

RITUAL SPELLS AND PRACTICAL MAGIC FOR BENEDICTION AND
MALEDICTION: FROM INDIA TO GREECE, ROME, AND BEYOND
(SPEECH AND PERFORMANCE IN VEDA AND AVESTA, I.)

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1.1. Sacred formulae and rites of ‘bene-*dictio*’ and ‘bene-*factio*’ or of ‘male-*dictio*’ and ‘male-*factio*’, respectively, are well known to researchers of oral poetry and popular rites in older Indo-European cultures from Ancient Greek and Latin contexts. They became central topics of scholarly discourse after the publication of the classical corpora of magical inscriptions and papyri in Indo-European traditions and beyond: by Richard WÜNSCH (1897), Auguste AU-DOLLENT (1904), and Karl PREISENDANZ (1928–1941). This was the start of *comparative* research in problems of ‘cursing and blessing’ (for one of the first summaries of cross-cultural studies s. CRAWLEY 1911), of ‘binding spells’ and incantations on magic, ‘voodoo’ dolls, to mention only a few pertinent groups of texts.

1.2. The interest in this subject has been re-vivified in the last 30 years, after the discovery of huge numbers of new materials, in Indo-European but also in Semitic (Assyrian, Babylonian, Hebrew etc.) and Egyptian sources. Thus, the circle of societies concerned was enlarged, and the spells and charms became object of a series of (*contrastive*) investigations like the ones of David R. JORDAN (e.g. 1985a, 1985b, 2000), John G. GAGER (1992), Fritz GRAF (1997), Christopher A. FARAONE (1991*ab*, 2001 etc.), Henk VERSNEL (e.g. 1998, 2011), Hans Dieter BETZ (1986), William M. BRASHEAR (e.g. 1995), Richard GORDON (e.g. 2000, 2002), Roy KOTANSKY (e.g. 1988), D. OGDEN (esp. 1999), John J. WINKLER (e.g. 1990 and in FARAONE – OBBINK 1991: 214–243), Anita KROPP (2008), and many others, on the topics of ‘Magic in the ancient world’.

2.1. Among the most archaic magic rites are those of ‘binding’, ‘piercing’ or ‘burying’ by means of spells or mantras. These rituals of cursing-and-subjecting concern, on the one hand, adversaries in battles, opponents in lawsuits or rivals in love, and, on the other hand, the beloved persons (!) themselves, as ‘opposite parties’ in love, who have to be bewitched, bewildered, bestirred – and besotted. The relevant Greek spells are called κατάδεσμοί, from καταδέω ‘to bind (down)’; in Latin they are styled *defixiones*, both words meaning ‘binding’, ‘binding (means)’¹. The assessment of their quantity in the 1990es,

¹ For some highlights from the voluminous literature, see e.g. PREISENDANZ, *RAC* 8 (1972), 1–29, GAGER 1992: v, 3ff., GRAF 1997: 9f., 118ff., KROPP 2008: 37–43, and VERSNEL 2011: 4–14.

stating that more than 1000 such κατάδεσμοί have been unearthed so far, is meanwhile antiquated: Only David R. JORDAN's two collections of addenda to the corpus of Greek *defixionum tabellae* (1985a and 2000) comprise 189 and 122 new items, respectively, KROPP 2008 discusses 537 Latin texts (in part, recently found), and discoveries from the whole territory from Britain to the Near East and Egypt come every year. The papyrological evidence has its own, impressive numbers (figures in BRASHEAR 1995: 3476–3576). The two principal genres – the *defixiones* 'hostiles' and the *defixiones* 'amatoriae' – originated as *oral literature* but had the advantage to have been early enough (on this point, cf. GAGER 1992: 7 and 34, n. 39) *fixed in written form*.

2.2. However, a large corpus of *oral poetry* and relevant ritual practices *inside* Indo-European tradition – the Indo-Iranian corpus – has still not received the deserved attention: Comparative Indo-Iranian philology and religious studies now stay in front of the task of studying new textual material of the *Atharvaveda*, the Vedic 'book of spells' par excellence, of comparing it to Vedic ritual sūtras and to parallel Iranian sources, and of drawing conclusions concerning possible reconstructions of their common background. What earlier used to be taken as isolated parallels, now has good chances to be situated in a common *inter-textual* context of *Indo-Iranian* age.² This task seems an urgent desideratum especially since the discovery of the new Atharvaveda-Paipalāda fragments by Durgamohan BHATTACHARYA³ and the start of the Leiden project of their critical edition, initiated by Michael WITZEL and developed by Alexander M. LUBOTSKY.⁴ Since 2007, after Sasha Lubotsky kindly invited me to Leiden and our joint project work in the field of Indo-Iranian philology started, I have been engaging in the assessment of these Old Indian, Atharvavedic material, in (genealogical) comparison with Iranian, esp. Avestan texts – but also in contrastive, typological analysis of their Greek, Graeco-Egyptian, and (Graeco-)Roman counterparts. The results so far are a series of contrastive publications on *Ritual Formulae and Ritual Pragmatics in Veda and Avesta*. One of them, concerning the comparison between spells and rites in the Avestan Yašt 14 and Vidēvdād with the Atharvaveda, was published in the *Festschrift Eichner* (2009), another one just appeared in the Proceedings of the World Sanskrit Conference in Kyoto (SADOVSKI 2012), and two more are

² Cf. SADOVSKI 2009: 156ff., with recent literature and further examples.

³ See now the continuation of his editorial *magnum opus* by his son, Dipak BHATTACHARYA (BHATTACHARYA 1997–2008).

⁴ For a series of relevant publications going back to the Leiden project see e.g.: WITZEL 1985, LUBOTSKY 2005 (AVP 5), GRIFFITHS 2009 (AVP 6–7), LELLI 2009 (AVP 15), OORT (AVP 8, in prep.), ZEHNDER 1993 and 1999 (AVP 1–2); coming up: LUBOTSKY – GRIFFITHS (AVP 4).

in preparation for publication in the volume BRAARVIG – GELLER – SELZ – SADOVSKI (forthc.) and in the Proceedings of the Berlin Max Planck conference *Knowledge to Die For* (SADOVSKI, in print), respectively.

3. The subject of this particular article concerns a specific type of rituals, the *binding spells-and-charms* – a form of ‘ritual poetry in action’, i.e. of unity between incantations and concomitant ritual performance, in which the *ritual words* (*uerba concepta*) are considered largely identical with the *ritual actions*: the classical concept of performative speech acts.

To start with a typological outline of the phenomenon, in the traditions of Ancient Greece, Rome, and Near East (cf. BRASHEAR 1995: 3390ff.), such rites comprise following types of ‘spells-and-charms’:

- (a) Binding (seizing/piercing/burying) spells (cf. § 4ff.). (b) Amatory spells, magical ‘*ars amatoria*’ (§8f.). (c) Execratory spells, as means of total destruction in this world, even in the hereafter. (d) Protective spells, esp. ‘defensive magic’. (e) Rituals for procreation. (f) Healing spells, etc.

