On the inflection of OInd. śiras-/śirṣān-, n. ‘head’

Sunao KASAMATSU

1. The word for ‘head’ in OInd. is known by its suppletive inflection: nom.-acc. sg. śiras (< *krh₂-es or *krh₂-ős), the other cases from śirṣān-, a stem extended by -an- (< *krh₂-es-én-) : instr. sg. śirṣā, nom.-acc. pl. śirṣāṇi (RV VII, X¹+); śirṣā (RV I², VI¹, VIII¹, X¹). The formation of abl. sg. śirṣatās is to be traced to proto-IE: *krh₂sn-tós, gr. κράσος. A secondary thematic stem appears in a supplemental hymn of the RV in nom. du. śirṣé (I.1). The instr. sg. śirasa, inflected as a -as- stem, occurs in RV-Khila I 9,4; 11,3; ŚBM (Śatapatha-Brähmaṇa-Mādhyandina) XIV 2,2,50. The inflection in the -as- declension is known in the ŚBK (ŚB-Kāṇva). Pāṇini VI 1,60 points out that śirṣān- is a Vedic form. In Epic and Classical Skt. only the inflections of the -as- and -a- stems are found.

The facts stated above are already described in AiG III 315f. It discusses also the formation of adj. śirṣanyā- (AiG II-2, 811; see n.8) and forms in compounds (in the prior member: II-1,56; in the final member: II-1,92; 115f.). But, the description about the transition of inflection is rather brief and there is some room to take up the problem once more. The description about compounds is required to be improved.

This paper examines the forms and the compounds of širas-/śirṣān- found in the Sāṃh. and Br. It will clarify the historical development of the word, which will offer some points of view to find out the strata of the Vedic literature.

1.1 The inflection in the Śrīg-Veda [RV]. This paradigm is the basic pattern for the Vedic period except śirṣā with -ā in pl., which is peculiar to the RV². In RV IV 58,3 (a supplemental hymn) the nom. du. śirṣé¹ is found³. This thematic stem derives from nom.-acc. pl. śirṣā (ṇī) and the prior member of the compounds (cf. abl. sg.
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*širṣa-tās*, which fall into the same appearance with -a- stem (cf. AiG III 315). The RV-Khila has *širasā* (I 9,4; 11,3) besides the regular instr. sg. *śirṣṇā* (V 22,8). The former reflects the advanced stage of language, cf. 1.10.

1.2 The Atharva-Veda [AV] and AVP [AV-Paippalāda] have loc. sg. *śirṣé* (-a-stem. cf. 1.1) in AV VII 56,6 ~ AVP (-Or., -Kashm.) I 48,2; AV XIV 1,55 ~ AVP-Or. XVIII 5,8 ~ AVP-Kashm. XVIII 6,3 besides regular loc. sg. *śirṣāṇi* (there is no example of *śirṣāṇ*). The nom. sg. *śirṣām* AV IV 34,1, is the single example in the Vedic texts. AVP (-Or., -Kashm.) V 15,9 shows acc. pl. *śirāṇsi* as in the ŠBK (1.6).


1.4 The single exception in the ŠBM is *širasā* (XIV 2,2,50). The very part of ŠBM is assumed to be originated in the Kāṇva-school and this wording is the remnant of the Kāṇva-school (Caland, Introduction to ŠBK, 105ff.). In the loc. sg. the form *širṣān* is prevailing. In the newer stratum *śirṣāṇi* is occasionally met with : ŠBM IX 3,1,8; XI 4,1,6; 14. The historical instr. pl. *śirṣābhhis* occurs, among the whole Veda, only in ŠBM VI 2,1,11; VII 5,2,3 (cf. *śirṣais* KS-KpS). Also the Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa [TB] (sg. nom.-acc., abl.5, loc.6, pl. nom.-acc.2) and Kaṇṭāki-B. [KB] (sg. nom.-acc.10, loc.5) have no irregularity.

1.5 The Jaiminiya-B. [JB] shows an irregular loc. sg. *śirṣṇi* (I 49 : 3).

1.6 In the ŠBK all case-forms are formed from -as- stem:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nom.-acc.</th>
<th>instr.</th>
<th>abl.</th>
<th>gen.</th>
<th>loc.</th>
<th>nom.-acc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>siras</em></td>
<td><em>širasā</em></td>
<td><em>širṣtās</em></td>
<td><em>širasas</em></td>
<td><em>śirasi</em></td>
<td><em>širānsi</em></td>
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The adj. *širasyā*- is also peculiar.

