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## The Avestan compounds in $^{\circ}niuu\acute{a}$ and $^{\circ}niuu\grave{a}n$

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1. The four YAv. compounds  $r\acute{a}maniuu\acute{a}$ ,  $b\acute{a}maniuu\acute{a}$ ,  $afsm\grave{a}niuu\grave{a}n$  and  $afsm\grave{a}niuu\acute{a}$  have been discussed by various scholars of Avestan, one of whom was Jochem SCHINDLER (1982: 189, 199f.). It is my contention that none of the hitherto proposed solutions is satisfactory. In this paper, I will discuss the attestations of the compounds, discuss former etymologies, and present my own solution. In recent publications, CHEUNG (2004) and ZIEGLER (2004) have independently reconstructed a Proto-Iranian verbal root  $*uan(H)-$  ‘to throw out, spread’. Its main representatives are Old Persian *avaniya* ‘it was spread out’, several Middle and Modern Iranian verbs, and, in Ziegler’s account, two Avestan verb forms of the stem *ni-vana-* ‘to cover, hide’. In my view, the elements  $^{\circ}niuu\acute{a}$  and  $^{\circ}niuu\grave{a}n$  receive a better explanation if we assume that they also contain *ni-van-*. The meaning ‘to throw out, spread’ is simply a semantic derivative of Plr.  $*uanH-$  ‘to win, overcome’, and does not require the reconstruction of a different Plr. verbal root.

2. The form  $r\acute{a}maniuu\acute{a}$  occurs in Yašt 8.9 in the nom.sg.m.; it indicates a quality of the star Satauaēsa (translation based on PANAINO 1990: 35):

<i>āaṭtā āpō frašuuaiieiti</i>	‘Then Satavaēsa impels those waters
<i>satauaēso auui haptō.karšuuairīš</i>	towards the seven Karšvars,
<i>viiāhuua yaṭjasaiti;</i>	when he approaches the reservoirs;
<i>srīrō hištaiti rāmaniuu\acute{a}</i>	beautiful he stands, a dispenser of peace
<i>huiiāirii\acute{a} auui<sup>x</sup> dahhūš</i>	to the countries which gain good
	harvest.’

The meaning of  $r\acute{a}maniuu\acute{a}$  closely resembles that of the compound  $r\acute{a}mō.d\acute{a}iti-$  ‘bestowing peace’ in V 1.1 and of OAv.  $r\acute{a}mā d\acute{a}$  ‘you created peace’ in Y 47.3. The ending  $-uu\acute{a}$  would seem to point to a suffix  $*-uan-$  or  $*-uant-$ , cf.  $mii\acute{a}zdauu\acute{a}$  to  $mii\acute{a}zda-uuan-$  or  $astuu\acute{a}$  to  $ast-uuant-$ ; it is also possible to posit a root noun in  $-n$  or  $-m$ , cf. nom.sg.  $v\acute{a}r\acute{a}\theta raj\acute{a}$  to  $v\acute{a}r\acute{a}\theta ra-jan-$  and  $z\acute{a}$  to  $zam-$ .

3. The form *bāmaniuuā* in Yt 17.14 refers to beautiful clothes:

<i>aēšqm arəzatəm zaranīm</i>	‘Ihnen bringt Silber (und) Gold
<sup>+</sup> <i>nibərəθe ābərəta baraiti</i>	im Gepäck der Kaufmann
<i>aiβitarābiiō haca daḥhubiiō</i>	aus fernen Ländern,
<i>vastrāasca kašā bāmaniuuā</i>	und Kleider, fertige, glänzend aussehende.’

This translation is taken from HINTZE 2000: 309. Although some details of the passage are unclear<sup>1</sup>, the general meaning seems certain. If we interpret *bāmaniuuā* as ‘dispensing radiance’, its meaning is parallel to that of *rāmaniuuā* ‘dispensing peace’. The ending *-uuā* agrees with the acc.pl. ending of *vastrāasca*<sup>2</sup>, which suggests a thematic adjective in *\*-ua-*. Alternatively, *bāmaniuuā* might be interpreted as a nom.sg. referring to *ābərəta* ‘merchant’, although the position in the sentence would be unusual: ‘the merchant brings ready clothes from far-off lands, (he) who dispenses radiance.’

