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Killer and Guest: A Brief Analysis of the Semantic Horizon of *goghna-* through *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and *Ṛgveda*

Abstract Within the section devoted to the description of *kṛt* suffixes, rule A 3.4.73 *dāśagohnau sampradāne* teaches how to correctly interpret the terms *dāśa-* and *goghna-*, two deverbal nominal stems respectively derived from *dāś-* ‘to give’ and *go-* ‘cow’ + *han-* ‘to kill’. As taught by the constraint of this *sūtra*, which is *sampradāne*, these terms denote recipients and not agents as might be expected. In other words, in the language described by Pāṇini, a *dāśa-* is ‘the one to whom something is given’, while a *goghna-* is ‘someone for whom a cow is killed’, i.e., a guest. In the main frame of comparative research between Pāṇini and the language of the Vedas and with the specific aim of going deeper into the linguistic *datum* documented by A 3.4.73, this paper focuses on the technical and semantical analysis of the term *goghna-* with a special attention to the *Ṛgveda*. Finally, some suggestions about the cultural implications of the semantic switch reported by the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* will be considered in the conclusions.

Keywords Pāṇini, Vedic studies, ancient linguistics, Vedic literature

1 Introduction

The present inquiry steps from a provision taught by Pāṇini about the non-agentive trait of a compound (*goghna-*) morphologically endowed with a type of affix that usually denotes *nomina agentis* (§2). The textual occurrences of this word are analysed in §3 to check the reliability of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* with Vedic literature’s lexicon and to look for the exceptional semantic switch from agent to recipient in the language. In the mainframe of the still unsolved problem about the language targeted by Pāṇini’s grammar, the final section of this paper aims to investigate the parallelism between the word *goghna-* and analogous formations found in the *RV*. Finally (§4), and with respect to the formulation of A 3.4.73, some observations about the social and cultural environment of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* will be exposed; this study cannot provide any definitive answer to the delicate point of the nature



of the language described by Pāṇini: it merely adds evidence and tries to organize the collected new data.

The relationship between Pāṇini and the Vedas has been long discussed by scholars such as Liebhich (1891), Thieme (1935), Cardona (2002), Kiparsky (2012) and Kulikov (2013). As Bronkhorst (2016: 8) clearly explains, there is a close link between the regions in which a considerable number of Vedic texts were composed and the Gandhāra, the area where Pāṇini lived according to both tradition (e.g., Xuanzang's chronicles) and the analysis of some of his linguistic descriptions (see, e.g., Witzel 1989: 7 fn 11). North-western India, in fact, had a 'pivotal role' as far as the establishment of the Vedic canon is concerned, as Witzel (2011) suggests: the presence of Brahmanism in this place granted the conservation of the texts and their oral transmission.

The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was based also on the language of Vedic Sacred literature: this is why, along with other texts, it is worth investigating the *Ṛgveda* to better understand Pāṇini's linguistic architecture and the reasons behind the formulation of specific rules.

2 The morphologic status of *goghna-*

Before deepening this inquiry on literary and philological grounds, it is essential to summarize the Pāṇinian derivation of the word *goghna-*: according to the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* the morphologic derivation from *han-* to *ghna-* is described in two steps:

A 6.4.98 *gamahanajanakhanaghasām lopaḥ kriiti anāni*

The penultimate (89) vowel of the *aṅga* (1) of *gam-* 'to go', *han-* 'to kill', *jan-* 'to generate', *khan-* 'to dig', *ghas-* 'to consume' before affixes having K or Ṇ as IT apart from aṆ is replaced by zero.¹

The penultimate vowel of the verbal root *han-*, that is *-a-*, is replaced with zero (*han-* > **hn-*).

A 7.3.54 *haḥ hanter n̄ṇinnesu*

A velar stop – kU (52) – replaces the phoneme *h* of the *aṅga* of *han-* 'to kill' before affixes having Ṇ̄ or Ṇ as IT or the phoneme *n*.

The grammar provides here for the substitution of the phoneme *h-* (in **hn-*) with the velar stop *gh-* (**hn-* > *ghn-*).²

¹ Unless explicitly stated, the translations are mine.

² As for compounds ending in *-ghna-*, see, e.g., Whitney (1879: 151) and Macdonell (1910: 202).

