

CRACOW INDOLOGICAL STUDIES

Constructing and Deconstructing Pāṇini's Grammar:
The Role of Commentators

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Moments and Meanings

Remembering Professor Oberhammer

Gerhard Oberhammer (1929–2025) was an Austrian Indologist, Emeritus Full Professor at the University of Vienna and Full Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. After his initial studies in Innsbruck (German philology, history, philosophy), he turned to comparative linguistics and Sanskrit and continued his further education in Paris at the Sorbonne. He began his academic career as a research assistant in Vienna in 1955 and in 1957–1959 conducted research in India (University of Madras). From 1967 he served as Full Professor at the University of Vienna and acted as Dean of Humanities from 1983 to 1987, while also heading research institutes at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. His work focused on Indian philosophy (Sāṅkhya, Nyāya, Vedānta), Hinduism, and the hermeneutics of religion. He made significant contributions to the study of logic, epistemology, and soteriology in Indian traditions, produced a major dictionary of Indian philosophical terminology (1991–2006), advanced research on Yoga, Nyāya, and Vedānta spirituality, pioneered the study of Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta–Pāñcarātra connections, developed the concept of “religious hermeneutics”, and founded the Sammlung de Nobili, the De Nobili Research Library (1966), to promote interreligious research.

This biographical note might be brief but the faculty members of the Kraków Indology shared a long-lasting, special bond with the Professor. It all began with the World Sanskrit Conference in 1990...

Iwona Milewska: Our interaction with Professor Gerhard Oberhammer began over thirty years ago. The first meeting in person took place in 1990 during the VIII World Sanskrit Conference, held in Vienna.

Those were the times when we, the Polish scholars, were for many years totally isolated from the Western World. This was due to the fact that in the post-war Poland we had to study and work in a “socialist manner”, which meant that we were deprived of any direct contacts with our colleagues from the West, we had no access to academic books or journals published outside the communist bloc, we could not travel easily across Iron Curtain. There were no scholarships available for students or scholars either. Moreover, there was no Internet yet!

Though in 1980 the “Solidarność” movement had changed to a large extent political situation in Poland, even ten years later the conditions in Polish universities were not easy, at least in the economical aspect. Our salaries did not allow us to easily travel abroad be it for leisure, to enhance professional qualifications or to attend academic events. Often the attendance fee allowing participation in foreign seminars or conferences was a mountain that could not to be scaled by people from our part of Europe.

However, just then it happened that one of our students, Jakób Stuchlik, decided to continue his Indological studies in Vienna, under Professor Oberhammer. Before the conference, which was planned to take place in Vienna, he approached Professor and asked him whether it would be possible for some of his teachers from Kraków to participate in the conference without paying the obligatory attendance fee. Professor Oberhammer’s decision was so generous that five of us managed to go to Vienna and meet scholars of Indology from all over the world. This proved to be a huge steppingstone in revitalizing and re-building Indology in Kraków on modern, professional lines. The faculty members who got the chance to go to Vienna were Cezary

Galewicz, Agata Lenard, Iwona Milewska, Halina Słowik-Marlewicz and Lidia Sudyka.

While in Vienna, we thanked Professor Oberhammer for his munificent gift and presented him with a short note on Indology in Kraków, highlighting its long history and tradition. We also invited Professor to visit Kraków without much real hope that he would actually take up the offer. However, we were wrong. Professor did come to Kraków and since that first visit he became our great supporter not only in professional aspects. He helped every and each one of us to develop her or his professional career but at the same time he was a great adviser as far as our private lives were concerned.

Not much time passed before the idea to organize an international conference to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Indology studies in Kraków was born. The conference, namely the International Conference on Sanskrit and Related Studies, was held in Kraków on 23–26 September 1993 (Fig. 1) and was the very first of many great events to be placed in Kraków since then. It is befitting to recall here Professor Oberhammer's words from his Opening Address. He said, "It is a happy occasion, not only because it reminds us of a full century of Indological activity in Kraków, but also because it supplies us with the opportunity to become personally and scholastically reacquainted with each other after a long period of enforced division." He continued his speech by saying, "Upon the invitation of the University of Kraków and the Oriental Institute, European Indology meets for the first time in Eastern Europe. For the first time we are able to engage in conversation with our colleagues in this richly provided cultural space, a conversation of which we hope that it will be fruitful and lasting." His words were to become true in future.

The conference was a huge success. Many eminent Indologists not only from Europe but from all over the world took part. For us all, the small group of then young scholars, and for our students, it was the true beginning of the re-born Indology in Kraków. After years of stagnation, the Jagiellonian University could once again boast of an Indology centre of global consequence where high level research takes place. It enabled us to have contacts with colleagues from all over the

world, to get acquainted with main trends in modern research and to get access to best library resources. We will always remember that it was Professor Oberhammer who helped us to achieve this.

I could recount many more details of our past and our present professional situation, but one must stop somewhere. I have written this very short note on the events from the past just to remind everybody how did it all begin. However, I must add that one of the most important fruits of the 1993 conference in Kraków, which was the direct result of our opportunity to attend the Vienna Conference, was our first academic publication: the very first number of *Cracow Indological Studies* which appeared two years later, in 1995. Its first Editorial Board had five members: Przemysław Piekarski, Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, Cezary Galewicz, Iwona Milewska and Lidia Sudyka. The journal is published regularly since then and is recognized as an important academic imprint by the global Indology community. As may be seen, Professor Oberhammer was again the person who helped us to begin this scholarly venture as well.

I have no doubt that all of us feel extremely grateful to this man who was not only an outstanding scholar, but who took on the role of a “Father” to all of us, offering us advice both on professional and private matters.

Looking from my personal, private perspective, I would like to stress that every time when Professor Oberhammer visited Kraków or I went to Vienna on being invited by him for various seminars and library queries, we had long discussions concerning not only Indological problems but also private dilemmas. During my first visit in Vienna he, knowing that I am interested in Indian epics, enabled me to meet Professor Madeleine Biardeau, one of the most important scholars in this field. Since then, I was in direct contact with her. She sent me several very illuminating letters written in her own hand, letters which I have kept till now. Moreover, she shared with me her publications, both old and new, which were obviously not available in Kraków at that time. It was not only her that I met personally thanks to Professor Oberhammer. All such contacts were and still are invaluable to me. Even in the last years, when Professor could not come to Kraków any

longer, he would call me quite often, and he always had something important to say. As far as I know he did the same for other colleagues from our Department of Indology in Kraków.

I will never forget him and his contribution.

The only words that come to my mind when I think about Professor are and will always be THANK YOU and this THANK YOU is definitely not enough.

Lidia Sudyka: After the two conferences, in Vienna and Kraków, a ‘tradition’ of Professor Oberhammer’s annual visits to Kraków was soon established, always at the same time of year. At the beginning of May, he would spend over two weeks in Kraków, delivering lectures at the Institute and meeting individually with each member of the Kraków Indology department (Fig. 2). It was a time for reflection on what had been achieved over the course of the previous year.

We did not need a university system to evaluate our academic achievements because it was Professor Oberhammer who assessed our work, taking into account not the quantity of our publications, but their quality. He quickly made a note of the conditions in which we worked, in particular the shortcomings of our library. Those were not days when the internet provided access to a wealth of sources. Thanks to Professor, the library of the Institute of Indology in Vienna soon opened its doors to us. I remember the long hours spent studying books, selecting pages that absolutely had to be copied, and the triumphant returns to Kraków with material that could then be studied at home.

It was thanks to Professor Oberhammer that I became acquainted with Siegfried Lienhard, an undisputed authority in my field of specialisation, Sanskrit *kāvya*. Thanks to Professor Oberhammer I was present in Vienna on several occasions when Professor Lienhard was there delivering lectures, and I had the opportunity to discuss a wide range of topics with him. I learned a great deal from these conversations, as well as from our subsequent correspondence.

But it was not only our academic successes or failures that interested Professor Oberhammer. He knew our families and was always

curious about our daily lives. One might say that we matured academically in the warmth of his attention and presence.

Professor Oberhammer's formative role in mentoring faculty members at the Department of Indology in Kraków and overseeing their academic development was recognized by the Jagiellonian University when he was awarded the Jagiellonian University Medal of Merit in the year 1998 (Figs 3, 4).

And what he did for each and every one of us will remain forever etched in our memories and hearts.

Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz: For us, the scholars of the Indology Department, and for the journal *Cracow Indological Studies*, there was no single individual more crucial than Professor Gerhard Oberhammer. Our first contact with Professor dates to the VIII World Sanskrit Conference in Vienna (1990) when some of us met him for the first time. As this was just after Poland had regained independence from the communist rule (1989), we decided to organise first international Indological conference in Poland. But it was Professor Oberhammer's suggestion that we should take advantage of this historic opportunity and mark our presence in the world. True to his mentorship qualities and broad vision, apart from inviting some of us to Vienna in 1990 and introducing us to global Indology community, he strongly supported our idea of organising an international conference in Kraków. Thanks to his recommendation, many distinguished scholars came to Kraków for the 1993 conference and many academic friendships were established. The success of the conference prompted us to publish the contributions as the first volume of the newly conceived *Cracow Indological Studies*. Neither the conference nor the journal would have been possible without Professor Oberhammer's vision and mentorship.

However, Professor Oberhammer's support was not limited to this. He made a long standing commitment to visit our department frequently to give lectures, but he also agreed to work with some of us on our academic projects, which led to us acquiring our subsequent academic degrees. His constant support, lasting for thirty years, shaped

our academic work and significantly contributed to the development of our department.

In 2019, we dedicated the 21st volume of *Cracow Indological Studies*, titled *Gurum upapadyāmahe*, to Professor on his 90th birthday; this was our humble way of expressing our gratitude.

My personal collaboration with Professor Oberhammer began in 1991 when I was invited to Vienna for the first time. After completing my PhD, I was invited by Professor Oberhammer to join the team working on Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra literature and to collaborate on a large project of the Austrian Academy of Sciences titled *Tāntrikābhidhāna-kośa. A Dictionary of Technical Terms from Hindu Tantric Literature* (TAK), involving many scholars from different countries. The collaboration of Professor Oberhammer with several scholars from our department was also continued as part of the agreement between the Austrian Academy of Sciences (AAS) and the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN).

I owe Professor seminal insights into the world of the religious-philosophical milieu of pre-modern India, especially of the early Vaishnava tradition. It is he who introduced me to the technique of an in-depth reading and close analysis of Sanskrit texts. We spent on these readings many hours in Vienna, in Kraków, and later in Innsbruck. His invitation to the TAK project also enabled me to redirect my line of investigation into early Vaishnava tradition and connect my textual studies with the field research in South India.

I will never forget our long hard work, always concluded with dinner, which was a great opportunity to continue our academic discussions, but also to gossip and spend a more relaxed time entertained by Professor's witty stories. I consider it a special privilege and a token of our master-apprentice friendship, which lasted for thirty years.

Ewa Dębicka-Borek: As a representative of the 'second generation' of Polish Indologists who came to know Professor Oberhammer more closely, my professional collaboration with him began relatively late, in the mid-2000s, when I started working on my doctoral dissertation on the Pāñcarātra tradition under the supervision of Prof. Marzenna

Czerniak-Drożdżowicz. I first encountered him, however, several years earlier, when I was still a student of Indology. I remember how, one day, a lecture hall filled to capacity, not only with students who, like me at the time, probably understood very little of what Professor was saying about Rāmānuja, but also with Polish academics who were themselves already lecturing on India, and who came to our Institute specifically to listen to him. The atmosphere left no doubt that we were dealing with someone exceptional and important to our teachers.

In this first memory of mine, the Professor appears as a multifaceted figure: close in age to my grandparents, fragile and delicate, with extraordinarily thick glasses perched on his nose, yet at the same time vivacious and energetic, joking with the audience and even personally passing chairs across the study-desks. What I then perceived as unconventionality, I now recognize, in hindsight, as the embodiment of qualities that, in my view, defined Professor Oberhammer: a curiosity about research and curiosity about other people.

When, after several years, for a period of time I had the honor of visiting the already retired Professor annually at his family home in Innsbruck to discuss progress of my research, each time I was equally struck by his scholarly erudition and attentiveness, as well as his sharp sense of humor, his lack of judgment toward me, his unwavering support, and, even in times of my crisis, his belief that what I was doing was meaningful and valuable.

Whenever I doubted myself, I was greeted and bade farewell with the phrase “Yes We Can!” popularized by Barack Obama. Contemporary world events were among the many topics we returned to during breaks from scholarly work, alongside reflections on our respective family histories—which originated, both literally and figuratively, in entirely different worlds—and conversations extending well beyond the scope of academic research. Years later, whenever I say “Yes We Can!” to encourage someone in need, I find myself repeating Professor Gerhard Oberhammer’s phrase.

In memory of Professor Gerhard Oberhammer, a key figure in our lives, who supported, shaped, and encouraged us to pursue the work we continue to carry out today.

Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, Ewa Dębicka-Borek,
Iwona Milewska and Lidia Sudyka
Kraków, 26 May 2026



Fig. 1. Professor Gerhard Oberhammer with his wife at the opening of the International Conference on Sanskrit and Related Studies, 23–26 September 1993, Collegium Novum Hall, Jagiellonian University, Kraków.



Fig. 2. A farewell to Professor Oberhammer at the Kraków railway station in 1997 (?). Standing next to the Professor are Iwona Milewska and Lidia Sudyka.



Fig. 3. Professor Gerhard Oberhammer receiving the Jagiellonian University Medal of Merit (1998).



Fig. 4. Celebrating the award of the Jagiellonian University Medal of Merit.
Next to Professor Oberhammer: Marzenna Czerniak-Drożdżowicz, Iwona Milewska, Lidia Sudyka, Halina Marlewicz, Przemysław Piekarski.

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Constructing and Deconstructing Pāṇini's Grammar: The Role of Commentators

How could one ever read Pāṇini without the help of a teacher or the support of commentaries? Without even a hint of the linguistic material on which every single aphorism is based, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is practically a dead letter. Pāṇini's grammar has been used in various ways and for various purposes for over two thousand years and commentators have played crucial role in adapting this text to the ever-changing linguistic needs without changing the wording of the individual rules. On the other hand, it is precisely in recent years that the debate has arisen as to whether commentators—beginning with the earliest ones, Kātyāyana and Patañjali—actually understood the complex, but also fluid and exquisite, architecture of this monument to human linguistic genius, and whether linguistic world around them was comparable to the one in which Pāṇini operated.

Some doubts about the latter point emerge in the works of several modern Pāṇinian scholars, including Madhav M. Deshpande, one of the giants on whose shoulders many contemporary authors have built the edifice of their innovative research. It was Deshpande who drew the scientific community's attention to the context of bilingualism that characterised the age of commentators, when Sanskrit users were commonly Prakrit speakers. In his view, it was the doctrine of “the theology of eternal Sanskrit”—shared by Vyākaraṇa, Nyāya and Mīmāṃsā systems—that prevented the commentators and all the scholars dealing with the analysis of language from addressing the issue of bilingualism in a clear manner.¹ Moreover, it forced them to analyse the phenomena of Prakrit languages through the perspective of their relationship with Sanskrit and viewing them as various local outcomes of its degeneration. The sociolinguistic notion of “diglossia” is in fact also at the core of several insightful reflections by Jan Houben, who explained in a modern and brilliant way the paradox already pointed out by Renou (1956: 84) and inscribed in the mentioned descriptive pattern, according to which Prakrits were considered to be derived from the eternal Sanskrit, while it is clear that they are documented in epigraphy prior to the latter (Houben 2018: 11).²

A significant doubt regarding the absolute reliability of the reading of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* proposed by commentators, including the earliest ones, has been raised by another of the giants of Pāṇinian studies, namely Paul Kiparsky. In 1979 he published his revolutionary *Pāṇini as a Variationist*,³ in which the traditional, homogenising interpretation of three indeclinable expressions, namely *anyatarasyām*, *vā* and *vibhāṣā*, commonly interpreted by the commentators as equally conveying the sense of “optionally”, was replaced by three distinct values, respectively matching the English adverbs “optionally”, “preferably” and “marginally” (i.e. “preferably not”). The impact of this reading

¹ See, for example, Deshpande 1985: 145; 2018: 15.

² Especially interesting on the sociolinguistic approach to the Ancient and Middle Indo-Aryan languages are Houben 1996a and Houben 1996b.

³ Ed. by S. D. Joshi, Pune: MIT Cambridge (Mass.)–Centre of Advanced Study in Sanskrit, University of Poona.

of Pāṇini's grammar as fruit of a philological interpretation of Pāṇini's grammar itself, tested through the single rules and the linguistic materials which these rules account for, was huge. Even today, more than half a century later, not all scholars accept this method of trying to go beyond the commentators' level of interpretation of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, while those who have adopted it nonetheless acknowledge the valuable arguments of the commentaries.

However, the stimulating and in-depth debate that emerged from the discussion of this interpretation of Pāṇini's approach to optionality, as well as the broader question of whether it is preferable to adhere closely to the commentators' interpretations or to adopt a more open approach that allows for independent analysis, has been really fruitful.⁴ Additionally, the way in which the Vaiyākaraṇas handle the metarules (*paribhāṣās*) that were never stated by Pāṇini himself but widely cited and often applied by the later traditions, indirectly points to the approach taken in Pāṇini's grammatical work. Since the purpose of Pāṇini's metarules is just to limit the scope of a wider (and commonly accepted) metalinguistic principle that would otherwise be taken into account in interpreting the text, it is indeed legitimate to postulate that Pāṇini does not enunciate all the metalinguistic principles he presupposes to be valid, but only the ones he deems strictly necessary, leaving the others implicit. Nonetheless, commentators and later grammarians seem to have produced an excessive and not always justifiable number of metarules by relying on several patterns to legitimate them. First of all, they single out in the grammar itself some so-called *jñāpakas*, i.e. "indications", lit. "[linguistic items] which make something else known", which often boil down to some supposed redundancies in Pāṇini's text that can be justified—or rather, are no longer redundant—if the principle at stake is assumed to have been accepted by Pāṇini. Otherwise, a *paribhāṣā* can resort to a commonly accepted everyday norm or practice (*lokanyāyasiddhā*), to logical reasoning

⁴ The earliest steps in such a debate are insightfully recorded in Cardona 1999: 162–179.

(*nyāyasiddhā*), or to the utterances of authoritative and reliable persons (*vācanikī*) (Candotti and Pontillo 2018: 516–518).

Indeed the term ‘commentators’ in the title does not exclusively refer to authors who present themselves as exegetes of the original text or of a subsequent version of it.⁵ In fact, the term also encompasses all those authors who have commented on texts that are not necessarily of a grammatical nature, but who make extensive use of grammatical knowledge to clarify individual forms, interpret the meaning of sentences, or assess the acceptability of particular reading variants.⁶ Sometimes the aim of these technical sophistries is just to propose an interpretation of the commented text that better reflects some new contexts. At other times Pāṇini’s grammar is simply mentioned because of its prestige, as an authority that lends weight to a point of view and enhances the commentary itself.

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that commentarial activity was one of the principal means by which Sanskrit intellectual culture transmitted and generated knowledge. In doing so, commentators have created a sort of an ever-growing “Pāṇinian system”, which has absorbed the new normative standards without explicitly rejecting the previous stages. Consequently, when studying the “Pāṇinian system” a diachronic approach is especially useful in singling out the specific features and purposes of grammar in each age.

The present collection of articles partly originates from the seminar, which took place on 9–10 May 2025 at the Institute of Oriental Studies, Jagiellonian University, organized by Lidia Sudyka, and brought

⁵ It is also worth pointing out that even in the modern age India, commentaries and their authors have served as major agents in the vernacularization of knowledge. Acting as linguistic and intellectual bridges, they have translated pan-Indian, cosmopolitan systems of knowledge, not only the grammatical ones, into regional languages, thereby making complex epistemologies accessible to wider audiences. For more about commentarial engagements with Sanskrit works and their influence on Hindi literature see Williams 2024.

⁶ This specific genre of commentaries with their “four services”, i.e. *padaccheda*, *padārthokti*, *vigraha*, and *vākyayojanā* was masterfully illustrated by Tubb and Boose in 2007 and more recently with reference to the commentaries on the *mahākāvya* texts by Klebanov 2016 and 2020.

together a group of researchers eager to exchange views on the above mentioned subjects and an audience interested in learning from their expertise.⁷ The articles, which stemmed from seminar presentations and subsequent discussions, are complemented by contributions from other researchers, resulting in a volume that brings together work of both emerging and established scholars, with various competences of relevance not only to Sanskritic grammatical heritage, but also to Indian Zoroastrian communities and the reception of Pāṇini's grammar in Indo-European linguistics.

This collection concentrates on a historically oriented analysis of commentators belonging to different contexts in terms of time and space and particularly on the different strategies they used and the relevant toolboxes they created. Some of the authors undoubtedly marked crucial turning points in the history of Indian thought, such as Kātyāyana with his linguistic fact-checking attitude, Patañjali who radically changed the notion of the minimum significant linguistic unit, and the Prakriyā-grammar authors who shifted the pattern of explanation from the older substitution-based frame to a derivational one, better suited to the new usages of grammatical science to teach the language from scratch.

A rarely discussed but highly significant topic, namely the liberty taken by some authors in dealing with Pāṇini's grammar, was singled out by **Chettiarthodi Rajendran** (University of Calicut) as the subject of his article titled "Sanskrit Beyond Pāṇini: Pluralistic Perceptions of Grammar in *Apāṇinīyapramāṇyasādhana*", which in a lucid manner paves way for understanding the contents of this intriguing treatise written in the form of a letter. Authored by Melputtūr Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭatīri, a scholar poet of Kerala, who lived at the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, the letter reiterates and defends scholarly postulates presented in his earlier work *Prakriyāsarvasva*, in favour of a pluralistic view of language and grammar. As argued by Sheldon Pollock in his article on Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭatīri's *Apāṇinīyapramāṇyasādhana*

⁷ The project which allowed this meeting to take place was funded by the Strategic Excellence Initiative Program at the Jagiellonian University, Kraków.

(“A Demonstration of the Validity of Non-standard Sanskrit”), its author “challenged two millennia of Sanskrit thinking about language—the language of the gods, after all—by arguing for the first time that ‘It is by relying on established usage, previous grammars, but also by reasoning that intelligent people establish authority’” (Pollock 2016: 18).