The three words *vastrāasca kašā bāmaniuuā* are also quoted in the word-list Frahang ī Ōīm (F 279); here, the Pahlavī version translates them as *wstlg ZY krt ZY b’myk-tl’c /wastarag ī kard ī bāmīg-tarāz/* ‘produced clothing of shining silk’.

4. The form *afsmaniuūn* is found in the Srōš Yašt (Y 57) and in the priests’ manual Nērangestān. It is used as a technical term for the way in which verses should be recited in the liturgy, and it always occurs as the first member of the expression *afsmaniuūn vacastaštiuuaṭ(ca)* ‘in verse-lines (and) in verses’:

Y 57.8 (translation according to KREYENBROEK 1985):

<i>yō paoiriiō gāθā frasrāuuaiiat</i>	‘who was the first to recite the Gāthās,
<i>yā paṅca spitāmahe ašāonō</i>	the five of righteous Spitāma Zarathuštra,
<i>zaraθuštrahe</i>	
<i>afsmaniuūn vacastaštiuuaṭ</i>	in verse-lines, in verses,
<i>maṭāzaintiš maṭpaiti.frasā</i>	with explanations, with answers.’

N 23 (text and translation according to KOTWAL-KREYENBROEK 1995: 46f., with some modifications<sup>3</sup>):

*yā gāθā<sup>x</sup>afsmainiuūn<sup>x</sup>srāuuaiiatō<sup>x</sup>uuu ratufrīš*

<sup>1</sup> For instance, the use of the gen.pl. *aēšqm* as a dative; it may be a perseveration of the *aēšqm* with which the verses 17.8 to 17.13 begin.

<sup>2</sup> A neuter noun; cf. PIRART 2000: 378ff. for the use of the ending *-ā* for the neuter pl.

<sup>3</sup> In the second line of N 23, I do not adopt KOTWAL-KREYENBROEK’s emendation of *srāuuaiiamnō* to *<sup>x</sup>srāuuaiiatō*, since the Phl. version does not translate the form as a dual (which it does in the first line). Assuming that the ending originally was *-ā*, it may refer to *gāθā*. The correction *aēuuatō* to *<sup>x</sup>aētauuatō* seems compelling in view of the correlative *yauuaṭ* which follows it. For *fra-mar-*, I regard KOTWAL-KREYENBROEK’s original translation as ‘to recite quietly’ (1992: 67) as better than ‘to concentrate on the recitation’ which they adopt in 1995: 39.

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*vacastaštiiuuat*<sup>x</sup>*srāuuaiamnā*<sup>x</sup>*aētauuatō*<sup>x</sup>*katarasciṭratufriš yauuat**fra.marənti*  
‘If both recite the Gāthās in verse-lines, both satisfy the Ratus;  
if they are being recited in verses, either one of them satisfies the Ratus to the  
extent that he recites quietly.’

N 24:

*yā yasnəm*<sup>x</sup>*yazatō afsmainiiuuq̄n vā vacastaštiiuuat vā uua ratufriia* ‘(If) both  
perform the act of worship in verse-lines or in verses, both satisfy the Ratus.’

N 24:

*kaṭ hqm.sruṭ.vācimca?* *yaṭ hakaṭ*<sup>x</sup>*āmṛūtō afsmainiiuuq̄nca*<sup>x</sup>*vacastaštiiuuatca*  
‘What is ‘recitation while listening to each other’? (It is) when both speak in  
unison, both in verse-lines and in verses.’<sup>4</sup>

There is a difference in the syntax of *afsmaniiuuq̄n* and *vacastaštiiuuat* between Yasna 57 and N 24. In Y 57, both elements are juxtaposed without any conjunction. The translation given above treats them as asyndetically coordinated ‘in verse-lines, [and] in verses’. In N 24, both forms are explicitly coordinated by means of the conjunctions *vā* and *-ca*. It is possible that the conjunction was simply omitted in Y 57.8, but this is not certain. Note that the forms *maṭ.āzaintīš* and *maṭ.paiti.frasā*, which must indeed be coordinated asyndetically, refer to the acc.pl.f. *gāθā*, whereas this cannot be the case with *afsmaniiuuq̄n vacastaštiiuuat*. It is therefore conceivable that these two are not equivalent adverbs in asyndetic coordination; instead, *vacastastiiuuat* can be an adverb, determining *afsmaniiuuq̄n*. This interpretation was chosen by SCHMIDT (1885: 393): *yō paoiriō gāθā frasrāuuaiiat ... afsmaniiuuq̄n vacastaštiiuuat* ‘welcher zuerst die gāthās vortrug ... metrisch recitierend nach dem texte’.