We are going to see some of these rites in comparison, first focusing on mantras for *binding* and destroying *adversaries* and then going on to other performative mantras such as *amatory charms*. Other speech-performance rituals like execratory spells and, on the other hand, protective formulae, healing spells, and rituals of procreation can be commented upon only *en passant*, being special objects of two of the studies in preparation quoted above.

4. Let us first turn to *binding* spells, to ritual *seizing*, *piercing*, and *burying* as speech acts and extralinguistic realia: The Indo-Iranian evidence contains, first, incantations and practical magic ‘against competitors’.

4.1. The Vedic tradition is represented by typical *spells against opponents* like the following mantra from the Atharvaveda(-Śaunaka), 7,73[70],4-5:

<i>ápāñcau ta ubháu bāhū</i>	<i>Turned back/behind</i> are your two arms.
<i>ápi nahyāmy āsyām </i>	<i>I bind</i> your mouth.
<i>agnér devāsya manyúnā</i>	With the wrath of god Agni
<i>téna te ’vadhīṣaṃ havīḥ 4 </i>	<i>I destroyed</i> your oblation.
<i>ápi nahyāmi te bāhū</i>	<i>I bind</i> your arms,
<i>ápi nahyāmy āsyām </i>	<i>I bind</i> your mouth.
<i>agnér ghorāsya manyúnā</i>	With the wrath of terrible Agni
<i>téna ’vadhīṣaṃ havīḥ 5 </i>	<i>I destroyed</i> your oblation.

One can compare this *binding curse* with the usual form of the Greek κατά-δεσμοί, which contain the same elements. Not only the same magic words are to find in Greek and Egyptian spells (‘*I turn back* your arms. *I bind* your mouth’): we even have little sculptural representations (§ 5.1.)! Sometimes they are very simple, sometimes more elaborated: One of the simple structures of this type, on a *tabella defixionis* from Attica (ed. WÜNSCH 1897, no. 86), alrea-

dy contains some of the essential elements in common and reads ‘I *bind* Dromōn... (his) *feet and hands*. I *bind* Isias before Hermes the *Restrainer – the hands, the feet of Isias, the whole body*’. What is remarkable, is the identical way of formulation – very frequently, the body parts are listed *in extenso*⁵, with claim of totality (in elaborate syntactic structures, often increasing in accord with BEHAGHEL’s rule), hierarchically systematized according to a set of criteria: cf. the evidence discussed in § 6.3., Greek examples esp. in § 6.3.2.

4.2. Other operations mentioned in such spells beside *binding* are (ritual) *piercing* and *burying*. This form of black magic has not only verbal expression but also practical dimensions, the ritual acts being performed on little figural representations of the object concerned, figurines or ‘voodoo’ dolls.

4.2.1. A full-program piercing-and-destruction spell from the Atharvaveda (AVŚ. 16,7), says about the competitor:

téna _a naṃ vidhyāmy	1. With that I <i>pierce</i> him;
ābhūtyā enaṃ vidhyāmi	with ‘becoming-not’/‘un-being’/annihilation I <i>pierce</i> him;
nīrbhūtyā _a enaṃ vidhyāmi	with ‘becoming-off/away’ (WL: ‘extermination’) I <i>pierce</i> him;
pārābhūtyainaṃ vidhyāmi	with ‘becoming-away’ (‘calamity’) I <i>pierce</i> him;
grāhyā enaṃ vidhyāmi	with <i>seizure</i> I <i>pierce</i> him;
tāmasā enaṃ vidhyāmi 1	with darkness I <i>pierce</i> him.

Then, the curse goes on:

evānevāva sā garat 4	4. <i>Like this</i> (‘So’), not <i>like this</i> (‘not so’), may she [Grāhi / the Seizure] swallow [him] down.
nīr dviśantaṃ divo nīḥ pṛthivyā nīr antāriksād bhajāma 6	6. Let us deprive our hater of share of heaven, of earth, of intermediary space / atmosphere (cf. WHITNEY – LANMAN, ad loc.)

Obviously, this is a performative *speech act*, also referring to an *extra-linguistic* situation: The victim shall be *fixed-and-neutralized* ‘in a particularly torturing way’: the *mantra* is accompanied by *real gestures*. Further on, the text says:

idám ahám āmuṣyāyaṇè ’múṣyāh putré duṣvāpnīyaṃ mṛje 8	8. Now do I wipe off this evil-dreaming <u>on him of such-and-such lineage, son of such-and-such a mother.</u>
tāṃ jahi téna mandasva tāsya pṛṣṭīr āpi śṛñīhi 12	12. <i>Smite</i> him, <i>amuse</i> yourself with him, <i>crush in his ribs.</i> (after WHITNEY – LANMAN [WL]).

Note the *matri-lineal* indication of origin, more about which see in § 10.

4.2.2. A very instructive parallel type in Greek appears e.g. in a spell from Attica, written on a lead plate from the beginning of the 4th century BC: on its first side, we find almost the same structure, in the context of a *rivalry in a lawsuit*:

Side A: (1) I bind down Theagenes, his *tongue* and his *soul* and the *words* he uses; (2) I also bind down the *hands and feet* of Pyrrhias, the cook, his *tongue*, his *soul*, his *words*; [...] (8) I also bind

⁵ On the character of such lists in the context of the various genres of lists and catalogues as a device of systematization of the Universe in Veda and Avesta cf. SADOVSKI 2012: § 2.3.1.

down the *tongue* of Seuthes, his *soul*, and the *words* he uses, just like his *feet*, his *hands*, his *eyes*, and his *mouth*; (9) I also bind down the *tongue* of Lamprias, his *soul*, and the *words* he uses, just like his *feet*, his *hands*, his *eyes*, and his *mouth* (cf. GRAF 1997: 122 and 135)

On the backside, all adversaries are recapitulated and the key actions specified:

All these I bind down, I make them disappear, I bury them, I nail them down.

We will concentrate on the individual actions united in this formula in § 6.1 ff.; but first let us short focus on the pragmatic dimensions of the ritual situation, when pronouncing such spells and of the concomitant activities expressed in the various (verbal) forms we have observed in the text passages quoted till now:

5. For the respective actions, for which, as we have seen, Greeks use the words ‘to bind (down)’ (κατα-δέω) and ‘binding(-down) (spell)’, κατάδεσμος, and Latin terms like *relegare*, *dē-figere*, *dē-fixiō* (cf. e.g. GRAF 1997: 121f., 125, 134f.), in Vedic, the genuine meaning of the prefix – *nī* ‘down’, esp. in Ved. *nī* + *bādh* ‘to bind down’ – must be underlined as explicitly as in the cases of Greek κατά and Latin *dē-*, as a clear reference to a strongly *infernal/chthonic* notion. Also Avestan exhibits this preverb – *ni* ‘down’ – for instance with the root *zan*, but also with the verb *dā*, identical with δέω (< **deh*₁), in *nī.dīiā-* ‘to bind down’, pragmatically identical with (κατα-)δέω! We find this usage e.g. in the third Avestan Gāθā, in a spell against the demon(iac) *furor/Furor* ‘wrath/Wrath’ (*aēšəma-* ‘ira’):

nī aēšəmə nī.dīiātəm

Down, let w/Wrath be *tied down*!

paīti rəməm paīti.sīiōdūm

Cut back obstruction [...]! (SKJÆRVØ, with modif.)

