New Perspectives from Pāṇini's dhātu-:
Towards a Ṛgvedic Derivational Path for -ti- *and* -tu- *Suffixes*

Leonardo Montessi

University 'Guglielmo Marconi'

Since Benveniste's work (1948), Ved. *-ti-* and *-tu-* derivatives have been investigated by focusing either on the kind of nominalization shown by these suffixes (Seiler 1986; Stüber 2002; Lazzeroni 1997; Benedetti 2002) or on their functional opposition with respect to verbal constructions (Itzzés 2024; Roy 2024). However, the compatibility of these suffixes with the roots that they select, especially in the light of both the Unaccusative Hypothesis (Perlmutter 1978) and the pāṇinian notion of *dhātu-* (A. 1.3.1, 3.1.91), is yet to be investigated (Rix 1986; Bertocci 2022).

In this contribution, we aim at showing how the selection of the Ṛgvedic *-ti-* and *-tu-* suffixes with respect to monovalent verbal roots can be considered as a good diagnostic to establish the compatibility of a verbal root with Unergative or Unaccusative morphology.

To do so, we collect all the monovalent verbal roots showing *-ti-* and *-tu-* derivatives of the Ṛgveda (from Whitney 1885; Mayrhofer 1992-2001), by combining a syntactic and semantic approach (Sorace 2000; Lazzeroni 2004). All the occurrences of these derivatives are gathered and classified in terms of types and tokens (Berg 2014; Levshina 2019, 2021). Then, we analyze: 1) all their contexts of occurrence, considering their semantic and syntactic features (Keydana 2013; Lowe 2014, 2017; Spevak 2022: 62); 2) all the occurrences of the verb they come from, verifying whether it is more likely to be or enter either telic or atelic constructions (being Unaccusative the former, Unergative the latter: Levin & Rappaport-Hovav 1995; Van Valin & Lapolla 1997; Cennamo 2002; Romagno 2002; Sorace 2011). Moreover, following the *Split Intransitivity Hierarchy* model (*SIH*, Sorace 2011), all the verbal roots are grouped into semantic classes.

Preliminary results show that: 1) suffix *-ti-* selects roots creating verbs that are either atelic or more likely to enter atelic constructions (being thus Unergative, Van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 139-142), while suffix *-tu-* attaches to roots creating verbs that are either telic or more likely to enter telic constructions (being thus Unaccusative, Van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 139-142); 2) the selection of these suffixes is coherent with the *SIH* model, since verbal roots capable of taking both *-ti-* and *-tu-* suffixes are located at the peripheric semantic classes of the Unaccusative/Unergative prototype (*scil.*, CONTINUATION OF A PRE-EXISTING STATE: *e.g.*, √*vas* 'to dwell' > 70% *vasatí-* f. 'staying', 30% *vá/ä́stu-* m. 'the place of'); 3) the *dhātu-* (A. 1.3.1, 3.1.91: Renou 1896: 432; Sharma 1990, 1995; Alfieri 2024) should be intended as a real linguistic unit, since the selection of these suffixes seems to be triggered by different and specific semantic features of the verbal roots: thus, an analysis carried out according to the Indian grammarians (A. 3.3.94-97, 3.3.158) may help cast some light on peculiar features of Vedic derivative morphology that a lexicalist approach, on the contrary, does not allow to see (*e.g.*, Keydana 2022).

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