliquely connected recesses of Rigvedic phraseology that *would* yield a workable interpretation, if only the listener devoted sufficient attentional resources to activating this phraseology in order to mentally “repair” the typical semantics of the poet’s obliquely suggestive forms.

8.13 Motivating imaginative leaps: reciprocal verbal/deverbative homologies and grammatically “double-voiced” forms of \sqrt{cit}

There is one remarkable—and much remarked upon—trait of a number of forms of \sqrt{cit} : their ability to take on active *or* passive/intransitive meanings despite active morphology. In some cases, forms of \sqrt{cit} appear to have both senses at once. For instance, as Jamison had occasion to note in the course of an examination of Rigvedic similes, the stem *citáya-* can mean “is perceived,” “perceives,” “makes perceived,” and “makes perceive.”²²⁸ In a number of examples, individual forms can be construed to have a double meaning, i.e. a meaning that shifts from active to passive/intransitive to accommodate different

cikitváṃso acetásam nayanti
These hard to deceive—Mitra, Varuna—
Cause even the unperceptive man to perceive through their skills.
Fully knowing the resolve based on good perception,
They lead on a good path even across narrow straits.
Of heaven and earth, these unwinking,
Perceptive ones lead the unperceptive man.

²²⁸ Jamison 1982: 258-9.

phrases that surround these forms. What is more, these grammatically double-voiced forms tend to occur in passages discussing interactions between different entities/actors with different spatial locations and positions in human-divine hierarchies. Given that active and passive/intransitive forms refer (with various degrees of directness) to the agency of different parties, this means that in the right contextual environment, single forms of *√cit* can effectively encode reciprocal interactions between different human and divine parties.

Perhaps the best example in which ambivalence of (grammatical) voice seemingly paves the way for multiplicities of reference is *Rig Veda* 2.2. As noted by Jamison (1982), Verses 4 and 5 each demand two different meanings from a single form of *√cit*: one determined by its relationship to terms within a simile, and one determined by the wording and syntax of the the broader clause. Verse 2 describes the gods' creation of Agni:

- 2.2.4 *tám ukṣámāṇam rājasi svá á dáme*
candram iva surúcam hvárá á dadhuḥ
*pṛśnyāḥ patarām **citáyantam** akṣábhīḥ*
pāthó ná pāyúḥ jánasi ubhé ánu
Him, growing in the airy realm (as) in his own house,
Very bright like gold, (the gods) have set on a meandering course,
***Being perceived** (like) the flying (udder) of Pṛśni [=cloud], **perceiving**²²⁹ with his eyes*
Along (the whole length of) both races, like the protector of a path.

Another clause with a simile in the immediately following verse can be interpreted in the same fashion:

- 2.2.5d *dyaúr ná stṛbhiś **citayad** ródasi ánu*
***He isperceived** like heaven with its stars; **he perceives** along (the whole length of) the two*
worldhalves.

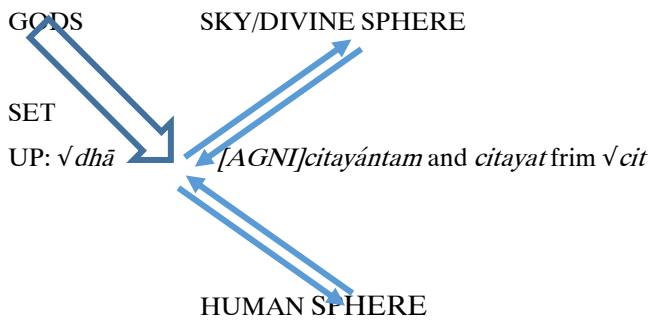
Later on, a different form of the same verb is used again in transitive and intransitive senses, but this time to describe more humble, human modes of perceiving and being perceived.

- 2.2.10a *vayám agne árvatā vā suv́riyam*
 2.2.10b *bráhmanā vā **citayemā** jánāṃ áti*
*May we, o Agni, by means of our steed **perceive** (wealth) in good heroes,*
*Or by our sacred formulation **be perceived as** beyond other men.*

²²⁹ Among the factors that force the shift in the meaning of *citáyantam*, “being perceived/perceiving” to an active sense outside of the simile are Rigvedic usage trends in which *akṣábhīḥ*, “with (one’s) eyes,” accompanies active/transitive verbs—much like the English phrase “with (one’s) own eyes,” which would sound out of place accompanying a passive/intransitive verb designed to minimize the attention paid to the viewer’s agency

Here, \sqrt{cit} is paraphrasing a more concrete, (ritual-)grounded type of interaction. Whereas Agni is perceived and perceiving *jānasī ubhé ānu*, “along (the whole length of) both races,” and *ródasī ānu* “along (the whole length of) the two worldhalves,” the human officiants just want to perceive rewards *suṽīriyam* “in good heroes,” and to be perceived as *jānāṁ āti* “beyond other men”: i.e. they want ritual remuneration and social status.

The doubled syntactic associations of each form of \sqrt{cit} already create multiple verbal/reciprocal homologies: for instance, the initial interpretation in which *citáyantam* is taken as intransitive, i.e. as “appearing/being perceived” among both “races,” is implicitly casting *both* gods and humans in the role of “perceiver”; and the transitive active rendering provides an analogous role for Agni. So also with *citayat*. These first two types of homologies could be visually portrayed in the following manner.



The double arrow indicates the role of the gods in setting these reciprocal relations in motion by creating and positioning Agni (it is expressed via $\sqrt{dhā}$, “set, put, place”: the same element in *sva-dhāvant-*).²³⁰

The similarly dueling interpretations of *citayemā* provide reciprocal roles for two interrelated groups of humans, but in a different way. Both interpretations of this form—“may we perceive” a ritual reward (*suṽīriyam*, “(wealth) in good heroes,”), and “may we be perceived” to be above other men—refer to forms of counter-gifts (in material gains and social capital) allotted to poets in response to their ritual performances. The poets’ or officiants’ role in these exchanges is encoded elliptically through the lexical element *bráhma-*, “sacred formulation.”²³¹ Presented on a more implicit level in these passages, but explicitly expressed in any number of other contexts,²³² is the fact that Agni’s perceptibility (\sqrt{cit}) in both

²³⁰ Once again, this is a simplified adaptation of a representation developed by Langacker (2008:370-373 and *passim*) –though he uses it to distinguish agentive from thematic action.

²³¹ It might interest the reader to compare this to the case of Structuring Device 4 in *RV*7.76, discussed in Sections 4.4-4.6. I claim that in that instance the key term *bráhma-* is what is *elided*.

worldhalves is a prerequisite for and cause of ritual exchanges between the two human parties, i.e. a precursor to the officiants *perceiving* a counter-gift in response to the sacrifice and *being perceived* as beyond other men due to the skill with which they fulfill their ritual duties. (This causal relationship is

²³² Below are two examples in which Agni's double *perceptibility* (perceiving and being perceived, in both the sky and on the ritual grounds) is presented as a precursor to sacrifice. These examples are selected mainly for their compactness, but given a bit more space, they could easily be multiplied.

- 8.56.5 **ácti** agníś **cikitúr**
 havvavát śa sumádrathah
 agníḥ śukréṇa śocíśā
 bhát **súro arocata**
 diví **súryo arocata**
Agni, the perceptive, has just been perceived,
the oblation conveyor along with his chariot.
Agni with his blazing flame
***Shone, having his own sun** aloft,*
*(As) **the sun shone** in heaven.*

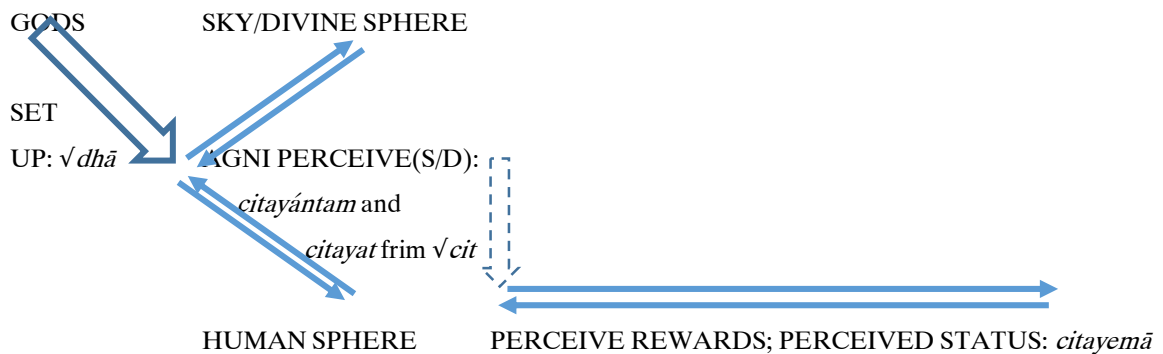
Here the reference to sacrifice—namely, Agni's role as oblation-conveyor—is surrounded by two allusions to Agni's double appearance. The first, via the root $\sqrt{cít}$, focuses on multivalence toward both active and passive poles, i.e. on perceiving and being perceived; the second, via the root \sqrt{ruc} , focuses on Agni's reach into both the human/ritual and divine/celestial realms, articulated through the double image of Agni's sky-born twin, the Sun, and Agni's sun-like ritual blaze.

See also various verses from a series of interrelated Agni-hymns (1.68-70). 1.69.9-10 encodes Agni's manifestation in the sky and the ritual grounds via $\sqrt{cít}$, whereas the obviously connected final verse of 1.68 makes it clear that the doors that are thereby opened are to *wealth* bestowed in a ritual context, and that the chambers thereby connected are (both) heaven's vault and human houses.

- 1.69.9 uśó ná jāró vibhávā usráḥ
 sámjñātarūpaś **cíketad** asmai
 1.69.10 tmánā váhanto dúro ví ṛṇvan
 návanta víśve súvar dṛśíke
Ruddy and far-radiant like the lover of Dawn,
*He, whose form has been produced by genuine agreement, will be **perceptible** to*
him [=the sacrificer].
Carrying him themselves, they [=priests] open wide the doors.
All cry out upon seeing the sun.
 1.68.10 ví ráya aurṇod dúrah purukśúḥ
 pipéśa nákaṃ stṛbhír dāmūnāḥ
Bringing much livestock, he [=Agni] has opened wide the doors of wealth.
He, the master of the house, has emblazoned heaven's vault with stars.

An additional example is in *RV* 1.71.7cd, a passage from the same series of Agni-hymns; there, $\sqrt{cít}$ is used in an explicitly multivalent way to refer obliquely to an exchange between humans and gods: ná jāmbhír ví **cíkite** váyo no / vidá devéśu prámatim **cikitván**: “Our vitality **is** not widely **perceptible** in the form of our kin / **Perceiving it**, find solitude (for us) among the gods.”

probably the motivation for idiosyncratically encoding the latter exchange in terms of \sqrt{cit} .) Both the expressed and implied components of this additional one-word homology are added to our chart below.



(The implicit causal relationship between Agni’s perception/ the perception of Agni in both realms on the one hand, and similar reciprocal human exchanges on the other, is represented by the dotted double-lined arrow.)

We could sum up the significance of 2.2 in the following manner: the various meanings of the (morphologically present-active) stem *citáya-* allowed it to be used to succinctly encode reciprocal actions between gods and gods, humans and gods, and humans and humans; but most interestingly for our current purposes, this is done through the use of this stem with a simultaneously active/transitive and passive/intransitive meaning.

Nor is this the only passage in which such a technique is deployed with forms of \sqrt{cit} . *RV* 10.95, examined in this dissertation’s final case study (in the conclusion), contains another such instance involving the stem *citáya-* and involving a simile. While inflected forms of *citáya-* seem to be those most frequently endowed with these double-voiced meanings, other stems can also be deployed in a comparable fashion—and even without a simile framing one meaning and distinguishing it from another. There are other such examples in which a single form of \sqrt{cit} has both an active transitive and an intransitive reading, and seems to communicate a homology connecting the reciprocal actions of different types of beings. Since *cikitúṣaḥ*, one of the forms of interest in 7.86, derives from a perfect stem, it should be of at least passing interest that some of these examples include perfect forms. Take, for instance, *ciketati*, a perfect (morphologically) active subjunctive. In a passage like 6.59.5ab, it means “perceive,” and takes a genitive.

6.59.5ab índraagnī kó **asyá** vām
 dévau mártas **ciketati**
*O Indra and Agni, **this one** of you what*
*Mortal **shall perceive**, O you two gods?*

(The form *asyá*, translated as a direct object, is in fact in the genitive.) On the other hand, it can also take an intransitive meaning: “what will stand out/be perceptible.” *RV* 8.1.31cd can be taken to display this meaning (c.f. *RV* 1.69.9 in the footnote above).

8.1.31cd utá vāmásya **vásunaś ciketati**
 yó ásti yáduvaḥ **paśúḥ**
Of the valuable good(s) (what) will be perceived
(Is) the livestock which is from Yadu.

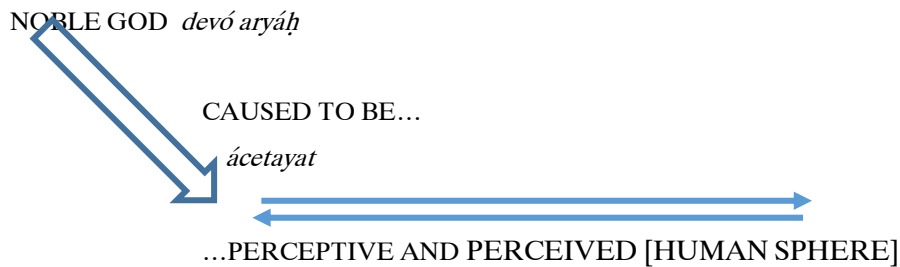
At least, the meaning of this hemistich *eventually* resolves in this fashion: prior context creates some ambiguity. I have highlighted not only the verb and its ultimate subject, but also a noun in the genitive—*vásunaḥ*, “of the good(s).” In a different passage, this genitive noun could have served as the object of a transitive verb *ciketati*—and in fact, until the explicit subject arrives at the end of the hemistich, such an interpretation might be favored, because the prior context would encourage the supplying of a different understood subject, namely, a patron (rather than the patron’s gift).

8.1.30ab stuhí stuhíd eté ghā te
 máṃhiṣṭhāso maghónā
 8.1.31c utá vāmásya **vásunaś ciketati**
Praise (them, Indra)! Just praise (them)!
(The patrons) are the most bounteous of bounty among your bounteous ones. [List of patrons]...
He (=Indra) will perceive the valuable good(s)...

So in this example, the very same verb form is taken to mean two different things at two different times—with one meaning referring to the perceptibility of (presumably, not-so-perceptive) livestock, and another referring to the *perception* of the *perceptive* god. In other words, the contrast is between an interpretation that highlights the agency of the god and one that identifies a generally appreciated prize.²³³ While these meanings do not necessarily exclude one another on a conceptual (as opposed to syntactic) level, the intransitive reading implicitly opens the possibility that *humans*, such as the speaker, can play an agentive role in perceiving one patron’s gifts over and above the others’. Still, even though the active interpretation of *ciketati* was rejected on syntactic grounds, the shadow of Indra’s exclusive agency would remain—and this shadow might help shield the speaker from the political consequences of having singled out particular patrons for higher praise.

²³³ Informing the interpretation of this latest example is the fact that the participle *cikitvāms-*, “perceptive,” (the same participle we find in 7.86.3), is often used as an epithet for Indra or Agni—see, for instance, 4.5.12a and 1.169.1c, examples which could easily be multiplied.

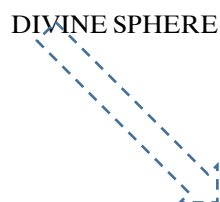
If listeners know that forms of \sqrt{cit} can encode reciprocal relationships and chains of analogous actions connecting parties with different places in a sociopolitical (or human-divine) hierarchy, i.e. interactions that *benefit* the humans involved, and that morphologically active/transitive forms of \sqrt{cit} can have both active and passive/intransitive meanings, then they might reconcile a benign interpretation of *áçetayad acítaḥ* with Rigvedic phraseology by interpreting the meanings of *áçetayat* in a similarly multivalent way. In other words, *áçetayat* could be taken to mean “making perceptive” and “making perceived” at the same time, and could refer to the advice they provide to figures like Vasiṣṭha (being perceptive) in exchange for forms of praise and deference (being perceived). This suggestion’s relationship to the meanings of grammatically double-voiced forms in *RV2.2.* is pictured in the chart below.



Note that I have assumed that the audiences whom the god makes these (formerly unperceptive) men perceive is human and anchored in the ritual grounds; I assume that because of the generally ritual-oriented meanings of active forms of the causal stem *çetáya-*, as noted above in Section 8.12.

The form *cikitúṣaḥ* could likewise have a double-voiced meaning; in addition to the typical meaning of “perceiving/perceptive,” a listener could retrospectively take this form as having an intransitive (translated into English as passive) sense of “(having been) perceived.” This second meaning is akin to the intransitive glosses *strahlend* and *glänzend*, which Grassmann posited for certain instances of this perfect participial stem, particularly where the epithet applied to Agni and in instances where descriptions of Agni’s brilliance were nearby, e.g. in 1.77.5; 3.7.3; 3.7.9; 3.29.3. The primary difference in my current interpretation and Grassmann’s (besides the particular passages to which we ascribe this meaning) is that I suppose a listener could simultaneously attribute *both* the active transitive *and* the intransitive meanings to this same form, just as was the case with present causative and perfect forms of \sqrt{cit} in other passages.