Other than the ŠBK, only traditional grammar and lexicography examples of this formation, cf. esp. Vārtt. ad VI 1,61 (cf. AiG III 315). The Pañcavimśa-B. [PB] (sg. nom.-acc., instr.3, abl.-gen.1, loc.4), Śaḍviṁśa-B. [ṢdB] (nom.-acc. sg.3, du.1, pl.1) and Gopatha-B. [GopB] (sg. nom.-acc.2, abl.4: except for a quotation) also belong to the group in which *širas*- is inflected in the -as- declension (see also 2.3).

1.7 In the texts mentioned above, there is most consistency of using *širas-/śirṣāṇ-"
in the standard inflection or only śīras- respectively. In the following cases, two types of the inflection are mixed in the same text.

1.8 The Aitareya-B. [AB] shows sg. nom.-acc. śīras¹¹, abl.-gen. śīrṇas (IV 22²), loc. sg. śīrṇ (I 17¹; III 3¹) :: śīrasi (VII 2¹). Two different text layers are assumed behind this phenomenon (I-V :: VI-VIII, cf. WITZEL, Fs. EGGERMONT, 185f.).

1.9 The Tait.-Āraṇyaka [TĀ] has sg. nom.-acc. śīras, instr. śīrṇā (V 10,3¹), abl. śīrṇatās (V 4,7¹). In TĀ X 1,8 (=MNārUp) the instr. sg. śīrasā (-as- stem) is found.

1.10 In Baudhāyana-Śrtautasūtra [BaudhŚŚ] XXV 29:262,14 the acc. pl. śīrāmsi of -as- stem is attested besides regular śīrṇā (VI 10, X 12). This is due to the younger origin of the Karmanta-Sūtra (XXIV-XXVI). There are two deviated forms in the main Sūtra : abl. sg. śīrastas XV 29:234,8, nom. du. śīrasi X 9:8,8. Only the -as- stem is used in the Baudh.-Śulbasūtra (= BaudhŚŚ XXX) : śīras³, śīrasas⁸, śīrasi³. The inconsistency pointed out in 1.8-10 probably reflects the transition from Vedic to Classical Skt. There are also texts in which two types of inflection appear side by side without showing any difference of textual layer :

1.11 The Aitareya-Āraṇyaka [AitĀ] has sg. nom.-acc. śīras¹³, loc. śīrā (I 5,2² ; II 1,4¹) :: gen. śīrasas (II 1,4²: coexisting with śīrṇ), loc. śīrasi (III 1,2¹). In the Śāṅkhāyana-Ā. [ŚāṅkhĀ], there are sg. nom.-acc. śīras⁴, abl. śīrṇas (II 2¹) :: loc. śīrasi (II 2¹ : with śīrṇas ; VII 4¹).

1.12 The Āpastamba-ŚŚ [ĀpŚŚ] shows sg. gen. śīrṇas (VII 25,6) :: śīrasas (XV 15,1, XVI 6,2, XVII 8,3), loc. śīrān : śīrasi, pl. nom.-acc. śīrāmsi. It is remarkable that the historical form śīrṇa is always used with the verb adhi-ni-dhā¹⁰; otherwise śīrasi is used. It seems to refer to a phenomenon in the transitional period to the secondary -as- inflection. The Kātyāyana-ŚŚ [KātyŚŚ] belongs to this group : sg. abl. śīrṇas, loc. śīrṇi :: sg. instr. śīrasā, pl. nom.-acc. śīrāmsi, loc. śīrahsu.

2.0 In the prior member of Compounds (cf. AiG II-1,56), śīrṣa(ṇ)° is used regularly in the Vedic period: śīrṣakahpālā- 'skull' (AV, AVP, TS³, ŚBM), śīrṣaroga- 'disease of the head' (AVP), śīrṣakti- 'head-ache' (AV, AVP. < śīrṣ+akti-, cf. KUIPER, AcOr 17,22ff.; MAYRHOFER, EWAia s. v. śīras-), śīrṣaktimánt- (TS°). This formation is found also in the ŚŚ : śīrṣamāmsa- 'meat of head' BaudhŚŚ, śīrṣaktimánt- VaikhŚŚ¹⁰, śīrṣaroga-bheṣaja- PārGS. But the latter two belong to the vocabulary already at-
tested in the Sarasvati. Ār. śirsa is allowed as the prior member in the Dvandva only: śirogrīvam ‘head and neck’ (MS\(^q\), KS\(^p\), AB). After the ŚS, we find Tatpurusa compounds (Tp.) having śiras\(^e\): śirahsthāna- ‘a chief place’ (VaikhŚŚ, Vaikh-, ĀgnivGS), śiro-bhāga- ‘the top’ (VaikhGS). An adjectival Tp. is met with in the G S: śirahsnāta- ‘who has bathed his head’ (KausGS ~ ŚāṅkhGS). Compounds having śiras\(^e\) is very common in Classical Skt. (cf. AiG II-1,56. Examples in PW VII 192ff.).