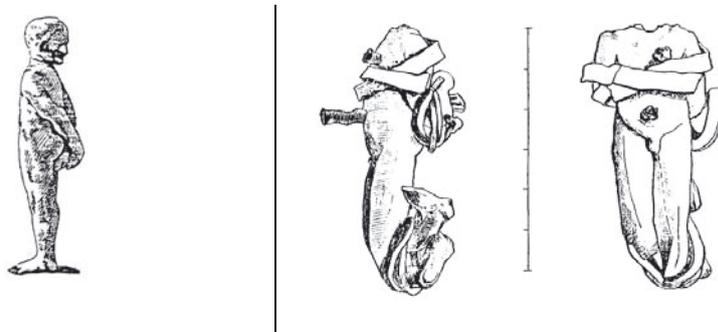
5.0. A variant of this act uses live animals instead of statuettes, like in the case of the cat from Santones found buried with *his head twisted back* and with a curse tablet⁶ ordering: ‘Let them be *turned away* [...] in the same way that this little cat is *turned away* and cannot get up. Let it be thus for them as well!’

5.1. Such spells of binding, piercing and burying are obviously not mere metaphors but have clear *extralinguistic aspects*: *Binding spells* are explicitly connected with *burying rites*. ‘One of the most striking features of ancient *defixiones* emerges from the use of dolls or figurines as part of the binding process’ (GAGER 1992: 15). The evidence for figural representations of the victims of performative speech acts comes e.g. from Egyptian magical recipes, Assyrian incantations, as well as Greek, Graeco-Egyptian and Roman testimonies of binding and seizing enemies, lovers, or even gods. The effigies are *bound* (cf. FARONE 1991a: 166ff.), *pierced*, *buried*, in the following major ritual contexts:

⁶ AUDOLLENT 1904, no. 112; GRAF 1997: 124, 130, and esp. 136f.: *aversos [...] esse quo/modi [sic] hic catellus aversus / est nec surgere potest / sic nec illi, sic transpecti sint / quomodo ille.*

- *Binding gods* as a form of ‘*re-ligio*’: in public rites attested in Greek poleis; on our evidence from India cf. below, § 10.4., and SADOVSKI, in print.
- ‘Rituals of *burning*’: effigies of demons or living enemies (cf. Assyrian *maqlû* incantations).
- Lead or wax figurines: *pierced, buried, melt*.

5.1.1. In Egypt, Greece and the Near East, a ‘significant number of such figurines have survived. Their existence confirms and illustrates the texts and formularies which speak of them. [...]’ (GAGER 1992: 15, FARAONE 1991a: 173ff., 1991b: 5ff.). The most prominent are the ones found in graves from the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens and going back to ca. 400 BC (cf. the table):



- Left side: Lead figurine from Athens, first publ. in *Mélusine* 9, 1898–1899, 104, fig. 2.
- Right side: Decapitated lead figurine from Athens, first publ. in *Philologus* 61, 1902, 37.

Both FARAONE (1991a: 201, reprinting the same pictures in his fig. 6–7) and GAGER (1992: 15 and 36, n. 82) discussed the figurines: GAGER (*ibid.*, 15) describes the material objects, ‘each encased in a miniature coffin made of two lead sheets, with names of the targets inscribed on all of the sheets and on three of the figurines’, and FARAONE adds that ‘[s]maller clay, mud, and stone versions of the free-standing ‘bound captive’ evolved artistically into a flattened, nearly abstract shape that provided a wide writing surface for long lists of intended victims [...]. Nearly all the extant examples were found buried in large caches in cemeteries or near mortuary temples’ (1991a: 174).

5.1.2. On the whole Graeco-Roman territory, we have rich evidence for *burying* figurines as usual black magic practice; we already saw the formula: ‘All of them, I *bind them*, I *make them disappear*, I *bury them*, I *nail them down*’.

5.2. Do we have *Indian* parallels of such effigies? Yes, but to find them, one has to *know* that they exist, just like the ancient Greek verb for ‘reading’ (ἀνα-γινώσκειν) as a cognition by re-cognition (ἀνά + γινώσκειν), i.e. by reading positive matter out of the black hole of lacking evidence on the basis of deduction – for the effigies themselves are not directly preserved. *Yo evam veda, vindati*, ‘the one who knows, finds it’:

5.2.1. Parallel traditions show us what materials to search for. Thus, Greek and Roman epigraphic and papyrus traditions testify of rites of *burying figurines* as usual black magic practice:

WÜNSCH 1897, no. 49: τούτους ἅπαντας καταδῶ All of them, I *bind them*, I *make them disappear*, I *bury them*, I *nail them down*.
ἀφανίζω κατορύττω καταπασσαλεύω.

5.2.2. The *materials* of these effigies were often of perishable or less durable character: *lead*, *wax*, and especially: *clay*. If ‘in Greece and Rome, supernatural attributes were ascribed to everyday objects and materials [...]’ (BRASHEAR 1995: 3394 with n. 27), then, logically, lead, ‘wax or clay figurines with spells written on papyrus attached to them have been found as well as instructions occasionally attested in magical procedures’ (*ibid.*; cf. also the magic recipes in GRAF 1997: 138). For the Greek evidence, cf. e.g. WÜNSCH 1897, no. 55, *Side A*:

Τούτους ἐγὼ καταδίδημι ἅπαντας ἐν [From the town of Karystos on Euboea]:
μολύβδῳ καὶ ἐν κηρᾷ(τ) [...] I bind all these people in lead and in wax.

Corresponding to the older Attic spells like the one quoted above, also later on in the Graeco-Roman sphere, we have evidence ‘from Plato to the Augustan poets’ (GRAF 1997: 145) that mentions *statuettes of wax or clay*: In Rome, Ovid (*Amores* 3,7,29, cf. GAGER 1992: 31, note 9; on the direct evidence of such a rite *ibid.* 142) wonders ‘if a specialist sorcerer has ‘victimized (*dēfixit*) [him], who has written his name in *red wax* and *pierced it with a needle*’.

5.3.1. To find testimonies of such material objects in Indo-Iranian, we have to ‘re-bind’ *disiecta membra*. In Ancient India, we have scattered evidence for such rites of *piercing* and *burying figurines* or *other material objects*, to damn a person, in magic texts such AVŚ 3,25,3–6:

yá plihánaṃ śośáyati
kámasyéṣuḥ súsamnatā /
prācínapakṣā v_iyòṣā
táyā vidhyāmi tvā hṛdí //3//
śucá viddhá v_iyòṣayā
śúṣkāsyā bhí sarpa mā /
mṛdúr nímanyuḥ kévali
priyavādīny ánuvratā //4//
ájāmi t_ivā ájanyā
pári mātúr átho pitúḥ /
yáthā máma krátāv áso
máma cittám upáyasi //5//
v_iy ásyai mitrāvaruṇau
hṛdás cittán_y asyatam /
áthainām akratúṃ kṛtvá
mámaivá kṛṇutām váse //6//

3. The well-straightened arrow of love which dries the spleen [...], forward-winged, consuming — therewith I *pierce* thee in the heart.

