

Vedic -tí- Abstracts and the Reconstruction of Proterokinetic *-tí- in PIE

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Two strands of analysis concerning the Vedic deverbal abstracts in *-tí-* (type *matís f.* ‘thought’ from $\sqrt{\text{man}}$ ‘think’) have come to prevail in the literature. According to an older and still followed approach, the class as a whole vacillates in accentuation and is subject to no rule, RV *bhṛtí-* vs. ŚB *bhṛti-* ‘bearing’ (Liebert 1949:88, followed by e.g. Burrow 1973:168-9). More recently scholars have all but universally assumed that this apparent fluctuation of accent reflects an erstwhile accent and ablaut paradigm, namely the reconstructed proterokinetic class, schematically **Ré-ti- ~ Rø-téy-* (e.g. nom.sg. **mén-ti-s ~ gen.sg. *mṇ-téy-s*). Yet the Vedic evidence used for this reconstruction deserves another look: it supports neither proposed analysis, but is indicative only of a late Vedic pattern of barytone accent creeping into the Rigveda, a pattern interestingly matched by developments in the prehistory of Greek.

That the proterokinetic reconstruction has become standard in the field is clear (overview in Vine 2004), but the evidence commonly adduced for it is surprisingly meager. Although recent scholars (Schaffner 2001:438ff., Grestenberger 2009:12) offer a few forms as illustrative of this pattern such as *cítti-/cittí-* ‘thought’, *śákti-/śaktí-* ‘strength, power’, these forms should not be taken as reflecting a deep archaism. In this paper I offer a new assessment of the entirety of the evidence for barytone *-tí-* abstracts in the RV, from which reassessment another picture emerges: such fluctuations are only apparent, since the forms with barytone accent consistently belong to a later chronological layer of Vedic. For instance, the oft-cited *bhṛtí-* (RV) \sim *bhṛti-* (ŚB) ‘bearing, carrying’ shows an awkward discrepancy, as the evidence from ŚB cannot be leveraged against that of the RV; similarly within the RV, *śákti-* is well-attested in the core family books, while *śákti-* is exclusively in the younger books 1 and 10. The oxytone type should be regarded as original, while the developing pattern of barytone accent becomes dominant in late Vedic (Wackernagel-Debrunner *AiGr.* 2.2:631-2, Lubotsky 1988:33ff.) and the apparent fluctuation is thus non-probative for archaic patterns.

A better account of the *-tí-* abstracts departs from the Vedic evidence and considers the *-tí-* suffix to be inherently accented (see esp. Kiparsky 2010, and Kümmel *fthcm.*). However, when subject to further derivation, the suffixal accent could yield its place, e.g. *prábhṛti-*. It is worth recalling that the *-tí-* suffix is very commonly employed in composition (see Vine 2004:371 with reff.). I propose that a pattern developed from

this starting point, whereby leftmost accentuation was generalized to the simplexes in late Vedic. In fact, an example for this pattern may be sitting before our eyes: from prehistoric **dítí-* ‘binding’ was derived *ádítí-* ‘unboundedness’ (PN of a goddess), and all scholars are agreed that RV *dítí-* is a backformation to the compound. This example suggests exactly the derivational process that may be posited for this class at large: **dítí-* → *á-dítí-* → *dítí-*. A further implication: the same account for the prehistory of the corresponding class in Greek, namely the *-ti/-si-* abstracts (type *lúsis* f. ‘a loosening’, compound *análusis*), explains their zero-grade root but consistently recessive accentuation, and so offers a diachronic account of the morphology of **-tí-* abstracts from at least Greco-Aryan to Vedic and Greek.

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