Nevertheless, at some stage of Avestan composition, the two words were interpreted as an asyndetic coordination. Hence the Pahlavī translation in Y 57.8 *abāg \*gāθr<sup>5</sup> ud abāg wacast* ‘with song and with strophe’, and the use of *vā* and *-ca* in N 24. Compare also the coordination of *afsman-* and *vacastašti-* in the Vīspereḍ: *yasnəm haptanḥāitīm ... maṭ.afsmanəm maṭ.vacastaštīm* (Vr 16.0) ‘the Yasna Haptanḥāiti, which contains afsman(s), which contains vacastašti(s)’, *ahunauuaitīm gāθqm ... maṭ.afsmanqm maṭ.vacastaštīm* (Vr 14.1).

For *afsman-*, a general meaning ‘part, section’ can be inferred from its use in Y 19.16:

*aētaṭca vacō mazdaoxtəm* ‘And that Mazdā-spoken word,  
*θri.afsm(an)əm<sup>6</sup> caθru.pištrəm* with three *afsman*s, with four classes,

<sup>4</sup> This is the literal translation. KOTWAL-KREYENBROEK 1995 interpret this as ‘(It is) when both speak in unison, either in verse-lines or verses.’

<sup>5</sup> Most mss. have *gaiθr*, for *\*gāθr*, in Avestan script; cf. KREYENBROEK 1985: 40. Mf4 has *gāθ*, J2 *ga’θr*, K5 *gaiθr*. The same term probably occurs in the Phl. form *hm-g’sθ /ham-gāh/* ‘even reciting together’ in the Phl. commentary on N 23, cf. KOTWAL-KREYENBROEK 1995: 49, fn. 86.

<sup>6</sup> All mss. have °*məm* except S1 *θriafsmanəm*. Since S1 represents a separate branch of the Pahlavī-Sanskrit-Yasna, it may preserve the original form, an acc.sg.m.n. of *θri-afsmana-*.

*pañca.ratu; kâiš hē afsmañ* with five Ratus; which are its *afsmans*?  
*humatəm hūxtəm huuarštəm* the well-thought, the well-said, the well-done.’

However, the precise meanings of *afsmān-* ‘section’ and *vacas-tašti-* ‘word-creation’ are uncertain, as was stressed by BOYCE 1966: 108. We might rely on the Pahlavī tradition, as KREYENBROEK does (1985: 80), but this is no guarantee for a correct interpretation. Avestan possesses five words which refer to the divisions of the Gāthic texts: *vacah-*, *vacastašti-*, *afsmān-*, *hāiti-* and *gāθā-*. The meaning of three of them is clear: *vacah-* is ‘word’; *hāiti-* refers to a single Gathic chapter, e.g. *yasna- haptanhāiti-* ‘the Yasna which contains seven *hāitis*’, viz. Y 35 to 41; and *gāθā-* ‘song’ indicates a fixed collection of Gathic chapters, e.g. *ahunauuaitī- gāθā-* (Y 28 to Y 34), *uštauuaitī- gāθā-* (Y 43 to 46). This leaves at least three entities smaller than ‘chapter’ to which *vacastašti-* and *afsmān-* may theoretically refer, viz. ‘syllable’ (smaller than ‘word’), ‘verse-line’ (the smallest metrical unit) and ‘strophe’ or ‘stanza’ (a group of verse-lines). BARTHOLOMAE 1904 translates *vacastašti-* as ‘strophe’ and *afsmān-* as ‘verse-line’; as we have seen above, this interpretation still holds sway. Although I have found no unequivocal evidence for its correctness, I will adopt it here.

5. In V 18.70, we find a form *afsmāniuuā*. GELDNER edits it as *asmaniuuā* (see also BARTHOLOMAE 1904: 221), but, in reality, the spellings of the Pahlavī Vīdēvdād manuscripts L4 *asmaniuuā* and K1 *asmane.vā* are probably corruptions of the forms in the two other mss. branches of the Vīdēvdād, viz. IrVS *afsmāniuuā* and InVS *afsmāniuuā*. The context would perfectly allow for the meaning ‘in verse-lines’:

*hazañrəm anumaiianqm frāuuinuiiāṭ, vīspanqmca aētaēšqm pasuuqm*  
<sup>+</sup>*afsmāniuuā zaoθra āθre ašaiia vanḥiia frabarōiṭ, bāzauua aiβiio vanḥibiiō*  
*frabarōiṭ*

‘A thousand sheep he must kill, and of all those sheep he must in verse-lines offer libations to the fire according to the good rite, the front legs he must offer to the good waters.’