4. *Pierced* with consuming pain [...], dry-mouthed, do thou come creeping to me, gentle, with fury allayed, entirely [mine], pleasant-spoken, *submissive*.

5. I goad thee hither with a goad [...], away from mother, likewise from father, that thou mayest be in my power (*krātu*), mayest come unto my intent.

6. Do ye, O Mitra-and-Varuna, cast out the intents from her heart; then, *making her powerless*, *make her [to be] in my own control* (WHITNEY – LANMAN, ad loc.).

5.3.2. According to a counter-spell of Kausika-Sūtra 39, if one finds a charmed

clay effigy, the Brahmán pierces it ‘with a hostile eye (sū. 11, cf. CALAND 1900: 134f.) and shoots (an arrow) on places [the effigy] has wounded’. The effigy is explicitly said to be ‘made of clay (12)’. He puts it ‘on a hide, with the heels turned downwards (16)’. What follows, contains a ritual of *binding-and-burying*: he ‘anoints it (18), binds it (19), pours water on it (14) and on places vulnerable by the effigy (28.31) and *plows* on it *with a plough* drawn by *black oxen* (29).’

5.4. The Vedic notion of such objects is *kṛtyā-*, f. (attested in RVKh., AV., YV.); it has been studied by prominent historians of religion (WEBER, HILLEBRANDT, HENRY, S.K. LAL, GOUDRIAAN) but, to my knowledge, without any reference to figurines in Greek, Egyptian and Roman rituals of burying.

5.4.1. In his study of this notion, Teen GOUDRIAAN (1986: 452) distinguishes two aspects: ‘an impersonal one, a material object produced by a sorcerer and handled by him according to more or less technical prescriptions; and a more personally conceived power which in a way is thought to be connected with this material substratum, sometimes in the form of a highly effective and dangerous being which threatens to destroy somebody’s life or property’.

The etymological meaning of *kṛtyā-*, ‘activity’, ‘action’, goes back to the more material one of ‘shaping, carving’, as a *nomen actionis/abstractum* → *nomen rei actae*, ‘[an object that results from] shaping, carving’. For *kṛtyā-* in extant Vedic texts, it seems reasonable to operate with two aspects of its meaning:

- Abstract: ‘powerful magic hidden in an object’;
- Concrete: ‘magical object (buried into the ground)’, esp. “voodoo” doll’.

5.4.2. In fact, we have evidence from the Yajurveda, from the Atharvavedic Kauśika-Sūtra, and from the corresponding mantra text of the Paippalāda-Saṃhitā that points out to dolls of (more or less explicit) human form:

- The formula to be pronounced, if somebody finds a *kṛtyā-* buried in his field or garden, VSM 5,23 / VSK 5,6.2 *ūt kṛtyāṃ kirāmi* ‘the *kṛtyā* I dig out’, speaks not only of the abstract ‘powerful magic’ but specifically of the precise object by which it is represented.
- At Kauś. 39,7ff., *kṛtyā-* is presented like a doll (CALAND, HENRY) or another object (GOUDRIAAN) to bury. GOUDRIAAN (*ibid.* 453) tends to retain that *kṛtyā-* can mean any ‘strange’ material object hidden or buried and doubts that it necessarily appears as a doll. However, also in Egypt and Greece, the figurine ‘does not need to be a portrait; it suffices that it bears some very superficial resemblance to the identity’ (M. MAUSS, s. GRAF 1997: 139).

Both Victor HENRY and Willem CALAND underline that, at least at the Kauś. 39,7ff. the object must have been a *figurine*. This solution is corroborated by Arlo GRIFFITHS, too, in his commentary of AVP 7,1, who stresses the fact that ‘the wording of KauśS 39, sūtras 13 [...] and 14 [...] clearly implies an object of human (or animal) shape, and so do stanzas like ŚS 10.1.1, 10.1.24’.

5.4.3. In this context, I would like to underline also other rituals connected

– jaws, neck, shoulders, ribs – to finish with the joints and (as a peak of gradation) the *marrow*, considered the seat both of life and of progeny:

idaṃ te *śiro* bhinadmi yātudhāna svāhā-
-daṃ te *mastiṣkam* ni tṛnadmi bhūmyām ||1||

idaṃ te *hanū* bhinadmi yātudhāna svāhā-
-daṃ te *+jihvām* ni tṛnadmi bhūmyām ||2||

idaṃ te *grīvā* bhinadmi yātudhāna svāhā-
-daṃ te *+skandhān* ni tṛnadmi bhūmyām ||3||
[...]

idaṃ te *kulphau* bhinadmi yātudhāna svāhā-
-daṃ te *pāḍau* ni tṛnadmi bhūmyām || 9||

idaṃ te *tvacaṃ* bhinadmi yātudhāna svāhā-
-daṃ te *prāṇān* ni tṛnadmi bhūmyām ||10||

idaṃ te *parūṃṣi* bhinadmi yātudhāna svāhā-
-daṃ te *+majjho* ni tṛnadmi bhūmyām ||11||
(Conjectures after ed. ZEHNDER, ad loc.)

1. Here-and-now I (am) split(ting) your *head*, sorcerer: ‘svāhā’; here-and-now I (am) pierc(ing) your *brain* down on(to) the earth.

2. Here-and-now I (am) split(ting) your *jaws*, sorcerer: ‘svāhā’; here-and-now I (am) pierc(ing) your *tongue* down on(to) the earth.

3. Here-and-now I (am) split(ting) your *neck*, sorcerer: ‘svāhā’; here-and-now I (am) pierc(ing) your *shoulders* down on(to) the earth. [...]

9. Here-and-now I (am) split(ting) your *ankles*, sorcerer: ‘svāhā’; here-and-now I (am) pierc(ing) your *feet* down on(to) the earth.

10. Here-and-now I (am) split(ting) your *skin*, sorcerer: ‘svāhā’; here-and-now I (am) pierc(ing) your *breathing* (etc.) down on(to) the earth.

11. Here-and-now I (am) split(ting) your *joints*, sorcerer: ‘svāhā’; here-and-now I (am) pierc(ing) your *marrow* down on(to) the earth.

For other instances of (Greek etc.) ‘anatomic curses’ see below, **9.2.2**.