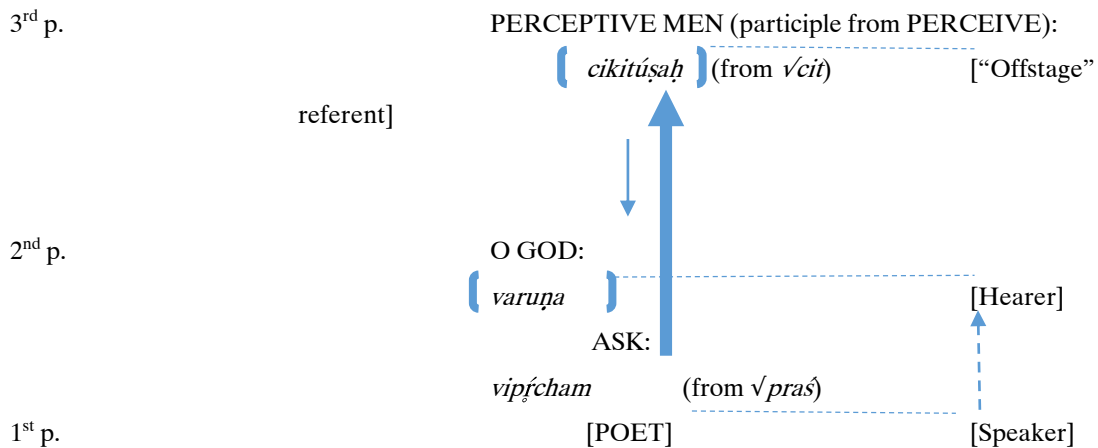
We could represent this interpretation of the meaning of *cikitúṣaḥ* in the following manner:





8.14 Summary: relationship between verbal/deverbative and nominal homologies in 7.86; relationship between metalinguistic, rhetorical, and audience-centered repair

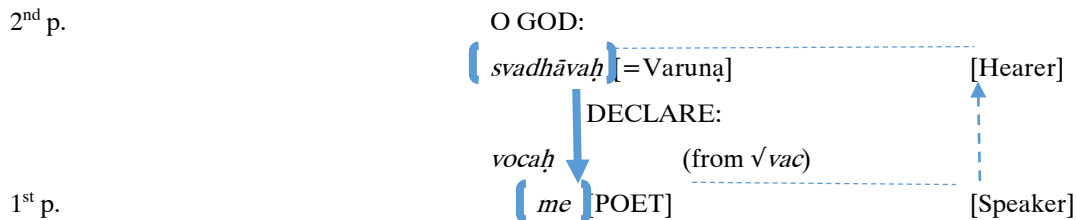
One thing to notice about the verbal reciprocal homology that an audience of “perceptive Kavis” might detect behind *áçetayad acítaḥ* and *cikitúṣaḥ* is that while it posits a prior interaction with Varuṇa, it does not really elevate the position or enduring relationships of the listeners beyond the status they enjoyed in Verse 3. Consider the chart that detailed the referential relationships between addressers and addressees from that verse.



If we rotated this chart by 90 degrees (to the right), we would see the same sort of interaction that a reader could hear in *áçetayat* in Verse 7: in each case, the idea of a god’s presence is hinted at, but the interactions encoded by *vçit* and referring to a party of men (plural) actually circumvent this god. In other words, if Vasiṣṭha made his human audience want to hear themselves in *áçetayad acítaḥ* by hinting at an interaction with Varuṇa, the solution they would find to this two-word phraseological riddle does not provide them with the same sort special connection to the divinity that Vasiṣṭha has carved out of his own self-characterizations, and outlined through a chain of interrelated nominal homologies. (Of course, part of Vasiṣṭha’s rhetorical strategy is to not draw attention to his divine side in Verse 3 or Verse 7, where the status of his human audience is most explicitly referenced: in Verse 3, Vasiṣṭha speaks of his guilt rather than his godlike guiltlessness; in Verse 7, the epithet he uses for himself is human-oriented, and he further compares himself to a Dāsa.)

Instead, the perceptive Kavis must content themselves with being distinguished (and distinguishing) among *men*. If they arrive at this self-characterization on their own—by finding the most flattering intersections of phraseology surrounding causative forms of \sqrt{cit} and privative nominal forms derived from the same root—they are much more likely to be content with such a conclusion. Manufacturing that contentment may be the ultimate rhetorical goal of providing an opportunity for audience-centered interpretive repair (in which a phraseologically centripetal solution behind an enigmatic phrase also allows the audience to center themselves).

We have seen two other forms of poetic repair, of course. Within the omphalos—in Verse 4, pāda b—the oblique referential relationship charted above between the poet and the god inquiring about him was repaired to the rhetorical shape that typically characterizes Indo-Iranian formulaic question-and-answer discourses framed around $\sqrt{praś/fraṣ}$ and \sqrt{vac} : 1st-person/2nd-person.



This phraseologically centripetal rhetorical repair made the more intimate interaction between Varuṇa and Vasiṣṭha sound more expected and natural. Finally, metalinguistic repair—which included transitions from less animate to more animate characterizations of guilt, and a splitting of the self into a weak flesh and a willing, god-like spirit—worked in the favor of Vasiṣṭha’s fine-grained agency hierarchy, which facilitated both the deflection of blame *and* self-proclaimed (*svá*-proclaimed) affiliation with Varuṇa (See Section 8.10 for an overview of this).

In other words, two forms of poetic repair seem designed to close the gap between poet and divinity, and one seems inclined to distract an audience of kindred Kavis from the question of whether Vasiṣṭha’s godlike half has managed to go over their heads.

PART IV. CONCLUSION AND DIALOGUE-HYMN CASE STUDY

1. CONCLUSION: SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

1.1 Summary of objectives

This dissertation concerned itself with analyzing the form and function of structuring devices in the *Rig Veda* as a means of responding to, if not conclusively answering, a number of questions posed by previous studies on Vedic poetry or on related traditions. The study also functioned as an experiment in applying toolkits ultimately originating in the Formalist tradition—which, as the name indicates focuses on analyzing how formal repetitions and alternations structure poetry—with the categories developed by the Bakhtinian school of criticism, which focus on the role of power relations in literature. The following set of questions were among those implicitly or explicitly raised in the introduction, listed according to their relative emphasis of questions of form vs. questions of function:

- Do demonstrably perceptible structuring devices in the *Rig Veda* bear any relationship to the types of formal repetitions detected within Avestan *hāitis* by Hanns-Peter Schmidt and Martin Schwartz?
- How do the forms and functions of structuring devices relate to indigenous categories like *yamaka* and *bandhu* and to Greco-Roman categories of stylistic repetition applied to the *Rig Veda* by Jared Klein and others?
- What do structuring devices have to say about the viability of the hymn (*sūkta*) and the author as useful categories for the study of Rigvedic poetry?
- Do structuring devices highlight cases of “poetic repair,” as defined by Stephanie Jamison?
- If so, what are the types of linguistic “norms” from which the expressions highlighted by structuring devices deviate, and to which they return (using Jakobson’s categories of communicative functions as a means of classifying these norms)?
- Can the Bakhtinian concepts of *heteroglossia*, and of centrifugal and centripetal expressions, be fruitfully applied to help understand the rhetorical goals, and perhaps the sociopolitical functions of poetic repair?
- If so, can Rigvedic hymns, even those which only feature one explicit speaker (the poet), be called “dialogic,” or “double-voiced,” i.e. be said to feature *heteroglossia*, a negotiation between two different discourses, each more strongly aligned with different parties to the exchange being described?

All of these questions clearly pertain to issues discussed in the four core case studies of this dissertation. In addition, the introduction raised a final question, which so far we have not had occasion to treat.

- How does the implicit dialogue—i.e. *heteroglossia*—in hymns with one speaker relate to similar operations in (explicit) dialogue hymns?

In the sections that follow, I will divide these questions into three clusters, and comment briefly on the elements of my case study that offer answers (however tentative and partial). Then, I will present a short case study on a dialogue hymn to offer a partial solution to the final, as-of-yet untreated question.

1.2 Summary of results: Comparing structuring devices in Rigvedic hymns to other, previously posited formal devices

As far as comparative Indo-Iranian considerations go, we have found an intriguing if inconclusive result: two of the four core case studies feature clear concentric, nested rings among their inventory of structuring devices—see Structuring Devices 1 and 2 in *RV*7.75 (Part II., Section 7.1), and Structuring Devices 1 and 2 in *RV*7.76 (Part III, Section 2.1). This is exactly the type of structuring device that Martin Schwartz detects in all Avestan *hāitis*. The other two hymns do not feature nested rings; but, in all four hymns, many if not all of the structuring devices seem to be initiated and/or terminated in a key verse or pair of verses, or else the verse(s) form(s) a dividing line which bisects the structuring devices. I have termed such a structural turning point a “hub” or an “omphalos” according to whether the key section is at the hymn’s center or not. *RV*7.77 had a “hub,” as described in Part II Section 7.9; in *RV*7.77, the passages between the end of Verse 3 and the end of Verse 4 might be characterized as a “hub”; *RV*7.76 and 7.86 had an omphalos, as described in Part III, Section 8.1.

If such devices and structural turning points are discovered in more Rigvedic hymns, it would be an exciting result indeed—but even in that instance, there are a few problems that would complicate the positing of an Indo-Iranian compositional technique featuring nested rings and/or a hub or “omphalos.” One is that the concentric rings detected by Schwartz and others in Avestan *hāitis* cannot conclusively be called perceptible according to our criteria. This does not necessarily mean that they are *not* perceptible. Part of the problem is that the small size of the corpus of Gāthic Avestan material that is left makes it hard to assess the relative frequency of various words and expressions; were it not for our knowledge of the infrequency of similar elements in the *Rig Veda*, we would have far less confidence in the perceptibility of many of the structuring devices we have detected. Another problem is that there are markedly perceptible repetitions (for instance, redundant repetitions) that fall outside of Schwartz’s template of concentric nested rings; if they were added to the Iranian inventory of devices, it is not clear whether Avestan *hāitis* would still appear to follow a symmetrical template. Particularly because of the first type of complication, I am more optimistic about the prospects of developing inventories of common shapes of structuring devices within the *Rig Veda* than I am about the future of comparative Indo-Iranian investigations on the same subject.

On to the matter of indigenous and Greco-Roman categories of stylistic repetition that have been posited for the *Rig Veda* or for other Sanskrit poetic traditions. As mentioned in the introduction, the primary problem with linking structuring devices (as defined by my study) to either the technique of *yamaka* from among the inventory of poetic figures described in indigenous critical traditions (*alaṅkāraśāstra*), or

to the Greco-Roman categories of stylistic repetitions favored by Jared Klein, is that both of these traditions focus on verse-internal repetitions, and therefore use the location of the repetitions within a contiguous set of pādas as a primary means of classifying them (with the Greco-Roman categories additionally classifying these repetitions according to the element being repeated—i.e. whether it is sounds, roots, stems, or forms are being repeated). By definition, the structuring devices in this study do not involve contiguous pādas.

A quick glance at any of the hymn texts that have structuring devices highlighted within them²³⁴ will reveal that even if we *mentally* juxtapose the pādas that are involved within a structuring device, there tends to be no consistency in the position of the repetitions in their respective pādas. In addition, the “Form” section of *RV* 7.77 (i.e. Part II, Section 2) made it clear that there is typically no consistency in repetition *type* (i.e. in whether sounds, roots, stems or forms are repeated) within structuring devices. So far, then, the prospects of comparing structuring devices to *yamaka* or to Greco-Roman categories of repetition seem quite dim.

However, our treatment of 7.75 suggested something of a way forward. In that hymn, verse-internal repetitions (on the form of these repetitions, See Part II, Sections 7.1-7.2 and 7.4; on the function, see Sections 9.5-9.11) interacted with similarly structured repetitions in a structuring device; together, these repetitions influenced the interpretations of instrumental forms that could refer either to inanimate objects or to animate entities. A comparative study of other hymns with formally related verse-internal repetitions and structuring devices might provide useful results. With the possible overlap in *function* of verse-internal repetitions and structuring devices in mind, an investigation of the category of *yamaka* in Classical Sanskrit poetry from the perspective of poetic repair might also pave the way for diachronic comparisons. Probably needless to say, both of these investigations are beyond the scope of the present study.

As for the matter of *bandhu*—while there are no particularly compelling connections between the systematized inventory of equivalent cosmic, ritual and mundane elements that we find particularly in the Upaniṣads, we did detect in the four core case studies a separate series of repeatedly attested categories of homologies highlighted by structuring devices. Each type had its own characteristic formal features and thematic preoccupations. The first *bandhu*-like category was called “epithet-based homologies” (see Part II, Section 9.2). This type of homology had the following major traits:

- (Thematic) The explicit **focus is on Dawn**’s appearance and Dawn appearing;

²³⁴ So, Part II, Sections 1 and 6; Part III, Sections 1 and 6; see also the text of the dialogue hymn below.

- (Formal) **One half** of the relevant round of repetition **is an attributive epithet** modifying the subject of the sentence, Dawn;
- (Formal) **The other half** of the relevant round of repetition **is part of the predicate, or else a vocative.**

As has been noted, this type is pretty clearly related to features of general Rigvedic phraseology recognized by Elizarenkova, among others: the traits implicit in epithets given to gods are acted out in later parts of hymns.

The second category of links between more celestial and more ritual activities was called “aorist-based homologies” (the most expansive definition was in Part III, Section 4.2). The traits of this homology type were the following:

- (Thematic) The explicit **focus is on** a description of **Dawn appearing**;
- (Formal) **One half** of the relevant round of repetition **is an augmented aorist indicative verbal form**;
- (Formal) **The other half** of the relevant round of repetition **is a present verbal form**, part of a present participial phrase, **or part of a predicative adjective** referring to a present condition—all of which connote a sustained, ritual-esque interaction.

Since this homology type relates to a formal feature of Dawn hymns that has been noticed by other commentators—namely, the prevalence of aorist forms in the beginning section of the hymns—one suspects it will be present in other hymns of this genre throughout the *Rig Veda*. Aorist-based homologies were not present in *RV7.86*, which addressed Vasiṣṭha instead of Dawn, and they are not present in the dialogue hymn discussed below.

The third category of homologies was simply called “nominal homologies” (most expansive definition in Part III, Section 4.8). Its traits were the following:

- (Thematic) **The focus is on two entities at different positions in** at least one of the following **hierarchies**:
 - a) altitudinal hierarchy: sky/atmosphere vs. ritual grounds;
 - b) human-divine hierarchy: gods vs. humans; more powerful vs. less powerful humans;
 - c) animacy hierarchy (divine or human) ritual entourage vs. ritual goods and exchangeable chattel; abstract, neuter-gender concepts vs. more animate masculine-gender agents;
- (Formal) **Both halves** of the relevant round of repetition **are nominal formations** (noun or adjective);
- (Formal) Perhaps because issues of agency and animacy are at stake, **the relevant nominal formations tend to be in direct cases (nominative or accusative) or in the instrumental case.**

One would imagine that variants of this particular device exist throughout the *Rig Veda*, though the specific types of contrasts linked could vary with hymn genre and author (see in the dialogue hymn below).

The final category of homologies was “verbal/deverbative reciprocal homologies” (introduced in Part III, Section 4.4). These homologies were characterized by the following traits:

- (Thematic) **The focus is on commonalities in the roles/performed actions of parties in different places within the human-divine hierarchy;**
- (Formal) **There is a key verbal root** that can be shown to clearly apply to both sides of a specific exchange or interaction in multiple Rigvedic passages;
- (Formal) **In the case in question, at least one relevant interaction** between parties in different positions within the human-divine hierarchy **is clearly encoded by a verbal form from the root in question.** If the corresponding reactions or counteractions are not directly encoded by a verbal form—for instance, if expressed anagrammatically, or expressed through etymologically linked forms which nonetheless do not imply any particular type of interaction—they may be inferred on the basis of Rigvedic phraseology.

Each of the hymns that formed one of our core case studies contained at least one example of a verbal/deverbative reciprocal homology (as discussed in Part III Sections 4.4-4.8 and Sections 8.12-8.13). In the hymns in which this homology featured prominently, namely *RV*7.76 and 7.86, it was employed to a particular end: to suggest flattering parallels or relationships between a *human* audience and divinities—relationships which, however, ultimately made the poet’s own status vis-à-vis both the gods and the other humans more secure. One imagines that homologies with all the formal traits listed above would feature prominently wherever a hymn is addressed to a potentially contentious human or divine audience, though the precise thematic preoccupations may vary slightly (see the dialogue hymn below).

1.3 Summary of results: Classifying types and purposes of poetic repair using Jakobsonian and Bakhtinian categories

To a large extent, the major results of this part of the investigation have already been discussed in the final portion of the introduction. Here I can only add the observation that the range of linguistic norms around which the process of poetic repair operated included characteristic referential relationships anaphoric formulas (See Part III, Sections 8.2-8.6)—in which case “rhetorical repair” was the term used; but far more frequently, the instances of poetic repair involved deviations from and returns to typical usage patterns associated with a particular set of lexical elements, in which case “metalinguistic repair” (either via implied metalinguistic equations or antanaclasis) was the operative term. In other words, so far, all but one of the Jakobsonian categories of communicative functions have proven to be relevant to this process. On the relevance of the “poetic” function (in the narrow sense discussed in the introduction), see the dialogue hymn below.