I interpret <sup>+</sup>*afsmāniuuā* as a nom.sg. which refers to the subject of *frabarōiṭ*, for the syntax, compare Yt 8.9 *srīrō hištaiti rāmaniuuā*. This same interpretation was proposed by SCHMIDT 1885: 393, who translates *afsmāniuuā* as ‘metrisch recitierend’. The acc.pl. *zaoθra* is irregular for a f. *ā*-stem, but we find the same form as an acc.pl. in Y 2.1ff. *zaoθra āiiese yešti*. It may thus be due to the spread of the nom.acc.pl. ending *-a* in the more recent text parts of YAv.

A different analysis of <sup>+</sup>*afsmāniuuā* was suggested by GERSHEVITCH apud BOYCE 1966: 108, viz. as an adjective to *zaoθra*. BOYCE assumes that *zaoθra* refers to a sacrifice of different body parts of animals, which was practised by Persian Zoroastrians until recently. She accordingly translates *afsmāniuuā* as ‘having parts, sections’, and its basis *afsmān-* as ‘that which is joined (to

another), a part, section’. This interpretation seems less attractive, since *zaoθrā* usually refers to libations, not to offerings of any solid substance.

6. Unfortunately, the etymology of *afsmān-* is not clear enough to specify its meaning. The consonant cluster *-fsm-* is unique in Avestan. Words with a very similar structure are OAv. *afsmān-* and *an-afsmān-* (both in Y 46.17), the meaning of which is disputed. HUMBACH (1991 II: 187) uses the occurrence of two compounds in °*afsmān-* in V 13 to break this deadlock. The compounds occur in a long description of the characteristics of dogs. To BARTHOLOMAE, the two compounds were too unclear to translate; HUMBACH translates the relevant passages as follows: *zairimiiafsmā θriiafsmā yaθa vaēsō* ‘bound to the house with three bonds like a male slave’ (V 13.46) and *zairimiiafsmā θriiafsmā yaθa jahika* ‘bound to the house like a prostitute’ (13.48). He thus posits a meaning ‘bond’ for *afsmān-*, which is not very far from ‘part, section’. *Afsmān-* is probably also present in personal name °*pərəθuuafsmān-* (Yt 13.126); cf. Schindler 1982: 199 for the restoration of the *man-*stem.

Phonetically, OAv. *afsmān-* and YAv. *afsmān-* ‘part, section’ can go back to Ir. \**Hapsman-*, under the assumption that \**s* would have been restored in YAv. Semantically, a connection with Av. °*apah-*, Skt. *apas-* ‘work’, Latin *opus* seems attractive, but a derivation \**Hap-s-man-* is difficult to account for. We face the same difficulty when deriving *afsmān-* from the PIE root \**h<sub>2</sub>ep-* ‘to fit, join’ (LIV-2: 269), which has yielded Old Hittite *happarū*, NHitt. *hapzi*. The meaning of *afsmān-* also renders possible a connection with Skt. *āpsas-* ‘breast, forehead, front’, the appurtenance of which to the root \**h<sub>2</sub>ep-* is uncertain (cf. EWAia I: 90). In that case, we would have an Ir. root \*(*H*)*aps-* with only two nominal derivatives.

7. The morphological analysis of the four forms in question may be summarized as follows. The nominal stems *rāman-*, *bāma-* and *afsmān-* suggest that we are dealing with compounds *rāma-niūuā*, *bāma-niūuā* and *afsmā-niūuqn/-niūuā*. The form *bāmaniūuā* seems to be thematic. The nom.sg.m. *-ūuā* in *rāmaniūuā* and *afsmāniūuā* belongs to a stem in \**-uan-* or in \**-uant-*. The ending *-qn* in *afsmāniūuqn* can reflect Ir. \**-ān* (as in the nom.acc.pl.n. of (*ua*)*n*-stems, e.g. *karšuuqn*, *baēuuqn*) or maybe \**-ānt*<sup>7</sup>. In theory, it is also possible to posit Ir. \**-āns* and \**-ānts* (> \**-āns*), although no such forms have yet been reconstructed for Avestan.

