

RV commentary: introductory remarks and abbreviations

As a companion to the Jamison-Brereton English translation of the Ṛgveda (*The Rigveda: The Earliest Religious Poetry of India. An English Translation*, Oxford UP, 2014), one of the two translators, Jamison, is providing a more detailed commentary on the translation, intended for readers with Sanskrit who are interested in how, starting from the text, we arrived at the translations we did, especially in the frequent cases in which our translations diverge from the standard ones, esp. Geldner's. For a project of this sort, online posting seems the ideal medium. The commentary has been posted piecemeal, and its various pieces are updated from time to time. **As of now (January 2026) Jamison has commented on all the hymns, both those for which she had primary responsibility and those of Brereton's.** (For the division by translator, see the published translation, pp. 83–84.)

Although the commentary now covers the entire text, it will continue to be updated, though at longer intervals, with changed or enhanced comments.

When citing from the comm., please give the date of access as well as the date of the posting of the file, since updated versions of already posted files will be regularly substituted, with the date of re-posting.

Comments will not only point out our differences from standard interpretations and explain the reasons for them, but also touch on any matters of language or content that strike us as worth discussion -- especially poetic and rhetorical figures, puns and word plays, and curious or aberrant syntax and morphology. Our own doubts about our translations of particular passages will also be noted, with possible alternative translations provided, and comments and suggestions subsequently made by others will be incorporated. Errors and omissions in the published translation will also be rectified. Lists of emended or alternate translations and of typos in the published edition are also provided, as well as a list of lexical items treated in the commentary, with the location indicated.

I will not generally provide info. readily available elsewhere (e.g., parallels, repeated passages, standard metrical resolutions, which are generally noted by Geldner in the first two cases and Oldenberg in the last) except when it's necessary for our argument. Nor will I catalogue *all* our differences from all the standard translators/interpreters, though I will usually do so for Ge. Nor engage with most of the sec. lit. And I will try to repeat info. from our published translation only when nec. to make the point clear. I thus expect that readers will have access at least to our published tr. and Geldner, with Grassmann, Renou (ÉVP), Oldenberg (Noten), and Witzel-Goto useful to have to hand as well. Many of the references to other secondary literature will be made in an abbreviated style and will assume that the interested reader can decode these references, although at some point we may provide a more formal bibliography.

The commentary is, not surprisingly, ordered by hymn and verse number. Hapaxes will be discussed in the passage in which they're found, as will particular morphological

forms. Words that appear rarely and require lexical discussion will generally be discussed only once (and not necessarily in the first passage in which they are found). An index is provided for these.

Abbreviations: Unless otherwise indicated, “publ. intro” = the introduction to the hymn in question in our published translation. Other abbreviations: tr. can = translation(s), translator(s), translate(s); interpr. = interpret(s), interpretation(s). Gr = Grassmann, Ge = Geldner, Re = Renou (ÉVP unless otherwise noted), Old = Oldenberg (Noten, unless otherwise noted), Th = Thieme, Hoff / KH = Karl Hoffmann, WG = Witzel Gotō, Sāy = Sāyana, Bl = M. Bloomfield, RR = *Rig-Veda Repetitions*, Macd = Macdonell, HvN = Holland & van Nooten RV ed., Mau = Walter Maurer, *Pinnacles of India’s Past*, Lub = Lubotsky, *Rigvedic Word Concordance*, Lü = Lüders, *Varuṇa* (unless otherwise noted), Schmidt / HPS B+I = Hanns-Peter Schmidt, *Brhaspati und Indra*, Kü = Kümmel, *Perfekt*, Scar = Scarlatta, *Wurzelkomposita*, Klein / JSK = *Discourse Grammar of the Rigveda*, Schaeffer, *Intensiv*, Krick, *Das Ritual der Feuergründung*, Don = Wendy Doniger *The Rig Veda*, C-H = Caland-Henry *L’Agniṣṭoma*, Pir = É. Pirart, *Les Nāsatya*. Personal comms.: JL = Jesse Lundquist, ET = Elizabeth Tucker, IH = Ian Hollenbaugh, JTK = Joshua T. Katz, DL = Diego Loukata., MLW = Michael Weiss, JC = John Clayton, CL = Colton Lavalette, PS = Paolo Sabattini, EM = Elisa Migliaretti, TY = Tony Yates, AR = Alex Roy, AS = Arjun Srirangarajan, AG = Arlo Griffiths, DG = Dieter Gunkel.

Although I welcome comments (and appropriate comments from readers will be incorporated into later posted versions with due attribution), the posted commentary is deliberately not set up to receive comments directly. Please communicate with the translator(s) personally.