Bakhtinian categories have helped us imaginatively speculate about the centrifugal power-plays that are being counterbalanced by centripetal returns to Rigvedic norms. The will of wielders of authority—gods; patrons; potentially petulant fellow poets—and the weight of tradition are among the centripetal

forces that encourage Rigvedic poets (or the speakers whose personas they adopt) to adhere to phraseological norms. At the same time, these poets' ultimately centrifugal objectives—like the need to gain the upper hand despite a literally stratospheric power differential (that separates the human and the divine), and the desire to re-negotiate roles with partners-in-ritual—require them to reconfigure traditional elements. With the following dialogue hymn in mind, we can add “husbands” to the list of authorities with whom power struggles play out via the push and pull of centripetal and centrifugal forces.

One somewhat unexpected result was the presence of “audience-centered interpretive repair”—essentially, centrifugal expressions on which a human audience must mentally perform metalinguistic repair. The key to the solution of these metalinguistic puzzles was the audience inserting themselves into the lacunae created by the poet (such as sentences with no explicit subjects and adjectives with no explicit referents), and finding phraseology which would lead to the most flattering self-characterizations (see Part III, Sections 4.4-4.6 and 8.11-8.14).

1.4 Summary of results: A note on the categories of “hymn,” “author,” and “genre.”

It is of course difficult to make any conclusions on the basis of four case studies—but the pervasiveness of structuring devices throughout the hymns, and the clarity with which they demarcate various self-contained discourse units, definitely suggest that at least for the hymns in questions, the groups of verses that are labeled as self-contained *sūktas* are separate poetic works with cohesive progressions and compositional strategies. The category of the “hymn” is therefore secure at least in these cases. The differences in the types of homologies and poetic repair deployed in straightforward praise hymns like 7.75 and 7.77 vs. those deployed in confessional hymns like 7.86 suggest that genre plays a role in affecting the functions of structuring devices. While it would be irresponsible to speculate on the category of authorship before examining in equal detail hymns of the same genre attributed to other authors, I think the significant overlap in the complex, idiosyncratic compositional and rhetorical strategies discussed above might leave the reader with the impression that these hymns were in fact composed by the same poet, or at least a set of closely associated poets, i.e. by Vasiṣṭha(s). It is my hope that an examination of the dialogue hymn below will strengthen that impression.

2. DIALOGUE-HYMN CASE STUDY: RV10.95 TEXT AND TRANSLATION

(Purūravas:)

10.095.01a hayé jāye **mānasā**¹ tīṣṭha ghore

"Woe, wife! **Thoughtfully** -- stand still, fearsome woman!

10.095.01b **vācāmsi**² miśrā **kṛṇavāvahai**² nú

Let us two now exchange [=lit. **do/make** mixed] **words**.

10.095.01c ná nau **mántrā**¹ ánuḍitāsa eté

These **thoughts**, if unuttered,

10.095.01d máyas karan páratāre canāhan

Will not bring us joy even on a distant day."

(Urvaśī:)

10.095.02a kím etá **vācā**² **kṛṇavā**² távāhám

"What **shall I do with** these **words** of yours?

10.095.02b prákramiṣam **uśásām**³ agriyéva

I have marched forth, like the foremost **of the dawns**.

10.095.02c púrūravaḥ púnar **ástam**^{1,3} **párehi**^{1,3}

Purūravas -- **go off home** again.

10.095.02d **durāpanā**¹ váta ivāhám asmi

I am as **hard to attain** as the wind."

(Purūravas:)

10.095.03a iṣur ná **śriyá**³ iṣudhér

"... as an arrow from the quiver **for glory (/for beauty)**

10.095.03b asaná **gośáḥ**³ śatasá ná ráṃhiḥ

A shot **winning cows**, as a charge winning hundreds.

10.095.03c avīre **krátau**³ ví **dauidyutan**³ ná

Under no man's will she/(they) will keep flashing forth -

10.095.03d úrá ná máyúṃ citayanta dhúnayaḥ

Like (a) lamb(s) (make(s) perceived its/(their) bleating, so are (her/their) tumultuous (tempests) perceived."

(Purūravas:)

10.095.04a sá vásu dádhātī śvásúrāya

"She was (always) imparting energy, a good thing, to her father-in-law

10.095.04b váya **úṣo**³ yádi váṣṭy ántigḥāt

Every dawn, whenever he wants it, from the house opposite.

10.095.04c **ástam**³ nanakṣe yásmiñ cākán

She attained a home in which she took pleasure;

10.095.04d dívā náktam **śnathitá**² **vaitaséna**²

Day and night she was pierced by my rod."

(Urvaśī:)

10.095.05a tríḥ sma máhnaḥ **śnathayo**² **vaitaséna**² "Three times a day you used to pierce me with your rod,

10.095.05b utá sma me áviyatyai pṛṇāsi

And you 'filled it up' for me, who did not seek it.

10.095.05c púrūravo ánu te kítam **āyam**³

Purūravas, I followed your will.

10.095.05d rájā me víra tanúvas tát āsiḥ

You were then the king of my body, you 'hero.'"

(Purūravas:)

10.095.06a yá sujūrñiḥ **śráyañiḥ**^{3*} sumnáāpir

"The beautifully glowing **rank**, friends in good favor,

10.095.06b hradécakṣur ná granthínī caranyúḥ

Interlaced like a pond's-eye [=lotus], (always) on the move --

10.095.06c tá añjāyo aruñāyo ná sasruḥ

These flowed like reddish salves;

10.095.06d **śriyé**³ **gávo**³ ná dhenávo 'navanta

Like **milch cows** they bellowed **for beauty (/for glory)**."

(Urvaśī:)

10.095.07a sám asmiñ jáyamāna āsata gná

"When this one was being born, the women were in attendance,

10.095.07b utém avardhan nadíyaḥ svágūrtāḥ

And the rivers, singing their own praise, strengthened him,

10.095.07c mahé yát tvā purūravo ráñāya

(Just) as for great battle, for the smiting of barbarians,

10.095.07d ávardhayan dasyuhátyāya deváḥ

The gods made you strong, Purūravas."

(Purūravas:)

10.095.08a sácā **yád**² **āsu**² jáhatīṣu átkam

"**When I**, a human, **among those (women)** taking off their robes,

10.095.08b ámānuṣīṣu mánuṣo **niśéve**²

Non-human (women), drew **near**,

10.095.08c ápa sma mát tarásantī ná bhujyús

Like a shy antelope they shied away from me,

10.095.08d tá atrasan rathas ^{pfśo} ² ná ^{ásvāh} ² (Urvaśi:)	Like horses that have brushed against a chariot."
10.095.09a yād ² āsu ² márto amṛtāsu ^{nispṛk} ²	" When a mortal, going to brush up among those immortal (women),
10.095.09b sám kṣoṇībhiḥ ^{krátubhir} ³ ná pṛñkté	Amid their cries, as if by his intentions , mingles (with their bodies),
10.095.09c tá ātāyo ná tanvāḥ śumbhata svā	Like ducks they preen their own bodies,
10.095.09d ^{ásvāso} ² ná kṛlāyo dándaśānāḥ (Purūravas:)	Like horses playful and constantly nipping."
10.095.10a ^{vidyūn} ³ ná yā pátantī ^{dávidyod} ³	"She who in her flight kept flashing like lightning ,
10.095.10b bhárantī me ápiyā kāmīyāni	The watery (maiden) bringing me the delights of love --
10.095.10c ^{jāniṣṭo} ² apó náriyaḥ ^{sújātaḥ} ²	(A son) belonging to men, nobly born, was born from the water –
10.095.10d prá úrvāśi tirata dīrghám āyuh (Urvaśi:)	Urvaśi extends Āyu his lifetime long."
10.095.11a ^{jajñiśá} ² itthá gōpīthiyāya hí	" You were born ² just so: to afford protection.
10.095.11b dadhātha tát purūravo ma ójaḥ	(But instead) you have exerted this force on me, Purūravas.
10.095.11c áśāsaṃ tvā vidúṣi śásmin áhan	I, knowing, instructed you on that very day.
10.095.11d ná ma áśṛṇoḥ kím abhúg vadāsi (Purūravas:)	You did not listen to me. Why will you speak without profit?"
10.095.12a kadá sūnúḥ pitāraṃ jātá ichāc	"When will (my) begotten son seek his father?
10.095.12b ^{cakrán} ² ná ² ^{ásru} ² vartayad ² vijānán	(When) will he let a tear roll like a wheel , on recognizing (him)?
10.095.12c kó dámpatī ^{sámanasā} ¹ ví yūyod	Who keeps apart a married couple joined in mind
10.095.12d ádha yád agníḥ svásuresu dīdayat (Urvaśi:)	As long as the fire will blaze in (the house of) the parents-in-law?"
10.095.13a práti bravāṇi vartáyate ² ^{ásru} ²	"I'll give him an answer when he lets his tear roll .
10.095.13b ^{cakrán} ² ná ² krandaḍ ádhīye śívāyai	Like a wheel he screeches for kindly care.
10.095.13c prá tát te hinavā yát te asmé	I will send it [=child] to you, that thing of yours that's with us.
10.095.13d ^{párehi} ¹ ^{ástam} ¹ nahí mūra ^{mápaḥ} ¹	Go away home . For you will not attain me , you fool."

3. Overview of Form

Three structuring devices thread their way through this hymn, indexed as always with different superscripts in the Sanskrit:

- 1) A “redundant” ring that indexes the discourse’s boundaries;
- 2) A series of rounds of concatenations that connect most stanza pairs;
- 3) A geometric ring that connects Verses 2 and 3 with subsequent verse pairs 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, and 10-11.

This time, I will not belabor the reasons for which I believe that repetitions are perceived and grouped in the way that they are; I will just briefly say that redundancy of multiple types (multiple lexical items repeated in a short span of pādas, plus, for instance, multiple instances of the root \sqrt{man}) support the first device; and recency supports the second. A variety of factors support the perceptibility of different rounds within the third structuring device: these include infrequency (in the case of *ásta-*, such expressions as *uśásām*

*agriyéva*²³⁵ and *avīre krátau*, and the marked intensive subjunctive stem *dávidyuta-*; on the infrequency of the semantics of the first instance of *śriyé*, see below) and redundancy (in the case of *śráyañih*, *śriye* and *gó* connecting Verse 3 and Verse 8; *vidyút* and *dávidyot* in Verse 10; *astam* + *√i* connecting Verses 2 and 4-5). Conventionality supports the recognition of both the concatenations and the geometric ring. Note that this particular analysis assumes that *ástam párehi* in pāda 2c would first be analyzed as part of the geometric ring and then as part of the redundant ring that indexes discourse boundaries.

4. FUNCTIONS OF STRUCTURING DEVICES: POWER DYNAMICS AND POETIC

(DIS)REPAIR

4.1. Rhetorical shapeshifting and repair in the redundant ring

The introduction to this dissertation (Part I, Section 6.3) featured a section on the idea that certain genres of hymns are characterized by a particular rhetorical shape, i.e. a hierarchical ordering of the frequency of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd persons. Sections 8.1-8.2, 8.4 and 8.6 of Part III applied this idea to a confessional discourse within *RV* 7.86, where traditional formulas would feature a mortal (in the 1st person singular) addressing a god (in the second person singular). Dialogue hymns also favor interchanges encoded in the 1st-person singular and 2nd-person singular (or vice versa).

Keeping this in mind, let us examine the following transition, articulated via a round of concatenation (10.95 1b, 2a):

10.95.1b *vácāmsi*² *miśrá kṛṇavāvahai*² *nú*

Let us two now exchange [=lit. do/make mixed] words. (Purūravas)

10.95.2a *kím etá vácá*² *kṛṇavā*² *tāvāhám*

"What shall I do with these words of yours?" (Urvaśi)

The verbal form in Purūravas' line, *kṛṇavāvahai*, is in the 1st dual—a marked inflection in almost any context. While we will treat the problems with the way in which Purūravas initiates the conversation under the phatic function, it is worth noting that from the perspective of Rigvedic phraseology (not to mention common sense), the 1st dual is a problematic choice for the beginning of a conversation with an interlocutor from whom the speaker is estranged—especially if that interlocutor is divine or semi-divine; such a form presumes that one has not only an audience but an *ally* or an *alter-ego* in the angry, elite interlocutor. (Under a different rubric below, I will show that Urvaśi finds many ways to affiliate herself phraseologically with the divine, and in particular with Uṣas, the dawn-goddess; this process begins already with the second

²³⁵ See Part II Section 2.2 for a discussion the locative-case formula on which this epithet is probably based (in *RV* 7.77, another epithet for Dawn is modeled on the same idiom).

stanza, in which she says of herself, *prākramiṣam uśāsām agriyéva*, “I have marched forth like the foremost of the dawns.”)

Note that in contrast, the confessional poetry of Vasiṣṭha, intended for (if not always directly addressed to) an angry Varuṇa, avoids any 2nd person reference throughout the first half of 7.86—to say nothing of a 1st dual! (See Jamison 2007 pp. 95-100, or the discussion of 7.86 in Part III, 8.1 8.2 and 8.6.) Urvaśī repeats the stem but changes the inflection to 1st singular (*kṛṇavā*), with a 2nd person pronominal form *táva-* emphasizing the 2nd person addressee as well. Thus, Urvaśī *repairs* Purūravas’ characterization of their interchange to reflect a more standard 1st-2nd referential relationship, i.e. to encode two separate parties. In doing so, she paves the way towards their separation, which she explicitly calls for starting in pādas 2cd starting with 2cd: “Purūravas—go off home again. I am as hard to attain as the wind.” Another way of saying this is that Urvaśī expresses her alienation from Purūravas in ways that are highly centripetal with respect to Rigvedic phraseology, using the authority of traditional rhetorical norms to begin to wrest herself away from a center of patriarchal authority (particularly since the bearer of that authority does not feel a need to align himself with the same linguistic norms).

Purūravas’ final remarks in this discourse unit show a greater degree of circumspection: he cautiously confines himself to the third person, so that by the end of the stanza his statements have a feel that is more gnomic than exhortative:

(Purūravas)

10.95.12c kó dámpatī **sámanasā**¹ ví yūyod

10.95.12d ádha yád agniḥ śvásureṣu dīdayat

*Who keeps apart a married couple **joined in mind***

As long as the fire will blaze in (the house of) the parents-in-law?"

The return of the dual—this time, with apparent 3rd-person reference and as the object of a verb in the 3rd-person—in *sámanasā*, a form associated with another ring (see under the phatic function below), is noteworthy. Urvaśī responds by once again reverting to the default 1st-2nd referential relationship, opening the stanza with *práti bravāṇi* “I’ll give [him] an answer”), and closing it with the same command that was featured in Stanza 2: *párehi ástam*, “Go away home.”

(Urvaśī:)

10.95.13c prá tát te hinavā yát te asmé

párehi ástam¹ nahí mūra **mápaḥ**¹

I will send it [=child] to you, that thing of yours that's with us.

***Go off home.** For you will not **attain me**, you fool."*

This command is part of the broad redundant ring connecting the beginning and end of the discourse unit. The final element of this ring is put in the 1st person at the beginning of the poem, and the second person at the end of the poem: *durāpanā* ... *asmi*, “I am hard to attain,” vs. *nahí* .. *māpaḥ*, “You will not attain me.” If Urvaśī began with some (in the Jakobsonian sense) “emotive” inclinations, she ends by commanding Purūravas to move on, as she herself will do (for a nymph, as for the dawns, a departure is really a return home). We will have more to say about this discourse unit’s first and last stanzas immediately below.

4.2 Rhetorical repair in the redundant ring, reprised: the function of poetic polish

So far, the case studies within my dissertation have not given me the occasion to describe the role of what Roman Jakobson called the *poetic* function—that is, the mode of composition in which lines are composed, words selected, primarily to express patterns of formal repetition and/or opposition, and only secondarily to express the sum of the semantics of each individual word. Here we can finally examine one instance in which Urvaśī’s adherence to Indo-European poetic conventions lends a kind of polish to her replies, and in doing so presumably helps her prevail against her opponent. We have already discussed the way in which Urvaśī “repairs” the centrifugal first-dual relationship with which Purūravas begins the dialogue. The same pair of pādas is relevant in this context as well:

10.95.1b *vācāmsi*² *miśrā kṛṇavāvahai*² *nú*

Let us two now exchange [=lit. do/make mixed] words. (Purūravas)

10.95.2a *kím etá vācā*² *kṛṇavā*² *tāvāhám*

"What shall I do with these words of yours?" (Urvaśī)

Notice that in Urvaśī’s reply, the noun phrase “*vācā*...*tāvā*” “with words...of yours” is split by the verbal form *kṛṇavā*. This entire configuration is highlighted by a structuring device, since two of the three forms involved participate in the first round of concatenation. The distraction of this noun phrase occurs across a metrical boundary (in the triṣṭubh meter, one encounters a caesura after the fourth or—as here--fifth syllable), to which two of the three forms (*vācā* and *kṛṇavā*) are adjacent. This is very close to a pattern that Watkins labels “a typical Indo-European figure of poetic word order,” in which two constituents of a noun phrase “have been distracted to straddle the verb and each adjoins a metrical boundary.” (Watkins 1995 p. 128; examples from six language branches on p. 41).