Several theories about the origin of these compounds have been proposed. BARTHOLOMAE (1904: 103) posits \**afsmānivant-* ‘like the verse-lines (of the Gāthās)’ and *rāmanivant-* ‘bringing peace’. He compares the Skt. adverbs in *-vat*

<sup>7</sup> It is generally assumed that OAv. nom.pl.acc.n. *mīzdauuqn* belongs to a stem *mīzda-uant-*. However, HINTZE (2000: 255) rightly remarks that there is no guarantee that this is really the case. Compare YAv. gen.pl. *miāzdauuanqm* (N 63) and nom.sg. *miāzdauuā* (A 3.7; 8-12): the latter is usually attributed to a *uant-*stem, but it could also represent *miāzda-uan-*.

meaning ‘after the manner of, like’, e.g. *manuṣvat* ‘as Manu did’. He does not explain the origin of *-i-*, but if the suffix is *\*-uant-*, this yields the unlikely assumption that it was added to the inflected nom.acc.pl.n. *\*afsmāni* and *\*rāmāni* rather than to the bare nominal stem. Also, the ending *\*-ani* is only attested in OAv. *n*-stems; in YAv., we once find *\*-āni* (Y 12 *cinmāni*) but usually *\*-ān*. In order to compare *bāmaniuuā* with the other two stems, BARTHOLOMAE postulates an *n*-stem *\*bāman-*, which is unattested.

A different explanation for *bāmaniuuā* has been put forward by GERSHEVITCH 1959: 282. He assumes that *bāmaniuuā* means ‘lichtähnlich’ and corresponds to a hypothetical combination of Skt. *bhāma-* (RV+) ‘light’ and *nibha-* (epic Skt.) ‘resembling’. In GERSHEVITCH’ view, this etymology is supported by the Pahlavī translation of *bāmaniuuā* as *bāmīg-tarāz* in F 279, and by a possible connection of Ossetic *niv* ‘form, manner’ with Skt. *nibha-*. Neither of these two arguments carries much weight. The word *tarāz* in MoP means ‘raw silk’, *ṭarāz* ‘a royal robe, or rich dress ornamented with embroidery’; therefore, Pahl. *bāmīg-tarāz* means ‘shining silk’ or, more generally, ‘beautiful clothes’. This is understandable, since *bāmaniuuā* occurs in the context of *vastrāšca* ‘clothes’. The etymology of Ossetic *nyv/nivæ* ‘luck; form’ from *\*ni-b<sup>h</sup>ā-* ‘shining down’ is adopted by ABAEV 1973: 211f., but it seems a moot possibility to me, since the combination *ni + \*b<sup>h</sup>ā-* is not attested in Old Iranian or in Vedic.<sup>8</sup>

HOFFMANN (1958: 10) etymologizes *afsmāniuuān* as *\*afsmā niyuvā* ‘binding the verse’, which he connects with Skt. *nī yuvati* ‘ties down’. According to KELLENS (1974: 228), HOFFMANN applied the same analysis to *rāmāniuuā*. *\*rāma-ni-iu-uan(t)-* ‘who offers peace’. This solution is explained at somewhat greater depth in a footnote in HOFFMANN-NARTEN 1989: 48. They argue that Yt 8.9 *rāmāniuuā* may be dissected into *rāma-ni-iuuā<sup>9</sup>* ‘granting peace’, built from the same verb as Skt. *nī yu-* ‘to grant’. They hesitate between an analysis as an adj. in *\*-uan-* or a pres.part.act. in *-uant-*. The latter analysis is impaired by the fact that a participial nom.sg.m. ending *-ā* does not exist in Avestan, see SCHINDLER 1982: 200.

In the same footnote, HOFFMANN-NARTEN also return to *afsmāniuuān*. They posit an original sequence of three words *\*afsmā \*niuuā vacastaṣtiuuā* meaning ‘das Dichtwerk (*afsmān-*) in metrischer Form (*vacas-taṣtiuuā*) anspannend (*ni-iuuā*)’, with *ni-iuuā* as the nom.sg.m. of the pres.part.act. *\*ni-iuuant-* ‘tying down’. Semantically, their explanation is based on a conception of *afsmān-* as the poetic text in its entirety, rather than as ‘strophe’ or ‘verse-line’. They do not address the formal problem that a nom.sg.m. in *-ā* (< *\*-ans*) is usually spelled as

<sup>8</sup> It is attractive to connect *nyv/nivæ* with OP *n<sup>a</sup>-i-b<sup>a</sup>-* ‘beautiful’, as proposed already by MILLER 1881-1887 II: 83. If OIr. *noib* ‘holy’ is indeed cognate (IEW 760), this would point to PIE *\*noib<sup>h</sup>o-*.