6.3.2. The same structure is well spread in Greek and Roman texts. Thus, beside the case of WÜNSCH 1897, no. 86, quoted above, we find the stylistic form of *body parts enumeration* already in the most ancient attestations of *tabellae defixionum*, the group of Kerameikos [5th c. BC; ed. JORDAN 1985a: 95]:

καταδῶ Χαρίαν ... καὶ ψυχὴν τὴν Χαρίου καὶ	I bind Charias... and the soul of Charias and the
γλῶτταν τὴν Χαρίου ... καταδῶ ψυχὴν τὴν	tongue of Charias... I bind the soul of
Καλλίππο καὶ χεῖρας τὰς Καλλίππο	Kallippos... and the hands of Kallippos.

An especially remarkable parallel appears in a Graeco-Egyptian recipe styled as ‘marvelous erotic binding spell’ (PGM IV, 296–466). In this *amatory charm* we have our doll, *pierced and stabbed* in absolutely the same way like the witch in the previous text. The recipe prescribes:

“‘Take *thirteen bronze needles*, drive one into her *brain*”, saying, “I stab your *brain* with the *needle*, NN [name to be filled in], two in your *ears*, two in your *eyes*, and so forth,” each time saying, “I stab this *member* of this person so that she thinks only of me, NN” (GRAF 1997: 138). – This follows after “a long list of magic words to be engraved on the body of the female figurine—on her head, ears, eyes, face, right collarbone, arms, hands, heart, belly,

nally, once again *recapitulated* by *sárvasmād ātmānas* ‘the whole trunk/torso/body’. – On these incantations, their textual structure and parallels see recently Kenneth Zysk’s PhD thesis (*TAPhS* 75,7, 1985; ²1998), Heiner EICHNER, *Die Sprache* 42, Heft 1–2, 2000–2001 [2004], 211–233, as well as SADOVSKI 2012, § 2.2., with lit.

genitals, buttocks, and soles of the feet. It is necessary to write on the breast the name of the victim and that of her mother (315) (which proves that the use of the metronym is intentional, not used for lack of anything better)” (*ibid.*).

The same *piercing* – on *twelve body spots* – we spot in AVŚ. 3,25,3–6!

6.4. On the topos of ‘burying the victim’ see above, § 5. – Beside the *binding*, *piercing* and *de-fixing* spells, we find also ‘*un-binding spells*’, in particular the so-called *separation curses*, *Trennungszauber*, about which s. below, § 9.

7. With regard to the typology of the *formulary* of binding and piercing charms, Indo-Iranian knows come the same main types of formulae and structures as in Greek (s. FARAONE 1991b: 5ff., cf. GAGER 1992: 13), which, to be sure, could be used in various combinations, even in one and the same spell:

7.1 The direct binding formula (‘I [am (herewith)] bind[ing] X/you!’), a simple performative utterance (in injunctive or indicative), is ‘designed to operate through the *effective force of the words* themselves and without intervention from any supernatural source’: in § 4.1., we have already seen AVŚ. 7,73[70],4–5: ‘*Turned back/behind* are your two arms. I *bind* your mouth. I *bind* your arms’.

7.2. We also find a series of Indo-Iranian parallels to Greek and Latin formulae that ‘appeal directly or indirectly for *supernatural assistance*’ – of the type ‘*Restrain X!*’ or ‘*May god A restrain B*’. Compare e.g. the Vedic formulae (precative or constative) of the type ‘*May the god(s) (twist and) bind his arms behind his back*’, in the spell against one’s relatives (AVP 1,18,4a.d):

ihed asātha na puro gamātha- [...] Here you have to be, you will not go forwards [...]
viśve vo devā upa +samdyān iha ||1|| the All-Gods (Viśve Devāh) will bind you here together.

Especially the *narrative type*, in which a god *binds hands and feet* of the enemies, is common to Avesta and Veda:

7.2.1. In Avesta, such gods are Miθra and Vərəθraϥna: Beside the Gāthic Avestan appeal ‘to bind down’ (*ni + dā*) the demon(iac) *w/Wrath*, on which see above, § 5.0., cf. for instance the case of Yt. 10,48:

āaṭ yaṭ miθrō frauuazaitē	When Mithra comes driving
auui haēnaiiā +xruuišiiieitiš	against the blood-thirsty enemy armies,
auui haṃ.yaṇta rasmaoiiō	towards those who (in the area lying)
aṇtarə daiṅhu pāpərətāne	between two countries at war join their (respective) regiments,
aθra narəṃ miθrō.drujaṃ	(and, having arrived) there,
apqš gauuō darəzaiieiti	<i>fetters behind the evil hands of men false to the treaty,</i>
para daēma vāraieiti	switches off their eyesight,
apa +gaoša +taošaieiti	deafens their ears:
nōiṭ pāda vīdāraieiti	(then) one no longer disjoins the feet,
nōiṭ paiti.tauuā bauuaiti	one has no strength to counter:
tā daiṅhāuuō tē hamərəθō	the lands and the men (<i>lit.</i> opponents)
yaθa dužbərəntō baraiti	he treats as (he treats) those who treat (him) badly,

miθrō yō vouru.gaoiiaoiṭiṣ: Mithra the grassland magnate (GERSHEVITCH).

A detailed analysis of the Avestan hymn Yt. 14, in which the soldiers ask Vərəθraϥna before the battle *to bind the hands of the enemies behind* (their backs) *by means of cords* s. now in SADOVSKI 2009: 158f.; cf. also the posture with twisted hands/head in the burying curses in §§ 5.0. and 5.1.

7.2.2. In the Veda, the same role is assigned to King Varuṇa, or else, to the earthly/local king himself who, according to the Kauśika-Sūtra, *binds on an amulet* and symbolically *binds hand and feet* of enemies – cf. in particular Kauś. 2,7[16],1–26 (‘To terrify enemy’s army, let it run away’), esp. sū. 6, containing a specific performative speech act that exhibits a nucleus (beside a series of additional details) common with the Avestan *topoi* (see *op. cit.*, p. 159):

(3) somāṃśuṃ hariṇacarmaṇy utsīvya kṣatriyāya badhnāti [...]	(3) He binds an (amulet) consisting of Soma stalks, which he has sewn into a piece of gazelle leather, to a <i>kṣatriya</i> - around (his neck). [...]
(6) (saṃdānaṃ vo [6.103]) (ādānena [6.104]) iti pāśair ādānasamdānāni	(6) The songs 6,103 and 104 are connected with (the actions) of <i>hand-binding</i> and <i>foot-binding</i> , by means of the cords.

7.2.3. In Greek, ἀποστρέφω ‘to turn down’ is generally used for the action of *twisting of hands and feet* that are *bound backwards* (VERSNEL 1998: 220). Notably, this is a wide-spread topos in classical *tabellae defixionum* and in particular, in ‘judicial curses’: e.g. ἀποστρέφω as *terminus technicus* transferred on the tongue, on the tablet from the Demeter Malaphoros sanctuary at Gaggara, Selinous, early 5th c. BC (JORDAN 1985a, 99; cf. VERSNEL, *l. cit.*).