Urvaśī’s line deviates from this configuration in one respect: the second element of the noun phrase, the 2nd person possessive adjective *tāvā* is followed by, or rather fused to, the nominative 1st singular pronominal form *ahám*. Recall from our discussion of referential relationships that this retort is also significant for *undoing* the overly intimate 1st person dual reference into a clear, conventional “I-Thou”

interchange. As we will soon discover, one of Urvaśī's overall strategies is to affiliate Purūravas phraseologically with human warriors, and to align herself with the divine. Against this backdrop, the juxtaposition/blending of "I" and "Thou" into *tāvāhām* appears to be an iconic figure depicting the deceptive physical proximity of two unlike beings.

This is I-Thou juxtaposition is a commonly attested figure in and of itself. Watkins (1995) presents an example from Sappho: ἠράμην μὲν ἔγω σέθεν, Ἄτθι, πάλαι ποτα, "You I loved once, Atthis, so long ago" (p. 107; translation modified slightly). Formally speaking, we might say that Urvaśī deviates from convention in one respect only to return to it in another. Watkins' explanation of the communicative power of Sappho's line is instructive in this context.

The bridge between the hemistichs is the iconic juxtaposition of the subject and object pronouns [ἔγω σέθεν]. But the real grammatical figure is the semantics of the genitive case of the object; the genitive focuses on the extent of the participation of the entity in the message, implying that it is not total. The result is a powerful tension of the physical juxtaposition of the pronouns I-you where 'you' is marked for 'unattainability.' (ibid)

A similar tension obtains in Urvaśī's message, where the juxtaposition between I and Thou is only obtained by breaking Purūravas' dual 1st person into a 1st-2nd referential split, by breaking a noun phrase into two distanced forms, and by breaking mutually exchanged, "mixed words" (*vācāmsi mīsrā*) into a monologue (*etā vācā...tāvā*) addressed to an unwilling audience.

Tellingly, Urvaśī deploys this iconic figure again in Vers 13 in the process of dismantling Purūravas' final dual form and for all intensive purposes ending the verbal duel-turned-custody-battle: *prá tát te hinavā yát te asmé*, "I will send it to you, that thing of yours with us." Through many different communicative routes, Urvaśī has marked herself for unattainability.

4.3 Phatic *disrepair* in the redundant ring: Purūravas begins with a clear malapropism

Purūravas, to put it mildly, is not successful in navigating the treacherous waves of the initial phatic phase of communication: in fact, he appears to be lost at sea amid splashes of laughter from Urvaśī and her fellow water nymphs. We have already seen the problems concerning the referential relationship that he uses to initiate his conversation with the estranged nymph; his selection of the first dual for this purpose could also fall under the designation of "phatic disrepair." The other phatic phrases in question are embedded in the first half of the (highly "redundant," and therefore prominent) ring that rounds out this discourse unit, i.e. the portion of the dialogue that could fairly be termed a debate (in the remainder, Purūravas expresses his despair rather than presenting anything that resembles a counter-argument). I will present a chart of the relevant lexical repetitions, along with a translation of the cola that contain them,

and then discuss the transitions they appear to highlight when viewed against the backdrop of relevant phatic formulas.

10.95.1a hayé jáye **mánasā** tīṣṭha ghore

10.95.2c púrūravaḥ púnar **ástam párehi**

10.95.2d **durāpaná** vāta ivāhám asmi

*"Woe, wife! **Thoughtfully** -- stand still, fearsome woman!"* (Purūravas)

*"Purūravas -- **go off home** again.*

*I am as **hard to attain** as the wind."* (Urvaśī)

10.95.12c kó dámpatī **sámanasā** ví yūyod

10.95.12d ádha yád agníḥ śvásureṣu dīdayat

10.95.13d **párehi ástam nahí** mūra mápaḥ

*"Who keeps apart a married couple **joined in mind***

As long as the fire will blaze in (the house of) the parents-in-law?" (Purūravas)

*"**Go off home.** For you **will not attain** me, you fool."* (Urvaśī)

(The reader will recall that some of these repeated elements have also been discussed in conjunction with the referential, emotive and conative functions. As Jakobson reminds us, "Although we distinguish six basic aspects of language, we could, however, hardly find verbal messages that would fulfill only one function. The difference lies not in a monopoly of some one of these functions, but in a different hierarchical order of functions."²³⁶)

To fully understand Purūravas' folly, we might remind ourselves once again of Laver's observation about "the multistranded communicative behavior that accompanies and includes phatic communion" (see Part I Section 6.4). We can infer from the phrasing of particular initial stanzas that certain phatic formulaic elements are associated with types of motion occurring in and towards the ritual scene: the rising of the fire and the rushing of the gods toward the sacrifice, for instance. Keeping these connotations intact (or consciously, adroitly distorting them while compensation with other concessions to convention) is part of the successful deployment of the phatic phrase. So, before reminding the reader of what our hopeless human does come up with, I will outline the normal types of hymn-(and-sacrifice-)initial actions that seem to be associated with the nominal and verbal forms that he uses.

The verb form Purūravas selects for his opening invocation is *tīṣṭha*. Most frequently, it is used (with or without *úd*) to mean "stand up"/ "stand firm," as, for instance Agni would, when successfully kindled:

²³⁶ Jakobson 1960: 353.

- 4.6.1a ūrdhvā ū śú ṇo adhvarasya hotar
 4.6.1b ágne **tíṣṭha** devátātā yájīyān
O priest of our ceremony, (you who are) firm,
*Agni, **stand** with the divine throng, (you who are the) better-sacrificing one.*
- 1.4.1a út **tíṣṭha** brahmaṇas pate
 1.4.1b devayántas tuvemahe
***Stand** up, Brahmaṇaspati,*
We god-worshiping folks go to you.
- 3.35.1a **tíṣṭhā** hári rátha á yujyamānā
 3.35.1b yāhí vāyúr ná niyúto no ácha
***Mount** the bay pair harnessed to your chariot;*
Come toward us like Vāyu (and his) yoked horses.

In all of these situations, this verb form is clearly used as an exhortation for the god to get a move on so that the sacrifice can begin. (Indeed, the form is typically, although not invariably, divine-oriented.)

A nominal form found both in Purūravas' phatic phrase and in the discourse unit-level structuring device in which it participates only reinforces this association: in hymn-initial stanzas, *mānasā*, "with thought/thoughtfully," is typically used to describe a sort of eagerness with which a particular initiating action is taken:

- 7.67.1a prāti vāṃ ráthaṃ nṛpatī jarádhyai
 7.67.1b havīṣmatā **mānasā** yajñīyena...
 7.67.1d ...vivakmi
O you two princes, to be roused toward your chariot
***With a mind** pouring out libations and worthy of sacrifice...*
...I call out (to you).
- 10.53 1a yám aíchāma **mānasā** sò 'yám ágād
 10.53.1b yajñásya vidván páruṣas cikiván
*He whom we sought **with our mind**, he has come,*
knowing the divisions of the sacrifice, the wise one.

Note that in these and most other instances, the eagerness described is that of an officiant, not a god.

Purūravas uses these two forms (whose orientations already seem to mildly contradict each other) in a phrase that, if possible, has the opposite meaning of that of the examples quoted above: he urges Urvaśī to hesitate before she leaves, and try to be of two minds before she acts on her own convictions (10.95.01a-b):

- 10.95.1a hayé jáye **mānasā tíṣṭha** ghore
 10.95.1b vácāṃsi miśrá kṛṇavāvahai nú

"Woe, wife! Thoughtfully -- stand still, fearsome woman!

Let us two now exchange [=lit. do/make mixed] words."

To say the least, these formulaic elements are not exactly well-suited to convey a message to the tune of, "Stop in the name of love." Transplanting (as opposed to translating) the hero into a different language, social context and register, one might suppose that an equally misguided modern-day Purūravas would modify Bob Marley's song to into a plea to the tune of, "Get up; stand up: please give up the fight!" One might add that the two appellations of "wife" and "fearsome (woman)," while not tending to be used in introductory invocations, do appear to lend contradictory human and divine connotations, heightening the confusion already caused by the juxtaposition of typically officiant-oriented *mānasā* and the typically god-oriented *tīṣṭha*. In contravening Rigvedic phraseology so severely, Purūravas *sounds* as if he has the weaker claim as soon as he opens his mouth.

The reader will recall that the same lexical element resurfaces in stanza 12, this time as the second element of the compound *sāmanasā*, "joined in mind/of like mind":

10.95.12c kó dámpatī **sāmanasā** ví yūyod

10.95.12d ádha yád agníḥ śvásureṣu dīdayat

*"Who keeps apart a married couple **joined in mind***

As long as the fire will blaze in (the house of) the parents-in-law?" (Purūravas)

As it turns out, this is a more competent, centripetal manipulation of conventional Rigvedic language: a phraseological homecoming that, in conjunction with the prior deviation, helps the hymn come full-circle. The dual form *sāmanasā* itself is quite frequently used in the Rig Veda. Unsurprisingly, the form frequently attaches itself to the *twin* Aśvins (1.092.16c and 07.074.2c). It can also describe Dawn and her sister, Night:

1.113.3c ná methete ná tasthatuḥ suméke

1.113.3d náктоśásā **sāmanasā** vírūpe

The fair-formed pair neither clash, nor halt:

*Night and dawn, **joined in mind**, different-hued.*

This example might be particularly important to remember in conjunction with 10.95: as we have already mentioned and will see in detail below, Urvaśī identifies with Uṣas, i.e. Dawn. However, the examples that Purūravas likely had in mind involve the formula *dāmpatī sāmanasā*, "married couple joined in mind/spouses of like mind," which appears in the same form elsewhere in the *Rig Veda*. The following example, addressed to Agni (Fire), is particularly noteworthy considering our hero's own utterance:

5.3.2c añjānti mitráṃ súdhitam ná góbbhir

5.3.2d yád **dāmpatī sāmanasā** kṛṇóṣi

They anoint (you) with cows (= milk) like a kind friend,

When you make spouses of like mind.

When interpreted in (the flickering) light of (admittedly somewhat later) passages of legal texts brought to our attention by Stephanie Jamison (in the course of an investigation on the wife's "structural role in ritual")²³⁷ both this passage and *RV*10.95.12c-d would appear to be referring to the "ritual partnership of a married couple," beginning with the "Establishment of the Fires," an initial joint kindling which establishes husband and wife as lifelong partners-in-sacrifice. To quote just one of the passages which she cites (noteworthy for the heavy use of the dual):

MŚS VIII 23.10-13

Sahāvad etau mithunau saṃbhavataḥ sahāgnīn ādhataḥ saha prajāḥ prajānayatāḥ...

...tasmā ardhabhāginī bhavati

yājyāḥ striyo'rdhabhāk **patnī** yajñe yajamānasya

The couple [dual] come together mutually; together they establish the fires; together they produce offspring...

Therefore she is half-sharer (in the ritual).

Women are fit for ritual. The wife is half-sharer in the ritual of the Sacrificer. (Jamison 31)

Jamison notes additionally that another legal text speaks of the "nondifferentiation of a husband and wife [dual] who have established the fires' (BŚS XXIX.9 [381: 2] aviśeṣāj jāyāpatyor āhitāgnyoḥ)" (ibid).

Two additional factors argue for the relevance of pronouncements found in these later *śrauta sūtras* to the meaning of Rigvedic verses: on the one hand, as Jamison herself notes, "These various codes, though linguistically not very old, obviously are reworkings of older, traditional material...we must assume a code with fixed verbal formulae at least by the time of our earliest Sanskrit prose texts (before 1000 B.C.E.);"²³⁸ on the other hand, the term translated above as "married couple" or "spouses," *dāmpatī*, contains the dual of the noun from which derives the *only* word used for the wife in her capacity as co-sacrificer: "Though there are a number of words for 'wife' current in Vedic Sanskrit in the period, only one is used of her in her ritual role: *patnī*, the feminine counterpart of *pati* 'master.'"²³⁹ If, for these reasons, we permit ourselves to view Purūravas' own objection through the prism of the later legal code, it would appear to be an appeal based on an understanding of the wife's essential ritual role, and phrased in a manner that is entirely conventional from the perspective of both Rigvedic and later formulaic language. Unfortunately for Purūravas, as we will see in detail below, the particular stratum of phraseological conventions to which

²³⁷See Jamison 1996: 30ff.

²³⁸ Jamison 1996: 8.

²³⁹ Jamison 1996: 30.

he appeals here—expressions treating the joint obligations of *human spouses*—has become irrelevant by this part of the debate: Urvaśī has already gone to great lengths to show that, like Dawn herself, she finds her kindred minds among her fellow female divinities. Despite and because of this conventionality, Purūravas’ appeal falls on unsympathetic ears.

4.4 Metalinguistic repair and implied equations within the concatenations: Urvaśī recasts the demonized nymphs as divine

Implied metalinguistic equations are not as prominent a tactic within this hymn as they were within, for instance, *RV* 7.75 and 7.76, where nominal homologies articulated via these equations accomplished some key transitions along celestial-terrestrial and animacy hierarchies—but the round of concatenation from within Verses 8 and 9 does provide one striking example. In keeping with the notation introduced in Part II, Section 7.3, I will put the repeated lexical frame in bold, and underline the equated words, i.e. the words connected by their shared grammatical case and syntactic relationship with the repeated lexical frame.

10.95.8 sácā **yád² āsu²** jáhatīṣu átkam
ámānusīsu mānuso niśéve
 ápa sma mát tarásantī ná bhujyús
 tá atrasan rathaspfíso² ná áśvāḥ² ."
*"When, **those (women)** taking off their robes,*
I, a human, to non-human (women), drew near,
Like a shy antelope they shied away from me,
*Like horses that **have brushed against** a chariot." (Purūravas)*

10.95.9 **yád² āsu²** mártō amítāsu **nispfík²**
 sám kṣoṇībhiḥ krátubhir ná pṛṅkté
 tá átáyo ná tanvāḥ śumbhata svá
 áśvāso² ná kriḷáyo dándaśānāḥ
"When a mortal, going to brush up among those immortal (women),
Amid their cries, as if by his intentions, mingles (with their bodies),
Like ducks they preen their own bodies,
Like horses playful and constantly nipping." (Urvaśī)

Aside from the locative feminine plural pronominal form *āsu*, the shared lexical frame that produces the equation includes the preverb *ní-*, along with the root $\sqrt{spṛś}$, “touch,” and the stem *ásva-*, “horse.” The two adjectival stems are both ensconced within a subordinate temporal clause (introduced by *yád*). This frame highlights the replacement of *ámānuṣī-*, “(nonhuman or) inhuman, unaffiliated with Manu (the founder of

ritual),” the adjective that Purūravas uses to describe Urvaśī and her fellow nymphs, with *amṛtā-*, “immortal.”

In effect, the (implied) lexical substitution is centripetal with regard to Rigvedic phraseology in general, replacing a rather rare (and, in this context, quite problematic) lexical element with a more standard one: whereas, according to Lubotsky’s concordance, the adjective *ámānuṣa-* occurs only 5 times, there are over 150 instances of *amṛtā-*. Within the Rigveda, the former adjective appears to connote monstrosity: in 2.11.10b and 10.22.8b, for example, it refers to a Dānava or a Dāsa²⁴⁰ that Indra slays (in other words, to Vṛtra). The former passage is especially instructive, because Indra himself is called “human-like” or “descendant of Manu” (*mānuṣa-*):

2.11.10a ároravīd vṛṣṇo asya vājro
 2.11.10b **ámānuṣam** yán **mānuṣo** nijúrvāt
The mace of that bull roared
*When he, **human-like** engulfed **the inhuman one**.*

Purūravas uses the same adjective to describe himself in pāda 8b above. The implications of this use of bellicose terminology to describe sexual play will better be grasped by the end of our discussion of 10.95; though it is hardly without precedent in Rigvedic phraseology, it works to his disadvantage in this context. At this stage, it should at least be clear that by portraying her posse of Apsarases as *immortal* rather than *inhuman/monstrous* (i.e. Vṛtra-like), Urvaśī successfully leverages phraseological norms against Purūravas’ pejorative characterization.

At the same time, and through the same act of metalinguistic repair, Urvaśī removes a thematic obstacle that could have otherwise separated her from the goddess Dawn, with whom (it will soon become clear) she desires to be associated: recall from Part II, Section 9.4 that Dawn can be called *mānuṣī*, or “descendant of Manu,” which connects the goddess to male ritual officiants and to the realm of sacrifice. The adjective *ámānuṣa-*, perhaps intended to portray Urvaśī as monstrous for desiring to abandon her post as sacrificer’s wife, and her fellow nymphs as monstrous for never desiring to occupy such a post, would have distinguished Urvaśī from Dawn—but she makes sure to correct that.

