

Deterrorizing Sanskrit

Aorist

Harald Wiese

University of Leipzig

General remarks

- no class signs
- augment *a*
- secondary endings, roughly speaking

formation of 3. sg.							
aorist	√	augm.	redupl.	root	infix	them. vow.	ending
redupl.	<i>pat</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>pa</i>	<i>pt</i>		-	<i>t</i>
sigm. <i>sa</i>	<i>diś</i>	<i>a</i>		<i>dik</i>	<i>ṣ</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>
sigm. <i>s</i>	<i>yuj</i>	<i>a</i>		<i>yâuk</i>	<i>ṣ</i>		<i>ī-t</i>

General remarks

- ① thematic aorist:
augment + zero-grade root + *a* + ending
- ② reduplication aorist:
augment + reduplicated zero-grade root + *a* + ending
- ③ root aorist:
augment + zero-grade root + ending
- ④ sigmatic aorist:
s infix + lengthened-grade root + *s* + ending
sa infix + zero-grade root + *s* + *a* + ending
iṣ infix + root + *iṣ* + ending
siṣ infix + (full-grade) root + *siṣ* + ending

General remarks

The following table offers examples for these 3 + 4 groups:

aorist	✓	3. sg.	3. pl.
thematic (pp.)	<i>yuj</i>	<i>a-yuj-a-t</i>	<i>a-yuj-a-n</i>
reduplicated (pp.)	<i>pat</i>	<i>a-pa-pt-a-t</i>	<i>a-pa-pt-n</i>
root (pp.)	<i>bhū</i>	<i>a-bhū-t</i>	<i>a-bhūv-an</i>
sigmatic	<i>s</i>	<i>a-yâuk-ṣ-ī-t</i>	<i>a-yâuk-ṣ-us</i>
	<i>sa</i>	<i>a-dik-ṣ-a-t</i>	<i>a-dikṣ-a-n</i>
	<i>iṣ</i>	<i>a-vād-ī-t</i>	<i>a-vād-iṣ-us</i>
	<i>siṣ</i>	<i>a-snā-sī-t</i>	<i>a-snā-siṣ-us</i>

Thematic aorist

Formula

augment + zero-grade root + *a* + ending

Examples

thematic aorist	formation of 3. sg.				
	√	augm.	root	them. vow.	ending
	<i>lubh</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>lubh</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>tuṣ</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>tuṣ</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>yuj</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>yuj</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>

Thematic aorist

√ <i>lubh</i>			
parasmâipada			
aorist			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-lubh-a-m</i>	<i>a-lubh-ā-va</i>	<i>a-lubh-ā-ma</i>
2	<i>a-lubh-a-s</i>	<i>a-lubh-a-tam</i>	<i>a-lubh-a-ta</i>
3	<i>a-lubh-a-t</i>	<i>a-lubh-a-tām</i>	<i>a-lubh-a-n</i>

Endings secondary parasmâipada

Reduplicated aorist

Formula

augment + reduplicated zero-grade root + *a* + ending

Examples

redupl. aorist	formation of 3. sg.					
	√	augm.	redupl.	root	them. vow.	ending
	<i>pat</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>pa</i>	<i>pt</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>vac</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>va</i>	<i>uc</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>kath</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>ca</i>	<i>kath</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>

where the last verb *kath* does not use the zero grade root.

Reduplicated aorist

√ <i>muc</i>			
parasmâipada			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-mū-muc-a-m</i>	<i>a-mū-muc-ā-va</i>	<i>a-mū-muc-ā-ma</i>
2	<i>a-mū-muc-a-s</i>	<i>a-mū-muc-a-tam</i>	<i>a-mū-muc-a-ta</i>
3	<i>a-mū-muc-a-t</i>	<i>a-mū-muc-a-tām</i>	<i>a-mū-muc-a-n</i>

√ <i>vac</i>			
ātmanêpada			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-vôc-ê</i>	<i>a-vôc-ā-vahi</i>	<i>a-vôc-ā-mahi</i>
2	<i>a-vôc-a-thās</i>	<i>a-vôc-êthām</i>	<i>a-vôc-a-dhvam</i>
3	<i>a-vôc-a-ta</i>	<i>a-vôc-êtām</i>	<i>a-vôc-a-n-ta</i>

Root aorist

Formula

augment + zero-grade + ending

Examples

root aorist	√	formation of 3. sg.		
		augm.	root	ending
	<i>dā</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>dā</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>sthā</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>sthā</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>bhū</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>bhū</i>	<i>t</i>

Root aorist

√ <i>dā</i>			
parasmâipada			
aorist			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-dā-m</i>	<i>a-dā-va</i>	<i>a-dā-ma</i>
2	<i>a-dā-s</i>	<i>a-dā-tam</i>	<i>a-dā-ta</i>
3	<i>a-dā-t</i>	<i>a-dā-tām</i>	<i>a-d-us</i>

Secondary athematic endings often have the variant *us* in 3. pers. pl.. After *dā*, **dā-us* and hence **dôś* would have been unrecognizable. Instead, we find *a-d-us*.