A real gem in this series is **Paul Kiparsky**’s (Stanford University) article, which encapsulates the author’s seminal work on linguistics and Pāṇinian philology. As is well known, the scholar has presented academic community with some of the most ingenious and revolutionary reinterpretations of Pāṇini’s grammar. His work is held in great esteem by both older and younger generations, particularly for the unrivalled balance the author maintains between a fruitful dialogue with tradition and an independent approach to the rules within the system in which they are framed. After an extremely interesting historically oriented introduction to a new approach to the analysis of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in relation to its commentators, and a chapter devoted to revise the main principles used by the commentarial tradition on Pāṇini’s grammar, the author concentrates on showing how the opposition between the *siddha* and *asiddha* principle, applied to the whole text, allows the readers to avoid relying on both these traditional principles and some recent assumptions such as Rajpopat’s reinterpretation of rule A 1.4.2.

The study of the strict tradition of commentary on Pāṇini’s grammar is the subject of four further articles. “Remarks on Negation through the Ages or How Should We look at Sanskrit Grammatical Tradition?” by **Malgorzata Sulich-Cowley** (University of Warsaw) focuses on a selection of historical interpretations of the phenomenon of negation. The article adopts an unconventional yet intriguing perspective to address a key question in this field of research, namely whether the Pāṇinian tradition may be considered a unitary tradition or rather a complex assemblage of divergent interpretations that include innovations and even errors.

“Pāṇini’s Semantic Hierarchy, or How to Remove the Commentarial Dust from A 2.3.15” by **Davide Mocci** (Kyoto University/University of Cagliari) challenges Patañjali’s hypothesis that the infinitive suffix *-tum* signifies *bhāva* (“action”), on the grounds that such an interpretation

would make A 2.3.15 a redundant provision. His work represents an elegant exercise in methodology, in that the commentaries on Pāṇini are regarded as having extraordinary heuristic value, whilst the entire system of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is explored with a certain degree of independence, aided by comparison with other formal grammars.

The ideal dialogue between Pāṇini and his commentators continues in “The Rejection of the Variationist System: How Commentators Interpreted Pāṇini’s General Rule on *taddhita*-derivations (A 4.1.82)” by **Tiziana Pontillo** (University of Cagliari), where—in line with the crucial work by Bhate published in 1989—one of the consequences of a recently proposed un-traditional re-interpretation of A 2.1.1 is analysed, namely the reading and the practical application of the general rule devoted to the formation of secondary derivative nominal stems (A 4.1.82).

More broadly, on the basis of his fresh reading of rule A 1.4.2, **Rishi Rajpopat**’s (University of Macau) article, “Why Does the Tradition Approach the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* the Way It Does? Some Methodological Reflections about Pāṇinian Studies”, discusses the current state of Pāṇini studies, particularly with regard to traditional teaching attitudes and practices in the Indian educational context by examining the interpretative risks that may arise from a purely traditional approach to Pāṇini’s grammar that relies solely on commentaries. Although one may disagree with the author’s views and proposals, the article has its strengths and will hopefully provoke an interesting and productive scholarly response.

Valentina Ferrero’s contribution is devoted to the new generation of Pāṇinian grammar, namely the so-called *navya vyākaraṇa*. In her paper, “*Laghupāṇinīyam*: the Relevance of a *navya vyākaraṇa* Text in Kerala with a Special Reference to the *sarvanāman* Section”, she offers a clear and systematic account of the distinctive features of this grammar composed in accessible twentieth-century Sanskrit by Rājārājavarma, known as the Kerala Pāṇini.⁸ Her reflections are situated

⁸ More about A. R. Rājārājavarma, a poet and scholar, can be found for example in Pierdominici Leão 2025.

within the framework of the project “How Hard Can a Dead Heart Beat? Reflections on Modern Sanskrit Literature”, funded by the National Science Centre of Poland and carried out at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, in cooperation with Ganesh U. Thite and Chet-tiarthodi Rajendran. This article forms part of her earlier, broader research project on *sarvanāmans* and arises from the need to present a new and original study of this grammatical category, with the aim of reasserting its importance. Although pronominal stems occupy a distinctive place throughout the history of Sanskrit grammatical literature, the subject has yet to receive sustained and detailed scholarly treatment.

Taken as a whole, this special issue of *Cracow Indological Studies* highlights the versatility of the subject of the Vyākaraṇa with all the commentaries produced within this rich tradition, the history of which is intertwined with that of linguistics, philosophy of language, literary studies and several sciences. An extremely interesting case of interaction between grammatical description and literary practice, more specifically between a rule of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* that provides a special restrictive use of *Ātmanepada* endings and a passage in Bhāravi’s *Kirātārjunīya*, is the focus of a brilliant article by **Andrey Klebanov**, titled “When Poetic Usage Becomes Normative: On the Interpretation of A 1.3.37”.

Another pair of *śāstras*, namely Vyākaraṇa and Mīmāṃsā, are at the core of **Monika Nowakowska**’s (University of Warsaw) contribution, titled “Kumārila’s Engagements with the Pāṇinīyas—Towards any Future Study of Vyākaraṇa’s Presence in Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā”, in which she demonstrates in a most interesting way how Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* was one of the most influential inspirations for Kumārila’s arguments.

The time-honoured interaction between indigenous grammar and historical linguistics is the subject taken up by **Dariusz Piwowarczyk** (Jagiellonian University) for his contribution titled, “The Reception of the Indian Grammatical Tradition in the Indo-European Linguistics—the Concept of the Root, the Ablaut and the Laryngeal Theory”, with two key targets that are really significant for Indo-European studies,

namely the reception of the notion of 'root' and the reinterpretation of the Ablaut system in light of the discovery of laryngeal sounds.

The original experiment represented by the article "Patterns of Substitution in the Zoroastrian Sanskrit Translation of *Ogamadecā*: Linguistic Features of Parsi Sanskrit" by **Oskar Podlasiński** (Jagiellonian University) offers a valuable examination of the advantageous strategies, as well as the shortcomings, of the approach taken by the Sanskrit translators of the Iranian treatise mentioned in the title. His article pays special attention to the deviations from Pāṇini's grammatical framework while placing distinct emphasis on the device of substitution. In doing so, it sheds light on the linguistic features of Zoroastrian Sanskrit translations and their broader Indo-Iranian cultural and textual context.

We believe that the articles collected in the current volume of *Cracow Indological Studies* constitute a valuable contribution to Indology: they illuminate a range of important phenomena, reflect a particular stage in the ongoing research, and at the same time stimulate further discussion, raise new questions, and encourage the search for answers.

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Sanskrit Beyond Pāṇini
Pluralistic Perceptions of Grammar
in *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana*

ABSTRACT: The present paper proposes to analyse the arguments contained in the *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana* of Melputtūr Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, the scholar poet of Kerala, challenging the orthodox view that the field of Sanskrit grammar is basically *trimuni* or confined to the discourses of the three sages, namely Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali. Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's work is a short monograph written in the format of a letter addressed to Vainateya, a grammarian from Cola country, who could not digest the liberties taken by the author with Pāṇinian grammar in *Prakriyāsarvasva*, his earlier work. It appears that another scholar, called Sudarśana, seemed to uphold Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's views. This raging controversy prompted Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa to write *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana*. In this work, he demonstrates that there is no valid proof to warrant the view that alternate systems propounded by scholars like Candragomin and Bhoja are non-authoritative. He argues that though the Pāṇinian grammar is universally accepted because of its inherent qualities, it does not follow that other systems are worthless as Pāṇini himself refers to other, earlier authorities. Therefore, in true democratic spirit and upholding a pluralistic view of language and grammar, he maintains that if there is some

contradiction between Pāṇini and others on specific points, it would be ideal to take these principles as optional. He points out that great authorities like Vyāsa, Śaṅkarācārya and Vidyāraṇya, and poets like Murāri, Sureśvara and Śrīharṣa have occasionally used un-Pāṇinian forms. Thus, through this short treatise, Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa demonstrates that he is a progressive grammarian who accepts accretions and modifications in tradition as language is bound to undergo change. This exchange of views raises interesting questions such as: (i) Is language a monolith to be locked in a specific grammatical system? (ii) Are the innovations inherent in linguistic growth to be denied validity?

KEYWORDS: Pāṇini, Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, *Mahābhārata*, grammar

The *Apāṇinīyapramāṇyasādhana* of Melputtūr Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, (hereinafter called Nārāyaṇa), is an interesting grammatical work of pre-modern times.¹ It challenges the orthodox view confining Sanskrit grammar to the discourses of the group of three sages (*trimuni*) consisting of Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali. In this work, Nārāyaṇa tries to establish that the non-Pāṇinian systems also have validity and relevance in determining the usage of words which are not attested in the mainstream grammar of Pāṇini. He makes use of all his arsenal to counter the arguments levelled against them.

Nārāyaṇa, whose life time is ascertained as the later half of the sixteenth century and the earlier half of the seventeenth century, is a celebrated scholar poet from Kerala, now chiefly remembered for his mellifluous devotional poem, *Nārāyaṇīya*, but whose contributions to grammar, Mīmāṃsā, Campū literature, and many other disciplines are also equally noteworthy (Rajendran 2008: 21–32). *Apāṇinīyapramāṇyasādhana* was written by Nārāyaṇa as a sequential work of *Prakriyāsarvasva*, his treatise on Sanskrit grammar. Iyer (1972: 24) describes *Prakriyāsarvasva* as “a comprehensive treatise on practical Sanskrit grammar explaining and illustrating the

¹ The text used here is the edition prepared with an English translation by E. R. Sreekrishna Sarma, appended to the *Prakriyāsarvasva* compiled by K. P. Narayana Pisharoti and ed. by M. S. Menon (1998).

entire bulk of the sūtras in Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and its essential ancillaries like the *Vārttikas*, *Paribhāṣās*, *Gaṇapāṭha*, *Dhātupāṭha* and *Uṇādi*." Houben (2014: 1) describes it as a Pāṇinian grammar of living Sanskrit, since it does not confine itself to the Sanskrit language as used and accepted only by the three sages, Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali, but also by later authors of Sanskrit tradition. In this work, Nārāyaṇa, in order to sanctify many un-Pāṇinian forms widely accepted in Sanskrit, has drawn material also from other systems, like the *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharāṇa* of Bhoja, the *Mugdhabodhavyākaraṇa* of Bopadeva, *Candravyākaraṇa* ascribed to Candra and the *Śākaṭāyana-vyākaraṇa*. Understandably, the work drew sharp criticism from several quarters as not all were happy with this eclectic approach. The introductory verse of Nārāyaṇa's *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana* states:

O Vainateya! I, the same Nārāyaṇa, [ie. the author of *Prakriyāsarvasva*], now depending upon Sudarśana, [a friendly grammarian from the Cola country] am going to stand after attacking your view [like Lord Viṣṇu, holding the Sudarśana wheel in his hand, mounts on the wings of Garuḍa].²

From this, it can be surmised that Vainateya, a grammarian from the Cola country could not digest the liberties taken by Nārāyaṇa with the Pāṇinian grammar and had severely criticised the author on that count. But it also appears that another scholar, called Sudarśana, seems to have upheld the views of Nārāyaṇa. This raging controversy prompted Nārāyaṇa to write *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana*, a short monograph composed in the format of a letter addressed to Vainateya, his adversary. He also asks two scholars, Someśvaradīkṣita and Yajñanārāyaṇa, to act as arbitrators in this dispute (Sreekrishna Sarma 1998: 9). At the outset of his work, Nārāyaṇa summarises his arguments to be elaborated later in the treatise:

² *sudarśanakarāṇāmbī so 'ham nārāyaṇo 'dhunā |
vainateya bhavatpakṣam ākramya sthātum ārabhe* || (Sreekrishna Sarma 1998: 1).

Some say that what is said by Pāṇini is authoritative, not other treatises like those of Candra, Bhoja and others; this is most silly; for there cannot be baseless utterances on the part of those [Candra, Bhoja etc.] who are profusely learned; there could be variation in recognition on the basis of qualities. How was it before Pāṇini? Pāṇini himself quotes what was said by his predecessors; even if there is a conflict, an option is to be presumed (ibid.: 10).³

This interesting verse has its own share of ambiguities, but the points it make are clear: (i) the argument that what is said by Pāṇini alone is authoritative and other grammars like that of Candra and Bhoja and others are not authoritative is flimsy; (ii) learned people cannot make baseless statements; (iii) if majority of people have accepted Pāṇini, it is simply a recognition of the merits of his grammar;⁴ (iv) we have to speculate regarding the state of affairs in pre-Pāṇinian phase of grammar;⁵ (v) Pāṇini himself reproduces in his work what is said by his predecessors; (vi) if there is a conflict between Pāṇini and others, we can take all these views as optional. The treatise as a whole is an elaboration of this preamble.

This work, coming as it is from a follower of the Pāṇinian tradition, assumes importance as a document suggesting a pluralistic approach to linguistic usage. It has been a common practice of several literary critics and commentators in Sanskrit to condemn the usage of even

³ *pāṇinyuktam pramāṇam na tu punar aparam candrabhojādīśāstram ke 'py āhus tal laghiṣṭham na khalu bahuvīdām asti nirmūlavākyaṃ | bahvaṅgīkārabhedo bhavati guṇavaśāt pāṇineḥ prāk katham vā pūrvoktim pāṇinīś cāpy anuvadati vīrodhe 'pi kalpyo vikalpah ||* (ibid.).

⁴ This is as per the subsequent explanation of Nārāyaṇa himself in section 18. See Sreekrishna Sarma 1998: 4.

⁵ Houben (2014: 9) interprets *pāṇineḥ prāk katham vā* in a different way: “And how was the situation (with regard to linguistic correctness) before Pāṇini? (Even without Pāṇini’s grammar people could speak correct Sanskrit.)”. Of course this is valid, but I believe the context suggests that Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa was referring to the Pre-Pāṇinian scenario where people were guided by the earlier grammarians, not the Pre-Pāṇinian linguistic scenario as such where the conduct of *śiṣṭas* was the sole guide.

established writers for violating norms stipulated by Pāṇini. The note of caution contained in *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana* is that before passing such a judgement, it has to be ascertained if there is grammatical sanction for such usages in other systems. Thus, *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana* raises interesting questions such as: (i) whether language is to be a monolith that must be locked in a specific grammatical system; and (ii) whether usages, which could also include innovations inherent in linguistic growth and unattested by the Pāṇinian grammar are to be denied validity.

With regard to the first question, the attitude of Nārāyaṇa is that Indian grammatical tradition has always been pluralistic. As seen already, he speculates about the status of Sanskrit language before Pāṇini (*pāṇineḥ prāk*)⁶ and he is convinced of the fact that even before his time there must have been some grammatical systems in vogue which ensured correctness of linguistic usage. It would not be proper to imagine that in the Pre-Pāṇinian era, grammatically correct words were not used simply because the work of Pāṇini was not yet available at that time. Nārāyaṇa exposes the shallowness of this position on the basis of several ingenious arguments. Firstly, he alludes to the purposes of grammar mentioned by Patañjali, among which re-contextualisation (*ūha*) of Vedic mantras is very important. The Vedas do not give mantras in all genders and with all case endings. Therefore, in the Vedic ritual, it may be necessary for one to use a mantra given in reference to a particular deity for another deity and for this, suitable linguistic modifications to the mantra by way of substitution, changes of case endings, verbal endings etc. will be necessary. For this, grammatical knowledge is required (Deshpande 1993: 23). Nārāyaṇa contends that in the absence of grammar in the Pre-Pāṇinian times, it must be assumed that there would have been a confusion in the performance of Vedic rituals, which is an untenable assumption.

Another argument adduced by Nārāyaṇa is in all probability based on the maxim cited by Patañjali himself, with the description as “verses

⁶ Sreekrishna Sarma 1998: 2, 10.

called *bhrājāḥ*” (*bhrājāḥ nāma ślokāḥ*) to the effect that a person who is ignorant of the conjunction of words (*avāgyogavit*) gets vitiated.

*yas tu prayuñkte kuśalo viśeṣe śabdān yathāvad vyavahārakāle
so 'nantam āpnoti jayam paratra vāgyogavid duṣyati cāpaśabdaiḥ ||
(Vākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya 2)*

Describing this vitiation as going to hell itself, Nārāyaṇa discusses the implication of this pronouncement. We have to assume that either there were grammatical systems in the pre-Pāṇinian times or not. If there were no pre-Pāṇinian grammarians to guide language users, surely they would have got vitiated due to the usage of ungrammatical words. Such an assumption is absolutely unacceptable. The only way out to ward off such an assumption is to postulate that even before Pāṇini, there were grammarians indeed. This would entail the assumption that there could be authorities other than Pāṇini in Sanskrit grammar.

Thirdly, Nārāyaṇa alludes to another dictum of Patañjali that one becomes socially degraded (*mleccha*) if one utters incorrect words as in the case of *asuras* who mispronounced *he arayaḥ* as *helayo* and got succumbed as a result. If it were so, in the absence of any proper grammar in the pre-Pāṇinian times, everyone would have to be deemed as becoming degraded.

From all this, it can be surmised that Nārāyaṇa envisages a pre-Pāṇinian phase in the history of grammar in which all the linguistic functions related to Pāṇinian grammar were taken care of. He is convinced of the fact that Pāṇini himself was aware of such a phase as he mentions the views of earlier grammarians. It is well known that Pāṇini mentions ten other names in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and Cardona cautiously refers to them as “presumably grammarians” (Cardona 1976: 146). The names thus mentioned in *Aṣṭādhyāyī* are Āpiśālī, Kāśyapa, Gārgya, Gālava, Cakravarman, Bhāradvāja, Śākaṭāyana, Śākalya, Senaka and Sphoṭāyana. There is slight difference in the names mentioned by Nārāyaṇa: only Āpiśālī and Śākaṭāyana figure in his list, and additionally, Indra, Candra and Kāśartsni, not mentioned directly by

Pāṇini, are there. Nārāyaṇa concludes that though the Pāṇinian grammar is universally accepted because of its inherent qualities, it does not follow that other systems are worthless since even Pāṇini himself refers to previous authorities.

Such a position would appear to be upholding a pluralistic view of language and grammar in a true democratic spirit. It is tantamount to say that language is far more complex than any grammar which sets to describe it. Indeed, the language spectrum analysed by Nārāyaṇa includes works of many authoritative figures sanctioned by tradition, such as Vyāsa, Śaṅkarācārya and Vidyāraṇya, and poets such as Murāri, Sureśvara and Śrīharṣa who have occasionally used un-Pāṇinian forms. To illustrate, Śaṅkarācārya has used un-Pāṇinian *hūnet* in his *Prapañcasāra*.⁷ Murārimiśra, Sureśvarācārya, the Vedic votaries have used un-Pāṇinian words like *visrāma*.⁸ The author of *Naiṣadha* has used the un-Pāṇinian word *alpamedhasi*.⁹ According to Nārāyaṇa, Vidyāraṇya has accepted the authority of Śākaṭāyana in the use of *kathāpayati* in lieu of *kathayati* accepted by Pāṇini, though as per the text, Śākaṭāyana advocates *kathayati* in VI.2.200.¹⁰ Bopadeva etc. have used several words unaccepted by Pāṇini. Nārāyaṇa further contends that there are regional variations in the acceptance of grammatical schools. For example, northern votaries of the Veda accept Sārasvata grammar, while *Prakriyākaumudī* of Rāmacandra is accepted everywhere. Vedic scholars of the pre-Pāṇinian times have also accepted other grammars.

⁷ The form should be *juhuyāt*. Sreekrishna Sarma (1998: 11) points out that Śaṅkara also uses the Pāṇinian form *juhuyāt* in *Prapañcasāra* VI.91.

⁸ Sreekrishna Sarma (ibid.) takes this as a reference to Bhavabhūti. Though Nārāyaṇa does not mention it, both Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti have used the un-Pāṇinian form *visrāma*. Cf. Kālidāsa, *Abhijñānaśākuntala* II.40 (Williams 1876: 73). See also Bhavabhūti, *Uttararāmacarita* I.39 (Kale 2010: 36).

⁹ *naivālpamedhasi paṭo ruciratvam asya madhyesamin nivasato ripavas tṛṇāni utthānavān iha parābhavitum tarasvī śakyaḥ punar bhavati kena virodhināyam || Naiṣadhīyacarita*, XIII.13. Sreekrishna Sarma (1998: 12) points out that the form should be *alpamedhas* as per Pāṇini (V.4.122).

¹⁰ See Sreekrishna Sarma 1998: 12.

Nārāyaṇa is quite unhappy over the fact that the forms which are at variance with those prescribed by Pāṇini are dubbed as incorrect words (*apaśabdas*). He refers to a view whereby *apaśabda* is a shortened form of *a-pāṇiniyāśabda* which is tantamount to the position that the criterion determining the correctness of a word is whether it confirms to Pāṇinian norms or not (Sarma 1998: 13). He also quotes a passage which makes the deriding statement that Vyāsa has become “the very epitome of ungrammatical expression” (*vyāsaś tanmayatām gataḥ*) and indignantly refutes it, by pointing out that Pāṇini himself has committed grammatical errors in expressions like *ṛddhir ādaic*, which should have been *ṛddhir ādaik* as per the dictum *coḥ kuḥ* (VII.2.30)

Defending the usage of words which occur in the *Mahābhārata* and which are not sanctified by Pāṇini, an anonymous source quoted approvingly by Nārāyaṇa observes: “Could these gems of words, which the venerable Vyāsa took out of the ocean of grammar, be measured in the small puddle of Pāṇini”¹¹ (Sarma: 1998: 14)?

The verse is extremely significant from the point of view of linguistics, as it emphatically asserts the fact that the domain of language is much larger than any codified grammar describing it.