Perhaps Purūravas hoped that his demonization of the Apsarases would make the prospects of rejoining them unattractive—but by describing himself using the antonym with positive connotations, *mānuṣaḥ*, “descended from Manu, human,” he goads Urvaśī into turning the tables altogether rather than taking her place at his side. One could think of Purūravas’ choice of words as a kind of stumble off of the same tightrope that Vasiṣṭha was negotiating in *RV*7.86.7 (as described in Part III, Sections 8.11-8.13). In

²⁴⁰ On the word Dāsa, see further Part III Section 8.11.

order to make his human audience (particularly the Kavis of his clan) more sympathetic to his plight (of estrangement from Varuṇa), Vasiṣṭha encoded them as the formerly *acítaḥ*, “unperceptive (men),” whom the god made to perceive. As mentioned in Part III, the “unperceptive” often face punishments similar to those meted out to the demonized Dāsas—so it would first appear that, in labeling the Kavis in such a manner, Vasiṣṭha risks provoking the Kavis until they reject characterizations of their station and role—much like Urvaśī rejected the demonization of her fellow Apsarases in the present hymn. The difference, however, is that Vasiṣṭha simultaneously compares himself to a (deferent or dehumanized) Dāsa, equating his *current* status with the Kavis’ lowly beginnings, beginnings which stand in stark contrast to the Kavis’ subsequently attained heights of perceptiveness (they are called the *cikítuṣaḥ*, the “perceptive and perceived,” in the same hymn)²⁴¹.

Note that, in particular, the substitutions of “immortal” for “inhuman” does meet almost all the criteria set out for nominal homologies in the section above, although the forms in question are locative rather than nominative and accusative.

4.5 Implied equations in a pseudo-concatenation: divine female autocrats vs. men made for martial service

There is actually another, comparable implied metalinguistic equation *within* the immediately preceding verse, one which sets the stage for Urvaśī’s act of metalinguistic repair. While repetitions *within* the verse are technically not a round of concatenation according to our methodology, both the form and the function of these repetitions are similar to what we saw in Verses 8-9:

10.95.7 sám asmiñ jáyamāna āsata gná
 utém **avardhan** nadíyah svágūrtāḥ
 mahé yát tvā purūravo ráṇāya
ávardhayan dasyuhátyāya deváh
 “*When this one was being born, the women were in attendance,*
*And the rivers, singing their own praises, **strengthened him**,*
(Just) as for great battle, for the smiting of barbarians,
*The gods **made you strong**, Purūravas.” (Urvaśī)*

The last two noun phrases, *nadíyah svágūrtāḥ*, “the rivers that sing their own praises” (feminine), and *dev áḥ*, “the gods” (masculine) are equated through their shared status as subjects to a third plural transitive form of *√vardh*, “strengthen, raise,” (a root also seen in *RV* 7.77.6a, for instance). An intersecting, but

²⁴¹ See Part III, Sections 8.13-8.14 for more on the gloss, “perceptive and perceived.”

distinct, set of parallels connects *nadíyah svágūrtāḥ* with another form, *gnāḥ*, “(divine) women”: these are both pāda-final feminine plural subjects of third-person verbs.

Just as we saw in Verses 8-9, contrasts between the roles of gendered human and divine agents seem to be articulated in each hemistich, with a singular male mortal being counterposed to the group of divinities who raise him. (The male mortal who is born and “made strong” in the first hemistich is the son of Purūravas and Urvaśī; the male mortal who is made strong in the second verse is Purūravas himself.) This time, though, there is a new twist: a contrast of the caretaking roles performed by *feminine* deified river-*goddesses* (i.e. Apsarases), and masculine gods. Part of the point of this particular contrast is to frame an argument for custody of their son; but in addition, Urvaśī is carving out a feminine sphere within the divine realm for herself and her fellow Apsarases to occupy. To do this, she uses somewhat marginal but definitely attested Rigvedic phraseology. To demonstrate the relationship between Urvaśī’s self-characterization in pādas 7ab and divine-oriented phraseology elsewhere, I have included the two passages in the *Rig Veda* that share the most lexical elements with 10.95.7.

6.68.4 **gnās** ca yán náras ca vāvṛdhánta

vísve **deváso** narám **svágūrtāḥ**

prá ebhya indrávaruṇā mahitvá

diyaús ca · pṛthivi bhūtam urvī

*When they grew strong, both men and **women**—*

*(That is,) all **the gods, singing their own praises** through [mortal] men,*

You stand out from them by your greatness, O Indra and Varuṇa,

(And you) two wide ones, Sky and Earth.

4.19.10a prá te pūrvāṇi káraṇāni vipra

4.19.10b ávidvám̐ āha vidúṣe kárāṃsi

4.19.10c yáthā-yathā vṛṣṇiyāni **svágūrtā**

4.19.11a nú ṣtutá indara+ nú grṇāná

4.19.11b íṣam jaritré **nadíyo** ná pípeḥ

I speak forth your ancient deeds, O Inspired one,

Knowing them, to (you) who know the deeds...

*The bullish (deeds), **which sing their own praises**...*

Now praised, O Indra, now being sung,

*Make refreshment swell for the singer like **rivers**.*

In the passages above, the epithet *svágūrta-* appears to convey the sense that the gods’ immenseness or deeds essentially perform the ritual-praise equivalent of “speaking for themselves”—no elaborate praise-song would be required to grasp their greatness, although that fact does not absolve the singer of his obligations to perform the praise. In *RV*10.95, the clever recasting of the Apsarases as rivers leads one to imagine the sound of rushing water in conjunction with *svágūrta-*; in other words, in this case perhaps the Apsarases are literally singing their own praises, cutting out the male ritual officiants altogether.

The mention of a group of *women—gnāḥ*—among the gods is fairly rare in the Rigveda; *RV*6.68 contains one of a very few parallels; likewise, the epithet *svágūrta-*, “singing **one’s own** praises,” is not terribly common. However, it belongs to a common class of divine-oriented epithets. In Part III, Section 8.8, we discussed the important role played by a similar divine-oriented epithet *svadhāvanta-*, “force all **one’s own**,” in *RV*7.86. The epithet *svadhāvanta-*, “force all one’s own,” appeared to convey Varuṇa’s autocratic status at the top of the relevant human-divine hierarchy, including his immunity to the pressures and influences that affected those below. The female goddess Dawn is also granted epithets that encode an idea of self-sufficiency via the element *svá-*:

6.64.ab sugótá te supáthā párvateṣu
 aváté apás tarasi **svabhāno**
In the mountains you have good ways and paths;
*In calm you cross the waters, **self-lighting**.*

For similar usages, see 4.10.6d, 5.60.4a-b. I mean to suggest that just as fundamental to Urvaśi’s identification with Uṣas as their shared femininity is their shared *divinity*, implying a kind of autocratic *self-sufficiency*.

If a kind of autocratic self-sufficiency and even isolationism is what is being conveyed by the epithet *svágūrta-*, imagine how much more significant the contrast becomes between the caretaking strategies of goddesses content to *sing their own praises*²⁴²—who presumably raise Urvaśi’s son to serve himself in like fashion—and those of male gods, depicted as bent on preserving the sociopolitical hierarchy that they dominate: gods who raise men like Purūravas just to fight their battles. Urvaśi is doing more than carving out a niche for herself in divine-oriented phraseology—she is also using a different discourse to characterize Purūravas’ one-track, martial mentality: from the cradle to the chariot, he has been taught only to smite social strata that exist outside of the sociopolitical hierarchy connecting the Rigvedic gods to the communities that serve them. With that in mind, Purūravas’ attempt to demonize the Apsarases by calling them *ámānuṣa-*, which literally describes them as smite-worthy group existing outside of the roles

²⁴² From the same root *√gr̥* that played a crucial role in *RV*7.75—see Part II, Section 9.5-6 for more on that.

and rights prescribed by the mortal Manu, becomes laughably predictable and all the more ineffective. By encoding different worldviews through the shared verb \sqrt{vardh} , “raise, make strong,” Urvaśī highlights circumstances behind this hymn’s heteroglossia: in truth, the two former lovers have been *growing* apart since the moment Purūravas was born.

With things to come in mind, it will be important to remember that Urvaśī frames Purūravas’ military mentality using datives of purpose that describe the reasons why the gods raised him: *rāṇāya*, “for battle,” and *dasyuhātyāya*, “for the smiting of barbarians.”

4.6 Concatenations and metalinguistic manipulations, part 3: Repeated verbs, divergent roles

There are two other key rounds of concatenation that also expose and explicitly reference Purūravas’ martial mentality, making it clear that this mentality in large part determines the discourses from which he draws and the malapropisms which he produces:

10.95.4c ástaṃ nanakṣe yásmiñ cākán

10.95.4d dívā náктаṃ **śnathitá² vaitaséna²**

“She attained a home in which she took pleasure;

Day and night she was pierced by my rod.” (Urvaśī)

10.95.5a tríḥ sma máhnaḥ **śnathayo² vaitaséna²**

10.95.5b utá sma me áviyatyai pṛṇāsi

“Three times a day you used to pierce me with your rod,

And you ‘filled it up’ for me, who did not seek it.” (Purūravas)

The verb $\sqrt{śnath}$, “pierce, jab,” is elsewhere *exclusively* used for combat with foes and related exercises in combat skills. So, for instance, in *RV* 1.51.9b, you have Indra piercing those who don’t stand by him; in 1.63.5d and 7.25.2a, you have Indra piercing foes, who are encoded as *amítṛa-*, on which word see the Part III, Section 8.12 (towards the middle). In *RV* 7.82.6d, Indra vanquishes an un-kindred (*ájāmi-*) enemy who pierces (others); in *RV* 8.70.10d, Indra pierces a Dāsa (on Dāsas, see Part III, Section 8.11-12). In *RV* 7.99.4b, Indra pierces strongholds before smiting enemies; in 6.60.1a, an obstacle is pierced in a contest, and a prize is won—but the obstacle is encoded using the same word behind the name of Indra’s arch-nemesis, Vṛtra. There are more instances of this verb, but they are all in this same vein: the piercing is part of hostile combat.

It is not unheard of to use erotic metaphors to structure descriptions of military weapon: in fact, below, we will have a chance to discuss *RV* 6.75, a hymn structured on the blend of martial and marital discourses, in conjunction with the geometric ring. However, we have exactly zero instances of the root $\sqrt{śnath}$ being used to this end, at least in the *Rig Veda*—so I think we can safely say that Purūravas’ use of

this “piercing” verb to describe (what he supposed was) pleasurable sex is centrifugal in the extreme. All Urvaśī had to do to win this round is parrot his words and clarify that she did not, in fact, enjoy being treated like an enemy combatant—then, this particularly egregious deployment of martial metaphors becomes clear as Dawn.

A final Part of the thematic criterion applies too: the two finite verbs in this round of concatenations involve the roles/performed actions of parties at different sites:

10.95.10cd **jāniṣṭo**² apó náriyaḥ **sújātaḥ**²
 prá úrvāśī tirata dīrghám āyuḥ
*“(A son) belonging to men, **nobly born, was born** from the water –
 Urvaśī extends Āyu his lifetime long.” (Purūravas)*

10.95.11ab **jajñiṣā**² itthá gōpīthiyāya hí
 dadhātha tát purūravo ma ójaḥ
*“**You were born** just so: to afford protection.
 (But instead) you have exerted this force on me, Purūravas.” (Urvaśī)*

In Verse 11, attributed to Urvaśī, the *purpose* of Purūravas’ birth, and hence, of his existence—a purpose that, crucially, is articulated in the dative case—is contrasted with the likely circumstances of their infant son’s delivery (a water birth, to be sure). Perhaps this is meant to suggest that the infant may not end up “belonging to men,” after all: remember that, especially in the context of a hymn about Apsarases, and after another round of concatenations that spoke of rivers as caregivers (wet nurses, maybe), the water is a decidedly female element. The dative that describes Purūravas’ proper occupation is *gōpīthiyāya*, “to afford protection.” Etymologically speaking, this formation refers to animal *husbandry* (with the first element of the compound—*gó*, “cow”—in mind), but it is part of a group of nouns derived from a verbal root describing the forceful “protection” that only gods and patriarchs can provide. In other words, it is a dative of purpose fit for a human hero like Purūravas, but perhaps not for a child who has had so much contact with the semi-divine Apsarases.

Note that if we replace the word “commonalities” with “contrasts” in the abovementioned traits of verbal/deverbative homologies, the last two verbal contrasts definitely fit the bill. The most recent example even deploys the same key root, \sqrt{jan} , “generate/be born,” that was involved in the verbal homologies covered in Part III, Sections 4.4-4.7).

In sum, the concatenations (including the verse-internal pseudo-concatenation in 10.95.7) make it clear that Purūravas’ penchant for rather garish malapropisms stems from his martial mindset—that he is drawing from discourses related to combat out of a lack of experience with other spheres of life, and with

the language used to describe them. Sex, rebukes to Urvaśī for her abandonment of him, and nearly everything else are described in terms that rather apply to the vanquishing of foes who fall outside of the privileged sociopolitical order that extends from the Ārya patriarchs to their equally patriarchal gods. His aggressive deployments of (often marginal) martial phraseology in highly centrifugal ways allows Urvaśī to win each and every round of these dialogic exchanges, simply by parroting his words in more centripetal usages, or by replacing them with more centripetal near-synonyms that paint her behavior as divine rather than demonic. On top of this, the explicit content of her counter-arguments involves a discussion of Purūravas’ upbringing, pointing out with datives of purpose the training and the one-track mind that have caused their paths to diverge.

4.7 Metalinguistic manipulation and repair continued: the geometric ring and the antanaclashes of Purūravas and Urvaśī

In the geometric ring, even more than in the concatenations, Urvaśī uses celestial, divine-oriented phraseology—including Dawn-related phraseology which might be familiar from the Maṇḍala-7 hymns we previously examined—to “rise above” her former spouse and current pleading interlocutor, while pinpointing him down to a distant, human-oriented, and specifically *martial* discourse. Purūravas himself taps into a similar vein of martial phraseology; but he mixes it not only with idioms that refer to *marital* relations but also with divine-oriented collocations that seem to actually undermine his claim on Urvaśī.

The geometric ring that connects Stanzas 2 and 3 to subsequent verse pairs plays the most prominent role in highlighting relevant antanaclastic clashes of characterizations, including many instances of metalinguistic repair that tip the scale in Urvaśī’s favor. The basic pattern of antanaclastic usages is already established by the first lexical element involved in the geometric ring: *uśās-*, “Dawn.”

10.95.2b *prākramiṣam uśāsām*³ *agriyéva*

“I have marched forth, like the foremost of the Dawns.” (Urvaśī)

10.95.4a *sá vásu dádhatī śváśurāya*

10.95.4b *vāya úṣo*³ *yádi váṣṭy ántighāt*

“She was (always) imparting energy, a good thing, to her father-in-law –

Every dawn, whenever he wants it, from the house opposite.” (Purūravas)

In Urvaśī’s line, the “Dawns” in question are anthropomorphized deities with the current nymph as their leader; for Purūravas, “dawn” just refers to the time at which his spouse attends to his father.

The next round of the geometric ring connects two contrastive claims uttered by Purūravas and Urvaśī via their shared association with Urvaśī’s exhortation, *ástam párehi*, “Go off home again,” in Verse

2 (uttered by Urvaśi to Purūravas). In other words, it involves repetitions of the form *ástam* and the verbal root \sqrt{i} , “go”:

10.95.2c púrūravaḥ púnar **ástam**³ párehi^{1,3}
 “*Purūravas -- go off home again.*” (Urvaśi)

10.95.4c **ástam**³ nanakṣe yásmiñ cākán
 “*(She) attained a home in which she took pleasure.*” (Purūravas)

10.95.5c púrūravo ánu te kétam **āyam**³
 “*Purūravas, I followed your will.*” (Urvaśi)

In pāda 4c, Purūravas constructs a new statement using the word *ástam*, “home”—a statement recasting this “home” as Urvaśi’s preferred destination. Much like a number of the distorted/centrifugal verb phrases that Vasiṣṭha constructed as a sort of invitation to his human audience to hear allusions to other expressions,²⁴³ this pāda *evokes* Rigvedic phraseology rather than directly illustrating it. Aside from one simile in *RV*1.66.9b—*ástam ná gávo nákṣanta*, “like cows reaching/attaining a home,”—in which the verb $\sqrt{nakṣ}$, “attain/reach,” is paired with the same word for home, there does not appear to be too much in the way of phraseology behind the verb phrase *ástam nanakṣe*. Another phrase involving $\sqrt{nakṣ}$ will give us a better idea of the types of formulations that this pāda might evoke for a listener:

7.39.6b **nákṣat kāmam** mártiyānām ásinvan
The insatiable one [=Agni] will attain the desire of mortals.

The word *kāma-*, “desire,” derives from the root \sqrt{kam} , “love,” which is a secondary formation from $\sqrt{kan}/\sqrt{kā}$, “take pleasure in.” The form *cākán* in 10.95.4c derives from \sqrt{kan} . If there were more instances of $\sqrt{nakṣ} + kām-$, then we could be fairly confident that *ástam nanakṣe... cākán* would evoke that collocation in the mind of a listener.

The *Rig Veda* doesn’t quite give us that. What we do have in relative abundance is the coupling of *kāma-* with $\sqrt{naś}$, a virtually synonymous and phonologically related root meaning “attain,” (compare injunctive *nákṣat* from $\sqrt{nakṣ}$ and desiderative injunctive *ínakṣat* from $\sqrt{naś}$). We have this collocation, for instance, in *RV*1.54.9c, 6.5.7a, and 10.96.7d. I quote one divine-oriented and one human-oriented example below:

6.5.7ab **aśyāma táṃ kāmam** agne távotí
aśyāma rayīm rayivaḥ suvīram
May we attain this desire through your Grace, Agni,

²⁴³ See Part III, Sections 4.4-4.6 and Sections 8.12-8.13.