Then, A 3.2.52–54 teach the correct usage of this ablaut form of the verbal root *han-* (*ghn-*), whose *kṛt* affix is denoted by the technical term *ṬaK*. So:

A 3.2.52 *lakṣaṇe jāyāpatyoṣ ṭak*

The affix *ṬaK* is introduced after *han-* ‘to kill’ (49) co-occurring with the *karman* *jāyā* ‘wife’ or *pati* ‘husband’ in the sense of *lakṣana*.

E.g., *jāyāghnā-* ‘whose omen is that of killing his wife’.

A 3.2.53 *amanuṣyakarṭṛke ca*

The affix *ṬaK* is introduced (52) after *han-* ‘to kill’ (49) co-occurring with a *karman* to denote a non-human *karṭṛ*.

E.g., *patighnī pāṇirekhā* ‘a line on the wife’s palm proper of a husband-killer’.

A 3.2.54 *śaktau hastikapāṭayoh*

The affix *ṬaK* is introduced (52) after *han-* ‘to kill’ (49) co-occurring with the *karman* *hastin-* ‘elephant’ or *kapāṭa-* ‘door’ to denote a *śakti*.

E.g., *hastighnaḥ*, ‘[able] to kill an elephant’. *kapāṭaghnaḥ*, ‘[able] to destroy a door’.

As can be easily realized, these rules provide for the formation of an *upapadaśamāsa* having a *karman* (direct object) as first constituent and *-ghna-* as second constituent. They express, as final denotatum, the *karṭṛ* (agent) of the action of killing/destroying the given *karman*.³

While in A 3.2.52 the idea of *lakṣana* (omen) is introduced as a constraint, A 3.2.52 prevents a human from being connotated as the agent of the compound itself; in A 3.2.54, even if the final denotatum is represented by someone who possesses a given ability, the trait of agency does not refer to the human being: on the contrary, only the given *śakti* can be considered the real agent of the action (as the ability that allows someone to do something). In this sense, the constraint introduced by the previous rule, A 3.2.53, *amanuṣyakarṭṛke*, ‘non-human *karṭṛ*’, is still working in A 3.2.54.

According to A 3.4.67, all the *kṛt* affixes are supposed to denote the *karṭṛ*: the need teaching an exception is the aim of an additional rule:

³ Note that this section of the grammar mainly depends on the governing rule A 3.1.91 *dhātoḥ* ‘after a verbal base’ and on A 3.1.93 *kṛd atin* ‘every non *tin* affix after a verbal base (91) is termed *kṛt*’.

A 3.4.73 *dāśagoghnau sampradāne*

dāśa- and *goghna-* are derived in the sense of *sampradāna*.

I.e., these two terms are used as dative cases according to A 1.4.32:⁴ *dāśa-* means ‘the one to whom something is given’ and not ‘giver’;⁵ *goghna-* means ‘someone for whom a cow is killed (a guest)’ and not ‘cow-killer’.

In essence, *dāśa-* and *goghna-* are introduced by Pāṇini as *nipātana* (ready-made forms) denoting the recipients of the action instead of the agents of the action itself: even if endowed with *ḥrt* affixes, *dāśa-* and *goghna-* are not supposed to be analysed as the agent of the action of giving (*dāś-*)⁶ and of the action of killing (*han-*).

To sum up, according to the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the term *goghna-*, denotes someone who does not act firsthand, i.e., who does not commit any violence (even though he is the recipient of the product of the violent act perpetrated on his behalf).⁷

Sharma (1995: 644) hints at the possibility of reading, in this case, the verbal root *han-* in the sense of *gati* ‘movement’, that is, with the meaning of *jñāna*, *gamana* or *prāpti* (‘knowing’, ‘going’, ‘attaining’). According to Sharma’s explanation, then, the activity in which a *goghna*, i.e., the guest, is involved could be that of ‘attaining’ something: on this account, the scholar refers to the *madhuparka*, a traditional ritual offering composed of *dadhi* ‘curds’, *sarpis* ‘ghee’, *jala* ‘water’, *kṣaudra* ‘honey’ and *sitā* ‘white sugar’. If the *goghna*, i.e., the guest, receives a *madhuparka* and not a killed cow, it has to be assumed that we are facing an evolution from the idea of ‘cow’ to that of ‘cow’s products’.