2.1 In the final member of the Bahuvrihi (Bv.) (cf. AiG II-1,92), śirṣān- (f. śirṣṇi-) is used without exception in the RV: saptāśirṣānām, -nim; sahāsraśirṣā, in the same manner AV, AVP, YŚ\(^m\),\(^p\), ŚBM, TB, JB:ēkaśirṣānas AV XIII 4,6, kṛṣṇāśirṣā MS IV 7,8\(^o\), śataśirṣā, -ānām ŚBM IX, anuṣṭupśirṣā, -ānām JB, AitĀ. This type remains in the Ār. and ŚS partly\(^1\): viśirṣṇim (TĀ I\(^a\), cited BaudhŚŚ XIX), udakśirṣṇim ManŚŚ. The word viśirṣās in JB II 304 is a result of the contamination of śirṣān- and śiras- (AiG Nachtr. zu II-1,29). In the Vedic period compounds of śiras- are rather sporadic anomalies: prthū-śirṣā AV V 17,13,pratićina-śirṣā ŚBM III 1,17,nirūḍhaśirasam ŚBM X 5,5,8, āpa-śirṣā ŚBM XIV 2,2,48\(^1\)). After the Ār. and ŚS, śirṣān-śirṣa- are prevailing: aśiras- (AitĀ, ŚāṅkhĀ :: RV aśirṣān-); pratyakśirasim BaudhŚŚ, kṛṣṇa-śirṣa- VārŚŚ, śiras- MānŚŚ.

2.2 YŚ\(^m\),\(^p\) and Br. have the thematic śirṣā- as the final member of the Tp.\(^1\) (cf. AiG II-1,118): mṛgaśirṣā- TS\(^m\), ŚBM, TB+, paśuśirṣā-, puruṣaśirṣā- YŚ\(^o\), ŚBM+. śiras- is prevailing after the ŚS (cf. AiG II-1,120): paśuśirṣa- (Mān-, ĀpŚŚ etc.), puruṣaśirṣa- (Mān-, Āp-, KātyŚŚ etc.), mṛgaśirṣa- (ĀśŚŚ, PārGS). The form śirṣa- remains partly: puruṣaśirṣam MānŚŚ VI 17,27; mṛgaśirṣe (loc. sg.) ĀpŚŚ V 3,6.

2.3 The ŚBK, PB, ŚadB and GopB, corresponding to their inflection in the simplex, use śiras- as the final member of Tp. and Bv. against the other Vedic texts (cf. MINARD, Trois énigmes II, 311; AiG III 315f.). These texts replace śirṣān- by śiras- also in such cases that the words are already used in the older literature: triśiras- (ŚBK, PB+ :: RV triśirṣā-); mṛgaśirṣa- (ŚBK+ :: TS\(^m\), ŚBM, TB+ mṛgaśirṣā-)

\(^{15}\) The forms śirṣān- (f. śṇi-) are seen only in a quotation from the Sārn. or idiomatic wording: sahāsraśirṣā (puruṣa) (ŚadB IV 1,2 < RV X 90,1)\(^1\)). GopB II 6,14 ubhayataḥśirṣni (prthivi) follows MS I 2,4 : 13,4\(^m\) āditīr asy ubhayataḥśirṣṇī.