May we attain wealth well-stocked in heroes, O wealthy one!

10.96.7c *árvadbhir yó háribhir jóṣam íyate*

*só asya **kāmaṃ** hárivantam ānaśe*

He who goes at will with golden steeds,

*He **has attained** his gold-possessing **wish**.*

It seems to me that an expression like *ástaṃ nanakṣe yásmiñ cākán*, “She **attained** a home in which **she took pleasure**,” might be designed to evoke the collocation $\sqrt{naś} + káma-$, “attain **desire**,” with the hope that Urvaśi would believe that his home *was* her desire once that phrase popped into her head—just as Vasiṣṭha may have hoped that his human audience would hear themselves in the loopholes of his centrifugal verbal homologies, and believe that they had discovered their own agency rather than letting Vasiṣṭha define it.

However, Purūravas left his loophole rather wider than he intended: the phrase he deployed to evoke *káma-*, *yásmiñ cākán*, “in which she took pleasure,” is modeled on the construction $\sqrt{kan} +$ “locative,” which is much more frequently divine-oriented than human-oriented: see, for instance, 1.33.14a; 2.11.2ab; 1.51.12c; 1.174.5a; 7.70.4a; 10.29.1a; 10.91.12d; 10.147.3a; and 10.148.4c. (This is possibly true of $\sqrt{kan} +$ other cases, as well.) In the few instances in which humans are the ones taking pleasure, another case tends to be used—and in addition, these usages tend to be to be centrifugal turns of phrase made to round out a verbal homology that reflects a reciprocity relationship with a *god*. Here is a clear example:

2.11.3ab *ukthéṣu ín nú sūra **yéṣu cākán***

stómeṣu indra rudríyeṣu ca

*(Delight) now in just these hymns **in which you delight**, O Champion,*

And in Rudrian praise songs, Indra

2.11.13cd *śuṣmíntamaṃ **yám cākánāma** deva*

asmé rayiṃ rāsi vīrávantam

The most explosive [thing] which we might find pleasurable, O God:

Grant wealth for us, consisting in heroes.

(Cf. 10.147.4a in light of 10.147.3a.) In other words, in the midst of his effort either to jog Urvaśi’s memory of the pleasure she took in domesticity or to phraseologically entrap her into believing she has such a memory, he has actually framed her as a divine agent.

Urvaśi sees nothing other than an escape route in this particular loophole. On a denotative level, the structurally connected portion of her response refutes the idea that the home was *her* desire:

10.95.5c *púrūravo ánu te kétam **āyaṃ**⁴*

*“Purūravas, **I followed** your will.” (Urvaśi)*

On a phraseological level, her response does something that is quite clever. The formula *ánu + kétam + √i*, “come in accordance with [someone’s] will, “follow [someone’s] will,” appears only twice, but with unmistakable *divine* reference. Both involve the same construction and the same verbal stem (imperfect); and in both instances, the subject is *deváso*, “the gods.”

4.26.2d máma deváso **ánu kétam āyan**

The gods came according to my will.

10.6.7c táṃ te deváso ánu kétam āyann

The gods came according to your will.

A final, weaker parallel involves the prepositional phrase *ánu kétam*, but not the verb (so, not the element that is involved in the ring). In a hymn to Savitar (a.k.a. the god of the rising and especially the setting sun), the god’s ability to control the rhythms of life is emphasized. It is in this context that we find the following two lines:

2.38.5cd jyṣṭham mātá sūnáve bhāgám ádhād

ánv asya **kétam** iṣítam savitrā

The mother gives the best portion to her son;

In accordance with his appetite, (which was) stirred by Savitar.

Though the will/appetite is the son’s, the agency of a god is still expressed explicitly, if more obliquely, by an instrumental. Whatever this last example may contribute to the connotations of the prepositional phrase, it seems safe to say that the *verb* phrase as a whole is “divine oriented”—something to the effect of “I came *in accordance with Your will*.”

So, the inaugural two rounds of the geometric ring have involved Purūravas trying to use Urvaśī’s own words to conjure up memories of home: he tries redirect her affinity with the Dawn goddesses into memories of domestic duties that she performed, dawn after dawn; and he tries to trap her into remembering or believing she remembers that she too had a desire for home. The issue, however, is that his own words are more divine-oriented than domestic-oriented—so his centrifugal expressions of domestic bliss, beyond weakening his standing, actively give her the hierarchically upper hand. Her use of divine-oriented phraseology helps his phrases find their proper center of gravity in the gods’ realm—and it is in that realm that she quickly consolidates her position.

4.8 A singular loss, or in good company: metalinguistic repair and manipulations of number in the second half of the geometric ring

The third verse of RV 10.95, in which this geometric ring terminates, is famously fraught with difficulties: it opens with a hypometric pāda;²⁴⁴ it includes a hapax legomenon in the phrase *avīre krātau*, and it contains forms such as *dauidyutan* and *úrā*, whose number is ambiguous due to the effects of Sandhi. A challenge of a subtler variety is posed by the third form in the verse, which is the next form in our geometric ring.

10.95.3 iṣur ná *śriyá*³ iṣudhér
asanā *goṣaḥ*³ śatasā ná ráṃhiḥ
avīre *krātau*³ ví *dauidyutan*³ ná
úrā na māyúṃ citayanta dhúnayaḥ
*“Like an arrow from the quiver for beauty/glory...
A shot winning cows; a charge winning hundreds--
Under no man’s will, she/(they) will keep flashing forth like (lightning)
Like (a) lamb(s) (make(s) perceived its/their) bleating, so are (her/their) tumultuous (tempests)
perceived.”* (Purūravas)

The ambiguity in this form that appears as *śriyá* is twofold. On the one hand, the case could either be genitive or dative (in this instance, sandhi obscures the features that distinguish between the two forms). Here I will proceed with the tentative assumption that it is dative, on two basic grounds: 1) by Lubotsky’s count, the dative is almost twice as common (34 instances of the dative, including this one, vs. 18 of the genitive); 2) there is an unambiguous dative *śriyé* in pāda 6b of the hymn, and there are many other datives throughout the hymn, all of which (it will later become clear) are intended to be quite directly compared with the use here. (In other words, surrounding patterns of contrast suggest a shift in meaning stemming from the lexeme’s connotations rather than ambiguous or different inflectional morphology.)

More significantly, here the dative *śriyé*, “for beauty,” is rather jarring when used within a broader simile involving a prize won—a context which would be much better suited by a word with a different basic meaning, along the lines of, “for glory.” Though it is not impossible for *śriyé* to be translated this way in some contexts, the meaning is a marginal one, because this form tends to express the purpose of an act more self-sustained and exhibitionist than competitive or martial—and tends in particular to be associated with shining and flashing. From now on, I will translate the standard usage this dative form as “for the

²⁴⁴ This hypometric pāda features prominently in a wonderfully imaginative discussion by Werner Knobl (2007).

limelight” to capture these associations and distinguish it from near synonyms. See, for instance, the Maruts in 5.55 3a-c.

5.55.3a sākāṃ jātāḥ subhúvaḥ sākāṃ ukṣitāḥ

5.55.3b śriyé cid á pratarāṃ vāvṛdhur náraḥ

5.55.3c virokīṇaḥ súriyasyeva raśmāyaḥ

Born together, lovely-natured, raised together,

For the limelight the heroes grew yet stronger,

Radiant like rays of the sun --

(See also 5.60.4c-d, among many other examples.) The same dative of purpose is also used in conjunction with Dawn, the female goddess with which Urvaśī explicitly associated herself in Verse 2.

6.64.1ab úd u śriyá uśáso rócāmānā

ásthur apám ná ūrmáyo rúsantaḥ

Shining for the limelight, up the Dawns

Stood, bright like waves of water.

Another context in which this dative appears, *RV*1.92.6, is particularly revealing. In *RV*1.92, Dawn has a lover (the sun), but the dynamic between them has little to do with the typical gender-determined roles one would see in a human husband and wife. Dawn herself takes on an active role (to the extent that she is even compared to a male flatterer); the sun is *at most* the extraordinary backlighting behind the gorgeous goddess. *RV*1.92 provides a range of descriptions of the relationship between Dawn and the sun—none of which paint the latter as the former’s luminary lord. Note in particular the grammatical gender-bending in the first example: in the simile that characterizes Dawn’s radiance, she is described as a (grammatically and conceptually) *male* flatterer.

1.92.6cd śriyé chāndo ná smayate vibhāti Radiating (f.) for the limelight like a flatterer (m.) smiles,
suprātikā saumanasāyājīgaḥ She of the lovely form awoke [all] for happiness.

1.92.11d yóṣā jārāsya cākṣasā ví bhāti

A maiden, she shines with the brightness of (a/her) lover...

1.92.12d súryasya ceti raśmíbhīr dṛṣānā

She becomes visible, appearing by the rays of the sun.

In other words, this use of the dative is not only *celestial-oriented*, and possibly *divine-oriented*—pretty much the opposite of what Purūravas intended—but it actually points in the direction of Dawn’s quite different (extramarital) relationship with her own lover. Once again, Purūravas unwittingly playing into Urvaśī’s hands.

Indeed, Urvaśī steals the “limelight” away from Purūravas’ centrifugal phrasing and uses it to characterize the Apsarases as a group of gods. The second occurrence of the dative *śriyé* arrives in Stanza 6, along with the word *śréṇi-/śráyaṇi-*, “rank.” These words are derived from two roots with many near-homophonous forms (*śriyé* from the noun *śrī-*, which is derived from the root $\sqrt{\text{śrī/śray}}$ “diffuse light”; *śráyaṇi-* from the root $\sqrt{\text{śri/śray}}$ “lean on, spread”). This time, the form *śriyé* displays its typical use—referring as it does to a spectacular, luminous display performed without the active participation of any second party.

10.95.6 yā sujūrnīḥ **śráyaṇiḥ** sumnáāpir
 hradécakṣur ná granthínī caranyúḥ
 tā añjāyo aruṇayo ná sasruḥ
śriyé gāvo ná dhenávo ’navanta
*“The beautifully glowing **rank** (of Apsarases), friends in good favor,
 Interlaced like a pond’s-eye [=lotus], (always) on the move—
 These flowed like reddish salves;
 Like milch cows they bellowed **for the limelight.**”* (Urvaśī)

The word *śráyaṇi-*, meaning ‘rank/group’ and deriving from that phonologically similar root, makes for a more conspicuous case of antanaclasis—if it is taken to contrast with Purūravas’ use of the form *śriyé* to mean “for glory.” In any case, the use of *śráyaṇi-* to describe a rank of glowing gods or lights is typical of its appearances in the Rig Veda. For instance, the same term is used in another Marut hymn (5.059.7a): *vāyo ná yé śráyaṇiḥ paptúr ójasā*, “(Their) ranks, which flew like birds, with might.” (See similar references to Agni and his gleaming “rank” of teeth in 10.20.3c and 10.142.5a.) So, if a link or a transition is perceived between the use of *śriyé* in Stanza 3 and the use of *śráyaṇiḥ* in Stanza 6, it would indeed be one of a return to one set of norms of Rigvedic phraseology: in particular, to the phrases that hover around celestial gods like a cloudbank. Note that in the passage from 5.55 quoted above, the status of the Maruts as a self-contained group is also emphasized, though in different words.

The contrast between *śriyé* in Verse 3 and *śráyaṇiḥ* complements the contrast between the broader image of the *lone* arrow that outpaced all the others for *glory* and the idea of a *group* of goddesses who bask in the limelight together: and indeed, this transition is also highlighted by the geometric ring, via the reemergence of the word *gó-*, “cow”—used in Verse 3 to describe a prize won by the shooting of an arrow—

to characterize the Apsarases in Verse 6. Of course, such a characterization helps implicitly link them with the Dawn-cows (of whom we saw so much in Part II of this dissertation).²⁴⁵

The importance of the distinction of singular and plural as an indicator of a divergence of perspectives is already hinted at by the grammatically double-voiced usage of the verb form *citayanta* at the end of Verse 3 (a tactic called “case disharmony,” and already discussed in conjunction with the same root \sqrt{cit} in Part III Section 8.13).

10.95.3c avīre **krátau**³ ví **dauidyutan**³ ná

10.95.3d úrá na māyúṃ citayanta dhúnayaḥ

Under no man's will, she/(they) will keep flashing forth like (lightning)

Like (a) lamb(s) (make(s) perceived its/their) bleating, so are (her/their) tumultuous (tempests) perceived.” (Purūravas)

Though the form and other related ambiguities in this hemistich (discussed above) make many interpretations possible, once the contrast between the singular arrow and the rank of Apsarases is articulated in Verse 6, one imagines that this simile would be interpreted in the following fashion: “Like a lamb (makes perceived) her bleating, so are their tumultuous tempests perceived.” Within the simile, the lamb(s) is(/are) making their bleating perceived by others in their surroundings, indicating an enduring connection to those others and a plea for help; outside of the simile, a group of “tumultuous” creatures are being perceived even though they do not care to exert any particular agency to that end. In other words, in retrospect, Purūravas himself will appear to have articulated the very double image that Urvaśī is creating: between existence as a lone figure in a human hierarchy and membership among a group of tempestuous celestial Apsarases.

²⁴⁵ Unsurprisingly, the very same Dawn-hymns quoted above in conjunction with *śrīyé* also feature passages comparing the Dawns to cows.

1.92.1cd niṣkṛṇvāná áyudhānīva dhṛṣṇávaḥ

prāti **gávo** áruṣīr yanti mātáraḥ

Letting loose like bold [heroes] their weapons,

The tawny cows, the mothers, return.

6.64.3ab vāhanti sīm aruṇáso rúsanto

gávaḥ subhágām urviyá prathānām

The ruddy-white ones drive her:

The cows (drive) the Blessed one, the widespread one.

The difference between the single triumphant arrow—and, implicitly, the archer—that Purūravas uses to characterize his relationship to Urvaśī, and the group of goddesses in the limelight among whom she counts herself, is also fairly easy to link to his martial mindset. After all, just a few verses later (in Verse 8, as described above), he speaks of himself as the lone *mānuṣaḥ*—i.e. scion of Manu, the first sacrificer, and by extension the man who set up the sociopolitical order—amid a sea of *amānuṣīṣu*—female foes who lack or reject any connection to the order initiated by Manu. In consequence, by the time this contrast arrives in Verse 8, listeners, including Urvaśī herself, are likely to regard it with even more suspicion than it garners by virtue of its own centrifugal features: it will be associated with his failed attempt to assert control over a *group* of goddesses who collectively out-*rank* the human hierarchy that he has been raised to defend.

4.9 Metalinguistic disrepair in the geometric ring: the mixed-martial and marital discourse behind Purūravas' Waterloo

To put it bluntly, Verse 3 is where Purūravas seals his fate—though it takes the completion of the geometric ring for this to be made explicit. As the reader will have likely guessed, the self-defeating expressions can all be linked to the types of discourses that his martial mindset would lead him to favor. In subsequent verses, Urvaśī characterizes this mindset in terms of datives of purpose referencing battle, the smiting of foes outside the sociopolitical order, and the conferring of protection. It is just such a dative of purpose that must stand behind Purūravas' ill-considered use of the form *śriyé*. Perhaps the most prototypical dative of purpose in discourses of this kind is *śrāvase*, “for glory/fame.” A particularly instructive passage enumerates the more mundane occupations of the mortals that Dawn awakens:

1.113.6 kṣatrāya tvam **śrāvase** tvam mahiyā
 iṣṭāye tvam ārtham iva tvam ityai
 vísadṛṣā jīvitābhipracākṣa
 uṣā ajīgar bhúvanāni vísvā
One for warfare/kingship, one for great glory,
One as if in pursuit of a goal, one for his occupation—
Living creatures of various forms toward regarding various things:
Dawn awakened all beings.

(See also 6.17.14a-b for a similar use of the form *śrāvase* among mundane ends whose pursuit the gods enable.) Even when the form is used to express the aims of gods, it tends to be associated with feats that

are analogous to human competitions and/or combat (see, for instance, 9.097.25a, in which Soma [rushes] “like a steed” for glory).

It goes almost without saying that the pursuit of fame is characteristic of males, since the contests and conflicts that are occasions for fame, and the poet-patron relationship that institutionalizes its production, all hinge upon a steeply hierarchical social framework, with the patriarchal nuclear family as its fundamental rung. A consequence of this is that progeny and fame/glory are often juxtaposed as fruits of conflict and competition. *RV* 7.18.23c-d provides such a juxtaposition, referring to the rewards of prevailing in a chariot race:

7.18.23c ṛjráso mā pṛthiviṣṭháh sudásas

7.18.23d tokám tokáya **śrávase** vahanti

The steeds, well given, sure-footed

*Carry me, (and my) progeny for progeny (and) **glory**.*

Of course, there are other means by which this kind of conflation of martial and marital life can be expressed. For instance, in *RV* 6.75, the famous hymn on weapons, arrows are compared to children:

6.75.5 bahvínám **pitá** bahúr asya putrás

ciścá kṛṇoti sámanāvagátya

iṣudhíḥ sánkāḥ pṛtanās ca sárvaḥ

pṛṣṭhé nínaddho jayati prásūta

***Father** of many (daughters [=arrows]), he (also) has many a son;*

He makes a clattering when he descends into the melees.