But actually, this assertion of the superiority of the epic Sanskrit over Pāṇinian grammar is problematic. Even if the *Mahābhārata* was to be regarded as a homogenous work that could be traced to a single author, there is no verifiable evidence to conclude that the author of the epic had made use of grammatical tradition of his times. On the other hand, a socio-linguistic analysis of the epic language would indicate that the transmission of the epic stories was carried out by Sūtas, a class of royal servants, who were originally charioteers and whose language was of a popular nature different from the language of the educated Brahmins (Burrow 2001: 51). Burrow points out that the transmission depended on an oral tradition very different from the fixed oral tradition like that of the Vedic school’s oral tradition. As

¹¹ *yāny ujjahāra bhagavān vyāso vyākaraṇāmbudheḥ
tāni kim padaratnāni bhānti pāṇinigoṣṭhade ||* (Sreekrishna Sarma 1998: 2).

a result, the language of the epic came to be approximated to the prevailing type of Middle Indo-Aryan. Burrow (ibid.: 52) documents the following main differences between this epic Sanskrit and the classical Sanskrit as epitomised by Pāṇini:

1. The distinction between the active and the middle forms of the verb gets blurred in the epic as in the expression *śrūyanti* ('are heard');
2. Confusion of gerunds ending in *tvā* and *ya*;
3. Unaugmented preterits occur;
4. Augmented forms are sometimes found with prohibitive particle as in *mā agamah*;
5. The particle *mā* is indiscriminately used with imperative (*mā bhava*), optative (*mā brūyād*), future (*mā drakṣyasi*) and so on;
6. The tenth class and the causative verbs make a middle participle in *ayāna* as in *codayāna* in lieu of the regular *codayamāna*;
7. The rules regulating *ati* and *anti* for the formation of feminine of present participles are not strictly observed.

Thus a linguistic issue regarding the limitation of a stratified grammar like that of Pāṇini in the face of linguistic change gets inevitably reframed as the question of the relative reliability of Vyāsa over Pāṇini in Nārāyaṇa's premodern discourse. The same is the case with the linguistic expressions of other authorities revered by tradition like Śaṅkara when they come into conflict with the prescriptions of Pāṇini.

This brings us to the larger question as to whether Nārāyaṇa accepted the notion of linguistic change in his perspective on grammar. Laddu (1974: 3) has convincingly argued that during the period of Pāṇini, Sanskrit was the means of communication in the ordinary usage, but it was not static over the period and the grammarians coming after Patañjali had their own contemporary Sanskrit as the basis of their observations. However, we find that Indian grammarians generally subscribed to the theology of eternal language in which a direct perspective on historical change is difficult to accommodate. As pointed out by Deshpande, in *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, Pāṇini had accommodated diachronic and synchronic features of the Sanskrit language (Deshpande 1993: 55); Pāṇini thus describes optional usages, marginal and preferred usages and dialectical usages. The language is thus

conceived as a “panchronic flatland with many subdomains” (ibid.: 55). However, later commentators fail to understand the full implication of Pāṇini’s references to various regions and different grammarians and simply take them as expressions of respect. It can be seen that Nārāyaṇa also does not seem to have accepted the notion of historical change. Language ever remains static; but earlier grammars are superseded or supplemented by new grammars which cover linguistic data overlooked in earlier treatises. He views successive grammars as attempts to include that what was left out or overlooked by the earlier grammarians. Thus, Pāṇini composed his grammar after consulting earlier treatises and usages; those points left out by him were explained by Kātyāyana and those overlooked by the later are explained by Patañjali. What is not said even by the last, is explained by Bhoja and others.¹²

The thrust of *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana*, however, is on the validation of the non-Pāṇinian grammatical systems. Nārāyaṇa demonstrates that there is no valid proof to establish that the non-Pāṇinian systems are unreliable. He maintains that neither the Vedas nor law-givers like Manu have stated that the non-Pāṇinian grammars are not authentic. Further, one cannot argue that the non-Pāṇinian systems are unreliable on the basis of the criterion that they are not accepted by the righteous for there seems to be no reliable criterion to determine who is the righteous and who is not. The opposite is true: a galaxy of illustrious individuals like Vyāsa and Śaṅkarācārya have accepted the non-Pāṇinian traditions in linguistic usage. Nārāyaṇa time and again invites our attention to the pre-Pāṇinian state of language. At that time, Pāṇini had definitely not composed his grammar yet. The pre-Pāṇinian Vedic votaries must have resorted to the grammatical treatises in vogue at that time. Nārāyaṇa also refers to the differences between

¹² e.g. *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana*: *tēnaivam eva vaktavyam dr̥ṣṭvā śāstraguṇān prayogasahitān prāyeṇa dākṣiṣuṭaḥ proce tasya tu vic̥yutāni katicit kātyāyanaḥ proktavān | tadbhraṣṭāny avadat patañjalimunis tenāpy anuktaṁ kvaci-llokāt prāktanaśāstrato 'pi jagadur vijñāya bhojādayaḥ ||* (Sreekrishna Sarma 1998: 6).

Pāṇini and the Prātiśākhya texts, which deal with phonetics in great detail. Prātiśākhyas are accepted by the followers of Pāṇini as well. This shows that even those who follow Pāṇini sometimes have to accept non-Pāṇinian sources. Further, Nārāyaṇa contends that Pāṇini has accepted many technical terms like *ān* and *auṇ* (as in *āni cāpaḥ* and *auṇa āpaḥ*) from the traditional grammar which he would not have done had he believed that they were invalid.

Thus, we can see that in *Apāṇinīyaprāmāṇyasādhana*, what Nārāyaṇa tries to reject is the notion of one grammar one language. It can be seen that he adapts a diachronic perspective for grammar, and refers to grammars composed before Pāṇini. But such a perspective is absent in the case of his concept of language as he does not accept the view that new grammars are necessitated by the need of giving sanction to newly formed words. His concept is that of a language whose some aspects are analysed by Pāṇini, and he believes that other grammatical treatises are necessary to validate forms not covered by Pāṇini. What he envisages is a linguistic scenario in which the non-Pāṇinian usages of the established and reputed authors are not dubbed as ungrammatical. If sanction for such usages is found in the non-Pāṇinian treatises, they should not be rejected but accommodated as optional usages.

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Reparsing Pāṇini

ABSTRACT: The order in which rules are applied in Pāṇinian derivations was traditionally explained by four main principles: (a) the order of enumeration in the grammar *para* ‘later’ > *pūrva* ‘earlier’, (b) constituent structure: *antaraṅga* ‘internal’ > *bahiraṅga* ‘external’, (c) the interaction of operations: *nitya* ‘persistent’ > *anitya* ‘non-persistent’, (d) generality: *apavāda* ‘exception’ > *utsarga* ‘general case’. Modern Pāṇini interpretation has much reduced the role of (a) and (b). The theory developed by S. D. Joshi and his collaborators relies on generalized versions of (c) and (d), respectively called the *siddha*-principle and generalized blocking. Rajpopat (2025) proposes a different version of generalized blocking, and replaces (c) by a completely new principle. I argue that (1) Rajpopat’s version of generalized blocking is ill-defined, (2) his new principle yields the wrong results in a large class of cases, (3) his criticism of the Joshi approach is misguided, and (4) a Joshi-type approach accounts both for the cases that Rajpopat’s theory gets right and for the cases that it does not get right. I conclude with an argument that the Aṣṭādhyāyī and the Prātiśākhya follow exactly the same basic approach, and that the vast differences between their analyses are the result of their different scope.

KEYWORDS: Pāṇini, Aṣṭādhyāyī, paribhāṣās, rule ordering, *siddha*-principle, *para*-principle, Joshi, Rajpopat.

1 The revisionist turn

The Mahābhāṣya was long valued mainly as the indispensable authority on the structure and interpretation of the Aṣṭādhyāyī. Thieme called Patañjali “the great guide”, without whose help “even indigenous interpretation may fall short of a real comprehension of Pāṇini’s phrases” (1935: 60). But Kielhorn (1887) had already shown conclusively that Patañjali had no direct *paramparā* line of connection to Pāṇini, and the Aṣṭādhyāyī was beginning to be studied as a distinct stage of an evolving science of language. That meant delving more deeply into its principles, into its connections to ritual, philosophy, Vedic exegesis and orthoepic diaskeuasis (Bronkhorst 1981), and into the discontinuities and innovations of the tradition.¹ It also resulted in a renewed interest in Patañjali as not simply a commentator and interpreter of Pāṇini but a remarkable figure with a distinctive philosophical agenda of his own (Bronkhorst 2004).

Thanks to the practice of verbatim oral transmission, the text of the Aṣṭādhyāyī has been transmitted rather accurately. The biggest overt change was the loss of the *svarita* accent that originally marked headings, which could not survive because it disappeared from the language itself. Other audible modifications of the actual recited text since Kātyāyana appear to consist only of additions and changes in single words and some added rules, mostly imported vārttikas and gaṇas. Inaudible changes in the text involved dividing original single rules into two (*yogavibhāga*), misdividing rules (e.g. Kiparsky 1979: 66), and discreetly inserting covert *anubandhas* in places where they are unpronounceable and always deleted (such as *G*, *Y*, *Ḍ* in *gkñiti*, *gkṣṇu*, *ycuñcup*, *atḍ*, Kiparsky 2007). Systematic study of the syntax of the rules, in particular of the use and placement of the particle *ca* (Joshi and Bhate 1983) and of the principles of *anuvṛtti* (Kiparsky

¹ Houben (2012) cites Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, a heterodox grammarian contemporary with Bhaṭṭojī Dikṣita, who denied the divinity of Pāṇini and insisted that non-Pāṇinian grammarians such as Candra are also authoritative.

1979: 45–47, 154–5, Joshi and Bhate 1984), has revealed other likely textual changes of the inaudible type.

The most consequential changes were not textual but interpretive. The scope of *anuvṛtti* was often enlarged (*maṇḍūkapluti*), and some rules were completely repurposed without any change in wording whatsoever.² New *paribhāṣās* were formulated, and the *gaṇapāṭha* and *dhātupāṭha* were augmented with later vocabulary. The stylistic information about usage preferences that is conveyed by *vā* ‘preferably’ versus *vibhāṣā* ‘preferably not’ (= *na vā*) was lost, and remained completely unknown until it was rediscovered by collating the optional rules with the actual usage of Pāṇini himself, of his contemporaries, and — for the specifically Vedic rules — of the Vedic texts (Kiparsky 1979).

Most of the innovations were attempts to reconcile perceived mismatches between the grammar and the evolving language. As the vocabulary and even the syntax changed, the grammar continued to be held responsible for the new usage. The desire to derive post-Pāṇinian forms from Pāṇini’s grammar drove Patañjali and his successors to stretch the rules beyond what they had originally been intended to account for. They did it with astonishing ingenuity, though with some cost to the integrity of the system. Fortunately, the changes in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, as far as we can tell, did not involve drastic reorganization of its rules, such as moving them from one part of the grammar to another. Moreover, the changes were well-intentioned and intelligent: none were entirely unmotivated, none created more problems than they were intended to solve. This point will become important in section 3.

Given the discontinuities in the transmission of the grammar and its commentatorial apparatus, and the fixes intended to fill gaps in

² For example, 3.4.1 *dhātusaṃbandhe pratyayāḥ* is traditionally understood as a *vidhi* rule concerning relative tense, such as the past-in-the-future in *agniṣṭomayājy asya putro bhavitā* ‘his son will have performed the *agniṣṭoma*’. Joshi (1971) made a persuasive case that it is actually intended to be an *adhikāra* over the following block of rules, which introduce dependencies between verbs in infinitive and absolutive constructions.

coverage, it is worth re-examining the grammar from the ground up to seek a simpler and more elegant set of principles as its basis than the traditionally received one. From that perspective, the interpretation of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* has become a project of elucidating Pāṇini's original intentions, the principles behind it, its strengths and weaknesses, and (for linguists at least) learning from its achievements and insights. The re-examination of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*'s structure and the principles behind it in terms of its own internal logic, and in the context of the philosophical ideas in its background, is still ongoing, and yielding increasingly radical reinterpretations. Although Patañjali is no longer seen as a first-hand source of information about Pāṇini's intentions, he is so to speak the founder of the field of Pāṇini studies, whose subtlety and extraordinary command of the material few if any modern scholars can hope to match.

The pivotal figure in this turn was in my opinion S.D. Joshi. After investing decades on a *Mahābhāṣya* translation and commentary, he abandoned it and embarked at the age of 65 on a second lifetime project, prefaced by this heartbreaking but courageous announcement: "When we started the *Mahābhāṣya* project, our idea was that it could be only through Patañjali that we would be able to understand Pāṇini better. However, we have now come to the conclusion that, apart from introducing a great deal of extraneous material in the interpretation of the *Pāṇinisūtras*, Patañjali is often at a loss to construe Pāṇini's intention. . . . These and similar considerations have led us to terminate our *Mahābhāṣya* project, and to start a new project, namely, the translation and critical explanation of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*." (Joshi and Roodbergen 1991–2013, Vol. I, Preface, referred to as AP below). Fourteen volumes of this work appeared.

2 The principles underlying the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*

The traditional understanding of Pāṇini's grammar posited four main principles for prioritizing rule applications in derivations:

- (1) a. Order of enumeration in the grammar: *para* (later) > *pūrva* (earlier)
- b. Constituent structure: *antaraṅga* (internal) > *bahiraṅga* (external)
- c. Interaction of operations: *nitya* (persistent) > *anitya* (non-persistent)
- d. Generality: *apavāda* (exception) > *utsarga* (general case)

Modern Pāṇini scholarship has modified this picture substantially. The first two conditions have become much diminished in function and scope, while the other two have been generalized, and taken on a more important role in the system. There has been a surprising amount of convergence in this direction among researchers working independently, with vigorous debate continuing on the particulars.

The first break with the traditional doctrine was the demotion of rule 1.4.2 *vipratīṣedhe paraṃ kāryam*. It was traditionally thought to resolve conflicts between rules throughout the grammar in favor of the rule that is listed later in the grammar. Faddegon (1936: 36) was the first to challenge this view, remarking that rule 1.4.2 is not a system-wide *paribhāṣā* but restricted to the specific section 1.4–2.2 that it heads. His student Buiskool concurred.³ The limitation on the scope of *paratva* was endorsed by Scharfe (1961: 50), Shefts (1961: 28), Subrahmanyam 1999, among others, and confirmed by Cardona (1970: 41, 1976: 190, 1997: 405, 407), as well as by Joshi and Roodbergen throughout their edition and commentary of Pāṇini (1991–2013), which I will refer to as AP from here on. In Rajpopat (2025) not even this much of its meaning is retained, and the rule receives an altogether different function, to which I return below.

³ “The view that e.g. in **vr̥kabhyas e* is substituted for *a* by VII.3.103 in supersession of 102 (lengthening of *a*) because the former rule is *para* in regard to the latter, cannot be admitted since with reference to the position before *bh* 103 (plural!) is evidently a *restriction* on 102.” (1939: 40)

Next on the chopping block was the *antaraṅga*-paribhāṣā. It was argued that the *antaraṅga-bahiraṅga* relation does not hold word-internally. It is replaced by a much weaker principle that just prioritizes word-internal rule application over application across word boundaries (Joshi and Kiparsky 1979: 23–40, Kiparsky 1982: 77–120, Joshi and Roodbergen 1993, AP IV: 32–3, Roodbergen 2008: 32–2, Kiparsky 2009: 235–40, Kiparsky 2022, and independently Rajpopat 2025, 5.6.⁴). In other words, the *antaraṅga*-paribhāṣā is replaced by (2):

- (2) WORD-INTEGRITY PRINCIPLE: Rules apply first within words and then to combinations of words.

This revision also eliminates the various minor paribhāṣās devised to curb the unwanted effects of the *antaraṅga*-paribhāṣā (Pbh. 51–55, among others). As Joshi and Roodbergen put it, “the assumption that *antaraṅgatva* holds internally is the root cause of confusion in Sanskrit grammar.” (AP II: xiii).

Once it became clear that most rule conflicts are not resolved throughout the grammar by these two principles, neither in favor of later rules over earlier rules nor in favor of *antaraṅga* rules over *bahiraṅga* rules, the hunt was on for more valid alternative principles to establish priority between conflicting rules. Two comprehensive proposals to this effect were put forward. The first was worked out by Joshi and his collaborators, the second by Rajpopat (2025).

Of the two revisionist projects, the former is based on the other great pair of asymmetries recognized in the traditional interpretive doctrine, namely (1) the distinction between regular cases and exceptions, or more broadly between general and special rules, (*utsarga*

⁴ Rejection of *antaraṅga*-principle on pp. 14, 129, the Word-integrity principle on p. 142: “. . . according to me, in the Pāṇinian system all possible rules that can be applied while constructing a word ought to be applied before the word is considered within the context of the sentence. In other words, these rules, which contribute towards the construction of a word, cannot be applied to the word after it enters the sentence.”

and *apavāda*), including the related concepts of *sāmarthya* and *niravakāśatva*, and (2) the distinction between *nitya* and *anitya* rules. Unlike the *para* and *antaraṅga* principles, which were downgraded or abolished, these concepts were systematically extended. Generalized versions of both of them became the main regulators of rule interaction in the entire grammar. I'll call the first *generalized blocking*; the second is the *siddha*-principle.

Generalized blocking is already invoked in the work of Buiskool, as in his remark quoted in fn. 3, though he did not call it that, nor did he formulate it explicitly. But it seems that he meant it in the modern sense as holding between rules which share elements, one of which has additional conditions that apply specifically in relation to a particular case, even when there is not a strict subset relation between their respective domains. The classic presentation of it is Cardona (1970), who called it limited blocking (not the most felicitous term in my view, since it is a generalization of blocking (the *utsarga-apavāda* principle). It was taken a step further by Pataskar 1985, and systematically applied by Joshi and Roodbergen in a series of monographs and throughout their 14-volume *Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini* (AP, 1991–2007). They demonstrated its effectiveness to resolve most of the residual rule conflicts that were left unexplained when the *para* and *antaraṅga* principles were liquidated (see e.g. AP VI: 96). Their generalized blocking principle says that rules that apply to specific items have priority over rules that apply to a general class of items that subsumes them. The rules do not have to be adjacent or under the same heading, and their application need not even be mutually incompatible.⁵ For example, 6.4.111 is an *apavāda* of 6.4.119 because it mentions the verbal base *as-* (AP IX.67). 6.4.47 is an *apavāda* to 7.2.3, because it applies specifically to *bhrasj*, whereas 7.2.3 (*vṛddhi*) is generally applicable (AP IV: 145), e.g. *a-bhrj-s-ī-t* → *abhārjsūt* → *abhārksīt*. In *akṣi-au* the special rule 7.1.77 *ī ca dvivacane*, which

⁵ The two rules can even make the same change. For example, *i* → *y* by 6.1.81 *ino yaṇ* (*aci*) is an “exception” to *i* → *y* by 6.1.77 *iko yaṇ aci* (IX: 238).

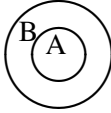
replaces the final *-i* of Vedic *asthi*, *dadhi*, *sakthi*, *akṣi* by $\acute{i}$ (*akṣi*-au $\xrightarrow{7.1.77}$ *akṣī*-au $\xrightarrow{6.1.102\dots}$ *akṣī*) has priority over the general rule 7.1.73 *iko'ci vibhaktau*, which would add the augment *nUM* to the stem.⁶

Another generalization of the *utsarga/apavāda* principle, related to *anavakāśatva*, is *collective blocking* (Kiparsky 1982: 115, 1991: 358), traditionally called *bādhyasāmānyacintā*, also used in *nyāya*. The idea is that blocking is induced by a domain inclusion relationship between a rule and a *set* of rules:

- (3) *Collective blocking*: If the domain of rule A is properly included in the domains of a set of rules $\mathcal{R} = \{R_1, R_2, \dots R_n\}$, A blocks (has priority over) each of the rules in $\mathcal{R}$.

So rule A blocks B in (4a), and it blocks both B and C in (4b):

- (4) Blocking



a. Regular blocking



b. Collective blocking

For example, 6.1.77 *iko yaṇ aci* and 6.1.101 *akaḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ* can be taken together with a third rule, 6.1.87 *guṇa* contraction:

- (5) a. 6.1.77 *iko yaṇ aci* ‘*i*, *u*, *r*, *l* (*iK*) $\rightarrow$ *y*, *v*, *r*, *l* (*yaN*) before a vowel (*aC*)’

⁶ Further examples: 6.1.58 *tṛjdiṣor jhali* > 7.3.85 *pugantalaghūpadhasya ca* (*draṣṭum*); 7.2.1 *sici vṛddhiḥ parasmaipadeṣu* > 7.3.84 *sārva-dhātukārdhahātukayoḥ* (*acaiṣīr*); 6.1.87 *ato guṇe* > 6.1.101 *akaḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ* (*pacanti*).

- b. 6.1.101 *akāḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ* (84 *ekāḥ pūrvaparayoḥ*) 77 *aci* ‘*aK* (*a, i, u, ṛ, l*) and a following homogeneous vowel are (both) replaced by a long vowel’
- c. 6.1.87 *ād guṇaḥ* (77 *aci*) ‘*a* + a vowel is replaced by *guṇa*’

Together, the three form a blocking set, with *savarṇadīrgha* as blocker (note that they all fall under *aci* from 6.1.77). Collective blocking applies because the domain of *savarṇadīrgha* is wholly included in the domain of *guṇa* and glide-formation taken together, for of the possible like-vowel sequences, *a + a* also falls under *guṇa*, and all others (*i + i*, *u + u*, *ṛ + ṛ* . . .) also fall under glide-formation.

Similarly, wherever rule 6.1.51 *ner aniṭi* is applicable, another *aṅga* rule is also applicable, and 6.4.51 blocks all the rules in that set. It includes *guṇa*, *vṛddhi*, glide formation, and other rules. Likewise, wherever rule 6.4.48 *ato lopāḥ* is applicable, some other rule is also applicable, and 6.4.48 blocks all the rules in that set.

Conceptually akin to generalized blocking is the idea that word-building rules such as reduplication and augmentation have priority over substitution rules (allomorphy or phonology). For example, in noun inflection the augment *nUM* is always inserted prior to application of any general *guṇa*, *vṛddhi*, or other stem-changing rule, and so is the augment *āT* in verb inflection. JR have applied this principle systematically with success (AP IX: 15, 35, 193, 234, 254, X: 24, 215–217, XIII: 52). It is crucially subordinated to the *siddha*-principle, in that reduplication and augmentation “wait” for the phonology to produce the actual environment (AP IX: 84, XII: 138, 141).

JR go further in AP IV: 34, where they suggest an order of application based on a three-way rule classification: (a) word-building rules, (b) morphological rules (rules whose application is determined by a stem-suffix context), (c) phonological rules. A similar rule hierarchy has been independently suggested by Scharf (2009, 2011), with semantics added as a fourth layer at the top.