Root aorist

Consider, now, the root aorist for *bhū*. Before vowel endings (*am* and *an*, respectively), we obtain (more or less) expected *bhūv*:

√ <i>bhū</i>			
parasmâipada			
aorist			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-bhūv-am</i>	<i>a-bhū-va</i>	<i>a-bhū-ma</i>
2	<i>a-bhū-s</i>	<i>a-bhū-tam</i>	<i>a-bhū-ta</i>
3	<i>a-bhū-t</i>	<i>a-bhū-tām</i>	<i>a-bhūv-an</i>

Sigmatic aorist with sa

Formula

augment + zero-grade root + s + a + ending

Examples

sa-aorist	formation of 3. sg.					
	√	augm.	root	infix	them. vow.	ending
	<i>dīś</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>dik</i>	<i>ṣ</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>viś</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>vik</i>	<i>ṣ</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>dviṣ</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>dvik</i>	<i>ṣ</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>t</i>

Sigmatic aorist with sa

√ <i>dīś</i>			
parasmâipada			
aorist			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-dikṣ-a-m</i>	<i>a-dikṣ-ā-va</i>	<i>a-dikṣ-ā-ma</i>
2	<i>a-dikṣ-a-s</i>	<i>a-dikṣ-a-tam</i>	<i>a-dikṣ-a-ta</i>
3	<i>a-dikṣ-a-t</i>	<i>a-dikṣ-a-tām</i>	<i>a-dikṣ-a-n</i>

Sigmatic aorist with *iṣ*

Formula

augment + root + *iṣ* + ending

Examples

<i>iṣ</i> -aorist	formation of 3. sg.				
	✓	augm.	root	infix	ending
	<i>aś</i> (ātm.)	<i>a</i>	<i>aś</i>	<i>iṣ</i>	<i>ṭa</i>
	<i>kamp</i> (ātm.)	<i>a</i>	<i>kamp</i>	<i>iṣ</i>	<i>ṭa</i>
	<i>mud</i> (ātm.)	<i>a</i>	<i>môd</i>	<i>iṣ</i>	<i>ṭa</i>
	<i>tan</i> (par.)	<i>a</i>	<i>tān</i> (!)	<i>ī</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>granth</i> (par.)	<i>a</i>	<i>granth</i>	<i>ī</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>rud</i> (par.)	<i>a</i>	<i>rôd</i>	<i>ī</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>kṛt</i> (par.)	<i>a</i>	<i>kart</i>	<i>ī</i>	<i>t</i>

where the first example is *āśiṣṭa*.

Sigmatic aorist with *iṣ*

The *iṣ*-aorist has a peculiar 2. sg.. Consider, for example,

✓ <i>budh</i>			
parasmâipada			
aorist			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-bôdh-iṣ-am</i>	<i>a-bôdh-iṣ-va</i>	<i>a-bôdh-iṣ-ma</i>
2	<i>a-bôdh-ī-s</i> (1)	<i>a-bôdh-iṣ-ṭam</i> (3)	<i>a-bôdh-iṣ-ṭa</i> (3)
3	<i>a-bôdh-ī-t</i> (2)	<i>a-bôdh-iṣ-ṭām</i> (3)	<i>a-bôdh-iṣ-us</i> (4)

- ① *a-bôdh-ī-s* ← *a-bôdh-is-s* + compensatory lengthening
- ② Building on the 2. sg., the 3. sg. *a-bôdh-ī-t* results from leveling:

	<i>a-bôdh-iṣ-ṭ</i>	
influenced by	<i>a-bôdh-ī-s</i>	with <i>ī</i> plus secondary ending
turns into	<i>a-bôdh-ī-t</i>	with <i>ī</i> plus secondary ending

Sigmatic aorist with *siṣ*

Formula

augment + root + *siṣ* + ending

Examples

<i>siṣ</i> -aorist	formation of 3. sg.				
	√	augm.	root	infix	ending
	<i>yā</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>yā</i>	<i>sī</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>pā</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>pā</i>	<i>sī</i>	<i>t</i>
	<i>snā</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>snā</i>	<i>sī</i>	<i>t</i>

The infix *siṣ* is not clearly visible in these sg. forms. Analogy from forms like Compare, however, the *budh* paradigm *a-bôdh-ī-t* above.