*The **quiver**, tied onto the back, clashes and battles -- all of them*

Wins, when it is thrust into action.

Recall that the same word for “quiver” —**iṣudhí-**—and the related word for “arrow” —**íṣu-**—are used in the opening simile in Verse 3 of 10.95: “Like an arrow from a quiver, for beauty(/for the limelight)...” We noted above that the implicit agent of this shooting must be a male—the passage above might suggest more specifically a *father*. Keep in mind that this is the third verse of a hymn in which Purūravas is making desperate attempts to convince Urvaśī, his lover and – in his view, at least—spouse, not to leave him; it is odd, then, to realize that the metaphor of an arrow being shot from a **quiver** more typically refers to a paternal relationship. In the same hymn (6.75.3), it is the bow and the bowstring that are characterized as lovers.

We are about to see that this metaphorical misstep is connected to Purūravas’ *unsuccessful* attempt to blend the world of the human and the divine together.

4.10 *Purūravas' Paternalistic Discourse: Urvaśi as Sūryā*

There *is* *one* glowing celestial goddess who is said to mount a chariot *for the limelight*, and one set of gods whose preparatory actions involve arrow-images. The goddess is the *daughter* of the sun, Sūryā, and the others are the Aśvins; they interact in a mythological marriage. Sūryā is the bride, and the Aśvins act as proxies for the groom (who is sometimes identified as Soma). In mounting the chariot of the Aśvins, Sūryā signals acceptance of the groom to whom they will lead her (Jamison 1996 222-224). In RV 6.063, a hymn dedicated to the Aśvins, Sūryā mounts the chariot “for the limelight”:

6.63.5ab ádhi śriyé duhitā sūriyasya

ráthaṃ tasthau purubhujā śatótim

For the limelight the daughter of the sun

Stood up on your hundred-favored chariot, O Wealthy ones.

The noun phrase *ráthaṃ...śatótim*, “hundred-favored chariot,” recalls *śatasā ná ráṃhiḥ*, “a charge **winning hundreds**” in 10.95.3. In another hymn, the Aśvins who usher her to her groom are compared to arrowsmiths.

1.184.3a śriyé pūṣann iṣukṛteva devā

1.184.3b nāsatiyā vahatūṃ sūriyāyāḥ

The gods, O Pūṣan, as if making arrows for the limelight—

The Nāsatyas (made ready) the bridal procession of Sūryā,

Of course, in 10.95, Urvaśi herself is compared to an arrow.

These motifs from the marriage of a celestial goddess occupy a recognizable if marginal part of a relevant divine-oriented discourse, and include an appreciable, relevant role of a male. Why was Purūravas' mobilization of these motifs not to his advantage? Well, if the marriage of Sūryā is to serve as a midpoint between divine and human discourses—a binding tie that would help rein Urvaśi in--Sūryā's acceptance of the groom should be emphasized, rather than her departure from her paternal “quiver.” Furthermore, Purūravas pains this departure as occurring *avīre krátau*, “under no man's will.” A marriage is a transferral of authority from one patriarch to another, rather than the abandonment of that authority. So, in this near miss of a rhetorical strategy, he and his arrow have accidentally hit upon the motifemic equivalent of a major malapropism: Purūravas casts himself in the role of a bewildered, abandoned father—and not surprisingly, fails to take Urvaśi in.

4.11 Summary

Urvaśī plies apart the two ends of Purūravas’ mixed mundane (i.e. martial and marital) and divine discourses and uses them *both* against him. She characterizes herself extensively in terms of divinities who, self-sustained and with their own horizontal social bonds, have little need for the roles a human hierarchy would prescribe; at the same time, she mobilizes another discourse to characterize Purūravas as a warlike hero who should be *entrenched* within this hierarchy. Her repairs, conventional from the point of view of Rigvedic phraseology but deviant from the point of view of Purūravas’ double discourse, signal the dissolution of the problematic union of man and nymph and a return to the Apsarases’ celestial convent/coven. In answer to this dissertation’s final question—i.e., “How does the implicit dialogue—i.e. heteroglossia—in hymns with one speaker relate to similar operations in (explicit) dialogue hymns?”—this hymn suggests that both participants attempt to deploy many of the same tactics that Vasiṣṭha used—but the winning party does so demonstrably more adroitly.

APPENDIX: INCREMENTAL PROCESSING, ORDERED PROXIMITIES, AND 7.76's
STRUCTURING DEVICE 4

The exposition below is intended as an in-depth treatment of how associations between repetitions in *Rig Veda* 7.76.1 and 7.76.5 develop, evolve, and eventually coalesce into what I have called Structuring Device 4. This device is introduced in Part III, Section 2.3; I reproduce the chart from this section below.

Verse 1	Verse 2	Verse 3	Verse 4	Verse 5
jyótiḥ...-janyam			té (íd) devānām	-jānate...té/té devānām ná minanti vratāni
devānām ajanīṣṭa	cákṣuḥ		jyótiḥ... ajanayan	

To repeat what was said in the beginning of that section: the distinction between the elements in bold and other ancillary elements is that the latter serve as a sort of “catalyst,” forming temporary associations with words that are eventually recognized as part of the structuring device, associations that increase the prominence of those elements in the mind of a listener, and then eventually attenuate in favor of other grouping judgments. Before presenting an account of that incremental process, however, a little more should be said about the model of language processing that informs the account.

Incremental processing of poetry—a catalog of (sometimes competing) cues

Periodically in this dissertation we have delved into the issue of incremental processing: more specifically, we have acknowledged that if we are dealing with a listener who hears a hymn’s pādas in a particular order, those repetitions that occur in prior pādas would, *ceteris paribus*, be perceived before repetitions which occur further along into a hymn.

But what about repetitions whose recognition depends on different layers of content and meaning within the same verse or even the same pāda? Now that (throughout Part III, Section 2) we have spoken of phonological, syntactic, and referential proximity as different types of cues that can account for the grouping of words into individual rounds of repetition, this question has an obvious relevance—and it will turn out to be a key question for understanding how this last structuring device comes into being.

Without getting deep into the technicalities of language processing (which would take us quite far afield), one can hopefully take as self-evident that all other things being equal, a listener would tend to register aspects of the signifier (or the “lexeme”)—for instance, phonemes and prosody—before elements

of the signified (or the “lemma”)—i.e. the semantics of individual words, and the recognition of morphological markers and syntactic connections. We can assume this because the recognition of the signified generally presupposes a thorough processing of the signifier. Again, all other things being equal, aspects of coherence and thematic content—the recognition of continuity of reference across sentences, of particular narratives, mythological motifs, or other types of references—would be the last cues to be factored in, since they depend on an understanding of both the signifiers and the signified, and on a comparison of those more basic cues to knowledge of key phraseology and an understanding of cultural context.

When dealing with different aspects of the factor of proximity that would prompt repetitions to be perceived as a single redundant ring, we could say the following: *ceteris paribus*, the first grouping judgments to be made are those that arise because two forms are juxtaposed and/or are in the same metrical phrase; this we have called “temporal” proximity, but “prosodic” proximity would work equally well. Next would be grouping judgments arriving primarily from syntactic proximity. After that would be judgments arising from referential proximity, which hovers in between syntax and thematics. (Incidentally, the same could be said for different aspects of the factor of “similarity,” etc.)

A final type of proximity (or similarity, etc.) suggested by this overview would be *thematic*, i.e. associations that obtain between words that are crucial to articulating a particular main idea (even though they may not be in the same syntactic phrase). One thing that is important to remember about thematic associations is that even though they develop late, they tend to increase in importance as time wears on. In particular, when the specific wording of particular pādas has faded from a listener’s mind, collocations with particular thematic significance still stand a chance of being recalled and associated with more recently arriving lines.

Incremental processing and Bob Dylan’s poetry

If readers are having trouble intuitively grasping how this ordering of cues affects the interpretation of poetry more generally, they might consider their bearing upon a different sort of poetic problem: the interpretation of the first verse of Bob Dylan’s song, “It’s Alright, Ma.”

Darkness at the break of noon

Shadows even the silver spoon

The handmade blade, the child’s balloon

*Eclipses both the sun and moon
To understand you know too soon
There is no sense in trying*

Much of the general sense of suggestive disorientation that accounts for this song's intrigue and appeal (neatly encapsulated in the lines, "To understand you know too soon / There is no sense in trying") has to do with the way in which competing types of cues, or the same types of cues in earlier vs. later lines, suggest different syntactic roles for successive noun phrases, culminating in entirely different imagery. In this verse, the noun phrases in question are "the handmade blade" and "the child's balloon." We could group these cues and the associations they suggest into three stages:

1) First three lines, prosodic cues:

Up until the end of the third line, "the handmade blade" and "the child's balloon" would be interpreted as appositives to "the silver spoon." This is not only because no other interpretation is yet available; it is also because the factors of prosodic proximity and similarity reinforce the interpretation as a good one: the phrases occur in swift succession in Dylan's rendering, uninterrupted by even a metrical pause, and they have the same syllable count and rhythm.

2) Fourth line and onwards, prosodic and morphological/syntactic cues:

Once the second verb, "eclipses," arrives, at least one of the two noun phrases will need to be interpreted as its subject. The prosodic proximity and similarity of "the handmade blade" and "the child's balloon" would encourage a listener to give them the same role; now that syntactic cues are being factored in, the need for an object for the transitive verb, "shadows" prevents "the silver spoon" from being interpreted in this manner.

3) Fourth line and onwards, thematic cues:

On the other hand, the status of "silver spoon" and "handmade blade" not only as silverware, but as symbols of power, would encourage one to once again group them as appositives, leaving "the child's balloon" alone to eclipse the sun and moon (which is a coherent image of a different sort).

Early arrival; phonological similarity, prosodic, syntactic and referential proximity: the first round of repetitions

The two instances of *vjan* and *vyótiḥ* are the first relevant repetitions to materialize to a listener hearing the hymn's verses in order. In addition, alliteration (a conventional form of phonological similarity) between *vyótiḥ* and the forms of *vjan* likely helps influence a listener to group these two

repetitions together into one round, and in both cases the two forms are found in the same hemistich (prosodic proximity); the first occurrences of *jyótiḥ* and *√jan* are even in the same pāda (1a).²⁴⁶ Other significant factors working in favor of this round of repetitions are *syntactic* and *referential* proximity. In the first instance (pāda 1a), *√jan* occurs in an adjective modifying *jyótiḥ* (*jyótiḥ amṛtam viśvájanyam* “the immortal **light** belonging to all **generations**”). In the second instance (pādas 4cd), *jyótiḥ* and the form of *√jan* are the object and verb (respectively) in two different but consecutive sentences constructed with identical verbal morphology (person, number, tense, voice and mood): (...) *jyótiḥ pitáro ánv avindan / satyámantrā ajanayann uṣāsam*: “The fathers found the...**light** / Those with the mantras coming true **generated** the dawn.” This meets all the criteria of an implied metalinguistic equation, a tool we have already seen used to hint that different words are glossing the same referents. Once this referential proximity is perceived, “light” would seem to rename the object of “generated,” and “generated” would rename the verb governing “light,” strengthening the associations between the two forms.

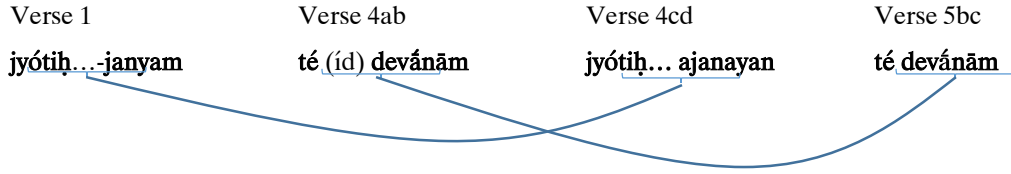
So, the first perceived repetitions would definitely be the following (the brackets in the chart below indicate that the association is between *pairs* of words rather than individual forms).

jyótiḥ...-janyam
jyótiḥ... ajanayan

Prosodic/temporal proximity: the second-perceived round of repetitions

The next round of repetitions to be perceived would involve the demonstrative pronoun *té*, “those,” plus the genitive plural form *devánām*, “the gods’.” This is the case even though by the time the final instance of *devánām* arrives in pāda 5c, a listener has also heard all the other forms relevant to the structuring device. All other nearby rounds of repetition require the factor of referential proximity in order for the relevant repetitions to be grouped together: in other words, basic processing of both the signifiers *and the signified* in sentences is required so that the listener can ascertain which words refer to the same agents, entities and actions. In contrast, the juxtaposition of *té* and *devánām* in both pāda 4a and pāda 5c facilitates the more or less instantaneous recognition and grouping of these repetitions via the factor of prosodic proximity, particularly since they also occur in contiguous verses. Immediately upon hearing Verse 5, then, a listener will have perceived the following two rounds of repetition (again, the brackets indicate that the associations are between pairs of forms).

²⁴⁶ Of course, the onset of *j-* in *jyótiḥ* is a Middle Indicism, but the initial onset of *dy-* is sufficiently phonologically close to *j-* for (near) alliteration to still be a factor.



Note that I have temporarily put all instances of *té* and *devánām* in bold: at this point, they would seem to be a round of repetition in a putative structuring device.

Referential proximity: expansion of the third round of repetition

These would indeed be the most immediately felt rounds of repetition—but other associations would simultaneously be growing in the background. Chief among these would be phonological and phraseological associations connecting *ajanayan*, from $\sqrt{jān}$, “generate,” and (*sám*) *jānate*, from $\sqrt{jñā}$, “know,” with the repeated phrase *té (íd) devánām*.

7.76.4a tá ⁴ íd devánām ⁴ sadhamáda āsann	té (íd) devánām
<i>Those⁴ were the gods⁴ feasting companions:</i>	
7.76.4c gūlḥám jyótiḥ⁴ pitáro ánv avindan	jyótiḥ...
7.76.4d satyámantrā ajanayann⁴ uṣásam	ajanayan

*The fathers discovered the hidden **light**.*
*With the mantras that come true, **they generated** the Dawn.*

7.76.5b sám jānate⁴ ná yatante mithás té ⁴	- jānate...té
<i>Those⁴ genuinely act together; they do not marshal themselves in opposition.</i>	
7.76.5c té ⁴ devánām ⁴ ná minanti vratáni	té devánām
<i>Those⁴ do not transgress the gods⁴ commandments</i>	

The influence of *referential* proximity is the most powerful factor pushing for the association of these forms. In this case, the subjects of *jānate* and *ajanayan* are eventually recognized as identical with the referents of *té* in the repeated phrase *té devánām*. This process starts with the form from $\sqrt{jñā}$, i.e. (*sám*) *jānate*. A pronominal form *té* is the explicit subject of (*sám*) *jānate*., and both forms occur within the same pāda:

7.76.5b sám jānate⁴ ná yatante mithás té ⁴	- jānate...té
<i>Those genuinely act together; they do not marshal themselves in opposition.</i>	

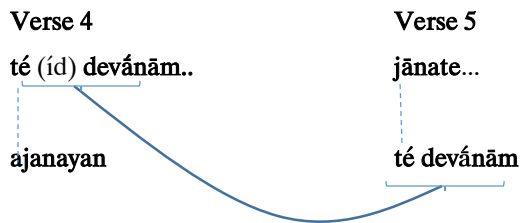
This first instance of *té* is separated from *té devánām* only by a metrical break,²⁴⁷ so the co-referentiality of the two identical pronominal forms could hardly be clearer:

7.76.5c **té devánām**⁴ ná minanti vratáni **té devánām**
Those do not transgress the **gods'** commandments

Note also that these two contiguous pādas are very close in terms of semantics; all in all, it would take a very short time for a listener to recognize that “those” (*té*) who act together are the same as “those” (*té*) who do not transgress the gods’ (*devánām*) commandments.

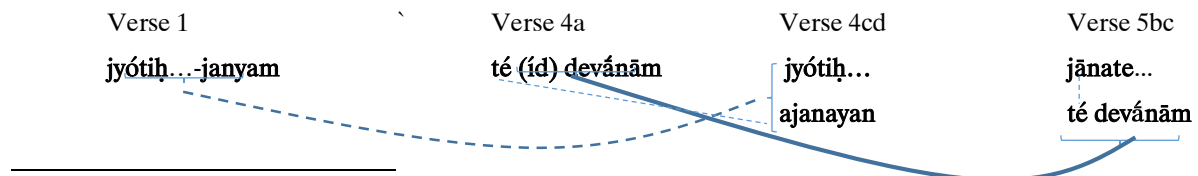
It takes just a bit longer for *té* at the beginning of pāda 4a to be connected with the subject of *ajanayan* (from \sqrt{jan}) in pāda 4d. The connection is suggested primarily by the semantic/thematic ties between *pitáraḥ*, “fathers,” the explicit subject of *ajanayan* in 4cd, and the phrase *kaváyaḥ pūrviyásaḥ*, “sage poets of old,” in 4b which is clearly co-referential with the *té* of pāda 4a.

Once these associations are made, *jānate* and *ajanayan* would start to be associated with the pre-existing round of repetition connecting the two instances of *té (íd) devánām*. In the chart below, the dashed vertical lines are the new associations, and the curvy wave and brackets reflect the pre-established round of repetition.