For example, in *vāri-Ñi* two mutually exclusive rules become applicable simultaneously:

- (6) a. 7.1.73 *iko'ci vibhaktau* ‘the augment *nUM* is inserted after the final vowel of a neuter stem ending in an *-iK* vowel (*-i*, *-u*, *-ṛ* . . .) before a vocalic case ending’.
- b. 7.3.111 *gher ñiti* ‘final *-i*, *-u* are replaced by *guṇa* (*-e*, *-o*) in a neuter stem before case endings marked with *Ñ*’.

In JR’s typology 7.1.73 is a word-building rule, 7.3.111 is a substitution rule, and the former prevails over the latter. So *vāri-Ñi* → *vārin-Ñi* (→ *vāriṇi*), not **vāre-Ñi* (→ **vārayi*). Cf. Pbh. 55 *vārṇād āṅgaṃ balīyaḥ*.

The generalization of the *nitya*-principle as the *siddha*-principle (Joshi and Kiparsky 1979, Kiparsky 1982) has been more controversial, although in my opinion it is empirically at least as well supported and formally better defined than generalized blocking.

(7) The *siddha*-principle

If rule A affects the operation of rule B, but not conversely, rule A has priority.

J&R applied and refined it in a series of monographs (Joshi 1981; Joshi and Roodbergen 1987, 1990) and throughout their AP (e.g. IV: 17–20, IX: 87, XII: 227). They distinguish between two types of rule conflict: *one-way* conflict (resolved by the *siddha*-principle) and *two-way* conflict (mutual blocking). A one-way conflict obtains if the application of rule A would affect the way rule B applies (or would make it entirely inapplicable), while the application of rule B would have no effect on how rule A applies. A two-way conflict obtains when each rule would affect the way the other applies (*tulyabalatva*). Their core idea is that one-way conflicts in the Aṣṭādhyāyī are resolved by the *siddha*-principle, and two-way conflicts are resolved by generalized blocking (AP IV: 35, VIII: 65, IX: 87). Unlike the *nitya*-principle, the *siddha*-principle works also to prioritize environment-*changing* rules — not just environment-*destroying* ones. In other words, a rule may affect the operation of another rule either by removing its environment

or by modifying the environment. Intuitively, the *siddha*-principle says that rules should interact as much as possible.

There are several ways in which one could implement the *siddha*-principle, all of which maximize *siddha* relations in derivations, but to different extents. We could assume that the *siddha*-principle applies at each point in a derivation to determine which of the rules that is applicable at that point should take effect. Or we could assume that it scans entire candidate derivations and chooses the one in which *siddha*-relations are maximized. There is some evidence that the *siddha*-principle has the latter, crucially global “lookahead” character. It comes from the close examination of Pāṇinian derivations and from the tell-tale wording of some of the rules. An example is the different treatment of *agāt* ‘went’ (3.Sg. Aorist) and *āyan* ‘went’ (3.Pl. Imperfect). The underlying vocalic root *i* is replaced by *y* in *ā-y-an*, and by suppletive *gā* in *a-gā-t*, thereby coming to begin with a consonant in both forms. By 6.4.71–2 *luṇlaṇlṛṇkṣv aḍ udāttaḥ*, *āḍ ajādīnām*, the past tense augment is *a-* before a consonant and *ā-* before a vowel. The global *siddha*-principle dictates that this distribution should be checked *after* *i* is replaced by *gā* and *y*, predicting a short augment *a-* in both forms. This is correct for *agāt*:

$$(8) \ i \xrightarrow{3.2.115} i-luṇ \xrightarrow{3.4.78} i-ti \xrightarrow{3.4.100} i-t \xrightarrow{2.4.45} gā-t \xrightarrow{6.4.71} a-gā-t$$

The point is that the context of augment insertion is there already at the stages *i-luṇ* → *i-tiP* → *i-t*, but the *siddha*-principle correctly tells the augment rule to hold off inserting the augment until its final context *gā* is in place, thereby maximizing *siddha* relations over the derivation. By the same token, however, the extended *siddha*-principle gives the wrong result for *āyan*, which has to get *ā-*, as if the root was still vocalic. With this in mind, Pāṇini has put both relevant rules, 6.4.72 *āḍ ajādīnām* and 6.4.81 *īṇo yaṇ* (but *not* 2.4.45 *īṇo gā luṇi*!) into the special section headed by 6.4.22 *asiddhavad atrā bhāt*, which states that all rules in this section are as if *asiddha* with respect to each other. This heading sets aside the *siddha*-principle and tells us to “pretend” that the root still begins with a vowel, ensuring that the augment *ā-* is

selected *as if* the root vowel had not been replaced by y. (The derivation in (9) again skips a few steps for the sake of perspicuity.)

- (9) $i \xrightarrow{3.2.115} i-la\bar{n} \xrightarrow{3.4.78} i-an$ (up to this point, the desired augment $\bar{a}$ could be derived by 6.4.72 $\bar{a}\dot{d} aj\bar{a}d\bar{i}n\bar{a}m$) $\xrightarrow{6.4.81} y-an \xrightarrow{6.4.72} \bar{a}-y-an$ (in virtue of 6.4.22)

Here we see Pāṇini using the extended *siddha*-principle in constructing his grammar. The argument rests not just on this or any particular example, but on a general observation: rules have been put under the scope of 6.4.22 and 8.2.1 *only* in order to defeat the *siddha*-principle. Moreover, since the inclusion of some rules in those sections is justified *only* by the global *siddha*-principle, that is the version that Pāṇini must have worked with.

In practice, the *asiddha* relation on operations is a way to restrict the relative order in which the rules that enjoin those operations take effect. The restriction “A is *asiddha* with respect to B” has the same import as the restriction “B and A are applied in that order” would have.

3 Rajpopat 2025

3.1 A new theory

Much of Rajpopat’s framework is familiar and widely accepted. He builds on the modern near-consensus that the *antaraṅga-bahiraṅga* relation does not apply within words, whereas word-internal operations do precede operations across word boundaries. He rejects the idea that rule 1.4.2 *vipratishedhe paraṁ kāryam* prioritizes later (*para*) operations over earlier ones. He adopts a generalized blocking principle along the lines of Pataskar 1985 and Joshi and Roodbergen, as well as the distinction between one-way and two-way rule conflict.⁷

⁷ The publisher deserves thanks for putting out this volume and giving it plenty of media coverage. Unfortunately the production is reader-unfriendly: no index

But Rajpopat’s main thesis is completely new and even shocking. It gives an entirely new function for 1.4.2 (the “perfect rule” of the book’s title), with new meanings for both *vipratishedha* and *para* in it, upending the accepted view of how rules are prioritized. These are remarkable claims, and they require commensurate evidence. Although a version of this work has been publicized since 2022, it has for some reason not received much attention yet from specialists. I am aware of only two serious reviews of it, or rather of the Ph.D. dissertation that the book is based on: Scharf (2022) and Bodas (2022), both of them unpublished. They are highly critical, but they are more concerned with flaws in Rajpopat’s analyses of specific examples than with the larger issues raised by the book, or with comparing it to other approaches.

Rajpopat introduces a distinction between two types of rule interaction: Same Operand Interaction (SOI), where two rules are applicable to the same operand at the same point in the derivation, and Different Operand Interaction (DOI), where two rules are applicable to different operands at the same point in the derivation. He claims that Pāṇini’s term *vipratishedha* refers to DOI (not to incompatibility in general), and that his rule 1.4.2 *vipratishedhe paraṃ kāryam* resolves cases of DOI by giving priority to the right-hand side (*para*) operation. Moreover, he claims that Pāṇini deploys a generalized blocking principle, not stated in his grammar but part of the *sūtra* tradition, which resolves SOI in favor of the more specific rule.

To show how this works, let’s look at the simple derivation *deva-bhis* → *devaiḥ* ‘god’ (instr.pl.). Pāṇini’s rule 7.1.9 *ato bhis aḥ* replaces *bhis* by *aḥ* after a stem ending in *a*, superseding 7.3.103 *bahuvacane jhaly et*, which is also applicable here and would replace final *a* by *e* before a plural case ending beginning with a *jhal* consonant (an obstruent), to yield the wrong form **devebhis*. The modern consensus

of rules, no index of technical terms, no index of examples, endnotes instead of footnotes. I found myself constantly flipping around in the text in search of particular parts of the tightly framed argument. In the age of computer typography footnotes are so easy to typeset that there is simply no excuse for using endnotes in a work where they convey crucial content.

is that *ais* $\rightarrow$ *bhis* supersedes *a* $\rightarrow$ *e* because it is an exception to it (Cardona 1997:405, AP X:30). But this analysis is unavailable in Rajpopat's theory. The two rules operate on different elements, so this is a case of DOI, and hence of *vipratīṣedha* (in his special sense). Therefore the competition between the rules must be resolved by 1.4.2 in favor of the *para* operation 7.1.9. It is actually the earlier rule in the order of the Aṣṭādhyāyī, but that is irrelevant because by Rajpopat's new interpretation *para* in 1.4.2 does not mean 'the later rule', but 'the rightmost operand', which in the case at hand is *bhis* rather than *a*.

Your head may be spinning by now, but I hope you appreciate how novel and intriguing these ideas are. In what follows I will examine Rajpopat's theory of SOI and DOI rule interactions. My conclusion, sadly, is (1) that Rajpopat's theory of SOI interactions is ill-defined, and (2) that his theory of DOI interaction is wrong, and that the *siddha*-principle and generalized blocking together account for both for the cases that Rajpopat's theory gets right and for the cases that it does not get right.

3.2 SOI cases

A generalized blocking relation does a lot of work in Rajpopat's theory, and he takes some pains to illustrate how it works. The idea is to break down rules into elementary subrules, and then to compare the matching pairs of subrules that are relevant in the derivation at hand in order to determine which of them is more specific. Unfortunately we are not given rules or instructions for establishing a generalized blocking relation, but asked by the author to intuit the procedure from examples.

I illustrate Rajpopat's method with the derivation $\bar{r} + \acute{S}aP + tiP \rightarrow tarati$ 'crosses' (3.Sg.). Two rules compete here. The first is 7.3.84 *sārvadhātukārdhahātukayoḥ* (82 *guṇaḥ*), which is applicable to the class of short or long simple vowels *i*, *u*, *r*, *l* before a *sārvadhātuka* or *ārdhahātuka* suffix not marked with *K* or *Ṇ*. The second is 7.1.100 *ṛta iddhātoḥ*, which turns root-final $\bar{r}$ to *ir* (before any affix). This is not a case of *vipratīṣedha* (in Rajpopat's terminology), because both rules

apply to the same operand (SOI). Therefore the new *para*-principle does not apply here, and blocking should cause the more specific of the two rules to take effect. What we want is $t\bar{r} + \acute{S}aP + tiP \rightarrow t\acute{a}rati$ (contrast $t\bar{r} + \acute{S}a + tiP \rightarrow t\acute{ir}\acute{a}ti$ with $\acute{S}a$, which is $\acute{N}it$ by 1.2.4; both forms are frequent in usage). We break down the rules into subrules as in (10), pick out the relevant subrules (boldfaced), establish on that basis that 7.3.84 is the special rule, which therefore has preference over 7.1.100.

- (10) a. 7.3.84
 $\bar{r}$ + non-*Kit*, non-*Nit* *sārvadhātuka* or *ārdhadhātuka* affix
 other vowels + non-*Kit*, non-*Nit* *sārvadhātuka*
 or *ārdhadhātuka* affix
- b. 7.1.100
 $\bar{r}$ + *sārvadhātuka* or *ārdhadhātuka* affix

But it looks like we have stacked the deck here. Rule (10a) 7.3.84 has been made a special rule by singling out the relevant operand $\bar{r}$ as a special case (boldfaced) and setting aside the other operands to which 7.3.84 is applicable as being irrelevant. But by parity that procedure should also be applied to the other rule 7.1.100, by singling out its relevant context “non-*Kit*, non-*Nit*” as a special case, while the other suffixes before which 7.1.100 is applicable are set aside as being irrelevant. I have done that in (11), again with the relevant subrules boldfaced.

- (11) a. 7.3.84
 $\bar{r}$ + non-*Kit*, non-*Nit* *sārvadhātuka* or *ārdhadhātuka* affix
 other vowel + non-*Kit*, non-*Nit* *sārvadhātuka* or
ārdhadhātuka affix
- b. 7.1.100
 $\bar{r}$ + non-*Kit*, non-*Nit* *sārvadhātuka* or *ārdhadhātuka* affix
 $\bar{r}$ + other affix

It seems that neither rule is more special than the other, and we are left with no explanation for why 7.3.84 blocks 7.1.100 in the domain

where they intersect. The vowels to which 7.1.100 applies are a proper subset of the set of vowels to which 7.3.84 applies, while the suffixes before which 7.3.84 applies are a proper subset of the ones before which 7.1.100 applies. The fact that we get *táрати* and not **tíрати* in (10) does not emerge from the subset relations, but from the decision to privilege one subset relation while suppressing the other. In other words, it construes the competition as being between two rules about the treatment of $\bar{r}$ before suffixes, and not as being between two rules about the treatment of vowels before non-*Kit*/*Ñit* suffixes. If the facts were the other way round, the procedure could “explain” that outcome too, by writing the subrules like this:

- (12) a. 7.3.84
i, u, r, l + non-Kit, non-Ñit sārvaḥātuka or ārdhaḥātuka affix
- b. 7.1.100
 $\bar{r}$ + *non-Kit, non-Ñit sārvaḥātuka or ārdhaḥātuka affix*
 $\bar{r}$ + other affix

From this perspective it is 7.1.100 that is the special rule, because it only applies to long $\bar{r}$, whereas 7.3.84 applies to short or long *i, u, r, l, ī, ū, ṛ, ḷ*.

Surprisingly, this exposition is directly followed by a summary of Cardona’s (1970) account of the same two rules, and of my refutation of it (Kiparsky 1991), with the comment:

I think that Cardona’s limited blocking principle is similar to my method of dealing with SOI. However, Kiparsky correctly points out that the explanation offered by Cardona is ambiguous. On the other hand, my solution overcomes such ambiguity by following the clearly defined procedure which I have developed and used to tackle all examples of SOI in this book. (p. 104)

As best as I can make out, Rajpopat’s method, and his analysis of this example, is not just “similar” to Cardona’s — it is a notational variant of it, and it suffers from exactly the same problem. This has been

also pointed out by Scharf (2022). The indeterminacy of Cardona’s version, which both Rajpopat and Scharf acknowledge, also vitiates Rajpopat’s version. Rajpopat claims to have presented a “clearly defined procedure” which overcomes this problem, but I have been unable to find it in his book.

But before we give up, let’s explore a possible way to save the idea. In (10) the winning rule applies to a more special class of operands, while the losing rule applies in a more special set of contexts. Could having a special operand be more important than having a special context? Unfortunately that is a dead end, for two reasons. First, there are cases of the reverse kind, where the rule that applies to a more special class of contexts wins and the rule that applies in a more special set of operands loses. Secondly, Rajpopat’s account explicitly equates context specificity and operand specificity for purposes of establishing blocking. Here are the details.

In the derivation of feminine *tri-ām* → *tiṣṛṇām* ‘three’ (gen.pl.), the two relevant rules are:

- (13) a. 7.2.99
tricaturōḥ striyām tiṣṛcatasṛ ‘feminine *tri* and *catur* are replaced by *tiṣṛ* and *catasṛ* before a case suffix’
 b. 7.1.53
tres trayah (52 *āmi*) ‘*tri* is replaced by *traya* before (the case suffix) *ām*’

Because the rules apply to the same operand *tri*, this is not a case of *vipratishedha* in Rajpopat’s terminology. It is an SOI case, so the more specific of the two rules should take effect. To determine which of the rules is more specific, we break them down into subrules, discard the ones that are not applicable to both inputs, and select the more specific remaining subrule.⁸ If we do it in both rules, we get:

⁸ We could add “feminine *catur* + *ām*” and “feminine *catur* + any case suffix” to (14a), but these subrules would not enter into the evaluation (they would not get boldfaced) because 7.1.53 cannot not apply to *catur*.

- (14) a. 7.2.99
feminine *tri* + *ām*
 feminine *tri* + any case suffix
- b. 7.1.53
feminine *tri* + *ām*
 any gender of *tri* + *ām*

For *tri*, 7.2.99 selects the operand more specifically than 7.1.53 does (feminine *tri* rather than any *tri*), whereas 7.1.53 selects the context more specifically than 7.2.99 does (*ām* rather than any case suffix).⁹ In this example, the operation conditioned by the more specified context (*ām*) wins, so the subrule applying in that context should have come out more specific, whereas in the previous example (10) the rule applying to the more specified operand (*ṛ*) wins, so the subrule applying to that operand should have come out more specific. We could make the display in (14) asymmetric by suppressing one of the subset relations, but if we can have it both ways, we have no theory. We seem to have made no progress over Patañjali's wry proposal that *vipratīṣedha* is resolved in favor of the *para* rule in the sense of the *iṣṭa* 'desired' rule.

Moreover, prioritizing operand over context or vice versa would lead nowhere anyway, because Rajpopat's formal implementation is set up in such a way that context and operand are on a par. In Ch.2, Ex. 5 (p. 63) he explains that his procedure for prioritizing rules by specificity treats context and operand together. He illustrates this by rule 6.1.77 *iko yaṇ aci*. The operation enjoined by this rule is not to be considered as a replacement of *iK* with *yaN* before *aC*, but as a replacement of *iK-aC* with *yaN-aC*. The formal motivation for this is that it allows the procedure to compare rules of the form "*A + B → C*" to context-sensitive rules of the form "*A → B* before *C*", in particular to compare *ekādeśa* rules such as 6.1.101 *akaḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ* (77

⁹ Rajpopat 2025: 62 says that 7.2.99 wins because it has a "specific restriction or marker", meaning that it is specifically restricted to feminine stems. But it seems to me that it could equally well be 7.1.53, because it is specifically restricted to *ām*.

aci) to replacement rules like 6.1.77 *iko yaṇ aci*. The consequence is that the distinction between context and operand plays no role in determining which rule is *apavāda* and which rule is *utsarga*. The derivation is given in (15).

- (15) a. 6.1.87 *ād guṇaḥ* (77 *aci*): *guṇa* (*a, e, o*) replaces both *a* and the vowel immediately after it.
 b. 6.1.101 *akaḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ* (77 *aci*): a long vowel replaces both *aK* (*a, i, u, ṛ, ṝ*) and the immediately following *savarṇa* (homorganic) vowel.

Rajpopat says that 6.1.101 wins because it is more specific, in that it is applicable only when the following vowel is homorganic. He shows this graphically by bolding the subrule that is relevant to the conflict.

- (16) a. 6.1.101
 a + vowel (savarṇa)
 i, u, ṛ, ṝ + vowel (savarṇa)
 b. 6.1.87
 a-vowel

Here we may again object that 6.1.87 is also more specific, in that it is applicable only to *a*. So to be consistent we should write:

- (17) a. 6.1.101
 a + vowel (savarṇa)
 i, u, ṛ, ṝ + vowel (savarṇa)
 b. 6.1.87
 a + vowel (savarṇa)
 a + vowel (any)

Neither rule is more special than the other. By the method of judicious expansion into subrules used in (16) we could equally well have “explained” the contrary case where 6.1.87 is the winning rule.

Recall from (3) in section 2 that collective blocking works perfectly in this case, see (5). Once the rules that operate are grouped together

into a threesome with (5), it is obvious that *savarṇadīrgha* is a special case relative to the other two, and sets them aside in the overlapping domains. The problem of prioritizing them disappears.

Here is another pair of rules with intersecting conditions.

(18) a. 7.1.58

idito num dhātoḥ ‘*nUM* is added (1.1.47 to the last vowel of) a root (6.4.1 that is an *aṅga*) and is marked with *I*’

b. 6.1.75

dīrghāt (73 *che*, 71 *tuk*, 72 *saṃhitāyām*) ‘*tUK* is added (1.1.46 after) a long vowel before *ch* (in connected speech).’

7.1.58 is more special in that it singles out the class of roots marked with *I* and requires it to be (part of) an *aṅga* ‘stem’. 6.1.75 is more general in that it has no morphological restrictions and is applicable anywhere in connected speech (close phonetic contact), even across word boundaries. On the other hand, 6.1.75 is more special in that it is restricted to the phonological context between a long vowel and *ch*. Both rules are applicable in a case such as *vāchI* + *ŚaP* + *tiP* ‘wants’. This is an SOI conflict. It is not clear how to apply Rajpopat’s procedure here, or any version of generalized blocking for that matter. The *siddha*-principle, however, gives an immediate answer. If nasal insertion by 7.1.58 takes effect first, it eliminates the context $\bar{V}___\text{ch}$ in which 6.1.75 wants to add *tUK*, and we derive the correct form *vānchati*. If *tUK* is added first by 6.1.75, 6.1.75 can then still add *nUM*, and we get **vāntchati* → **vāncchati*. The *siddha*-principle predicts the correct outcome.

A more difficult case is the relationship between 7.1.73 and 7.3.111, also proposed as a case of limited blocking by Cardona (1970, 60).

(19) a. 7.3.111

gher niti (108 *guṇaḥ*) (6.4.1 *aṅgasya*)

‘before endings with the marker - $\check{N}$ (Dative - $\check{N}e$, Ablative - $\check{N}asi$, Genitive - $\check{N}as$, and Locative - $\check{N}i$), (the final segment of) *ghi* stems (a class of stems in -*i*, *u*) is replaced by *guṇa*’

- b. 7.1.73
 (58 num) *iko'ci vibhaktau* (72 *napuṃsakasya*) (6.4.1 *aṅasya*)
 ‘the augment *nUM* is inserted after the final vowel of a neuter
aṅa ending in an *-iK* vowel (*-i*, *-u*, *-r*, *-l*) before a vocalic case
 ending’

In the shared operand domain, comprising neuter *ghi* bases, 7.3.111 is more specific than 7.1.73 in that it applies only before *Ñit* endings (all of which are vocalic), whereas 7.1.73 applies before any vocalic ending. In the shared context domain, namely before *Ñit* endings, 7.1.73 applies only to neuter stems, 7.3.111 to stems of any gender, but in another respect, 7.3.111 is more specific than 7.1.73 in that it applies only to *-i*, *-u* stems, whereas 7.1.73 applies also to *-r*, *-l* stems. So 7.3.111 has two proprietary contexts as against 7.1.73’s one proprietary context. Still, 7.1.73 takes precedence, as in Dat.Sg. *jatu-e* → *jatun-e* (not **jatave*). This case falls under J&R’s generalization that augment rules are word-building rules, and as such dominate phonological and morphological rules (see AP IV: 26).