<sup>9</sup> By giving the spelling of the ms. P13 *rāmāniuuā* between brackets, they suggest that this ms. has preserved the older variant. But the evidence of P13 can not be used, since it is a copy of Pt1, which has *rāmāniuuā*.

$-q$  rather than  $-qn$ <sup>10</sup>; see SCHINDLER 1982: 189, who stresses this point. A decisive objection to their thesis is the fact that the ending  $^*{-anh}$  of the nom.sg.m. of *ant*-stems yields either  $-q$  or  $-\bar{a}$  in YAv., depending on the preceding consonant. The reflex  $-q$  is regular after nasals,  $h$  and  $ii$ , whereas  $-\bar{a}$  is found after all other consonants, including  $*u$ <sup>11</sup>: acc.pl.  $^+da\bar{e}uu\bar{a}$  (cf. HOFFMANN),  $^+auu\bar{a}$ , after  $-uu-$ , it has yielded  $-\bar{u}$ , as in *framrū*. Thus, it is impossible to posit original  $^*ni-yuuants$ .

SCHINDLER's own solution (1982: 189) is based on HOFFMANN's analysis  $^*afsma-ni-yuvant-$ . In view of the problems involved in assuming a nom.sg.m. in  $-qn$ , SCHINDLER posits a neuter sg.  $^*afsma-ni-yuvant$ , used as an adverb. Since the expected reflex of  $^*niuuant$  would be  $\dagger-niūn$ , he ascribes attested  $-uuq\dot{n}$  to dialectal variation within Avestan, which is hardly an explanation. One might suggest that the syllable  $-ua-$  was restored at some stage of YAv. so that the complete assimilation to  $-uu-$  did not take place. The result would be  $\daggerniiuuən$ , but never *niuuq\dot{n}*.

A serious problem which all etymologies with  $^{\circ}ni-iuuā-$  must face, is the fact that Skt. *yuvāti* has no correspondence in Avestan, nor do other forms of the Skt. root *yu-*, such as *ni-yūt-*. Together with the formal problems of the ending, which diminish the probability of the proposed comparison, it seems best to drop it altogether.

In order to save an interpretation as  $^*ni$  + a verb, one might reconstruct  $^*ni-iuga-$  'yoking down', which would yield  $\daggerniiuuā-$  by regular development  $^*ni-iuγā- > ^*ni-iuuā-$  (cf. SKJÆRVØ 1997: 116); but no present formation  $^*yuga-$  is attested in Skt. or Avestan, and the root *yuj-* never occurs in combination with the preverb  $^*ni$  in the Ṛgveda. Wherever we find it (AV, ŚBr.), it occurs with the loc. of goal: *ni yunakti* + loc. 'to bind on something'.

**8.** In my view, the element  $^{\circ}niuu\ddot{a}$  /  $^{\circ}niuuq$  is explained in a more satisfactory way as a reflex of the Iranian root *van-* 'to win, overcome' (see KELLENS 1984: 116 and 1995: 49-50), which is also attested with the meaning 'to spread out'.

From BARTHOLOMAE 1904 to ZIEGLER 2004, scholars have discussed the number of Iranian roots *van-*, and their meaning(s). BARTHOLOMAE 1904: 1353 divides the occurrences of Avestan *van-* 'to win', and especially of the YAv. present *ni-uuana-*, among three different entries: <sup>1</sup>*van-* 'superare', <sup>2</sup>*van-* 'gewinnen' and <sup>4</sup>*van-* 'von oben her bergen'. As KELLENS (1974: 76–80) has clearly shown, all attestations can be derived from a single root *van-* 'to win, overcome'; and just like Vedic, Avestan *van-* 'to win' is homonymous with *van-*

<sup>10</sup> The only exception being the gen.sg. *aiiq\dot{n}* (in Y 57.31, Yt 1.18, 8.54, 11.5), which may be due to graphic influence of the loc.sg. and nom.acc.pl. *aiiq\dot{n}*. In view of the paradigm split which was obviously under way in YAv. (nom.acc.sg. *aiiarə*, thematicised as *aiiara-*, loc.sg. and nom.acc.pl. *aiiq\dot{n}*), it is also conceivable that loc.sg. *aiiq\dot{n}* was petrified as an oblique form of 'day', and replaced the gen.sg.  $^*aiiq$  in expressions of time.