⁴ The *sampradāna* notion is introduced by rule A 1.4.32 *karmanā yam abhi praiti sa sampradānam* ‘the indirect object, that which is aimed at in connection with a *karman* is termed *sampradāna*’. Patañjali considers A 3.4.73 as an *apavāda* rule, i.e., an exception (see M 2.179 ll. 4–5 *ad* A 3.4.67).

⁵ To the best of my efforts, I have not been able, by now, to detect a Vedic literary groundling for this rule. As far as I have seen, indeed, no occurrences of *dāśa-* in the Pāṇinian sense ‘giver’ can be found in the ṚV nor in both the recensions of the AV. The socio-cultural origins of such a precise semantic switch taught by the A are still thought provoking.

⁶ As for the meaning of this stem, I refer to the DhP 1.931 *daśṛ dāne* (see Böhtlingk 1887: 69).

⁷ Also consider in this sense *atithigya* ‘he who offers a cow for the guest’, ‘he who is hospitable’ and the so-called *arghya*-ceremony to honour a respected guest in the proper way (see Bloomfield 1896: cxxiv). Moreover, it is interesting to consider the story of Bhavabhūti, recalled by Chakravarti as follows (1979: 54): ‘Bhavabhūti in his *Uttarāmacarita* (Act IV) describes how the venerable poet Valmiki, when preparing to receive the sage Vasiṣṭha, slaughtered a number of calves for the entertainment of his guest’. The same passage also tells us that, according to the Vedic prescriptions, a *grhamedhin* should perform this kind of sacrifice in honour of a *śrotriya* (a learned Brahmin). The compound *goghna* is not used here to denote Vasiṣṭha.

Srinivasan (1979: 57) underlines that the term *go*, in the context of the Vedic ritual, does not stand only for the animal involved into the oblation, but also for the milk which will be mixed with the *soma*.⁸

In this sense, from a Pāṇinian point of view, rule A 4.3.134 (which provides for the formation of words denoting *vikāra* ‘transformation’) should have been involved to justify the linguistic shift from the denotation of an X item to the denotation of an X-derived item; however, no derivational affix is applied to *go-* in *goghna* as taught in A 3.4.73: this fact may imply that Pāṇini did not consider this possibility.⁹

The *madhuparka* is mentioned in even ŚS X 3.21 and, in a more detailed way, in the *Āśvalāyana Grhyasūtra* (AśvGS I 24, 23ff), where the ‘guest’ is not denoted with the term *goghna-*, it is said that a guest can choose whether to kill or release an offered cow; it is quite puzzling, then, that the passage ends with the following exhortation:

AśvGS I 24.33 *nāmāṃso madhuparko bhavati bhavati*
the *Madhuparka* is actually not without flesh.

3 Pāṇini and the *Rgveda*: A lexical comparison

With respect to Pāṇini’s interpretation of the term *goghna-*, Ambedkar (2020) notes that its use turned out to be ‘pejorative’ during the age of Manu’s Law Code¹⁰ but that its *original* sense was the ‘one for whom the cow is killed’. Can this be true?

To deepen the problem, it seems necessary to look for *Rgvedic* compounds which have *-ghna* as the second constituent¹¹ to understand whether the *sampradāna* trait taught by Pāṇini is attested in the *Samhitā* and if it is possible to detect such a special linguistic feature in analogous compounds.

⁸ Such a transition is also covered by a passage from Yāska’s *Nirukta* (II 5) where, amongst the many senses of the word *gauḥ*, ‘milk’ is also listed as a possible meaning.

⁹ The rule that would have been applied in this specific case is A 4.3.160 *gopayaso yat*, which conveys the sense of cow food-derivates (i.e., *go* + *yaT* > *gavyam* ‘produced from the cow’)

¹⁰ The *Manusmṛti*, whose composition is dated by Olivelle (2005: 25) to around the second-third century CE, features the term *goghna-* twice in the part that exposes the penances for secondary sins which cause the loss of caste (MDh XI 109 and MDh XI 116); both the occurrences of *goghna-* convey the trait of agency. The *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* (III 263) is along the same lines. The term is, again, used in the sense of ‘cow-killer’ in the *Liṅga Purāṇa* (LiPur I 15.9.2, LiPur I 15.29.1, LiPur I 82.118.2), in a section that deals with the expiation of a series of misdeeds. Note that *goghna-* is used along with terms denoting major sins. Despite the teachings of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, literary occurrences after Pāṇini’s age point away from the sense of *sampradāna* for *goghna-* taught by rule A 3.4.73 (see, e.g., R IV 17.32.2, MBh II 38.15; XII 145.18).