7.3. Binding spells can also function as ‘verdicts to Non-Liberty / Annihilation’. The instances we meet in several variations (of the type of AVŚ 16,7, whose core mantra we called in § 4.2. ‘a full-program piercing-and-destruction spell’), AVŚ 16,8, are stylistically elaborated, containing series of repetitions with form variation, gradations, enumerations according to various classificatory patterns: Thus, the victim shall not be liberated from the bonds of *Nir-ṛti*; from the bonds of *Abhūti*; of *Nirbhūti*; of *Parā-bhūti* (four forms of non-existence/annihilation). Then he is given to the sorcerers of the different branches of (black or white) magic, and their followers. For 27 stanzas, verses *a–d* remain identical! Here a short excerpt from AVŚ. 16,8:

(2e) sā <i>nirṛtyāḥ</i> pāśān mā moci	He shall not be liberated from the bonds of the <i>Nir-ṛti</i> .
(3e) só <i>'bhūtyāḥ</i> pāśān mā moci	He shall not be liberated from the bonds of the <i>A-bhūti</i> .
(4e) sā <i>nirbhūtyāḥ</i> pāśān mā moci	He shall not be liberated from the bonds of the <i>Nir-bhūti</i> .
(5e) sā <i>parābhūtyāḥ</i> pāśān mā moci	He shall not be liberated from the bonds of the <i>Parā-bhūti</i> .
(11e) só <i>'ṅgirasām</i> pāśān mā moci	He shall not be liberated from the bonds of the <i>Āṅgiras</i> -as.
(12e) sā <i>āṅgirasānām</i> pāśān mā moci	He shall not be liberated from the bonds of the <i>Āṅgirasa</i> -s.
(13e) só <i>'tharvanām</i> pāśān mā moci	He shall not be liberated from the bonds of the <i>Ātharvan</i> -s.
(14e) sā <i>ātharvanānām</i> pāśān mā moci	He shall not be liberated from the bonds of the <i>Ātharvana</i> -s.

7.4. A particular case of correspondence are the so-called *persuasive analogies* (FARAONE 1991b: 5, GAGER 1992: 13): Here, the *sorcerer* or the *client* curses the ‘target’ to take on (negative) *properties of an object* mentioned in the spell, e.g.: ‘As this lead is cold and useless, so may *X* be cold and useless!’.

7.5. If we ask ourselves the question, where to bury a *voodoo*, our ritual texts as well as specific manuals of magic (in Vedic, Kauśika-Sūtra, in Greek, a series of magical papyri) give us instructions about *marked places* of putting bound effigies, binding spells and other objects of curse.

7.5.1. For what concerns Indo-Iranian, beside a series of indications in the Avesta that *daēnuas* and other demoniac beings (on the common Indo-Iranian aversion against *yātu-* as acts/agents of black sorcery cf. SADOVSKI 2012) use wells and other gaps in the earth, cemeteries, generally belonging to the *daēnuic* sphere in Zoroastrian tradition and to the asuric one in the Veda, both the Gṛhya-Sūtras and the unique hymn Atharvaveda 5,31 list more than 20 such places, like *wells* and *cemeteries* – cf. e.g. AVŚ. 5,31,8:

yām te kṛtyām kīpe 'vadadhūḥ	What <u>witchcraft</u> (<i>kṛtyā-</i>) they have put down for thee in the <i>well</i> ,
śmaśānē vā nicakhnūḥ	or have dug in at the <i>cemetery</i> ;
sādmani kṛtyām yām cakrūḥ	in the seat (<i>sādman-</i>) what <u>witchcraft</u> they have made —
púnah prāti harāmi tām 8	I <u>take that back again</u> (WHITNEY – LANMAN 1,279).

7.5.2. Absolutely the same locations – *cemeteries, wells, walls, fields* – are to observe in the Greek tradition from the 5th century BC onwards:

- *Cemeteries*: e.g. the Athenian Kerameikos; the necropolis at Camarina in Sicily (defixiones from ca. 450 BC) etc.; cf. also GAGER 1992: 250ff et *passim*.

- *Wells*: cf. e.g. D. R. JORDAN 1985b (and ZPE 9, 1975, 245–248), GRAF 1997: 127, 274f., n. 27, and the funds from the *thermae* in Arezzo, Italy and Bath, Britain; cf. also the location of the ritual complex at Uley (TOMLIN 1993).

- *Walls*: e.g. a 4th century BC κατάδεσμος found buried in a mud-brick wall of a house in the ancient Athenian industrial quarter (JORDAN 1985a, no. 20; cf. FARAONE/OBBINK 11); a couple, bound and buried in the supporting wall of the temple of Zeus Hypsistos on Mount Cynthus on Delos (FARAONE 1991a: 191, 202); on this location in Assyrian tradition, see lit. in GRAF 1997: 170.287.

7.5.3. The existence of Indian correspondents of the Greek type of ‘field-buried’ magic objects, such as the two lead *tabellae defixionum* which were *plowed up in a field* near Arkesinē, is presupposed by mantras like AVŚ. 4,18,5:

anáy _a hám ośadhya	I, with this herb,
sárvāḥ kṛtyā adūḍṣam	have spoiled all witchcrafts —
yām kṣétre cakrúḥ yām góṣu	what one they have made in the field, what in
yām vā te pūruṣeṣu 5	the kine, or what in thy men (<i>pūruṣa</i>) (WL).

8.1. Analogously, ‘binding charms-and-spells’ play a central part also in

amatory rituals. From the viewpoint of gender/sex, Greek evidence of erotic magic virtually offers all combinations available: the main agents are ‘men in pursuit of women’, but there are also other *casūs* (GAGER 1992: 80):

1. women in pursuit of men: *PGM* XV, XVI, XIXb, XXXIX; *DT* 100, 230; GAGER no. 18.
2. women in pursuit of women: *PGM* XXXII; JORDAN 1985, no. 151;
3. men in pursuit of men: *PGM* XXXIIa; GAGER no. 25²;
4. recipes to deliver men or women; *PGMI*, line 98; IV, line 2089; and GAGER no. 31.

8.2. In India, these types of amatory rituals are reduced especially to the one for winning love of women:

1. men in pursuit of women: e.g., AVŚ. 2,30; 6,8; 6,77; 6,89 etc. etc.
2. women in pursuit of men: e.g., AVŚ. 6,130; 6,130; 6,60; 6,132...

Also here, the excessive formulae of the ‘restrained Eros’, projections of obsessive possessivity, are pronounced in love/sex spells (and written on figurines), addressing the ‘beloved victim’:

- *Greek* (GUARDUCCI, *Epigrafia greca* IV; GAGER 158f.): I record ‘down’ (*κατα-γράφω*) Isias, the daughter of Autoclea, with Hermes the Restrainer. Restrain her near you. I bind Isias before Hermes the Restrainer (*Kat-ochos*) — the hands, the feet of Isias, the whole body.
- In *Indian* ‘women’s rituals’, which make part of Atharvavedic magic and are accomplished by the Brahman on behalf of the wife/lover, we find a unique couple of hymns: The first one, AVŚ. 6,138, has the purpose to make the beloved (!) man impotent. The second one, AVŚ. 4,4, is the ‘antidote’ to the first: its task to give him his potency back, but only if he remains bound to the curser!