<sup>11</sup> See DE VAAN 2003: 492-498.

‘to wish, love’<sup>12</sup>. In the Old Persian texts ordered by Darius at Susa (D Sf 25, 28, first published in 1929), a 3sg. impf. pass. *avaniya* occurs twice, with *θikā* ‘gravel’ as its subject. BENVENISTE (1951) interpreted *θikā avaniya* as ‘gravel was spread out’, and connected the verb form with some Middle and Modern Iranian verbs of similar meaning, such as Khot. *uysvāñ-* ‘to throw up’. According to BENVENISTE, this would point to a separate Iranian root *\*van-* ‘to spread out’. ZIEGLER (2004: 3–4), apparently unaware of the discussion in KELLENS 1974 and 1984, proposes to add to BENVENISTE’s dossier the two YAv. verb forms which BARTHOLOMAE 1904: 1353 adduces under <sup>4</sup>*van-*, viz. Yt 14.41 *niuuānənti* and Yt 10.75 *niuuānāṭ*. She might be right as far as Yt 14.41 is concerned, since *niuuānənti* does seem to show similar semantics as OP *avaniya* and some of the Mlr. forms meaning ‘to spread out’. I am less convinced that this is also true for Yt 10.75. See KELLENS 1974 for more details on the YAv. forms.

KELLENS’ structural argument still seems convincing to me: in view of the fact that only one finite YAv. verb form can be translated with ‘to spread out’, it is unattractive to distinguish two different YAv. verbs *ni-uuana-*. However, the positions of KELLENS and ZIEGLER are not mutually exclusive, since ‘to spread out’ may be a derived meaning of ‘to win, gain’. I therefore propose the following solution: beside *van-* ‘to love’, Iranian had a second root *van-* ‘to win, gain’, which in Avestan is found especially often in combination with the preverb *ni*<sup>13</sup>. The literal meaning of this combination was ‘to win down, to fully overcome’, with the image of the opponent being struck down by blows. Through metaphorical extension, ‘to strike down’ acquired the meaning ‘to spread out’. This does not necessarily imply, of course, that the meaning ‘to win’ was ousted: both meanings may have existed side by side for a long time.

Apart from *niuuānənti* in Yt 14.41, there is another piece of evidence which seems to confirm that *ni-uuana-* already had the meaning ‘to spread out’ in YAv., viz. the noun *niuuāiti-*. It probably contains the zero grade of *ni-van-*, as we find it in the abstract *haθrā-ni-uuāiti-* ‘victory in one blow’. After the example of the latter word, Y 10.16 *niuuāitiš* is usually translated as ‘victory’, but this is problematic. The Pahlavi text translates it as *wc’lšnyh /wizārišnīh/* ‘decision’, an abstract derived from *wizārdan* ‘to separate’:

*aṣṣaonō ahmi, druuatō nōiṭ ahmi, aṭciṭ ahmāṭ yaθa apəməm maniiuuā aṣṣaṭ niuuāitiš* ‘I am [a partisan] of the truthful one, I am no [partisan] of the deceitful one, from now until at the end [when] the *niuuāitiš* of the two spirits will take place’. The last three words are rendered in Pahlavi by *mēnōgān ast be wizārišnīh* ‘there will be the decision of the spirits’ (JOSEPHSON 1997: 101).

<sup>12</sup> The root *\*uanH-* ‘to love’ is well-attested in Vedic; in Avestan, we find only nominal derivatives, no verb forms.

<sup>13</sup> We also find *\*ni* with other verbs of conquering, viz. *nī... tauruuaiia-* ‘to overcome’ in Y 9.18 and *ni-jan-* (YAv. passim) ‘to strike down, destroy’.

The text clearly refers to the battle between the good and the evil spirit, the *spənta- mainiiu-* and the *ajra- mainiiu-*. A translation ‘victory of the two spirits’ would therefore be senseless, since they cannot both win. Since the Pahlavi word also cannot be ascribed to etymological speculation on the part of the translator, it may simply preserve the original meaning of *niuuāitiš*. The meaning ‘decision’ would fit the context very well, and original ‘separation’ (with the literal meaning of Phl. *wizārdan*) would fit even better. Since ‘separation’ may easily derive from ‘spreading out’, *niuuāitiš* provides independent evidence for a YAv. verb *ni-uuana-* ‘to spread out’.