3.3 DOI cases

All 40 unidirectional DOI cases cited by Rajpopat work by the *siddha*-principle. They are the following:

- Section 2.7, Exx. 6–8: *kroṣṭūṇām*, *karṭṛṣu*, *tad*
- Section 3.2, Exx. 1–7: *pratīcaḥ*, *seduṣaḥ*, *gargāḥ*, *pañcālāḥ*, *gārgīyāḥ*, *puṣyaḥ*, *pañcamāḥ*
- Section 4.3, Exx. 1–9: *śvayitvā*, *hata*, *ghnanti*, *kramitvā* ~ *krantvā* ~ *krāntvā*, *atikramya*, *prasthāya*, *āgatya* ~ *āgamya*, *śiṣṭāt*, *hatāt*
- Appendix C, Exx. 1–21: *glāyati*, *abhūt*, *agrahūt*, *agopūt*, *abhitta*, *ūrnaviṣyati*, *bhūyāt*, *naśitavya*, *devitvā*, *khanitvā*, *kuru*, *stāt*, *bhāvi*, *krīṇanti*, *udvijisya*, *bibhyati*, *anijat*, *asicat*, *vatvā*, *āghnīya*, *viddhvā*

In each instance, the winning rule is the right-hand operation *and* it is the rule that removes or modifies the context of the other.

Rajpopat's theory also makes the right-hand rule responsible for the small group of DOI cases that involve mutual (bidirectional) blocking. Some of these are instances of special rules superseding general rules, others follow from the *siddha*-principle.

- (20) *hari-āṆ harinā* 'green' (Instr. Sg), application of 6.1.77 *iko yaṇ aci*, which replaces *iK* (*i, u, ṛ, ḷ*) by *yaṆ* (*y, v, r, ḷ*) before *aC* (any vowel) would derive the wrong form **haryā*. It is superseded by 7.3.120 *āño nāstriyām*, which replaces *-āṆ* (= *Ṭā*) by *-nā* after a non-feminine *ghi* base (a base ending in *i* or *u*, except *sakhi*). The morpheme-specific rule 7.3.120 is the special case, for all instances of it are included in the remit of 6.1.77, and as such it supersedes 6.1.77. Rajpopat's theory derives the same outcome in a different way: since the operands are different (DOI), the case falls under 1.4.2 *vipratishedhe paraṃ kāryam*, and it is resolved in favor of the *para* 'right-hand' operation 7.3.120.

- (21) In *strī-ām* 'woman' (feminine, genitive plural) the conflict is between 6.4.79 *striyāḥ* (6.4.1 *aṅgasya*, 6.4.77 *aci yvoḥ iyaṇ*), which replaces the final sound of the base *strī* by *iyAṆ* before a vowel-initial affix, and 7.1.54 *hrasvanadyāpo nuṭ* (52 *āmi*), which adds the augment *nUṬ* to *-ām* after a nominal base that ends in a short vowel or is termed *nadī* (feminine ending in *-ī* or *-ū*), or has the feminine affix *-ṬāP*. The derivation *strī* $\xrightarrow{6.4.79}$ *striy-ām* $\xrightarrow{7.1.54}$ *striyām* terminates in the wrong form. The correct derivation *strī* $\xrightarrow{7.1.54}$ *strī-nām* gives the correct form *strīṇām*. 7.1.54 wins because it is an augment rule, and augment rules prevail over substitution rules because they are word-building rules (AP IX.234).

- (22) In *vāri-ām* $\rightarrow$ *vārīṇām* 7.1.73 *iko'ci vibhaktau* (58 *num*, 72 *napuṃsakasya*) attaches the augment *nUM* to neuter bases end-

ing in *iK* (*i, u, r, ḷ*) before a vowel-initial case ending. 7.1.54 *hrasvanadyāpo nuṭ* (*āmi*) (see previous example). Whichever rule takes effect destroys the context required by the other. 7.1.54 must win in order to feed lengthening by 6.4.3 *nāmi*: *vāri-ām* $\xrightarrow{7.1.54} \rightarrow \text{vāri-nām} (\rightarrow \text{vārīṇām})$. For Rajpopat this follows by the right-hand rule. For JR (AP X.156) the *nUṬ* rule 7.1.54 wins because it is the special rule, in that it applies specifically before the genitive plural case ending *-ām*, whereas the *nUM* rule applies before any case ending that begins with a vowel.

3.4 DOI cases that work only with the *siddha*-principle

In previous sections we saw that the *siddha*-principle and Rajpopat's *para*-principle make the same correct predictions in many cases. I now turn to some types of cases in which the outcomes diverge, where only the *siddha*-principle makes the correct predictions. I submit that whenever the *siddha*-principle would predict the *wrong* result, Pāṇini always adds a fix that requires an otherwise unmotivated complication. On the other hand, as far as I am aware there are no cases where Pāṇini has complicated his grammar in order to cope with the wrong consequences of Rajpopat's *para*-principle. This adds up to an argument that Pāṇini composed his grammar with the *siddha*-principle in mind. The examples that follow are drawn from a much longer list in Bodas' review (2022), but the use of the *siddha*-principle to explain them is mine.

Rule 7.2.101 *jarāyā jaras anyatarasyām* (100 *aci*) optionally replaces the feminine *ā*-stem *jarā* 'old age' by the consonantal stem *jaras* before a vocalic ending. The form of the inflectional endings is chosen accordingly, so we have *ā*-stem forms like Dat. *jarā-yai*, Acc. *jarā-m* alongside C-stem forms like Dat. *jaras-e*, Acc. *jaras-am*, Instr. *jaras-ā*, Gen. *jaras-aḥ*, (all these are cited from the Rīgveda, but the alternation is live throughout Sanskrit). The basic forms of the endings are like the C-stem forms, for example Dat.Sg. *jarā + Ne*, which yields both *jaras-e* and *jarā-yai* (via *jarā-yā-e* by 7.3.113 *yād*

āpaḥ). This is a problem for Rajpopat's approach. His procedure for DOI conflict is to start the derivation with the rightmost operand (the "right-hand side" principle, RHS for short), in this case by adding *yā* to the case ending. This rule is obligatory. But after applying it we no longer have a vocalic ending, so we have no way to derive the other option *jaras-e*. The *siddha*-principle handles this alternation straightforwardly. Since the replacement of *jarā* with *jaras* by 7.2.101 bleeds (removes the *nimitta* of) the replacement of suffixes after vowel stems by 7.3.113, the *siddha*-principle tells us to apply 7.2.101 first. Since 7.2.101 is optional, we may either apply it to get *jarase*, after which 7.3.113 is no longer applicable (bleeding order), or we may not apply it, in which case affix replacement by 7.3.113 takes effect obligatorily, yielding *jarāyai*.

Next, take *dyauḥ* 'sky, god'. Two rules are applicable to Nom.Sg. *div-sU*:

- (23) a. 7.1.84 *diva auṭ* (*sau* 82) 'stem-final *-v* → *-au* before Nom.Sg. *-sU*'
- b. 6.1.68 *halṇiyābbhyo dīrghāt sutisy aprktam hal* (*lopaḥ* 66)
'a suffix consisting of a consonant is deleted after a stem-final consonant.'

The desired derivation is $div-sU \xrightarrow{7.1.84} diau-sU (\rightarrow dyauḥ)$. The *siddha*-principle correctly predicts it, for $v \rightarrow au$ replacement by 7.1.84 bleeds *s*-deletion by 6.1.68, whereas the converse is not the case, for after $-s \rightarrow \emptyset$ takes effect, $v \rightarrow au$ replacement remains applicable due to 1.1.62 *pratyayalope pratyayalakṣaṇam*, which maintains the triggering force of the deleted suffix. It follows that the *siddha*-principle prioritizes $v \rightarrow au$, which gives the correct result.

Rajpopat's *para*-principle, on the other hand, prioritizes $-s \rightarrow \emptyset$, because the operand *-sU* is to the right of the operand *-v*. This yields $div-sU \xrightarrow{6.1.68} div-\emptyset \xrightarrow{7.1.84} *diau$, which is incorrect. *dyauḥ* is a very frequent word, for which Pāṇini took care to formulate the special rule 7.1.84 *diva auṭ*. So he must have intended his grammar to cover it. Therefore, the fact that its derivation requires the *siddha*-principle

and is incompatible with Rajpopat's *para*-principle is a good piece of evidence for our position and against his.

A similar case involving a different pair of rules is *he gauḥ* 'hey bull!' (Voc.Sg.). In *go-sU*, rule 6.1.69 *eṇ hrasvād sambuddhau* (66 *lopaḥ*), (68 *sutisy apr̥ktam hal*) deletes final *-sU* in vocatives after certain vowels, including *o*, whereas 7.2.115 *aco ññiti* replaces stem-final *-e, -o* by *-ai, -au*. The *siddha*-principle gives precedence to the latter rule, for it bleeds 6.1.69 *-s* → ∅, whereas 6.1.69 does not bleed 7.2.115 because of 1.1.62 *pratyayalope pratyayalakṣaṇam*. So 7.2.115 takes effect first, yielding the correct form *he gauḥ*. Rajpopat's *para*-principle requires the opposite order of application, because the operand *-s* is to the right of the operand *-o*. That derivation produces the wrong output: *go-sU* $\xrightarrow{6.1.69}$ *go-∅* $\xrightarrow{7.1.115}$ **gau*.

Now look at the derivations of *adas-sU asau* and *tad-sU saḥ* 'he', 'that one' (Nom.Sg.). Two rules are applicable to *adas-sU*:

- (24) a. 7.2.107 *adasa au sulopaś ca* (106 *sau*)
 'the final segment of *adas* → *au* before Nom.Sg. *-sU*, and *-sU* is deleted'
 b. 6.1.68 *halñyābbhyo dīrghāt sutisy apr̥ktam hal* (66 *lopaḥ*):
 'a suffix consisting of a consonant is deleted after stem-final C-'

Why was 7.2.107 formulated as performing two distinct operations — replacing the stem-final *-s* by *-au*, and deleting the Nom.Sg. ending *-sU*? Couldn't the ending *-sU* just be deleted by (24b) 6.1.68, allowing (24a) 7.2.107 to be simplified by omitting *sulopaś ca*? The answer is no, and for an interesting reason (AP XI: 234).

Suppose 7.2.107 were formulated simply as **adasa au*. Then, if it applied first, it would destroy the environment of 6.1.68, whereas if 6.1.68 applied first, **adasa au* would still apply (by 1.1.62 *pratyayalope pratyayalakṣaṇam*, as before). That being the case, the *siddha*-principle would predict the wrong derivation in which **adasa au* would take effect first, viz. *adas+sU* → *adaau+sU* (→ *adauḥ*). But as a result the stem would no longer end in a consonant, and the *siddha*-principle

would predict the wrong outcome with **asauḥ*. And it is exactly *because* the grammar was constructed on the basis of the *siddha*-principle that **adasa au* had to be supplemented with *sulopas ca*. In other words, the *siddha*-principle *explains* the longer wording of 7.2.107 in the grammar.

Still continuing to assume the simpler version rule *7.2.107 *adasa au*, what would the *para*-theory predict? It would prioritize the *right-hand* operation, the deletion of *-sU* by 6.1.68, and after some further rules, the correct output would emerge: *adas-sU* $\xrightarrow{6.1.68}$ *adas* + $\emptyset$, and (by other rules) *asau*. There would have been no need for *sulopas ca*.

The conclusion is that only the *siddha*-principle made the complication of the additional clause *sulopas ca* in rule 7.2.107 necessary, and this reveals that Pāṇini was working with the *siddha*-principle in mind, and took care to forestall its negative consequences.

As a positive countercase, let's look at the derivation of *tad* 'that'. In *tad* + *sU* (neuter nom.sg.) the nominative case ending *sU* is deleted by 7.1.23 *svamor napuṃsakāt* (22 *luk*). The deletion of the case ending must take effect before rule 7.2.102 *tyadādīnām aḥ* (84 *vibhaktau*) has a chance to replace *-d* by *-a* before a case ending. Otherwise we would get the wrong derivation *tad-sU* $\xrightarrow{7.2.102}$ *taa-sU* $\xrightarrow{6.1.97}$ *ta-sU* $\xrightarrow{7.1.23}$ **ta*. In the right order of application, the case ending is deleted first, destroying the environment that triggers the unwanted stem change: *tad-sU* $\rightarrow \xrightarrow{7.1.23}$ *tad*. The *siddha*-principle predicts this order of application. Applying 7.1.23 first ensures that 7.2.102 takes account of its effects. If the rules were applied simultaneously, or if 7.2.102 were applied first, 7.1.23 would give the unwanted result **ta*. Thus the two rules interact transparently to produce *tad*, which is the correct form. The new *para*-principle, though, requires the suffix-triggered operation to apply first, leaving the suffix *-sU* in place to derive **ta*.

Each of these cases is an instance of a larger pattern that contradicts the new *para*-principle. Rajpopat is aware of them, and proposes to solve them by assuming that rules 6.1.68, 6.1.69 and 6.1.70

were originally in the Tripādī (right after 8.2.2, he suggests).¹⁰ and were moved from there to their present site, perhaps in order to allow *apṛktaṃ* to be omitted by *anuvṛtti* from 6.1.67 (except that they forgot to actually omit it). According to him, “clearly someone has fiddled with both the contents and the position” of these rules (2025: 116).

But whether or not 1.4.2 was interpreted in Rajpopat’s way, it is hard to see why rules 6.1.68, 6.1.69, and 6.1.70 would have been relocated from the Tripādī to their present location. The trivial purpose of getting *lopa* into it by *anuvṛtti* could have been achieved in any number of ways without messing up the derivations in the way that Rajpopat’s theory forces us to assume. Moreover, the relocation would have required two complications: the addition of *sulopas ca* to 7.2.107, and the addition of *apṛktaṃ hal* to 6.1.68. The latter’s purpose is to prevent deletion of *-NaL*, which is a replacement of *-tiP*, and therefore *sthānivat*. If 6.1.68 had been in the Tripādī, it would not have needed *apṛktaṃ hal*, because there is no *sthānivadbhāva* in that section (*pūrvatrāsiddhe na sthānivat*, Vt. 3 on 1.1.58, AP XII: 163).

3.5 Rajpopat’s objections to the *siddha*-principle

In section 5.7, Rajpopat criticizes Joshi and me for making a “logical error” in “inferring *siddha* principle from [Kātyāyana’s] vt. 1 on 6.1.86” (*asiddhavacanam ādeśalakṣaṇapratīṣedhārtham utsargalakṣaṇabhāvārtham*). We made no such inference. The vārttika formulates two functions of *asiddhatva*. While the distinction between them is useful, and they are indeed the functions of *asiddhatva*, one cannot infer a principle from a distinction. We simply cited Kātyāyana’s distinction and pointed out that *asiddhatva* in Pāṇini’s grammar has

¹⁰ But not for the sake of *anuvṛtti*, as he suggests. In 6.1.68–70 *lopa* is a *vidheya* ‘process item’, ‘predicate’ (what the rule enjoins) and in 8.2.2 it is an *uddeśya* ‘undergoer’, ‘subject’, which the rule declares to be *asiddha*, and *anuvṛtti* syntax does not mix them (Kiparsky 1979: 45–47, 154–5; Joshi and Bhate 1984). Moreover, in 8.2.2 *lopa* is part of the compound *nalopaḥ*, and *anuvṛtti* out of compounds is not common.

both functions that he identifies. To repeat, we have never claimed to “infer” the *siddha*-principle itself from anything but Pāṇini’s grammar itself.

To further refute our “inference” Rajpopat produces a misleading analogy in which *asiddhatva* is construed as prohibition and *siddhatva* as permission. This makes no sense. Pāṇinian rules are not permissions, they enjoin operations. And neither *siddhatva* nor *asiddhatva* are prohibitions, or permissions, or injunctions, or operations. They are *relations* between operations, and between the rules that enjoin operations. Rules apply obligatorily unless explicitly designated as optional, and operations not enjoined by a rule are prohibited. Operation A is *siddha* with respect to operation B if the result of A affects B. There is no question of “permission”.

For those who want a *laukika* analogy, here is my effort. Imagine a family where each member has a plate of their own. They are joined by two guests, Māṭhara, who brings a plate, and Kauṇḍinya, who brings a pot. Now picture three scenarios, where the host issues a different pair of instructions in each:

- (25) a. 1. Give plates to the guests.
 2. Give rice to everyone who has a plate.
 Outcome: Everyone, including Māṭhara and Kauṇḍinya, gets rice.
- b. 1. Take away the guests’ plates.
 2. Give rice to everyone who has a plate.
 Outcome: Everyone except Māṭhara and Kauṇḍinya gets rice.
- c. 1. Replace the guests’ pots by plates.
 2. Give rice to everyone who has a plate.
 Outcome: Everyone gets rice.

Coincidentally, in the jargon of generative grammar, (25a) and (25c) are feeding orders, while (25b) is bleeding order. Note also that the same two instructions carried out in the opposite order would leave

poor Kauṇḍinya hungry in scenario (25a) and (25c) (feeding order), but they would turn out better for Māṭhara in (25b) (counterbleeding order).

4 Systemic considerations

4.1 Grammar and naturalness

As far as I know, the new *para*-principle as reinterpreted by Rajpopat would be unique. I am not aware of anything like it in the grammar of any other language. All the other major devices and principles of Pāṇini's grammar have analogs in at least some other languages. In some cases they were independently found by modern linguists who had no concern or familiarity with Pāṇini.¹¹

Although the new *para*-principle often fails, it works most of the time, and that is remarkable. Clearly it reflects a real tendency of the language, which Rajpopat (mistakenly, as I am arguing) has construed as a structural principle of Pāṇini's grammar itself. Why this tendency holds is an interesting question, to which I have no answer.

4.2 The metalanguage

Because *siddhatva* is the default mode of rule interaction, it is systematically suspended where necessary by negating it by *asiddhatva* and *asiddhavattva*, in addition to *sthānivattva* and *pratayalakṣaṇatva*. If the new *para*-principle reigned in the grammar instead, why is the term *asiddha* used so prominently for rule prioritization, and why is

¹¹ For example, the idea of applying rules cyclically from inner constituents outwards, a counterpart of the *antaraṅga*-principle, was invented by Chomsky, Halle, and Lukoff in 1955 and used to explain English sentence stress. The *siddha*-principle is equivalent to unmarked rule ordering (Kiparsky 1968), and it is the *only* kind of ordering that is available in classical Optimality Theory (Prince and Smolensky 2004). The *utsarga/apavāda* principle is equivalent to the Elsewhere Condition (Kiparsky 1973), also known as the Subset Principle.

the term *pūrva* (or *a-para*) never used to flag the exceptions? Shouldn't there be at least some rules that are specified to apply to the *leftmost* operand?

4.3 *jñāpakas*

In those cases where the effects of the *siddha*-principle yields the wrong result, Pāṇini complicates his rules to avoid the misapplication. Why does Pāṇini not do this where the new *para*-principle fails, for example in *dyauḥ*?

4.4 The placement of 1.4.2

If *vipratishedhe param kāryam* means “in case of conflict, apply the latter rule” and only has scope over 1.4–2.1, as traditionally thought, it is placed exactly where it should be. But if it means “in case of conflict, do the right-hand side operation”, why is it placed out of context in 1.4.2, at the head of sections that it has nothing to do with? Why isn't it located among the other *paribhāṣās*, or at the head of the *vidhi* rules that it supposedly regulates?

4.5 The *sūtra* context

In the *Prātiśākhya*s, all rules are *siddha*. When a rule fails to feed and bleed another, the grammar treats the case as an exception, and either lists the form or complicates the rule. So the *siddha*-principle is as much part of the *sūtra* context as blocking is. The discovery of *asiddhatva* was the major breakthrough that made the deep analysis of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* possible.

5 *para* already has a different function

5.1 Agreement with conjuncts

In at least one compelling case *para* in the grammar means “later in the enumeration of rules”. Rules 1.4.105–8, well within the section that has always been considered in the scope of 1.4.2 *vipratīṣedhe paraṃ kāryam*, concern person agreement in finite verbs.

- (26) 1.4.105 *yuṣmady upapade samānādhikaraṇe sthāniny api madhyamaḥ*
 1.4.107 *asmady uttamaḥ*
 1.4.108 *śeṣe prathamaḥ*

These rules tell us that verbs have respectively second and first person agreement in the presence of a second person (*yuṣmad*) or first person (*asmad*) as an *upapada* (“coreferential” element, in effect as their subject), even if it has been replaced; otherwise (that is, if there is no such *upapada*), verbs have third person agreement. Coupled with 1.4.2 *vipratīṣedhe paraṃ kāryam*, (26) elegantly characterizes also the agreement pattern in compounds:

- | | | |
|------|------------|---------------------------------|
| (27) | conjunct | Agreement |
| | you and I | ‘we’ (first person agreement) |
| | he and I | ‘we’ (first person agreement) |
| | you and he | ‘you’ (second person agreement) |

The ordered agreement rules prioritize first person agreement over second person agreement, second person over third person. They make third person the ‘elsewhere’ (default) case. 1.4.108 is *not* a third person agreement rule, but applies (like Pāṇini’s other *śeṣa* rules) in a negatively defined “elsewhere” context, namely whenever there are neither *yuṣmad* nor *asmad* upapadas, or no upapadas at all: *devadattaḥ svapiti, mayā supyate, tvayā supyate*. Sanskrit conforms to these rules (as do most languages):

- (28) a. *nakulaḥ sahadēvaś ca bhīmasenaś ca pārthiva*
ahaṃ ca tvaṃ ca kaunteya draṅṣyāmahy śvetavāhanam (*Mbh.*
 3.141.23) ‘Nakula and Sahadeva and Bhīmasena, O Pārthiva,
 and you and I, O Kaunteya, will see Śvetavāhana’.
- b. *ahaṃ ca tvaṃ ca vṛtrahan saṃ yujyāva* (*RV.* 8.62.11) ‘may
 I and you, vṛtra-slayer, be united (1.Du.Aor.Opt.)’