1) Cf. MAYRHOFER, EWAia s.v. śiras-. About its situation in the IE languages and proto-IE: NUSSBAUM, Head and Horn in Indo-European, 1986 (a sketch in p.219). In Avestan only loc.
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sg. sarahu (Yt. 10.40) from sarah- (= *siras-) is attested (cf. SBK → 1.6). 2) The ms. of the KpS reads *sirṣā for *sirsāni XXX 6:166,4. 3) Theoretically *sirsāni is to be expected. Attested forms are *sirṣē of -a-stem and *sirasi of -as-stem (ṢadB, BaudhSS). 4) *sirṣam, *siram given by Ved. W. Conc. under AVP are non-existent. AVP-Kashm. XI 2.5 is, instead of alavatār ara *sirṣan, to be read ‘alavati ruru*sirṣiṇi ‘(an arrow.) poisonous, having head of Rudradeer (‘s horn’), cf. AVP-Or. (Ed. BHATTACHARYA) alavati ruru*sirṣiṇi, RV VI 75,15a álākta yā ruru*sirṣiṇi ‘Dem giftbestreichenen, dessen Kopf ein Hirsch (horn)’ (Gc). AVX XIX 34,16 (−Or., −Kashm.) yūyam tu pārnīnąm *siram is to be corrected to *saram ‘but you do repel the winged arrow... ’, cf. AVP II 70.5 (Ed. ZEHNDER, AVP Buch2,1999) yuyuta pārnīṇam *saram ‘wehrt den gefiederten Pfeil ab’. 5) *sirṣam given by Ved. W. Conc., AVP-Kashm. I 45,2 (Kashm. ms.: jusasirṣasāte; Ed. Barres, R. VIRA: juṣe *sirṣam mā te), is to be read with ZEHNDER, Paipp. -Sanhitā. Kāṇḍa I, 1993, 79f.: juhūsirṣam ‘mit einem Kopf wie ein Opferlöfel’ (Bv.). 6) Kashm. ms. reads sartastas in AVP XII 3.10 (no corresponding in AVP-Or.). Both *sirastas (Barret, R. VIRA) and *sirastas are possible. 7) Further KātyāŚS VII 9.4; Vaiḫ śŚS I 1: 21 (~ Kāṭh. Saṃk. 21:7); XII 19:16. 8) Derivatives in -ya- of suppletive stems are made from the stem forming oblique cases (cf. AiG II-2, 811). From RV to Classical Skt. *sirṣanyā- is used. 9) It is noteworthy that *sirṣanya- is attested in KātyāŚŚ V 4.15. 10) ĀpŚŚ I 4.15; VIII 6.23; XIII 17.2; XVIII 15.5; XX 20.2. BaudhŚŚ shows the same construction in I 2: 3.7; V 7: 131.1; 7; VIII 16: 257.11. 11) Vaikh ŚŚS I 1: 21 yac chirṣṇi manthati *sirṣaktimān yajamāṇo bhavati ‘If one stirs up fire on the head [of arani], Yajamāna becomes having headache’ ~KāṭhSaṃk. 21:7f. yac chirṣṇi manthati sīvorōgena yajamāṇo pramīyat ‘...Yajamāna perishes by a disease of the head’. The compound sīvoroga- is attested here in the KāṭhSaṃk. for the first time. 12) AiG II-1.92: “Abgesehen von den altertümlichen Fällen ... scheint nach dem RV. *siras- in den starken, *sirṣan- in den schwachen Kasus und im Fem. üblich zu sein”. But this view is unsatisfactory. The new word kṛṇāsirṣā MS IV 7.8: 103,7* shows *sirṣan- in the strong case, and pratyaṅkāstrasim BaudhŚŚ II 9:48,15, HirPiṭṭhmŚū I 5:1 has *siras- in the feminine. The choice between *sirṣan- and *siras- depends on the historical development of the inflection of *siras/-sirsān-, and not on the stem-degree. 13) It can be regarded as the remnant of Kāṇya-school’s wording (1.6). The BĀU shows in the both recensions the Kāṇya-like prākṣirās (BĀUM VI 3.13 = BĀUk VI 3.6). 14) A Bv. having *sirṣa- as final member is to be regarded as isolated. The Vedic language offers no example other than dāśa-sirṣa- ‘ten-headed’ in AV IV 6.1; AVP (-Or., -Kashm.) III 17.2; IX 3.2. It is not “Sommer-Kompositum” judging from its accent. The reason why the Tp. shows *sirṣ-ā- as its final member remains as a problem. 15) The vṛddhi-form mārgaśirṣa- (Jb III 386+) is used as a name of month (cf. Pāṇini IV 3.37) in the later period. mrgāśiras AV XIX 7.2 is the form like ŚBK with anomalous accent as Tp. (cf. AiG II-1, 266). 16) In the MNārU sahasraśīrṣam is attested. Vedic texts have no example of sahasraśīrṣas-. Its earlier examples are in MBhār. (cr. ed.) V 101.6; Rāmāyaṇa (cr.ed.) IV 39.46; 40.8 etc.

(Key words) *siras-, *sirsān-, *sirṣā-, head, Noun-Inflection, Vedic.

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