Eventually, this new-forming grouping judgment will be abandoned, but not before it acts as a “catalyst” establishing a key association between *jānate* and *té devánām* in Verse 5.

The following chart puts the newly developed associations in context, comparing them with competing previously formed grouping judgments within Structuring Device 4 (to say nothing of other complicating factors; see below).



²⁴⁷ The pāda-final *té* in 5b is very oddly positioned, so this *té* stands out perceptually as well—not that it needs to in order for the repetition to be recognized at such close range. I think this positioning may be drawing the reader’s attention to the problem of the pronoun’s reference—ie. the fact that the identity of the subject of this and other sentences in Verse 5 is not explicitly clarified, and is a matter of some importance (see Part III Section 4.6 for more on this).

The dotted lines indicate a certain instability in a number of these grouping judgments: at this stage, the form *ajanayan* would appear to belong to one redundant ring by virtue of its syntactic proximity to *vyótiḥ*, and to another redundant ring by virtue of its referential proximity to *té* in 4a. In the short term, competing associations that vie for/ divide a listener’s attention weaken each other (this is almost a tautological statement); but the tug of war may very well serve to modulate more attentional resources toward developing associations between these passages.

The chart indicates the state of affairs up through the processing of pāda 5c; once pāda 5d—which contains the last phrases relevant to Structuring Device 1—comes fully into play, one of the two grouping judgments that currently seem secure would begin to break down: the *té* in 4a would once again associated with redundant repetitions in Verse 3 (with both prosodic and syntactic proximity keeping those associations intact), forming the inner round of the hymn’s first nested ring (Structuring Device 1), which would then be perceived in full. Obviously there is something of a problem with the analysis so far: again, in the short term, competing almost-associations are about as good as no associations. (This leaves only the association between *jānate* and *té devānām* intact.)

The chart is already busy, and yet it also does not treat the possibility of a direct association forming between *ajanayann* (from \sqrt{jan}) and (*sám*) *jānate* from ($\sqrt{jñā}$). The two forms occur in contiguous verses, and the stems show significant phonological overlap. In prior discussions, these types of similarities and usages have been sufficient grounds for the grouping of near-homophones into rounds of perceived repetitions; the reader may wonder why I am not making similar claims here. On a related note, nothing has been said about how *devānām ajaniṣṭa* fits into this picture: the chart at the beginning of our treatment of Structuring Device 4²⁴⁸ suggested it would be the first half of one redundant round of repetitions. Clearly a little more work has to be done to understand how these associations could solidify into a stable structuring device.

Thematic proximity: introduction

Ultimately, all of the interpretive problems I just mentioned—the relationship between near homophones, status of *devānām ajaniṣṭa*, and the unstable associations between other repetitions—will be

²⁴⁸ See Part III of this dissertation, Section 3.

resolved by taking into account thematic considerations, which can modulate and limit possible associations that would initially form on other grounds.

It might help to see this factor exert a similar influence over associations that we can grasp more intuitively than the associations in 7.76 or in other Rigvedic passages. Below are two versions of what could charitably be termed a poem (let's say, a poem about a performance of *The Nutcracker*).

	Version A.	Version A&B	Version B
1.	Beside the will-call lines, Curtseys and bows in rows; Girls' hair put up with bows .		1. Branches bowed with snow, Beside the will-call lines: Curtseys and bows in rows.
		2. The halls they decked with boughs , The doors adorned with wreaths— The stage tree: ornaments.	
3.	The curtain calls three times; They take their many bows , Their bouquets bound with bows .		3. The curtain calls three times; Their limbs fold as they bow , Their bouquets bound with bows .

The two versions of the poem essentially differ by two lines: one in each Verse 1, and one in each Verse 3. (Verse 2 in each version is identical.) Within each poem, there are two homophones (bow and bow), in addition to other words with considerable phonological overlap (bow(-tie), bouquet).

One would imagine that such an arrangement could produce a chart of formal repetitions with the same type of busy ambiguity as we saw at the beginning of this section—and yet, neither poem feels that complicated. In Version A, the “bows” in “curtsies and bows” feels closely associated with “bows” in “They take their many bows”; and despite the fact that both of these instances of “bows” are closer to the homophonous “boughs,” there is not much of a temptation to associate the two. In fact, there is rather a temptation to group “decked with boughs” with “put up with bows” and “bound with bows.” In Version B, however, “Branches bowed” and “limbs...bow” do indeed feel closely associated with “decked with boughs.” These different associations yield layers of imagery that intersect in different types of details: in Version A, audience, setting and performers are connected by virtue of their bow-tied accessories; in Version B, they are connected through their tree(-like) limbs.

The grouping of repetitions into different rounds or devices and the resultant differences in imagery are largely a product of a change in the balance of other phraseology associated with the poem's two themes or discourses. In each version, there's a discourse about human performance on and offstage, and there's also a discourse about less-animate settings and accessories, with a particularly heavy focus on

plants. In each case, “bough” and “bow” (the verb) can be deployed in either discourse. It is ultimately the connotations of elements surrounding “bow”—including “hair,” “bow(tie),” and “take,” as well as the repeated preposition “with” in Version A, and “branches,” and “limbs” in Version B—that determine which phonological repetitions are most closely associated.

A first attempt to characterize the differences between the two versions might yield a chart showing the relative distribution of *anthropocentric* and *dendrocentric* language, with particular emphasis on the collocations that involve “bow” (noun or verb) and “bough.” In the chart below, a “+” sign indicates a collocation; superscript “A” that are specific to Version A.

Anthropocentric Phraseology	Ambiguous (Human-produced plants)	Dendrocentric Phraseology
Verse 1 “Curtsy” + “Bow” “Hair put up” ^A + “With Bows” ^A		
Verse 2 “Halls” + “Deck”... “Doors” “Adorned”... ...“Ornaments”	... + “With Boughs” ...“With Wreaths”	“Tree”...
Verse 3 “Take” ^A + “Bow” ^A	“Bouquets”...	
...“Bound” “With Bows”		

The next chart is analogously constructed; Superscript “B” indicates collocations that are specific to Version B.

Anthropocentric Phraseology	Ambiguous	Dendrocentric Phraseology
Verse 1 “Curtsy” + “Bow”		“Branches” ^B + “Bow” ^B
Verse 2 “Halls” + “Deck”... “Doors” “Adorned”... ...“Ornaments”	... + “With Boughs” ...“With Wreaths”	“Tree”...
Verse 3	“Bouquets”...	“Limbs” ^B + “Bow” ^B
...“Bound” “With Bows”		

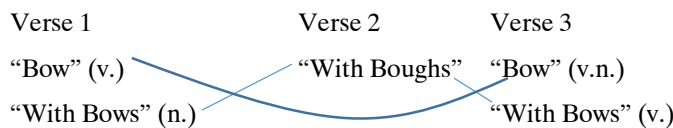
But it is actually a finer distinction that is most relevant to which repetitions “boughs” gravitates towards (and resultantly, how each poem version’s imagery is constructed): are more near homophones

associated with semi-animate, swaying (tree or human) *limbs*, or with inanimate, decorative ties and trimming?

	Tied-down trimming	Ambiguous	Swaying limbs
Verse 1	“Hair put up” ^A + “With Bows” ^A		“Branches” ^B + “Bow” ^B
Verse 2		“Halls decked” + “With Boughs”	
Verse 3	... “Bound” “With Bows”		“Limbs” ^B + “Bow” ^B

Primarily due to a preponderance of collocations (involving homophones or near homophones) that push one way or another, “boughs” in Verse 2 is perceived to be connected either with “bow(ties)” or with “limbs” and “branches”—i.e. to be either an anthropocentric or a dendrocentric image. (For Version A, repeated syntactic construction of “with ___” adds the possibility of referential proximity between “bow(tie)s” and “boughs” into the mix.) This results in entirely different grouping judgments.

Version A: “Boughs” associated with tied-down trimming; 2 separate structuring devices



Version B “Boughs” associated with swaying limbs; 1 structuring device



These grouping judgments, in turn, result in quite distinctly constructed imagery. In Version A, the boughs become an analog of (the central image of) humans’ bow-tied adornments; in Version B, humans’ bowing limbs become an analog of (the central image of) lively, swaying tree boughs. While both the motif of tied-down trimming and the motif of swaying limbs were on the less-animate side, structuring devices emphasizing one type or another determined what entities could be endowed with a human-like animacy.

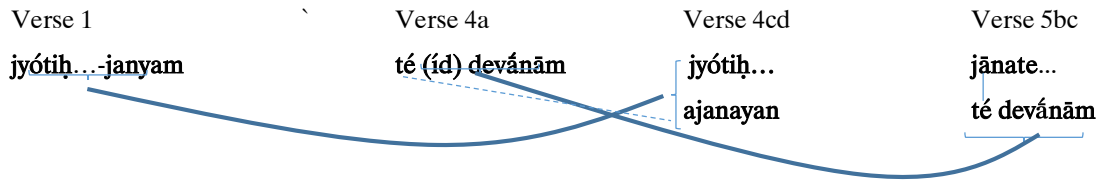
Thematic proximity and Structuring Device 4 in 7.76

Part III, Sections 2.4-2.7 of this dissertation treat the thematic elements that ultimately determine how the competing associations in Structuring Device 4 are resolved: namely, the “discourse of discoveries” and the “discourse of directives.” The relevant repetitions in 7.76 are associated with one or the other discourse, so that thematic dividing lines help group these repetitions into distinct rounds. Yet a third thematic element—a homology in which more and less animate characterizations of light in the midspace are connected and contrasted—is likewise responsible for the resurgence of Structuring Device 1, i.e. the

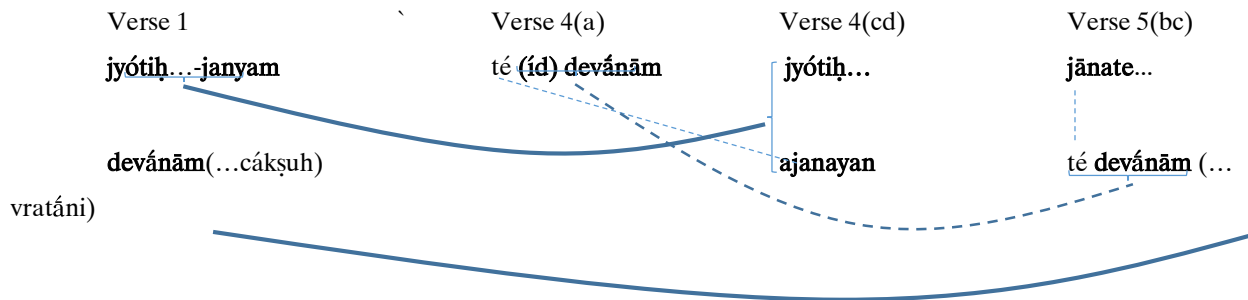
first nested ring, after one of its repetitions (*té*) had temporarily been associated with Structuring Device 3. This homology is treated in Part III Section 4.9.

I would refer the reader to those earlier sections to examine the phraseology associated with each discourse and how it compares to the repeated terms that factor in to Structuring Device 4. What is important to recognize for our present purposes is the following:

1) Thematic proximity via association to the “discourse of discoveries” promotes the association of *ajanayan* and *jyótiḥ* over the competing association of *ajanayan* and *té (íd) devánām*. Revising the chart from a few sections above to indicate which associations are strengthened by thematic proximity (indicated by the new solid line), we have the following.

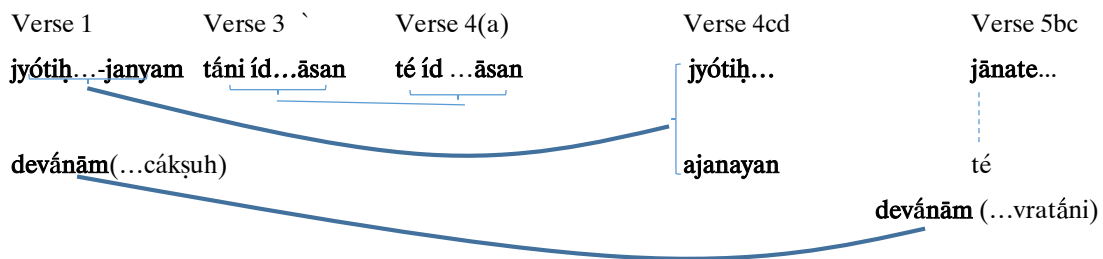


2) The “discourse of directives,” would not only clarify existing associations, but also enable the recollection of forms that had faded from the listener’s working memory. In particular, an awareness that this discourse is in operation would heighten the mind’s ability to recall specific aspects of the phraseology of Verse 1 that had not initially been flagged as important, including the form *devánām (...cákṣuḥ)*, “(the eye) of the gods.” The form *devánām*, “of the gods,” was not syntactically governed by the verbal form with which (I propose) it is ultimately grouped (*ajanīṣṭa*, “was just generated”), and the high frequency of repetitions of forms of the stem *devá-* renders them white noise unless they are perceived to be part of a more complex round of repetitions—so that form would have long since decayed from the listener’s working memory. But because the overseeing eye of the gods figures so prominently in the discourse of directives, and is closely associated with the *devánām ...vratáni*, which appears in pādas 5bc. The recollection of the phrase “eye of the gods” and its association with the phrase “commandments of the gods” would change the landscape of associations significantly, as the modified chart below shows.



Dotted lines indicate previously established associations that have not been reinforced by thematic material, and which are consequently beginning to recede from a listener’s mind. They include the associations between *té* and *devánām* in Verses 4 and 5, now overshadowed by the thematic proximity of the two forms of *devánām* in Verses 1 and 5 (with the form in Verse 1 not being accompanied by a pronoun like *té*—hence the difficulty in integrating these two repetitions into one).

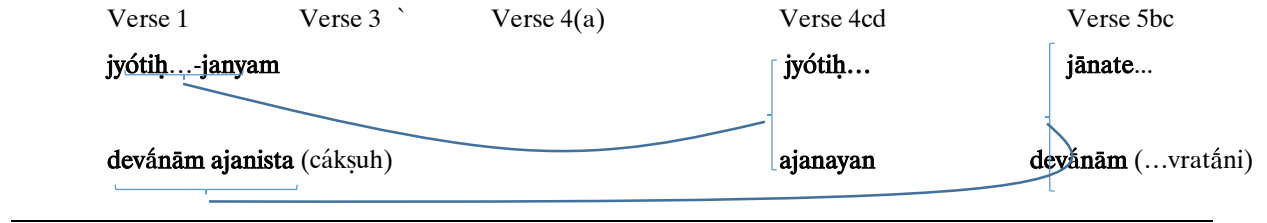
Once Verse 5d arrives and the presence of the nested ring (discussed in Part III, Section 4.9) is detected, the form *té* in pāda 4a would not be clearly connected to *devánām*, and the status of the round of repetition connecting Verses 4 and 5 would be further undermined. At that point, the referential proximity between *té* and *ajanayan* would likely cease to seem structurally relevant, particularly because that association was already competing with the association between *ajanayan* and *jyótiḥ*. With all of these considerations in mind, the following chart would seem to reflect the situation after all of Verse 5 has been processed. (The round of repetitions connecting Verses 3 and 4 is actually from Structuring Device 1.)



The chart above now seems quite a bit like the structuring device that we proposed—except for the matter of the association between *devánām ajanīṣṭa*²⁴⁹ and *jānate...devánām* in Verses 1 and 3, as well as the strengthening of the associations within each pair of forms. As it turns out, the discourse of divine directives will have much to do with how this comes about, as well. My argument in this final section on form runs as follows: the usage patterns of *sám* + the present stem of $\sqrt{jñā}$ in the middle voice nicely dovetail with the discourse of directives; *thematic proximity* therefore combines with referential proximity to unite *jānate* with *devánām (ná minanti vratáni)*. Once this association has formed, prosodic,

²⁴⁹ One prefatory note: the perceptibility of *ajanīṣṭa* as a repetition (whether structurally significant or not) is actually a fairly simple matter: given that the verb form occurs just two pādas away from *-janyam*, the double use of the root \sqrt{jan} would indeed initially be registered. Particularly since it is fairly easy to find Dawn hymns that do not repeat the root \sqrt{jan} within the space of four pādas (as opposed to the root $\sqrt{dyu(t)/div}$, from which *devánām* is derived and inflected), this type of repetition would not be received as a kind of background “noise.” There are of course several types of barriers—thematic, syntactic, prosodic, etc.—precluding the grouping of *ajanīṣṭa* and *-janyam* into the same round of repetition, but their co-occurrence would still flag both forms as important information (according to our principle of redundancy). In the case of all of these repetitions, then, it is the problem of grouping, not that of perceptibility, which remains unresolved.

phonological and thematic proximity would work together to unite this pair of forms with *devānām ajanīṣṭa*. The only nontrivial step of this argument involves the element of thematic proximity, which has been discussed at length in Section 2.6 of Part III. The conclusion of that discussion is as follows: the phraseology of social accord and the discourse of directives *are* compatible enough that *sām jānate* and *devānām* in Verses 5-6 would have the thematic proximity required to *rekindle* associations first established through other means (i.e. via shared temporary associations with *té*). Now that analogous ties have revived the memory of *devānām* in 1c and bound it to *sām jānate ... devānām*, prosodic proximity, phonological similarity and the appeal of symmetry would finally rein in *ajanīṣṭa*.



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