There is no question of a right-hand side interpretation here: *para* isn’t even applicable here in that meaning. Neither is there an *ut-sarga/apavāda* relation between these groups of rules. But 1.4.2 accounts perfectly for the data if *para* means ‘the latter rule’. Since Pāṇini gave those agreement rules it is hard to believe that he overlooked agreement with conjoined subjects, and there is no other place in the grammar where that is addressed than 1.4.2, where *para* means ‘the latter rule’.

This has been the received view ever since Kātyāyana; see AP IV: 244 ff. for a full account of it. I am indebted to a reviewer of this MS for bringing to my attention Mocci and Pontillo’s (2023) ingenious new proposal to deal with conjoined subject agreement without requiring an appeal to rule 1.4.2 by exploiting the pattern of plural pronouns in (27). Building on Pāṇini’s derivation of pronominal plurals from conjoined phrases by *ekaśeṣa* reduction (rule 1.2.72 *tyadādīni sarvair nityam*), they argue for a different way to account for the agreement pattern of conjoined structures by *sthānivadbhāva*. Specifically, they assume that *tvaṃ ca devadattaś ca* ‘you (Sg.) and Devadatta’ is synonymous with *yuvām* ‘you two’, and in virtue of that synonymy it is an *ādeśa* ‘substitute’ of *yuvām*, its *sthānin*, which is subsumed under *yuṣmad* in 1.4.105 and hence falls under *sthāniny api* in that rule. Since its *sthānin* is *yuvām*, *tvaṃ ca devadattaś ca pacathaḥ* ‘you and Devadatta are cooking’ gets 2.Person (Dual) agreement by 1.4.105.

I submit that neither the conjoined phrase *ahaṃ ca devadattaś ca* nor the conjoined phrase *tvaṃ cāhaṃ ca* are actually “synonymous” with the bare pronoun *āvām*. They are not even synonymous with each other. The most we can say is that the two conjoined phrases are co-hyponyms of the pronoun. It is true that the bare pronouns may

get the same *interpretation* as the more explicit conjoined phrases in certain contexts where discourse or common ground provide the right clues, but that is not the same thing as synonymy. These *sthānin/ādeśa* relations would be the only instances in the grammar where *ādeśas* (in this case *aham ca devadattaś ca*) have much richer meanings than the corresponding *sthānins* (in this case *āvām*), and even mutually contradictory meanings. For example, *aham ca devadattaś ca* and *tvam cāham ca* would be *ādeśas* of the same *sthānin*, namely *asmad*, and therefore get 1.Person (Dual) agreement by rule 1.4.107 (where *sthāniny api* is continued from 106). Moreover, since any nominal whatever can stand in the place of *devadatta* in the second conjunct, the *sthānin* of a bare plural pronoun would correspond to an unbounded number of different phrasal *ādeśas*, quite alien to Pāṇini's usage.

Mocci and Pontillo say that “synonymy between X and Y [is] an implicit requirement for X to replace Y in Pāṇini's framework of substitution” (p. 484), and fallaciously conclude that “synonymy between *tvam ca devadattaś ca* and *yuṣmad-* then allows *yuṣmad-* to be replaced with *tvam ca devadattaś ca*, so long as *yuṣmad-* is a *sthānin*” (*ibid.*). That synonymy is a necessary condition for replacement does not mean that it is a sufficient condition for replacement. In fact, the relation between *sthānin* and *ādeśa* is not a symmetrical semantic equivalence relation. It is the asymmetrical relation between the input and the output of a replacement operation, governed either by a rule of the grammar, or by a discourse ellipsis process that is not stated in the grammar, but presupposed by it, and referred to by its rules.

A case in point is rule 2.3.14 *kriyārthopapadasya ca karmaṇi sthāninaḥ* (13 *caturthī*, 1 *anabhihite*) ‘(the fourth [dative] case endings are added to a nominal stem) in the sense of *karman* ‘direct object’ of a *sthānin* which is an *upapada* (of a form conveying the meaning of “action performed”) for the sake of (another) action’ (mentioned as an instance of *sthānin* by Mocci and Pontillo (2023: 478, fn. 30). This rule derives datives of purpose in sentences like *edebhyo gacchāmi* ‘I’m going for firewood’ from verb ellipsis (Kiparsky 1982: 38–39, AP VII: 28–33). Among a number of unremarkable elliptic versions

of *aham edhān āhartum gacchāmi* ‘I am going to fetch firewood’, each suited to a different discourse context as indicated in (29), one is conspicuously ungrammatical, namely (29f), just as its English counterpart is. Rule 2.3.14 replaces it by its grammatical counterpart (29g), elegantly explaining at one stroke both its ungrammaticality and the special use of the dative in an otherwise unaccounted for non-*saṃpradāya* (non-recipient) meaning.¹²

- (29) a. (Who is going to fetch firewood?) *aham* ‘me’
 b. (What are you going to fetch?) *edhān* ‘firewood’
 c. (What about fetching the firewood?) *gacchāmi* ‘I’m going’
 d. (Where are you going?) *edhān āhartum* ‘to fetch firewood’
 e. (What about the firewood?) *āhartum gacchāmi* ‘I’m going to fetch it’
 f. (How will you get fuel?) **edhān gacchāmi* *‘I’m going firewood’
 g. (How will you get fuel?) *edhebhya gacchāmi* ‘I’m going for firewood’

The rule defines the ellipted *sthānin* syntactically and semantically as *kriyārthopapada* ‘having as upapada a verb denoting an action performed for another action’, i.e. as a purpose complement in *-tum* or *-aka* as per 3.3.10 *tumunṇvulau kriyāyām kriyārthāyām*. The grammar has no rules for ellipsis, only for the cases where ellipsis is opaque and has consequences that must be taken care of (as here for the object of an ellipted verb), for agreement with null pronouns, and for verbs which are *karmavat* even though they have no overt object.

The most serious difficulty with the proposal is that the *ekaśeṣa* rule 1.2.72, which establishes the correspondence between bare pronouns and pronouns in conjoined phrases, actually operates in the opposite direction. It is phrased to apply to conjoined structures where

¹² See also my analysis of 1.4.51 as a treatment of object ellipsis (*ibid.*).

one conjunct is a bare pronoun, and suppresses all but the pronoun. I do not see how it can be read as enjoining the reverse operation where the bare pronoun is a *sthānin* that is replaced by an *ādeśa* consisting of a full conjoined structure.

If ellipsis is understood as the replacement of something by nothing, and 1.2.72 derives *āvām* from *aham ca devadattaś ca*), then if there is a *sthānin* it would have to be *devadatta*, and the corresponding *ādeśa*, deemed equivalent to the *sthānin* in virtue of *sthānivadbhāva* (1.1.56), would be the gap left by its deletion. But if *devadatta* were the *upapada sthānin* that the agreement rule 1.4.105 refers to, we would wrongly derive third person agreement for this use of *āvām*. Another version of this reversed construal of 1.4.105 would be to construe the entire unreduced conjoined structure as the *sthānin* and the output plural pronoun as the *ādeśa*, but that would just take us back full circle to the original agreement problem, which was *which* constituent of the conjoined structure triggers agreement. In sum, I cannot see how a overt pronoun such as *āvām* can be a *sthānin* in any sense that would be relevant to the agreement rules (26).

That leaves us with the straightforward traditional interpretation of *sthāniny api* in 1.4.105 as referring to the null replacement of a pronoun by the (unstated) ellipsis (*pro-drop*) process. The point of *sthāniny api* is then quite simply to get the agreement rule to apply to *pacāmi* and not only to *aham pacāmi*. This is in tune with the function that *sthānin* has elsewhere in Pāṇini's grammatical system. And this means that the agreement rules (26) need to be prioritized by 1.4.2 in sections 1.4–2.2.

5.2 The ordering of elements in *dvandva* compounds

Pāṇini gives three rules for ordering the elements of *dvandva* (copulative) compounds:

- (30) a. 2.2.32 *dvandve ghi* (30 *pūrvam*) ‘an *-il-u* stem precedes’ (e.g. *hariharau* ‘Hari and Hara’)

- b. 2.2.33 *ajādyadantam* ‘a stem that begins with a vowel and ends in *a* precedes’ (e.g. *uṣṭrakharam* ‘camels and donkeys’)
- c. 2.2.34 *alpāctaram* ‘a stem containing fewer vowels (i.e. syllables) precedes’ (e.g. *grīṣmahemantau* ‘summer and winter’).

Wackernagel (1957: 167) confirms that the three rules are on the whole correct, although often violated, and that they are listed in ascending strength. 2.2.34 *alpāctaram* is stronger than 2.2.33, and 2.2.33 is stronger than 2.2.32, just as the standard interpretation of *para* in 1.4.2 would have it. The rules tend to be respected in the grammar itself (1.1.8, 1.2.19, 1.1.26, 1.2.38, 1.2.57, 1.2.60).¹³ Rule 1.2.7 *mṛḍ-amṛda-gudha-kuṣa-kliṣa-vada-vasaḥ ktvā* shows the dominance of 2.2.34 and 2.2.33 in that order: the strongest rule *alpāctaram* places the monosyllable *mṛḍ* first in the compound, and the next strongest rule 2.2.33 *ajādyadantam* places *amṛda* next, and words that fall under neither of rules 2.2.32–34 follow.

It may be significant that these rules are placed right before 2.2.38 *kaḍārāḥ karmadhāraye*, which delimits the domain within which 1.4.2 is valid and terminates the initial portion of the grammar that is organized around defining the major grammatical categories. None of them are categorically obeyed, however, so they contribute less to the argument concerning the meaning of *para* in 1.4.2 than the agreement rules do.

Evidently some apparent violations of the three ordering rules are due to the interference of stronger regularities that are not encoded as part of the grammar. According to Wackernagel, the strongest generalization of all about the order of elements in *dvandva* compound is that the most “important” item typically comes first. This is something that Pāṇini missed, or perhaps was forced to omit because pragmatic categories like “importance” (in whatever sense it is relevant here)

¹³ Exceptions are 1.1.58 and 1.2.46. 1.1.33–35 also flout the rules, but that may be due to their complicated textual history, on which see Bloomfield 1927, section 5, and Kiparsky 1979: 84 ff.

have no place in his metalanguage, nor in the shared *sūtra* tradition that he was working in.

6 Brief and incomplete remarks on brevity and completeness

For a long time Western philologists did not appreciate the role of *lāghava* ‘economy’ in the design of the Aṣṭādhyāyī. They regarded the compression of rules as a source of obscurity, incoherence, and disorganization.¹⁴ More kindly, but still incorrectly, Faddegon and Buiskool explained it as an artifact of “mnemotechnical” practices and the associative linking of topics. This is a superficial view because it addresses only the rules. But of course not only the rules, but the entire system, including the conventions that govern the interaction of rules, as well as the organization of the dhātupāṭha and śivasūtras, work together to maximize simplicity. When applied on this global scale, simplicity has a deeper function: it is an engine of generalization and insight.

Pāṇini’s *lāghava* is conceptually related to Occam’s Razor and to the simplicity criterion of generative grammar, but these three things are different. For Chomsky (1965) simplicity was originally an empirical hypothesis internal to linguistic theory. It claims that, given a fixed format for grammars and equal descriptive coverage, the shortest grammar is the best, as judged by general scientific criteria such as predictive success and conceptual elegance. In later work (the Minimalist Program), he shifted to a different understanding of simplicity, still defined on grammars, according to which the complexity of operations is minimized. In either case, the complexity of the theory itself does not enter directly into the calculation. Occam’s Razor, on the other hand, is a general maxim for theory construction for any science. It says that a good theory should make the fewest assumptions and posit the fewest entities (*simplex sigillum veri*), but does not per se provide a measure of goodness or a way to relativize theoretical complexity to

¹⁴ “[Pāṇini] is so brief as to be often obscure and not seldom even illogical” (Thieme 1935), more such quotations in Buiskool 1939: 2.

the extent of empirical coverage. Pāṇini's *lāghava* requirement does that. It pits the cost of the analytical apparatus against the work it does. The complexity that must be minimized is in principle calculated globally on the entire grammar, including the *vidhi* rules and the conventions that govern their application and interpret their abbreviatory conventions, as well as the dhātupāṭha and śivasūtras. Taken literally it means weighing the complication of adding rules against the complication of *pratipadokta* listing of word forms. The idea has resurfaced in a mathematical and philosophical form as the theory of Minimum Description Length (Rissanen 1978), also known as Kolmogorov Complexity (Li and Vitányi 2008; Nannen 2010).

The dialectic of simplicity and completeness makes sense of a puzzling feature of the grammatical tradition: the contrast between Pāṇini's elegant account of Sanskrit phonology and the Prātiśākhya's treatment of the corresponding Vedic phenomena, which is as short on insight as it is long on lists. My first teacher of Pāṇini, Frits Staal, considered them a world apart, representing entirely different philosophical/scientific approaches (*voce*). The Prātiśākhya, he said, were compiled by empiricists, whom he compared to the descriptivist structuralist linguists (the *bêtes noires* at the time), while Pāṇini was a rationalist like Chomsky. This drastic dichotomy is hard to square with the fact that these supposed empiricists and rationalists overlapped in time, cited each other, used each other's results, and in some cases were the same people (see Thieme 1937–1936 on Kātyāyana, and Kiparsky 2012 on the relation between Vedic recensions and Pāṇini's preferences). I now think that there was no philosophical or ideological difference at all between them. They all subscribed to *lāghava*. The crucial difference between them is that the Prātiśākhya were strictly limited to describing a fixed corpus, whereas the Aṣṭādhyāyī tackles an entire language – a project that obviously required an entirely different approach, as Patañjali memorably explained in the Paspasā.

Here is an example to concretize the point. The Taittirīya-Prātiśākhya needs forty rules to account for the distribution of *anusvāra* (xv.1–9, xvi.31); (31) is a sample:

- (31) a. 16.14 *ākārekārōkārāḥ siṣiparāḥ padāntayoh*
 ‘The vowels *ā*, *ī*, *ū* have *anusvāra* before word-final *-si* or *ṣi*.’
 E.g.: *tamāṁsi*, *havīmṣi*, *yajūmṣi*
- b. 16.15 *vikṛte* ‘*pi*’ ‘Even when [the final *-i*] is altered.’
 E.g.: *chandāmsy upa dadhāti*
- c. 16.17 *na dvisvare nityam* ‘never in disyllables’
 E.g.: *yāsi*, *gāsi*, *pāsi*, *māsi*
- d. 16.18 *rjīṣi-jigāsi-jighāsy-ajāsi-yajāsi-dadāsi-dadhāsi-*
-vatayāsi
 ‘not in *rjīṣi* etc.’

The Prātiśākhya mostly lists words, and to the extent that it has rules, it deals with their interactions by cross-references (such as *vikṛte* ‘*pi*’ in (31a)). The Aṣṭādhyāyī, naturally, has a simpler and more insightful analysis of these data: the nasal is a morphological entity, the infixed augment (*nUM*), and its realization is handled by specifying the interactions between the relevant morphological and phonological processes. Importing the morphology of Sanskrit would have made possible a much more elegant account of the distribution of *anusvāra* in the Taittirīya-Saṃhitā, but the Prātiśākhya author could not provide it because his task was to formulate the simplest description of the corpus, nothing more. An insightful treatment would have made the Prātiśākhya longer, not shorter, and it would have had to include much morphological information of no relevance to the pronunciation of the text. *Both* analyses strive for simplicity but the result depends entirely on the richness of the domain.

If the role of simplicity is taken seriously, the *prātiśākhyas* can be seen as instantiating exactly the same scientific approach as the Aṣṭādhyāyī. The differences between these works are due to the fact that the *prātiśākhyas* cover only a specific corpus (the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* in this case), whereas the Aṣṭādhyāyī covers the entire language. No elaborate calculations are needed to see that the cost of the grammatical apparatus required for a principled account of the distribution of *anusvāra*, measured in length, is greater than the net gain of simplifying

(31) to a few simple rules. In a complete grammar, of course, the opposite is the case. The grammatical apparatus with *nUM* infixation, affixation of inflectional morphemes, and so on, is needed anyway, and so the principle of *lāghava* works in the other direction to enforce the principled treatment of *anusvāra*. In a grammar that covers the whole language, the shallow rule 16.14 would have an intolerable number of “exceptions”, and additional rules for final -y (e.g. *dadhy atra*) would be needed as well. Adopting a *prātiśākhya*-style account of the nasal increment would have vastly complicated the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, which deals the same data with a handful of general rules. In this way, depth of analysis increases with corpus size.

Remarkably, *lāghava* not only forces abstractions that bring out generalizations, it also sets limits on abstractness. Here is an example. Due to a sound change that merged two originally distinct consonants, Sanskrit has two kinds of /j/ – one which alternates with velars, and another which alternates with retroflex consonants, e.g. /bhiṣáj/ → *bhiṣák* versus /viráj/ → *virāt*. Should a phonological analysis set up two distinct phonemes that diverge in certain contexts but merge elsewhere (“absolute neutralization”)? Pāṇini’s grammar does not do that. It uses essentially the *Prātiśākhya* method of distinguishing the two kinds of /j/ by listing the latter (P 8.2.39). It requires no elaborate calculation to show that this is simpler than positing two distinct phonemes.

The upshot can be summarized in the formula: economy + completeness → insight. Abstraction is driven by *lāghava* ‘brevity’, ‘economy’. There is no a priori limit on it, but the economy principle that forces generalizations through abstraction also sets limits on abstraction.

It is also important that economy applies to the *whole system*: the rules of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and the structured lists for phonology and lexicon (*śivasūtras*, *gaṇapāṭha*, *dhātupāṭha*). The metalanguage is defined *within* the grammar itself. Technical terms and some conventions of rule application are introduced whenever they save more than their definition in the grammar costs. The smaller the corpus, the fewer

the theoretical devices that *lāghava* requires, and the less linguistic insight the grammar brings. Corpus grammars, such as grammars that omit accent or Vedic rules, are always going to be shallower than Pāṇini's formally rich system, which emerges from the twin goals of maximizing coverage and simplicity.

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Remarks on Negation through the Ages or How Should We Look at Sanskrit Grammatical Tradition?

ABSTRACT: The tradition of Sanskrit grammatical school is viewed as having three founding fathers: Pāṇini, Kātyāyana and Patañjali, the latter of whom was given the position of the highest authority. Patañjali's interpretation of Pāṇini's grammar was supposed to be final, infallible and became a go-to in the following centuries. There are numerous instances, however, where Patañjali's interpretation of Pāṇini's rules is far from perfect and complicates, rather than simplifying, described procedures. These interpretations are further modified as the school of Vyākaraṇa develops under the influence of other philosophical trends. This article discusses selected examples of the phenomenon of negation to demonstrate the evolution in their explications over the centuries in the school of Vyākaraṇa. It attempts to answer the question whether we should, and can, look at Pāṇinian tradition as a whole; whether these different interpretations should be viewed as mistakes or innovations and a sign of independent thinking.

KEYWORDS: negation, negative compounds, Sanskrit grammar, *vyākaraṇa*, Navya-Vyākaraṇa, Pāṇini

1. Introduction

The Sanskrit grammatical tradition is sometimes looked at as a whole, with its foundations set by Pāṇini in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (4th century BCE) which were developed, or elaborated on, in the following centuries; the foundations always held as a benchmark and referred to when in need to support the line of argumentation. When we take a closer look, however, at different interpretations of various linguistic phenomena described by Pāṇini presented already by his commentators Kātyāyana (3rd century BCE) and Patañjali in the *Mahābhāṣya* (2nd century BCE), we will see that they do not always precisely explain the intentions behind the original text. They seem to deviate from the original application of Pāṇini's rules or concentrate on selected aspects in their understanding. The present article aims to take a look at a few selected passages related to the topic of negation, more specifically negative compounds (*nañsamāsa*) to sketch how the originally very straightforward formal take on a linguistic phenomenon transformed and was elaborated on in later centuries; how the initially morphological analysis gave way to the focus on the semantic and pragmatic aspect of such formations to finally delve into the issue of verbal cognition. Neither the analysis nor the selected passages aim to be exhaustive; what they intend to show is how, based on a widely discussed forms in literature, the interpretation of certain expressions and passages developed over the centuries and what layers were added onto them.

2. Simplicity at its finest—negation

Negation in the Sanskrit grammatical tradition was classified as either *prasajyapraṭiṣedha* ('negation (subsequent to tentatively) applying') and *paryudāsapraṭiṣedha* ('limitational negation', Cardona 1967: 34), which roughly corresponds to predicate versus term negation in western tradition. Although, it needs to be said that while *paryudāsapraṭiṣedha* can be found only in compounded forms (affixal negation), *prasajyapraṭiṣedha* can be expressed through both compounded (*samasta*)

and uncompounded (*asamasta*) forms.¹ It has often been assumed that in the former case the meaning of such a negative expression (or a negative particle) is that of *bheda* (difference), while in the latter (*prasajya*) the meaning is pure absence (*abhāva*) where provisional acceptance of an operation is required for it to be denied at a later stage. Negative compounds were given a lot of attention in grammatical literature in India, particularly because of their complex semantic structure. In Pāṇini's grammar, however, they are nothing if not simple and clear. Pāṇini introduces negative compounds in one rule:

P. 2.2.6 *nañ* | [The negative particle] *nañ* [combines with a syntactically connected nominal *pada* to form a *tatpuruṣa* compound].

This *sūtra* unequivocally classifies *nañsamāsas* as a determinative type of compound, in which the former member qualifies, in other words specifies, the latter. There is no room for interpretation here as to the type of compound or the relationship between its members; the nominative case of *nañ* indicates that the particle serves as a subordinate element (*upasarjana*). There is no semantic analysis though either; Pāṇini approaches affixal negation from the morphological perspective. What we could deduce from the ordering of the rules in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is that both items in a compound stand in apposition as in *karmadhāraya* sub-type of *tatpuruṣa* compounds.² What this rule also tells us then is that despite being an *avyaya* (indeclinable), negation does not form adverbial compounds (*avyayībhāva*). It consequently guides us to further instructions, according to which *nañ* can be subject to *n*-deletion (P. 6.3.73 *nalopo nañah* | “There is the

¹ The particle *nañ* “can be construed with the nominal following it in the compound, or it can be construed with a verb” (Cardona 1967: 34).