8.3. We have a number of typological parallels in Greece (**6.3.2.** and SADOVSKI, in print): the most important examples are the figurine from Athens, attached to a love spell written on papyrus, and the statuette produced after a magic recipe, which prescribes that ‘*thirteen needles shall be inserted into the figurine at thirteen symbolically appropriate body spots*’ (GAGER 1992: 15), comparable with the spell for piercing the victim on 12 body spots, AVŚ 3,25,3–6.

For ‘corporeal binding’, we have entire lists of body parts in amatory spells, on which see VERSNEL 1998 (Greek, Latin) and SADOVSKI 2012 (Vedic).

8.4. Furthermore, we have a series of fetiches for erotic(izing) prayers, of amulets, pharmaka, and specialized technologies of *philtre-katadesmoi*. Also *human hair* is largely used in Greek binding and/or erotic magic – see a spell plate described by David JORDAN, found in a well near the Athenian Agora (on the general background, cf. JORDAN 1985b: 251–255). In the Indian Yajur-Veda, esp. in Gṛhya-Sūtras, many such charms of *hair and nails magic* are attested that can serve as counterparts to the Graeco-Roman evidence. The Indian material has been presented by Bruce LINCOLN, *History of Religions* 16,4, 1977, 353ff.; for the Berlin TOPOI conference 2011 (SADOVSKI, in print), I collected relevant data from the Avesta, especially the Vidēvdād. Just like in the case of

the military ritual displayed in SADOVSKI 2009, *footprints* (or dust taken from them) can also serve as means of magic manipulation, seizing and control: AVP 2,35,3-4: ‘Your footprint has been *taken* by (a/my) footprint, | your thought has been *taken* by (a/my) thought, | I *seized* you as one turned to me (/'frontally')’.

9.1. Paippalāda-Saṃhitā contains a *Trennungszauber* curse dedicated to *un-binding lovers*, for *separation of a woman from a man* – AVP. 2,58:

vj vāṃ yantu hr̥dayāni
vj cittāni manāmsi ca |
 atho yat tanvoḥ samgatam
 tad vām astu vidūrakam ||5||
 asti vai vāṃ vid_vvikam
 ubhau śayane antarā |
 viṣvañcau pary ā vartethāṃ
yathā vām na saḥāsati ||6||

Ed. ZEHNDER 1999: 130–134:

5. The hearts of you two shall go *asunder/apart*, *asunder/apart* the intentions and the thoughts; and then that of the two bodies which has been united, that of you may be wide *asunder/apart*.

6. (Now) there is a separation in *bed* between you two: turn (‘yourself’) in *different directions*, so that there will be no (more) together(ness) for you two.

The background of this mantra is even more curious, since contains a form of ‘intertextual communication’ of the Atharvavedins with a popular Ṛgvedic text:

RV. 10,191,4: samānī va ākūtiḥ
samānā h̥dayāni vaḥ |
samānām astu vo māno
yāthā vah sūsaḥāsati //4//

United (be) your intention,
 united your hearts,
 united be your thought,
so that here will be beautiful together(ness) for you!

It is the very last verse of the last stanza of the last hymn of the last, 10th Maṇḍala: the hymn ‘for harmony’ (popular also under its GELDNERian name, as ‘*Eintrachtlied*’), with which the whole RV-Saṃhitā ends, so to say, on a high tone and with a positive note. In a striking example of deconstruction, ‘à la Derrida’, of this positive sūkta, as Jan HOUBEN (*apud* ZEHNDER 1999: 130f) discovered, the Brahmāns manage to turn this key stanza of the hymn about *harmony* to a mantra for *dis-harmony*! Of course, such a de-constructive mantra is considered at least double as de-structive as a ‘common’ magic formula, for carrying the *inverse* power of such a crucial *Vorlage* of the powerful Ṛgvedin competitors as 10,191. And ‘turning the medal’ of the meaning of the very last RV verse has also the symbolic significance of ‘laughing last’ in the sense of ‘saying the very last word’, thus winning against all odds in the agonistic situation of ‘perpetual competitiveness’ between the Veda clans.

One has to stress the fact that this approach of ‘*inverse* ritual poetry-and-action’ (for YV and Avestan examples, see SADOVSKI, in print, *b*), is carried through in a completely conscious manner not only in this particular verse but in the entire stanza 5 (and hymn AVP. 2,58), using classical constructive devices of Vedic language of poetry such as the anaphora (which normally functions as a sort of a *spinal column* (literally, with its columnal structure!) of a

Vedic stanza: Thus, while RV. 10,191,4 exhibits the classical threefold anaphoric construction (cf. Jared KLEIN's paper in this volume) of pāda *a-c* with the anaphoric repetition of *sam*^o, AVP. 2,58,5–6 answers (in the course of this 'intertextual communication') with a double *de-construction*: on the one hand, the anaphora in pāda *a-b* contains not *sam*^o but its perfect opposite, *vi!* – and, on the other, the anaphora of RV. 10,191,4*a-c* is not only negated in the described way but also negatively mirrored by its opposite, a form of epiphora of the last words of AVP. 2,58,5*d* and 6*a*: *vi-dūrakam* and *vi-d_ivikam*, with a 'mesophora' resuming the separative *vi*, with homoioteleuton and a semantic parallelism (*apart* – '*partition*'/*separation*) that leaves no space for doubt that former harmony is now perverted to dis-harmony.

9.2. Also for the group of *Trennungszuber*, we have good parallel evidence in Greek, in both *binding* and *un-binding* rites:

9.2.1. Separation of a woman from a man is the subject e.g. of the type of '*negatively binding*' curses (GAGER 1992: 90, but see also GRAF 1997: 150ff., and cf. WINKLER in FARAONE – OBBINK 1991: 240, n.65):

- [...] I bind Theodora to remain *unmarried* to Charias and (I bind) Charias to forget Theodora, and (I bind) Charias to forget ... Theodora and marriage *bed* with Theodora.

9.2.2. In case of enumeration of anatomic parts, we observe the genre that VERSNEL 1998 called '*anatomic curses*' (here, for *physical separation*) and which is a beautiful match of '*anatomic curses*' we have discussed in **6.3.1.**:

- *SEG* 30. 353 (JORDAN 1985a, no. 57), Nemea, prob. 4th c. BC: 'I turn away Euboula from Aineas, from his face (προσώπου), from his eyes (ὀφθαλμῶν), from his mouth (στόματος), from his nipples (τιθίαν), from his soul (ψυχᾶς), from his belly (γάστρος), from his [penis] ([ψωλίον]), from his anus (πρωκτοῦ), from his entire body (ὅλου τοῦ σώματος). I turn away Euboula from Aineas.' (GAGER 1992: 25; VERSNEL 1998: 231).