¹¹ For a technical survey on the topic, see, e.g., Scarlata (1999: 693).

Here follows the list of the linguistic parallels to *goghna-* that I have found in the ṚV:

1. *pūruṣaghná-* (ṚV I 114.10)
2. *ápūruṣaghna-* (ṚV I 133.6)
3. *vṛtraghná-* (ṚV I 175.5)
4. *ahighná-* (ṚV II 30.1)
5. *vṛtraghná-* (ṚV III 31.14)
6. *nṛghná-* (ṚV IV 3.6)
7. *dasyughná-* (ṚV IV 16.10);
8. *vṛtraghná-* (ṚV V 86.3)
9. *ahighná-* (ṚV VI 18.14)
10. *asuraghná-* (ṚV VI 22.4)
11. *pārāvataghná-* (ṚV VI 61.2)
12. *vṛtraghná-* (ṚV VI 61.7)
13. *hastaghná-* (ṚV VI 75.14)
14. *asuraghná-* (ṚV VII 13.1)
15. *vṛtraghná-* (ṚV VIII 66.10)
16. *vṛtraghná-* (ṚV VIII 78.7)
17. *vṛtraghná-* (ṚV IX 98.10)
18. *parṇayaghná-* (ṚV X 48.8)
19. *āśvaghná-* (ṚV X 61.21)
20. *ápatighna-* (ṚV X 85.44)
21. *sapatnaghná-* (ṚV X 159.5)

Now, it is crucial to pay attention to the context of each occurrence in order to understand their semantic implications: the term (1) *pūruṣaghná-* probably refers to Rudra's anger (men-killer) and its matching negative form, i.e., (2) *ápūruṣaghna-*, is an attribute referring to Indra's power which kills those who are not-men. In the case of (3) *vṛtraghná-* the agent of the action is probably Indra's exhilaration (the smasher of Vṛtra). (4) *ahighná-*, again, is referred to Indra. In (5) Indra is the *vṛtraghná-*, 'Vṛtra-killer', while as far as (6) is concerned, the *nṛghná-* 'man-killer' is the god Rudra. A non-human agent (*manasā* 'mind') is overtly involved also in the case of (7) *dasyughná-* 'Dasyu-killer'; the whole passage refers to Indra. (8) *vṛtraghná-* is now referred to Indra, who is also the final denotatum of (9) *ahighná-* 'serpent-killer' and (10) *asuraghná-* 'Asura-killer'. (11) *pārāvataghná-* 'foreigners-killer' and (12) *vṛtraghná-* are referred to the overwhelming force of the river Sarasvatī, which happens to be the agent in both compounds. According to Macdonell-Keith (1912: 60), (13) *hastaghná-*, which denotes an arm-protector used in archery, is a 'word of remarkable and still unexplained formation'; to advance any hypothesis about this difficult term goes beyond the scope of the present study. However, a tentative explanation may involve the sense of striking/beat-

ing proper of the verbal root *han-*: the specific equipment worn by the archer hits, indeed, the forearm instead of the bowstring. The agent, in this case, may consequently be considered the protection itself.

As for (14) *asuraghñá-* is this time the god Agni while (15) *vrtraghná-* ‘Vṛtra-smasher’, is another clear reference to the mythological battle between Vṛtra and Indra; this explanation is valid also for (16) *vrtraghná-* and (17) *vrtraghná-*. In this respect, note that two formations derived from a different ablaut of the verbal root *han-* (i.e., ṚV VIII 66.9 *vrtrahá-* and *vrtraghná-*) coexist in the same hymn within the distance of a single verse and with the same meaning. The denotatum of the compound (18) *parṇayaghñá-* ‘Parṇaya-killer’ is the god Indra¹² while (19) *āśvaghñá-* is, according to Sāyaṇa, is one of the names of Manu; it is used in the final praise during the dawn sacrifice. The compound (20) *āpatighna-* ‘not-husband-killer’ is found in the final verse of the famous wedding hymn from ṚV X 85, among the various principles that can ensure a good marriage. The agent is the wife, and the compound is formed according to A 3.2.52. An analogous analysis can also be drawn for (21) *sapatnaghñá-* ‘co-wives-killer’: this occurrence is taken from a hymn that celebrates the triumph of a woman (i.e., the agent) over her rival wives.