The same noun is found in N 84:  $^+dāθre^{14}$  *zī paiti niuuāitiš vīspahe aṅhəuš astuuatō humataēšuca hūxtaēšuca huuarəštaēšuca* ‘For through the gift [arises] the separation of the material world in good thoughts, good words and good actions.’ Again, the Pahlavi version translates *niuuāitiš* with *wizārišnīh*; and again, ‘separation’ yields a better understanding of the text than ‘victory’.

Now that we have concluded that YAv. *ni-uuana-* had already acquired the meaning ‘to spread out’ beside ‘to overcome’, we can return to the compounds in  $^{\circ}niuu\acute{a}$  /  $^{\circ}niuu\grave{a}n$ . The assumption that they contain a root noun *\*ni-uanH-* ‘spreading out’ accounts for the actual meanings of the words in a better way than all preceding solutions. Interpreting ‘spreading out’ as ‘dispensing’, the accepted meaning of *rāmaniiuuā* as ‘dispensing peace’ follows naturally. Similarly, we can easily interpret *bāmaniiuuā* as ‘dispensing radiance’. Finally, a translation of *afsmāniuuṅn* as ‘dispensing verse-lines’ makes good sense: the Gāthās must be recited *afsmāniuuṅn*, i.e. delivering all verse-lines in the right order, and the libations (in V 18) must be offered with all verse-lines in the right order.

**9.** So far for the semantics. As for the morphology, the root-final laryngeal in Proto-Iranian is suggested by the long vowel in (*haθrā*)*niuuāiti-* < *\*ni-unH-ti-*. This, in turn, implies that original *\*uan-* ‘to win’ had been replaced by *\*uanH-*, probably on the example of the Ilr. root *\*sanH-* ‘to gain’. Since some Vedic forms of *van* ‘to win’ (*avātá-* ‘unattacked’, *vánitar-* ‘owner’) also show a long vowel or preconsonantal *i*, it is possible that the analogical replacement of *\*uan-* by *\*uanH-* had already started in Proto-Indo-Iranian; cf. DE VAAN 2003: 111.

By sound law, a nom.sg. *\*-uānHs* should have yielded *\*-uāniš* in Avestan, compare *təuiiš* ‘power’ < *\*tauHs* and the evidence collected by BEEKES 1981: 277. However, in other case forms than the nom.sg., the laryngeal would not have been vocalized, such as the gen.sg. *\*-uanH-as*, nom.pl. *\*-uanH-as*. It is conceivable that the nom.sg. was eventually adapted to the other forms of the root, yielding pre-Avestan *\*-uāns*. Since *afsmāniuuṅn* can be plausibly explained as a subject complement in the nom.sg.m. (*vō ... frasrāuuaiiat ...*

<sup>14</sup> Both mss. have *-i*. I interpret *dāθre* as a locative depending on *paiti*, as BARTHOLOMAE 1904: 733 does.

*afsmaniiuuqn*), we return to the explanation of *afsmaniiuuqn* as a nom.sg., put forward by SCHMIDT 1885: 393. In contradistinction to SCHMIDT, we now know that it was not an asigmatic form, but a sigmatic one. Hitherto, no Avestan forms had been found for which a sigmatic nom.sg. of an *n(t)*-stem with lengthened vowel had to be assumed. The only possible form of this type was the nom.sg. OAv. *θβāuuqs* from *θβā-uuant-*, but the ending *-qs* may reflect *\*-ants* or *\*-ānts*, and furthermore it must have secondarily restored *\*-s* after the Iranian change of (*\*-nts >*) *\*-ns* to *\*-nh*; compare the nom.sg. *-q* of other *nt*-stems, and the discussion in DE VAAN 2003: 390ff.

The ending *-uuā* in *afsmaniiuuā*, *rāmaniiuuā* and (maybe) *bāmaniiuuā* can be explained with SCHMIDT 1885: 393 as the result of a more recent analogical introduction of Ir. *\*-uās* which is also found in possessive *-uant-* and *-mant-* stems (e.g. OAv. *drəguuā*, YAv. *astuuā*, *xratumā*), and which HOFFMANN 1976: 555f. has argued to be reflected in the Skt. endings *-vān*, *-mān* too (e.g. *āmavān*, *gómān*).

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