² I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for bringing this to my attention. As Joshi and Roodbegen point out, however, from the semantic point of view, treating *nañsamāsas* as *karmadhāraya* is difficult because two members of a compound do not, traditionally, refer to the same entity. While the second member points to a Brahmin, the negative particle is said to refer to a Kshatriya (Joshi and Roodbegen 1973: 70).

deletion of *n* [of the negative particle] *nañ* [before the second member of a compound]”) before consonants (e.g. *abrāhmaṇa*) and potential *nuṭ*-insertion (P. 6.3.74 *tasmān nuḍaci* | “[The augment] *nuṭ* is inserted after that [*nañ* which goes through deletion of its *n*] before a vowel”) before vowels (e.g. *aneka*). Pāṇini’s treatment of negative compounds in this rule is really straightforward and does not delve into potential semantic issues we might encounter while analysing such forms.³

In the centuries following Pāṇini we can see a number of turning points when negation got reinterpreted along new lines and the concept of absence was investigated from different angles, often under the influence of other philosophical schools.

3. Patañjali and his take on compounding—turning point 1

Discussion on the role of negation in the meaning of *nañsamāsa*s started with Patañjali and his interpretation of compounds in general. While Pāṇini’s classification of compounded forms was based on various criteria ranging from formal through morpho-syntactic to semantic, Patañjali concentrated on the meaning of individual members and their contribution to the final outcome of the compounding process. He introduced the concept of semantic headedness (*arthaprādhānya*) and described compounds based on semantic predominance of their members. He stated the following:

iha kaścīd samāsaḥ pūrvapadārthapradhānaḥ kaścīd uttarapadārthapradhānaḥ kaścīd anyapadārthapradhānaḥ kaścīd ubhayapadārthapradhānaḥ | pūrvapadārthapradhāno 'vyayībhāvaḥ | uttarapadārthapradhānas tatpuruṣaḥ | anyapadārthapradhāno bahuvrīhiḥ

³ I am omitting the case of *asamarthasamāsa*s, in which an outside word has a relation with the subordinate member of a compound thus making the picture more complicated. The examples of such compounds are *āsrāddhabhojin* (‘a person that does not eat during *śrāddha* ceremonies’) or *asūryampaśya* (‘a person never seeing the sun’). For more details on this topic refer to Gillon 1992, Joshi and Roodbergen 1996 and Vergiani 1994.

| *ubhayapadārthapradhāno dvandvaḥ* | (VMbh 1: I.376.24-377.3 on A. 2.1.6)⁴

Here some compound has the meaning of the former word as predominant, some has the meaning of the latter word as predominant, some has the meaning of the external/other word as predominant and some has the meaning of both words as predominant. [A compound that] has the meaning of the former word as predominant is an *avyayībhāva*. **[A compound that] has the meaning of the latter word as predominant is a *tatpuruṣa*.** [A compound that] has the meaning of the external/other word as predominant is a *bahuvrīhi*. [A compound that] has the meaning of both words as predominant is a *dvandva*.

When we consider therefore the case of *nañsamāsa*, we see that according to Patañjali, its second member is not only morphologically, but also, or most importantly, semantically predominant. This interpretation is significant because it became a benchmark for further analysis. It prompted questions that Pāṇini had never intended to answer or even ask; or to put it differently, they were auxiliary to the original formal classification he had proposed in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

Let us examine an example of a negative compound which is extensively discussed in literature to see what dilemmas this change in approach prompted.⁵ Patañjali analyses the example of *abrāhmaṇa* ('a non-Brahmin'), comparable to other typical *tatpuruṣa* compounds, such as *rājapuruṣa* ('a royal servant'), where the initial member specifies, qualifies, the latter. When the qualifier is a particle which

⁴ The emphasis in this and all the following quotes are mine. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing out that Patañjali's semantic take on headedness could be viewed as the extension of the implications of Pāṇini's notion of *upasarjana*. I think the issue requires further research into various types of compounds; it has already been partially tackled by Mocci 2023 and Pontillo 2003.

⁵ It should be mentioned that there are various examples of negative compounds, some of which could and, probably should, be interpreted slightly differently. The basic principles and the changes in interpretation over the centuries still apply, however, so we can safely say that the discussed example is representative of a bigger picture.

signifies absence or non-existence, however, the qualifier–qualificand relation between the two words becomes problematic. While in *rājapuruṣa* the man (*puruṣa*) gets specified by the king (*rāja*), yet the compound still refers to a person, what happens in *abrāhmaṇa* is the negation of a Brahmin, a Brahmin becomes non-existent, but the compound does denote some person nonetheless. There is no problem on the morphological level; semantically, however, it is not entirely clear. This is how Patañjali explains the problem.

athavā punar astūttarapadārthapradhānaḥ | nanu cuktam abrāhmaṇam ānayet ukte brāhmaṇamātrasyānayanam prāpnoti | naiṣa doṣaḥ | idaṃ tāvad ayaṃ praṣṭavyaḥ – atheha rājapuruṣam ānayet ukte puruṣamātrasyānayanam kasmān na bhavati? asty atra viśeṣaḥ | raja viśeṣakah prayujyate tena viśiṣṭasyānayanam bhavati | iḥāpi tarhi nañ viśeṣakah prayujyate tena viśiṣṭasyānayanam bhaviṣyati | kah punar asau? nīrvṛt-tapadārthakah | (VMBh 2: 669.3–670.20)

Alternatively, let it be that [a compound] has the latter member as predominant. But has it not been said that when [a sentence] ‘**Fetch a non-Brahmin**’ is uttered, it would result in fetching just a Brahmin. This is not a fault. This is indeed what should be asked—in this case then, when [a sentence] ‘Fetch a king’s man’ is uttered, how come just a man is fetched? Here is the difference. [The word] *rājan* is used as a qualifier so there is fetching [of a man] specified by it. **Here as well then nañ is used as a qualifier and there will be fetching [of a Brahmin] specified by it. What is that? It is [a Brahmin] whose object-meant/meaning has been removed.**

Despite the fact that in Pāṇini’s classification negative compounds are most definitely included in the *tatpuruṣa* group, which Patañjali ultimately accepts as well, the possibility of other types of compounds is also discussed in the *Mahābhāṣya*. The semantic approach to compounds, summarised above in Patañjali’s division based on semantic predominance (*padārthapradhānya*), creates a possibility to interpret such expressions as *abrāhmaṇa* in various ways. Firstly,

we can accept *uttarapadārthaprādhānya* (predominance of the latter element) and read the compound as referring a Brahmin that is non-existent, which is the chosen interpretation in the tradition. Secondly, we can opt for *pūrvapadārthaprādhānya* (predominance of the former element), which places the emphasis on negation and can be interpreted as absence residing in a Brahmin,⁶ in other words treat absence as a qualificand in need for specification—what is it that we have absence of? Finally, we can interpret this compound along the lines of *anyapadārthaprādhānya* (predominance of the other/external element) and establish the meaning of a Kshatriya as dominant because this is what usage (*vyavahāra*) points to. The word *abrāhmaṇa* can also be used with reference to a Kshatriya as a result of a mistake/doubt (*saṁdeha*) or wrongful instruction (*durupadeśa*).

jātihīne saṁdehād durupadeśāc ca brāhmaṇaśabdo vartate | saṁdehāt tāvat—gauram śucyācāram piṅgalaṁ kapilakeśam drṣṭvādhyavasyati brāhmaṇo 'yam iti | tataḥ paścād upalabhate nāyam brāhmaṇo 'brāhmaṇo 'yam iti | tatra saṁdehāc ca brāhmaṇaśabdo vartate, jātikṛtā cārthasya nivṛttiḥ | VMBh 2: 674.6–675.2.

In the case of a person of low birth the word *brāhmaṇa* is used as a result of a doubt or wrong instruction. [Let us see the example of it being] a result of a mistake first—having seen a person that is light (skinned?), of pure conduct, having red and brownish hair, a person determines that ‘this is a Brahmin’. Then afterwards they realise that it is not a Brahmin, [they say,] ‘this is a non-Brahmin’. Therefore, as a result of a mistake the word *brāhmaṇa* is used and the cessation of this meaning is caused by a [person’s] descent.⁷

⁶ The expression can also be interpreted as referring to a person that does not exist as a Brahmin. See Joshi and Roodbergen 1973: 72.

⁷ Patañjali proceeds to explain the case of *durupadeśa*, which I omit here for the reasons of space, but the structure of the argument is identical. An assumption is made as to the identity of a person as a Brahmin which is subsequently corrected and we are observing the cessation (*nivṛtti*) of the original meaning.

As will be shown in subsequent paragraphs, this notion of mistake or wrongful cognition became the key feature in the analysis of negative compounds for Sanskrit grammarians.

4. Bhartṛhari (5th century CE) and his secondary existence—turning point 2

There is a gap in the sources pertaining to Vyākaraṇa after Patañjali; the next grammarian whose work was preserved is Bhartṛhari and his *Vākyapadīya* (5th century CE), in which he develops the notions hinted at in the *Mahābhāṣya*. In his very detailed analysis of the meaning and application of the negative particle he points to the meaning of *kṣatriya* that is understood when the compound *abrāhmaṇa* is used. The novelty that Bhartṛhari introduces is ‘secondary/metaphorical existence’ (*upacārasattā*), which comes to life when we talk about negation.

kṣatriyāḍau padaṃ kṛtvā buddhiḥ sattāntarāśrayā |
jātyā bhinnāṃ tataḥ sattāṃ prasaktāṃ apakarṣati || (VP 3.14.262)

An idea based on **some other existence** is first applied (by mistake) to *kṣatriya* and the like and [when the negative particle is used], it removes the existence applied to something different from that based on a universal.

Bhartṛhari stresses that the entire process of negation of objects and the comprehension of uttered expressions happens in our brains. Treating negation as an attribute to the following noun, which ultimately means qualifying something existent with non-existence, can be problematic only in reality; on a linguistic level, however, it is perfectly understandable.

buddher viśayatam prāpte śabdād arthe pratīyate |
pravṛttir vā nivṛttir vā śrutyā hy artho 'nuśajyate || (VP 3.14.280)

In regard to what has been determined by the mind, one understands from a word its existence and non-existence (lit. activity and cessation). The meaning is attached to the word/what is heard.

This *kārikā* points to the fact that the ontological status of an object denoted by a word is irrelevant as we can express linguistically both its existence and the lack thereof.⁸ This potential for expressing contradictory aspects of being can be traced to Patañjali's explanation of *padārthanivṛtti* (the cessation of meaning) mentioned above, where he compares the use of the negative particle to a lamp illuminating the room and bringing different features of it to our attention, yet not creating the reality. In a similar fashion, *nañ* seems to reveal the non-existent aspect of a Brahmin in *abrāhmaṇa*.⁹ We can also see the remnants of Patañjali's wrongful cognition, mistake or faulty instructions given serving as the reason behind using negative expressions in the first place.

asamyagupadeśād vā nimittāt samśayasya vā
śabdapravṛttir na tv asti loṣṭādiṣu viparyayāt || (VP 3.14.281)

Either through faulty instruction or through some cause of doubt,
 a word is applied [to a wrong object]. It is not applied to a clod of earth and the like because of contradiction/opposition.

This last *karikā* is interpreted by later commentators in terms of superimposition (*āropa*) of concepts. Even though Bhartṛhari does not use the terms *āropa*, or its synonyms, with reference to negation, we can see how such a take on this passage can be justified. The similarity between the objects/notions in question is also emphasised

⁸ This emphasis on linguistic operations taking place in our minds with no actual reference to physical reality was discussed at length by Patañjali at various places in the *Mahābhāṣya*, for example in the context of substitution. See *vt.* 13–14 on A. 1.1.56; Joshi and Roodbergen 1990: 84–85. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing me in the direction of this particular passage.

⁹ See also Candotti and Pontillo 2015: 97–98.

as a prerequisite for superimposition to take place. Bhartṛhari prefers to use the term *upacāra* (secondary/metaphorical meaning) and *upacaryate* (it is used metaphorically) to describe the cases such as *abrāhmaṇa* (or *aneka* as in the following passage), but he seems to have focused on the error as the basis for using negative expressions in the first place.

brāhmaṇatvaṃ yathāpannā nañyuktāḥ kṣatriyadayah |
dvitvādiṣu tathaikatvaṃ nañyogād upacaryate || (VP 3.14.285)

Just like *kṣatriya* etc. have brahminhood associated with them when they are used with *nañ*, in the same way unity is metaphorically used in the meanings of two etc. from the connection with *nañ*.

Bhartṛhari's analysis of negation and especially negative compounds is strongly rooted in the earlier tradition and builds on Patañjali's notion of headedness. It does, however, introduce novel concepts, which form a foundation for further ideas developed by the school of Vyākaraṇa and finally solidified by Navya-Vyākaraṇa. Raising the discussion on negation to a more philosophical level creates a bridge between the earliest and latest grammatical tradition, and drifts further apart from the original formalism of Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

5. Grammarians of the 10th–11th century and their superimposition—turning point 3

The turn of the second millennium CE sees further development in the semantics of negative compounds and negation in general. Different commentators composing at that time exhibit similar ideas as to how negative expressions should be understood. What we are also observing then is their increasing focus on the process of cognition behind negative terms rather than pure morphological or morphosyntactic analysis. They are not discussing the meaning per se, as that is contextually determined and does not require explanation, but attempt

to describe how the understanding of said meaning happens. Despite evident similarities in their approach, the three grammarians whose views will be discussed below also introduce their individual ideas to the problem of negation.

5.1 Kaiyaṭa in the *Pradīpa* on Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*

In his commentary *Pradīpa* on Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* when discussing the classification of negative compounds, Kaiyaṭa goes a little further. In his opinion, all three options presented by Patañjali, namely the predominance of the meaning of the first (*pūrvapadārthāprādhānya*), second (*uttarapadārthāprādhānya*) or other (*anyapadārthāprādhānya*) word, are equally valid; when it comes to semantics, we could choose at will, because there are complications with either solution. The reason why the second option is preferable is simplicity; it poses the fewest problems with interpretation.¹⁰ Kaiyaṭa does not refer to Pāṇini's technical classification to support his standpoint but instead he focuses on semantic headedness within a compound. He also recognises that in the case of *abrāhmaṇa* there are three elements at play: a Brahmin (core meaning); his absence (*a-*) and a warrior (*kṣatriya*) that the compound denotes. Kaiyaṭa resorts to the notion of superimposition (*āropa*), according to which one concept is imposed on another; it is subsequently removed in the case of *nañsamāsa* and this process of superimposition is revealed by the use of the particle.

nañviśiṣṭasyeti | āropitabrāhmaṇyaśya kṣatriyāder ity arthaḥ | kaḥ punar aśv ity | bhāvābhāvayor virodhān nañviśiṣṭo brāhmaṇārtho nopapadyate iti bhāvaḥ | nivṛttapadārthaka iti | nivṛttaḥ padārtho mukhyaṃ

¹⁰ *yadyapīhārtho na nirdiṣṭas tathāpy abhidhānaśaktisvābhāvyaḥ labhyate | (...) evaṃ pakṣatrayasambhāve 'lpapratividheyapakṣam āśrayitum āha—uttarapadārthapradhāna iti |* ("Even though the meaning is not taught here, it is thus understood based on the natural power of denotation. (...) In such a way, when three views are possible, he has said to choose the view where there is little to object to, namely it (i.e. the compound) has the meaning of the latter word as predominant" (VMBh 2: 667. 5–7).

brāhmaṇyaṃ yasmin sa kṣatriyādir arthaḥ | sādṛśyādinādhyāropitabrāhmaṇyo nañdyotitatadavastha ity arthaḥ | (VMBh 2: 670.5–8)

[Let's explain:] 'of [the word] qualified by *nañ*'. The meaning is this: of a ***kṣatriya* etc. on whom Brahminhood has been superimposed**. What is it then? It is not possible to have the meaning *brāhmaṇa* qualified by *nañ* due to the contradiction between existence and non-existence—such is the sense. It is [a Brahmin] whose object-meant/meaning has been removed. That in whom the primary [meaning] of Brahminhood has been removed is the meaning *kṣatriya* etc. And that state of Brahminhood being superimposed due to similarity is revealed by *nañ*—this is the sense.

What is also interesting to point out here is the role *nañ* plays in determining the meaning of a compound. Kaiyaṭa emphasises that it serves as a *dyotaka*, a revealer or illuminator of the meaning. This notion of expressiveness (*vācakatva*) and suggestiveness (*dyotakatva*) of various parts of speech was present in the Sanskrit linguistic tradition from the time of Yāska (5th century BCE), the author of *Nirukta*, an etymological treatise. We can only assume that this distinction into words that are independently expressive and those that help to illuminate the meaning of words they accompany was known to Pāṇini, as he did not discuss it in his grammar. It was, however, heavily discussed within the school of Vyākaraṇa as well as in debates with other philosophical schools throughout the history of Indian thought.

5.2 Helārāja in the *Prakīrṇakaparakāśa* on Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya*

Interpretations found in the *Pradīpa* were influenced by Helārāja's commentary on Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya*, who elaborated on Bhartṛhari's 'ideas' (see par. 4) and expanded on his mistaken cognition, which ultimately led to adopting the notion of superimposition. While discussing the example of *abrāhmaṇa*, he points to error of mental effort (*mithyādhyavasāya*), which is corrected by *nañ* when realised.

brāhmaṇasattāviṣayā buddhir yadā kutaścīd bhrāntikāraṇāt kṣatriye pravartate tadā brāhmaṇaśabdas tatra prayujyate | so 'yaṃ mithyā-dhyavasāyo yadā tattvajñānān nivartate tadā nañḥ prayoga ity ayaṃ viṣayo nañsamāsasya | (VP 1: 274.1–4)

When an idea whose scope is the existence of a Brahmin is employed to a *kṣatriya* on account of some mistake, then the word *brāhmaṇa* is used in that case. When after realising the truth that this is **the error of the mental effort** one corrects it, then [the particle] *nañ* is used; this is the scope of a negative compound.

What superimposition (*āropa*), which is an entirely mental process (*buddhistha*), requires is similarity between the two objects. Not only are negative compounds used to negate the superimposed object or notion, but they emphasise *āropa* and the correction of a mistake that was made.

nāyaṃ brāhmaṇo mithyā tv evaṃ avasitas tatsadrśo 'brāhmaṇo 'yam iti, sadṛśaḥ kṣatriyādir eva samāsārthaḥ sampadyate na loṣṭādi(h), samāropanibandhanasya sādṛśyāder abhāvāt | (VP 1: 274.5–7)

This is not a Brahmin, but he has been thus wrongly understood; *abrāhmaṇa* is someone similar [to a Brahmin]. And the meaning of a compound is that which is similar, that is a *kṣatriya* etc. only, not a lump and such, **due to the lack of similarity, which is the cause of superimposition.**

In his commentary on VP 3.14.285 quoted above, Helārāja yet again refers to the fact that superimposition of the wrongful notion is caused by a mistake, a faulty instruction (*adhyāropito durupadeśādinā nimittena* | VP 1: 283.12–13). Similarly to his predecessors, he accepts the headedness of the latter member of a compound (*uttarapadārtha*) in its semantic analysis and says that it indicates the object or notion that was metaphorically used and needs to be negated (*sarvatra prasiddhe nañsamāse samāropo 'nugantavyaḥ | upacāritapadārthapraṭiśedhena hy uttarapadārthapradhāno nañsamāsa ity |* VP 1: 281.5–6). By

stating that we should always refer to superimposition in the case of *nañsamāsa* Helārāja seems to imply that *āropa* could be one of the meanings of the negative particle; the notion that Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa will object to some centuries later.

5.3. Haradatta in the *Padamañjarī* on the *Kāśikāvṛtti*

We can see that at this point in time there is very little reference made to types of compounds introduced by Pāṇini. Patañjali's interpretation was adopted without question and significantly elaborated on, especially in the second millennium CE. The texts discussed above belong to the more philosophical branch of the school of Vyākaraṇa, but such arguments were not absent from more linguistically oriented works. If we look at the *Kāśikāvṛtti* (KV), the first full commentary on the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* composed by Jayāditya and Vāmana in the 7th century CE, we will not find much debate on negative compounds. The authors' take is limited to their morphological description, which is, as mentioned earlier, quite simple. One of the commentators on the KV, Haradatta, dated to the 11th century (Pathak 1931: 247), however, elaborates on the complexity of meaning behind the forms such as *abrāhmaṇa*. Haradatta seems to be following Kaiyaṭa in his analysis and points to the loss of the original meaning of the word while superimposition takes place. On the other hand, he also mentions the secondary meaning that emerges in the process giving rise to the final outcome that we are observing in the context.

naiṣa doṣaḥ, nivṛttapadārthako 'tra brāhmaṇaśabdaḥ, sā ca nivṛttih svābhāvikī nanā dyotyate, ko 'rthaḥ? kevalo brāhmaṇaśabdaḥ prayujyamāṇaḥ prasiddhivaśān mukhyam eva brāhmaṇam ācaṣṭe; nañprayogeṇa tu kṣatriyādaḥ sādrśyādinaḥ nimittenādhyāropitaḥ brāhmaṇyaḥ na tātvikam iti dyotyate | tad evam mukhyo brāhmaṇaśabdasyārtho nivṛtto jūtaś cāmukhyah kṣatriyādir iti na brāhmaṇamātrānayanam, nāpi na kasyacidānayanam iti siddham | (KV 2: 105.15–20)

This is not a fault. Here the word *brāhmaṇa* has its meaning removed; **and this removal being natural is revealed by *nañ***. What is the meaning [then]? The word *brāhmaṇa* used alone signifies only the primary [meaning] that is a Brahmin according to acknowledged usage. By the use of *nañ*, however, superimposed Brahminhood onto a *kṣatriya* etc. as a result of similarity is revealed, not the real one. In such a way, **the primary meaning of the word *brāhmaṇa* is removed and a non-primary one of a *kṣatriya* emerges**. [Thus the instruction *abrāhmaṇam ānaya*] will not result in fetching only a Brahmin or not fetching anyone— this is achieved.”