The compound *goghna-* appears only once in the *Ṛgveda* and likely refers to Rudra’s anger (ṚV I 114.10), i.e., to an *amanuṣya kartr̥*.

āré te goghñám utá pūruṣaghñám kṣáyadvīra sunmám asmé te astu /

Be far your cow-killer and men-killer (anger?)¹³. Be your benevolence on us, o ruler of men.

To summarise, the following table offers a comparison between the Pāṇinian approach to the compounds ending in *ghna-* and the contents of the ṚV:

<i>Aṣṭādhyāyī</i>	<i>Ṛgveda</i>
3.2.52 <i>lakṣaṇe jāyāpatyoṣ ṭak</i>	<i>āpatighna-</i> <i>sapatnaghñá-</i> ¹⁴
3.2.53 <i>amanuṣyakartr̥ke ca</i>	<i>pūruṣaghñá-</i> <i>goghñá-</i> <i>vrtraghná-</i> <i>ahighñá-</i>

¹² Note the interesting *variatio* of the compounds *karañjahá-* and *vrtrahátyá-* in the same verse.

¹³ See Jamison-Brereton (2014: 266).

¹⁴ *sapatna-*, meaning ‘co-wife’, is a hyponym of *jāyā-*.

Aṣṭādhyāyī	Ṛgveda
3.2.53 <i>amanuṣyakartṛke ca</i>	<i>vrtraghná-</i> <i>nṛghná-</i> <i>dasyughná-</i> <i>asuraghná-</i> <i>ápūruṣaghna-</i> <i>pārāvataghná-</i> <i>hastaghná- (?)</i>
3.2.54 <i>śaktau hastikapāṭayoh</i>	–

Table 1. Comparison between the Pāṇinian treatment of *ghna*- compounds and their attestation in the *Ṛgveda*

Table 1 allow us to observe that this brief section of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* fits well the language of the *Ṛgveda*.

Now, there is a crucial parallel between ṚV I 114.10 *ārē te goghnám utá pūruṣaghnáṃ* and ṚV VII 56.17 *ārē gohá nṛhá*, where the variant *gohá-* refers to the Maruts. This is a piece of evidence that the *ṛgvedic goghnám*, being used as a synonym of *gohá*, is endowed with the trait of agency and not used in the *sampradāna* sense. It seems noteworthy that in A 3.2.53, Pāṇini uses the constraint *amanuṣyakartṛke*. This teaching matches the language of the ṚV: in fact, the only occurrence of *goghna-* that we have in this text refers to a non-human *kartṛ* (i.e., Rudra's anger?).

As already said above, the constraint also works in A 3.4.73: according to this rule, *goghna-* denotes a human being (i.e., a guest), but not a *kartṛ*. So, when the term *goghna-* is employed in literature to denote a man, the whole linguistic solution happens to be (surprisingly) un-Pāṇinian. Why then did Pāṇini derive the word *goghna-* inconsistently with the ṚV? If we take for granted that the author of rule A 3.4.73 was aware of the agentive meaning of the term *goghna-*, he had the chance to account for this by simply formulating the rule in a different way. In fact, special semantic constraints expressed in the locative case ending have often been adopted in this grammar in order to represent specific literary domains (see Joshi-Bhate 1984: 130–147): namely, e.g., *chandasi* 'in sacred literature', *ya-juṣi* 'in sacrificial formulas', *ṛci* 'in Vedic stanzas', *brāhmaṇe* 'in a *brāhmaṇa* text', *mantra* 'in the *Samhitā* text of the Vedas', *sāmani* 'in the hymns', *nigame* 'in the *mantra* text'; precise constraints are also used to refer to specific geographic contexts: *udicām* 'in the speech of northerners', *prācām* 'in the speech of easterners'.

If the *phenomenon* described by A 3.4.73 was proper to the spoken/ordinary language, the phrasing of the rule should have included the domain constraint *bhāṣāyam* 'in ordinary usage'.