10. To avoid any ambiguity about the person the spell was intended for, he/she was identified by name and *mother's* name (see also § **4.2.** and cf. GRAF 1997: 127f.). What is important in the context of the rituals thematized here, is the ritual group to be subsumed under the rubric of '*binding or seizing names*':

10.1. If you could bind (or 'seize') the *name*, you had complete control over its *holder*. Both in the Graeco-Egyptian space and in India, the practice of identifying personal names by matrilineal descent was characteristic in the treatment of *names in binding spells*: 'I curse *X*, whose mother is *Y*'. The Indian formulaic examples are a legion; for a basic tripartite structure cf. AVŚ 10,5,44:

rājño vāruṇasya bandhó 'si |
só 'múm āmuṣyāyaṇám amúṣyāḥ putrám
ānne prāṇé badhāna ||44||
tāsmād amūṃ nír bhajāmo

44. You are bond of king Varuṇa. *Bind* now *X*, descendent of *Y*, son of the mother *Z*, in his food and his *prāṇa*- (breath/vital energy), – or AVŚ 16,8,2–4:
2. [...] of this (all possession) we deprive *X*:

<p>'<i>múm āmuṣyāyaṇám</i> <i>amúṣyāḥ putrám asáu yáḥ </i> <i>sá nírṭyāḥ páśān má moci 2 </i></p>	<p><i>X</i>, descendant of <i>Y</i> <i>son (of mother) Z: (the one) who is X;</i> he shall not be liberated from the bonds of Nirṭi.</p>
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10.2. Just like in *Graeco-Egyptian magic papyri* we find ritual instructions to intentionally use *metronymics* (cf. F. JONES, *Nominum Ratio*, Liverpool Classical Papers 4, Liverpool 1996), so in Indo-Iranian, ‘knowing X’s *mother’s* or *father’s name*’ is considered a powerful method of control and linking. SADOVSKI 2009 analyzes the hymn AVŚ. 1,2,1, which starts with this mantra for manipulation of hostile missiles (*reed* being a standard metonym/synecdoche for ‘arrow’):

<p><i>vidmá śarásya pitáram:</i> <i>parjányaṃ bhúridhāyasam </i> <i>vidmó ś_v àsya mātáram</i> <i>prṭhivím bhúrivarparam//1//</i></p>	<p><i>We know the reed’s father:</i> Parjanya the much-nourishing; and we know well its mother: the earth of many aspects (WL).</p>
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10.3. One can even *bind divinities* by *seizing their names*, similarly to the extreme Greek polis ritual of *binding gods* cited above (§ 5.). For Indian, compare e.g. AVŚ. 1,191,13; 10,145,4. Another appropriate, recently found example from the Paippalāda-Saṃhitā I can quote in this context, is AVP. 6,7,7:

<p><i>yas tvā bhūme ’navavindad</i> <i>yas tvā bhūma udābharat </i> <i>tayoḥ sahasradhāmann</i> <i>ahaṃ nāmāni jagrabha </i></p>	<p>I have <i>seized the names</i> of these two [= (divine) Eagle (Vi- śṇu/Sun²) and (divine) Hog (: Viṣṇu²)], o you of a thousand abodes: the one who has discovered you, o Earth, the one who has brought you up, o Earth (cf. ed. GRIFFITHS 95).</p>
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– and, per analogiam, one can pronounce the same *name-seizing* ritual formula also with regard to (and even, dialogically, *toward*) teratomorphic forces of positive or negative power, like healing plants or (demons of) diseases. – Once again, what follows are instances from the Paippalādic material, AVP. 2,32,4:

<p>• <i>śunam ahaṃ madhughasya</i> <i>pitur nāmeva *jagrabha </i> <i>yo mā hiraṇyavarcaṣam</i> <i>*kṛṇavat +pūruṣapriyam </i> • <i>apacitaḥ pra patata</i> <i>[...] sarvāsām agrabhaṃ nām_a-</i> <i>-_avīraghnīr apetana </i></p>	<p>For a profit I have <i>seized the names</i> of (the plant) Madhugha, (just) like (his) father’s name, which (‘Madhugha’) will make me of golden brilliance, pleasant to people (conj. ZEHNDER 91f.), – cf. also AVP. 1,21,2a.3cd: O <i>Apacits</i> (scrofulosis)! Fly forth [...] I <i>seized the name(s)</i> of all, go away, as ‘Ones-who-do-not-kill-men’.</p>
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10.4. The binding charms find *social* employment in rites of ‘seizing gods’:

- The *Greek data* contain rituals like the one of ‘*binding Ares*’ and subjecting him to the will of the polis, e.g. in Boeotia (4th c. BC, FARAONE 1991b: 166ff).
- The *Indian evidence* is represented by groups of rituals ‘for power above gods and the world’ like Kauś.-Sū. 133,3, with mantras from AVP. 1,40,1ff:

<p><i>mamobhā mitrāvaruṇā</i> <i>mamobhendrābr̥haspatī </i> <i>mama tvaṣṭā ca pūṣā ca</i> <i>mamaiva savitā vaśe 1 </i></p>	<p>1. <i>Mine</i> (shall be) both: Mitra and Varuṇa, <i>mine</i>: Indra und Br̥haspatī, <i>mine</i>: Tvaṣṭar and Pūṣan in <i>my</i> power only (be) also Savitar.</p>
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The hymn continues with stanzas containing many other divine names, ordered according a principle of systematization that starts with the Divine, goes over macrocosm with a list of celestial and terrestrial elements and finishing with human microcosm: In this catalogue, we find the following items: ‘all gods; heaven, earth, atmosphere, sun; plants, waters; cows, horses, goats, sheep; humans; all the living world’. Details on this structure see in SADOVSKI 2012.

11. On the material of our text sources, including new-found ones, this paper and the series of studies it makes part of demonstrate how the research in the structure and form of the texts and rites attested in the Atharvaveda and Yajurveda, in comparison with the Avesta, turns out to be seminal for our understanding of their ritual pragmatics, especially for what concerns the question of ‘how to do things with words’ in Old Indo-Iranian liturgical practice. Moreover, we see how, from the point of view both of linguistics and of religious history, *contrastive studies* of the system of magical spells-and-charms used in the private or public ritual, their stylistics, syntax, *intra*-textual structure, and *inter*-textual relations, can shed light upon various common aspects of ritual poetry and pragmatics that have been largely neglected in the analysis of the individual traditions so far – but that turn out to be essential for the knowledge of the underlying common structures of religious thinking and spiritual life.

I would like to dedicate this work on the complex of questions concerning the topics of Speech and Ritual in Indo-Iranian to my first teacher of Avesta and Rigveda, Prof. Jochem SCHINDLER, whose active interest in assessing the role of extra-linguistic reality, such as the data of material culture or ritual pragmatics, for the interpretation of our texts, made an essential part of his own scholarly research and was well-known to us his students from the vivid discussions with him both inside his teaching classes and outside the University, in the real life of lived academism so typical of him: that lived and living Academism – with all its Socratic-dialogic, Aristotelian-peripatetic, and Platonic-idealist dimensions – which has been giving us inspiration and *philological* fascination for the world of the living Word through the years.

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