Sigmatic aorist with siṣ

√ <i>yā-s</i>			
parasmâipada			
aorist			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-yā-siṣ-am</i>	<i>a-yā-siṣ-va</i>	<i>a-yā-siṣ-ma</i>
2	<i>a-yā-sī-s</i>	<i>a-yā-siṣ-ṭam</i>	<i>a-yā-siṣ-ṭa</i>
3	<i>a-yā-sī-t</i>	<i>a-yā-siṣ-ṭām</i>	<i>a-yā-siṣ-us</i>

Sigmatic aorist with s

Formula

augment + lengthened root + s + ending

Examples for 3. pl. (!) forms

s-aorist	formation of 3. sg.				
	√	augm.	root	infix	ending
	yuj	a	yâuk (1)	ṣ (2)	us
	bhaj	a	bhāk (1)	ṣ (2)	us
	vah	a	vāk (1)	ṣ (2)	us
	śap	a	śāp	s	us
	tap	a	tāp	s	us
	vas	a	vāt (3)	s	us
	kr	a	kār	ṣ (2)	us
	bandh	a	bhānt (4)	s	us

1. backward assimilation. For *a-vāk-ṣ-us* see ie. *veǵh.

Sigmatic aorist with s

s-aorist	formation of 3. sg.				
	√	augm.	root	infix	ending
	yuj	a	yâuk (1)	ṣ (2)	us
	bhaj	a	bhāk (1)	ṣ (2)	us
	vah	a	vāk (1)	ṣ (2)	us
	śap	a	śāp	s	us
	tap	a	tāp	s	us
	vas	a	vāt (3)	s	us
	kṛ	a	kār	ṣ (2)	us
	bandh	a	bhānt (4)	s	us

3. Dissimilation of *a-vāt-s-us* from expected *a-vās-sus* is also observed in the future tense *vat-sy-a-ti*.

4. Compare *a-bhānt-s-us* with future *bhôt-sy-ati*

Sigmatic aorist with s

s-aorist	√	3. sg.	3. pl.
	<i>yuj</i>	<i>a-yâuk-ṣī-t</i>	<i>a-yâuk-ṣ-us</i>
	<i>bhaj</i>	<i>abhāk-ṣī-t</i>	<i>a-bhāk-ṣ-us</i>
	<i>vah</i>	<i>a-vāk-ṣī-t</i>	<i>a-vāk-ṣ-us</i>
	<i>śap</i>	<i>a-śāp-sī-t</i>	<i>a-śāp-s-us</i>
	<i>tap</i>	<i>a-tāp-sī-t</i>	<i>a-tāp-s-us</i>
	<i>vas</i>	<i>a-vāt-sī-t</i>	<i>a-vāt-s-us</i>
	<i>kṛ</i>	<i>a-kār-ṣī-t</i>	<i>a-kār-ṣ-us</i>
	<i>bandh</i>	<i>a-bhānt-sī-t</i>	<i>a-bhānt-s-us</i>

The difference between sg. and pl. is explained by the *iṣ-* and *siṣ-*aorists presented above. The speakers came to consider *ī* as a possible “thematic vowel” for the two sg. forms and applied them here, were *a-yâuk-ṣ-t* would have produced **a-yâuk* by “simplification of final consonant clusters”.

Sigmatic aorist with s

√ <i>kr̥</i>			
parasmâipada			
aorist			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-kār-ṣ-am</i>	<i>a-kār-ṣ-va</i>	<i>a-kār-ṣ-ma</i>
2	<i>a-kār-ṣī-s</i>	<i>a-kār-ṣ-ṭam</i>	<i>a-kār-ṣ-ṭa</i>
3	<i>a-kār-ṣī-t</i>	<i>a-kār-ṣ-ṭām</i>	<i>a-kār-ṣ-us</i>

Sigmatic aorist with s

√ śap			
parasmâipada			
aorist			
	sing.	dual	plur.
1	<i>a-śap-s-i</i>	<i>a-śap-s-vahi</i>	<i>a-śap-s-mahi</i>
2	<i>a-śap-thās</i> (1)	<i>a-śap-s-āṭham</i>	<i>a-śap-dhvam</i> (1)
3	<i>a-śap-ta</i> (1)	<i>a-śap-s-āṭām</i>	<i>a-śap-s-a-ta</i> (2)

- 1 Between consonants, the aorist marker *s* is lost. This is similar to the phenomenon that *s* is regularly lost between voiceless dentals. The concrete sound law is unclear.
- 2 The athematic ending 3. pl. is regularly *a-ta* from ie. **h₂-to* (or later analogy from similar occasions).