4 A cultural matter?

Joshi and Roodbergen (1994: 90) hypothesize that the sense of *goghna-* taught by Pāṇini may have originated in a somewhat ‘derisory’ attitude, while Jamison (1996: 170), with respect to the non-agentive trait of this compound, advances the suggestion that the term *goghna-* was

regularly formed [...], that the guest was really considered a cow-killer. Though he does not wield the knife, he gives the order, and that is what usually counts.

This possibility is very interesting; nonetheless, the reason why Pāṇini handed down *only* the *sampradana* sense remains still unclear.

Probably, the softer *nuance* taught by the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* fits well with the increase in condemnation of animal (and especially cow) sacrifices: according to the textual analysis conducted by Houben (1999: 129), the Brahmanical caste’s approach to violence in Vedic sacrifices can be divided into three historical steps: ‘Period A’, ‘Period B’ and ‘Period C’.

The first one (‘Period A’) basically corresponds to the ṚV, where there is evidence confirming the acceptance of bloody rituals. During ‘Period B’, the Brahmanical perspective on violence in sacrifices turned into ‘embarrassment’ and ‘stronger rejection’. Houben sets this specific phase during the rising of heterodox spiritual movements such as Jainism and Buddhism and places the *terminus ante quem* around the third century BCE (corresponding to the age of Aśokan edicts). Finally, according to this reconstruction, acts of ritual violence started to be defended again as part of the identity of the Brahmanical caste with ‘Period C’ covering the fifth and seventh centuries CE.

It is worth observing that the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was composed during the so-called ‘Period B’, when the problem of accepting violence was starting to emerge. Considering the cultural environment of the Brahmanical society,¹⁵ it seems quite plausible that the author of A 3.4.73 chose to endorse the less deplorable non-agentive trait of *goghna-* to denote high-caste guests even if, of course, the cow was still killed, and the flesh was still ate.

Without taking for granted any assumption, it is possible to hypothesize, at the very least, that the formulation of A 3.4.73 reflects a moment of transition and that its scope was strongly grounded in the social and cultural environment where it was composed.

¹⁵ As Fuller (1992: 88) recalls, a Brahman priest could in fact be degraded if he had perpetrated an act of violence (including animal sacrifice). It was crucial then for a Brahman to ‘completely separate himself from violence’ and, not least, to actually show that he had done so.

5 Conclusions and research perspectives

To better understand the nature of the historical and geographical layers of the Sanskrit language, more studies on the relationship between Pāṇini's rules and the Vedic literary corpus need to be done. As far as the present inquiry is concerned, a series of facts emerge from this brief philological and linguistic analysis:

1. The Ṛgvedic *upapadasāmāśas* ending in *-ghna* are all endowed with the trait of agency: *goghna-* in the ṚV was never used in the sense of a *sampradāna*. The analysis of the context of each occurrence leaves no room for forms ending in *-ghna-* to be considered as semantically different from those ending in *han-*. In fact, they appear to have the same meaning notwithstanding the different ablaut.
2. As far as I have seen, the literature known to Pāṇini does not feature the term *goghna-* used in the same sense taught by rule A 3.4.73; on the contrary, the word is endowed with an agentive meaning even if it does not refer to a human being (a datum which complies with rule A 3.2.53). Despite the specific rule found in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the subsequent literature treats *goghna-* as a noun denoting a precise kind of sinners, i.e., 'killers of cows' and there are no instances of *goghna-* in the sense of 'guest'. Probably, the *phenomenon* described by Pāṇini was part of the spoken language targeted by the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and that it stopped to be productive.
3. Even if the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* often employs special constraints to describe linguistic exceptions, the possibility of having *goghna-* as a *nomen agentis* (thereby justifying the Vedic usage) is not taken into account: even if the Ṛgvedic passage featuring this term is correctly described by rule A 3.2.53 (since in the ṚV the agent of *goghna-* is not a human being but Rudra's anger), rule A 3.4.73 excludes any possibility of having *goghna-* as a *kartr̥*. In this case, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* preserves its internal consistency but fails to consistently describe the language of the ṚV.
4. The peculiar teaching of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* regarding the *sampradāna* nature of *goghna-* could be symptomatic of a social and religious environment where vegetarianism and non-violence were taking hold. As such, a highly-respected guest, probably belonging to the Brahmanical caste, should have been considered free from the direct sin of killing. In this sense, probably only the trait of non-agency was worth to be taught by the author of the grammar.

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