Haradatta seems to be combining the concept of superimposition and secondary meaning here. He says that the word *brāhmaṇa* has the potential, or contains, both a primary and secondary meaning (similarly to the existent and non-existent aspects proposed by Bhartṛhari). When used in isolation, only the main meaning is understood; the emergence of the secondary meaning is triggered by a mistaken judgement resulting in the superimposition of Brahminhood on a Kshatriya. This allows for the proper understanding of the injunction and fetching a person other than a Brahmin. Superimposition is, of course, a feature of the linguistic level; it has no bearing on external reality.

As we can see, the beginning of the second millennium CE marked another change in the approach to the analysis of negative formations by introducing the notion of superimposition into the equation. It seems that the term *āropa* itself was extended into this context only around the 11th century CE. Earlier, we can find references to the erroneous cognition and superimposition of one concept onto another resulting from it in the *Vākyapadīya* of Bhartṛhari (VP III.3.39–41, the chapter on relations— *sambandhasamuddeśa*, see Houben (1995: 257–262)), but it was not used to explain the process behind negative expressions.

6. Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa (17th century CE) in the *Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇasāra*

When we move several centuries ahead, we enter the period of Navya-Vyākaraṇa (Neo-Grammarians), which witnessed the redefinition of various linguistic and philosophical concepts as well as the further development of the school of grammar. One of the prominent representatives of that period was Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa (KB), the author of the *Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇasāra*, in itself a commentary on his uncle Bhaṭṭojī Dīkṣita's *Vaiyākaraṇasiddhāntakārikā*. In his text KB takes a step back and redefines the notion of superimposition developed by the grammarians a few centuries before. He goes back to Patañjali's *nivṛttapadārthakatva* and opposes Kaiyaṭa on the interpretation of *āropitatva*:

yat tu nivṛttaḥ padārtho yasminn ity arthaḥ | sādṛśyādinādhyaōropitabrāhmaṇyāḥ kṣatriyādayo 'rthā yasyety artha iti kaiyaṭaḥ | tan na, āropitabrāhmaṇyasya kṣatriyāder nañavācyatvāt | anyathā sādṛśyāder api vācyatāpatteḥ | (VSK 43.2–4 / VBhS 360.1–5)

According to Kaiyaṭa, the meaning [of the expression *nivṛttapadārthakatva*] is “that in which the meaning has been removed”; [consequently,] the meaning [of *abrāhmaṇa*] is the following: “whose meanings of *kṣatriya* etc. have Brahminhood imposed on due to similarity”. **This is not the case [in our opinion], because [the word] *nañ* does not express the meaning *kṣatriya* etc. on whom Brahminhood was superimposed. Otherwise, [*nañ*] would also express similarity etc.**

For Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa *āropitatva* should be read as the ‘object of superimposition’ because otherwise we would run the risk of superimposition itself being the meaning of a negative particle, which would make the semantic range *nañ* expresses even more complex.¹¹

¹¹ KB quotes a famous verse attributed, rather wrongly, to Bhartṛhari, in which six meanings of the negative particle are listed:

*tatsādṛśyam abhāvaś ca tadanyatvaṃ tadāpatā |
aprasastyam virodhaś ca nañarthāḥ śaṭ prakīrtitāḥ ||*

What KB seems to be looking for in his interpretation of negation is the unification of meaning of both types of negative expressions, sentential and nominal, for *prasajya* and *paryudāsa*; he looks for semantic simplicity, which is negation meaning *abhāva* ('absence'). Furthermore, he favours negation as *viśeṣya* ('a qualificand') rather than *viśeṣaṇa* ('a qualifier'); an interpretation morphologically difficult from Pāṇinian perspective. Although reluctantly, he finally accepts the latter in the case of negative compounds, which allows him to follow the traditional path. It should be pointed out here that while Sanskrit grammarians over the centuries reinterpreted the approach to negation, they never question its qualifying character in negative compounds. Kauṇḍabhaṭṭa ultimately decides that the key to *nañsamāsa* is secondary meaning:

*atvaṃ bhavasītyādaḥ yuṣmadasmados tadbhinne laksanā | nañ dyo-
takah | tathā ca bhinnena yuṣmadarthena tiṇaḥ sāmānādhikaraṇyāt
puruṣavyavasthā | tvadbhinnābhinnāśrayikā bhavanakriyeti śāb-
dabodhaḥ | evaṃ na tvaṃ pacasīty atra tvadbhinnāśrayakapākā-
nukūlabhāvanābhāvaḥ | ghaṭo nāstīty atra ghaṭābhinnāśrayakāstitvābhāva
iti rītyā bodhaḥ | asamastanaṇaḥ kriyāyām evānvayabodhāt | sa cābhāvo
'tyantābhāvatvānyonyābhāvatvādirūpeṇa śakyas tattadrūpeṇa bodhād ity
anyatra vistarāḥ | (VSK 43.27–44.2 / VBhS 366.1–367.3)*

In [the examples] such as *atvaṃ bhavasi* etc. there is **the secondary meaning of [the stems] *yuṣmad* and *asmad* in the sense of “different from that”**. [The particle] *nañ* [serves as] **an indicator** [of that secondary meaning]. And thus, the person is determined through the co-referentiality of the verbal ending with the meaning of *yuṣmad* that is different. The verbal cognition is the following: the action of becoming has a substratum not different from what is different from you. In the same way, in

“Six meanings of [the particle] *nañ* are mentioned: similarity to that, absence, being different from that, smallness of that, lack of excellence/inauspiciousness and opposition/contradiction.”

The detailed analysis and translation of the chapter on negation in the Vaiyākaraṇabhūṣaṇasāra see Sulich-Cowley 2023.

[the example] *na tvam pacasi* (“You do not cook”) there is the absence of action conducive to cooking which has a substratum not different from you. In [the example] *ghaṭo nāsti* (“There is no pot”) the customary cognition is this: the absence of existence in the substratum not different than the pot. [This understanding] is due to recognising the connection with the action only when *nañ* is uncompounded. And this absence is possible to [be understood] in the form of *atyantābhāva* (absolute absence) or *anyonyābhāva* (mutual absence), because this is how it is cognised. This is explained elsewhere.

The conclusion that we find in KB’s work is that in negative compounds the particle is indicative of the secondary meaning the negated stem possesses; this meaning might, in some case, be superimposed. This last passage also points to the role of *nañ* as a revealer (*dyotaka*) rather than an element that expresses a particular meaning; what it reveals is the aspect of non-existence inherent in the object next to its existence.

7. Conclusions

What can we take from the above selective analysis? What picture of negation emerges from the development of the school of grammatical thought over the span of two millennia? Firstly, what the example of negative compounds shows us is a shift from a formal, morphological, description to a semantic-based approach. The introduction of semantic headedness by Patañjali has become dominant in the later tradition and superseded Pāṇini’s original classification of compounds thus focusing on selective aspects in their analysis. Secondly, discussion on the headedness in negative compounds with time concentrated on the predominance of either former (*pūrvapadārtha*) or latter (*uttarapadārtha*) member of a compound. The notion of the head lying outside of a compound (*anyapadārtha*) was largely abandoned, or perhaps redefined, and gave way to the concept of superimposition.

Therefore, it can be said that the journey of the school of Vyākaraṇa progressed from formalism through contextual analysis to defining the process of cognition behind negative compounds.

Can we say that Sanskrit grammarians and philosophers following Pāṇini were mistaken in their interpretations? Did they misunderstand what Pāṇini said? There is no one clear answer to that. There was definitely some miscomprehension at play but there was also a different take on linguistic phenomena, such as negation and compounds in general discussed in this article. Sanskrit commentators concentrated on other aspects of compounding than Pāṇini had, selected and emphasised some of them while devaluing others. Ideas started by Patañjali began to live their own life; they evolved in their own way independent of Pāṇini. They became a tradition within tradition so to speak, like a frame narrative. Commentators' constant reference to Pāṇini's grammar was filtered through later interpretations and external influences; it was often not so much Pāṇini they were referencing as their image of him. Perhaps then, the Sanskrit grammatical tradition should not be seen merely as a means to explain the intricacies of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* but rather as an attempt to establish its own ideas and explore the aspects of language Pāṇini did not venture into.

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Pāṇini's Semantic Hierarchy, or How to Remove the Commentarial Dust from A 2.3.15¹

ABSTRACT: In the Indian grammatical tradition, the semantic values ascribed by Pāṇini to the infinitival suffix *-tum* (notably, ‘agent’, ‘purpose’, ‘future’) were disputed by his commentators. In particular, Patañjali argued that *-tum* denotes ‘action’ (*bhāva-*) instead of ‘agent’. In the present contribution I provide fresh evidence in favor of Pāṇini’s original account of the semantic values of *-tum*. I also show how the issue of determining the denotation

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of *-tum*, far from being the purview of a handful of erudite historians of linguistics, reveals a fine-grained theory of argument structure—with several hierarchically organized meaning components—that can fruitfully interact with, even inform, the modern language sciences.

KEYWORDS: argument structure, *kāraṅkas*, Indian grammatical tradition, infinitives, Old Indo-Aryan

1. Introduction: The bigger picture

This study deals with a debate that developed within the Indian grammatical tradition regarding the denotation of the Old Indo-Aryan infinitival suffix *-tum*. Due to the specificity of this topic, a general introduction is called for that reveals the bigger picture lying behind the present study. Thus, in this section I shall briefly address the question as to why one should study Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (i.e., the foundational work of the Indian grammatical tradition) nowadays: outside the framework of this question, the present work risks appearing as a collection of erudite and abstruse historical observations of very limited interest for Indological and linguistic studies alike, let alone for the modern scientific community more broadly.

While several different answers may be conceived, two rise prominently above the others to my mind.

1.1. The place of Pāṇini's grammar in Old Indo-Aryan studies

For one thing, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*—a grammar of Old Indo-Aryan that dates back to ca. the 4th century BCE—is an extraordinary documentary work, bearing witness to the existence not only of diachronic varieties of Old Indo-Aryan, but also of diatopic and diastratic ones (Houben 2018; Deshpande 2019). Furthermore, in accordance with the groundbreaking work of Kiparsky (1979), Pāṇini provides subtle judgments that rank a series of linguistic options (i.e., forms that are in complementary distribution with one another) against a three-value

scale, i.e., as ‘preferred’ (*vā*), ‘neutral’ (*anyatarasyām*), or ‘marginal’ (*vibhāṣā*). Indeed, Pāṇini’s judgments may also rule some linguistic data out, in a way that is reminiscent of modern linguistic acceptability judgments (i.e., judgments that linguists elicit from native speakers in linguistic experiments to determine whether a given utterance belongs to the set of well-formed sentences of a given language). As an example of the latter kind of judgment, one may consider the following *Aṣṭādhyāyī* rule (‘A’ for short):²

A 2.2.10: *na nirdhāraṇe* [*samāsaḥ* 2.1.3] [*saha supā* 2.1.4] [*tatpuruṣaḥ* 2.1.22] [*śaṣṭhī* 2.2.8]

When a setting apart (*nirdhāraṇa-*) is to be signified, no *tatpuruṣa* compound can be formed by combining a genitive-marked word with another case-marked word.

As discussed by Mocci and Pontillo (2019: 7 n. 16), this rule prevents the combination of case-marked words in (1b) from being the input that yields the compound (1a). This is because (1b) involves an adnominal partitive genitive (*puruṣānām*), which brings it about that a tiger is set apart (*nirdhāraṇa-*) from the set of men:

- (1) a. *puruṣa-vyāghra-ḥ*
 man-tiger-NOM.SG.M
 b. *puruṣānām* *vyāghraḥ*
 man.GEN.PL.M tiger.NOM.SG.M
 A tiger among men.

As a result, the compound *puruṣa-vyāghra-* cannot be read as ‘a tiger among men’ in Old Indo-Aryan. It is crucial to emphasize that this reading cannot be excluded on any grounds (e.g., consistency

² My translation of *nirdhāraṇa-* as ‘a setting apart’ follows Cardona (1997: 216). I am thankful to an anonymous Reviewer for the Journal for refining my understanding of A 2.2.10.

with the textual passages in which the compound is attested) other than Pāṇini's own judgment, couched in the form a grammatical rule (i.e., A 2.2.10). Put another way, the reading in (1a) is simply not part of the repertoire of possible meanings conveyed by the Old Indo-Aryan compounds, just as (2a) can be read along the lines of (2b) (i.e., as a question about a mode or way of wondering), but not along the lines of (2c) (i.e., as a question about a mode or way of solving problems), as signaled by the asterisk prefixed to it: there is nothing inherently or logically wrong in these excluded readings; however, they are just perceived as unavailable by the relative native speakers of Old Indo-Aryan (including Pāṇini) and English.³

- (2) a. How do you wonder which problem to solve?
- b. Which way is such that you wonder in that way [which problem to solve].
- c. *Which way is such that you wonder [which problem to solve in that way].

Thus, as pointed out by Kielhorn (1969: 235) and more recently by Penn and Kiparsky (2012: §7), Pāṇini's rules teach not only how to output correct linguistic forms, but also how to avoid incorrect ones: that is, they are 'explicit' rules, in the technical sense of formal linguistics (Mocci 2025).⁴

³ See Rizzi (1990: 8–9) for the discovery of a seminal principle of grammar that accounts for the English native speakers' judgments reproduced in (2). See instead Ogawa (2005: 270–271) and Ozono (2021: 483–484) for an overview of the class of Old Indo-Aryan native speakers who served as model speakers (*śiṣṭa-*) for the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

⁴ This is indeed an oversimplification. As a matter of fact, the degree of explicitness of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* rules is limited by the so-called *anabhidhāna* principle, whereby the forms output by the rules may not match the forms actually used by the model speakers of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (Ogawa 2005: 271). The validity of the *anabhidhāna* principle in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was questioned by Kielhorn (1969: 234–235) but has been recently reinstated by Ozono (2021: 484). I am grateful to an anonymous Reviewer for drawing my attention to the *anabhidhāna* principle.

Therefore, the first answer to the question as to why one should study the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* nowadays is that the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* places modern scholarship in a unique position: not only by granting access to the varieties of Old Indo-Aryan that would otherwise remain unknown to us, but also by providing an inner perspective into the Old Indo-Aryan language more broadly. This position is in fact unparalleled in the studies of any other ancient language.

The second motivation for studying the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* today rests on the fact that Pāṇini's grammar represents the most advanced syntactic model worldwide until at least the twentieth century, when generative models were developed directly by Chomsky (e.g., Chomsky 1956; 1975; 2002 [1957]) or in response to Chomsky's work (e.g., Bresnan and Kaplan 1982).⁵ As a consequence, studying the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* implies learning a highly sophisticated procedure to analyze the syntax of Old Indo-Aryan and possibly of other natural languages.

1.2. The place of the indigenous Indian commentaries on Pāṇini's grammar in Old Indo-Aryan studies

The honorable place occupied by Pāṇini's grammar in modern scholarship provides an immediate rationale for the study of the indigenous Indian commentarial tradition on Pāṇini's grammar: it is worth studying and researching on this tradition nowadays insofar as it clarifies the content and purpose of Pāṇini's encrypted rules, for example by providing linguistic examples that illustrate the application of the rules.

However, there is an additional motivation for the study of the Indian grammatical tradition that goes beyond a better understanding of Pāṇini's single rules. Thus, the commentaries often dwell on alleged shortcomings inherent in Pāṇini's rules and discuss possible solutions for these shortcomings, including the alteration of the wording of the rules. Such discussions crucially reveal sensitive points of

⁵ For some concrete examples of the sophistication and granularity achieved by the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, see the case studies offered by Kiparsky and Staal (1969), Kiparsky (2009), and Lowe (2024).

Pāṇini's grammatical model that require careful consideration. These are often points of the model that connect with other points of the model, thereby creating a complex—albeit hidden—system of interconnections between the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* rules: within this system, the alleged shortcomings of Pāṇini's rules can be eliminated, thereby returning a more consistent and often deeper picture of the whole grammatical system of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

Thus, for example, Scharfe (1965) and Pontillo (2010) illuminated the system of the semantic conditions on rule outputs by calling into question the commentarial interpretation of *vacana*- (with special reference to A 1.2.51). Kiparsky (1979) illuminated the system of rule optionality by challenging the commentators' interpretation of *vā* and *vibhāṣā*, understood by Kiparsky as respectively enjoining a preferred and a marginal option.⁶ Pontillo (2018) shed new light on the system of complex word forms (e.g., nominal derivatives and compounds) by calling into question the commentarial interpretation of A 2.1.1, now re-interpreted as governing the relationship between complex word forms and the matching combination of inflected words.⁷ Likewise, Mocci and Pontillo (2020) cast new light on the system of *kāraḥ* by dissociating themselves from the commentators' reading of A 2.3.46, a rule that provides for the assignment of nominative case to nominal stems.⁸ Finally, by going beyond the commentarial reading of

⁶ As pointed out by an anonymous Reviewer for the Journal, Kiparsky's system of rule optionality has met with mixed reactions in modern scholarship. Thus, for example, Radicchi (1988: 56–58) and Candotti and Pontillo (2022: 10 n. 26) make crucial use of this system in their interpretation of compounding, whereas Cardona (1997)—a reference work for the study of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*—draws no distinction between *vā* and *vibhāṣā*, thereby sticking to the traditional understanding of these terms (see especially Cardona 1997: 219).

⁷ The re-interpretation of A 2.1.1 presupposes a crucial connection—also gone unnoticed in the Indian commentaries on the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*—between this rule and the pair of rules that define the *upasarjana*, i.e., A 1.2.43–44. See Pontillo (2003), Candotti and Pontillo (2019), and Mocci and Pontillo (2019) for a detailed discussion.

⁸ Simplifying somewhat, *kāraḥ* (e.g., *karṭṛ*- 'agent' and *karman*- 'patient') are syntactic-semantic notions that codify the relationship between the eventuality

the most important metarule on substitution (i.e., A 1.1.56), Candotti and Pontillo (2021) unveiled a scalar morphological system where the class of Pāṇini's linguistic segments is partitioned into morphemes (i.e., meaningful units), phonemes (i.e., meaningless units), and units that are halfway between morphemes and phonemes. All these studies—the list is by no means exhaustive—exemplify the approach to the commentaries on Pāṇini's grammar whereby the alleged aporias discussed in the commentaries indeed conceal unnoticed or misunderstood systems of interconnections between the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* rules.

In the present work I contribute to this approach by means of a case study on A 2.3.15. All in all, the main motivation for studying Pāṇini's commentators nowadays lies in their being powerful research tools for uncovering crucial points of a grammatical model—i.e., the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*—that is of enormous importance for Old Indo-Aryan studies.

1.3. The goal of this study

The main goal of this study is to show that Patañjali's modifications of Pāṇini's denotation of *-tum* infinitives in fact conceal a serious misunderstanding of the fine-grained theory of argument structure (i.e., the theory of verb-argument relations) of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.⁹ My core argument to achieve this goal is based on A 2.3.15 and on the notion of 'semantic hierarchy'.

The present contribution is organized as follows. First, I outline Pāṇini's model of the infinitive (section 2). Next, in section 3, I discuss the commentarial modifications of this model, by focusing on Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*. Last, in section 4, I show that Pāṇini's syntax makes crucial use of the notion of semantic hierarchy, which makes the commentarial modifications unnecessary and in fact unwarranted.

denoted by the verbal stem and the participants of this eventuality. See Lowe (2024: 108–117) for an updated discussion.

⁹ See Hale and Keyser (1993); (2002) for an insightful theory of argument structure.

2. Pāṇini's model of the infinitive

What is an infinitive for Pāṇini? The present section is given over to answering this question.

2.1. The unmarked infinitival type: *-tum*

The most general rule given over to the infinitive in Pāṇini's grammar is A 3.3.10:

A 3.3.10: *tumunṇvulau kriyāyām kriyārthāyām* [*pratyayaḥ* 3.1.1] [*paraś ca* 3.1.2] [*bhaviṣyati* 3.1.3] [*dhātoḥ* 3.1.91] [*kṛt* 3.1.93]

The *kṛt* affixes *tumUN* and *ṆvuL* are introduced after a verbal base X when an action Y taking place in the future (*bhaviṣyati*) is to be signified such that:

Y co-occurs with the action denoted by X;

Y has the action denoted by X as Y's purpose (*kriyāyām kriyārthāyām*).

This rule establishes *-tum* as the unmarked suffix for the formation of Old Indo-Aryan infinitives,¹⁰ and provides for a series of constraints on the use of this infinitival suffix. These constraints have been recently discussed in Mocci and Pontillo (2026: 200–204). The following subsections summarize the main results of their discussion.

¹⁰ The other infinitival suffixes, such as the Vedic dative suffixes *-se*, *-tave*, and *-tavai*, are taught as replacements of *-tum* in compliance with A 3.4.9: *tumarthe sese-naseasenkṣekasenadhyaiadhyainkadhyaiśadhyaiśadhyaintavaitaveṇtavenaḥ* [*pratyayaḥ* 3.1.1] [*paraś ca* 3.1.2] [*dhātoḥ* 3.1.91] [*kṛt* 3.1.93] [*chandasi* 3.4.6] 'In the Vedic *saṃhitās* (*chandasi*), the *kṛt* affixes *-se*, *-seN*, *-ase*, *-aseN*, *-Kse*, *-KaseN*, *-adhyai*, *-adhyaiN*, *-Kadhyai*, *-KadhyaiN*, *-Śadhyai*, *-ŚadhyaiN*, *-tavai*, *-taveN*, *-taveN* occur after a verbal base in the sense of *-tum*.' See Mocci and Pontillo (2026) for an updated discussion of this rule and its interaction with Pāṇini's system of *kārakas*.

2.2. First constraint: the infinitive as an agent-denoting unit

The first constraint imposed by A 3.3.10 on *-tum* is that the latter denotes an agent. This is because: i) *kṛt*, which is part of the wording of A 3.1.91, continues in A 3.3.10 by the mechanism of *anuvṛtti*, thereby labelling *-tum* as a *kṛt* (i.e., as a deverbal nominal); ii) linguistic units labelled as *kṛts* denote an agent by A 3.4.67.¹¹ I illustrate this point by means of a constructed example:¹²

(3) *paktum vrajati*

He goes to cook.

In accordance with Pāṇini's interpretation, the suffix *-tum*, which attaches to the verbal base *pac-* 'to cook' to form the infinitive *paktum*, denotes not the action of cooking, but rather the agent of this action (i.e., a cook).

¹¹ A 3.4.67: *kartari kṛt* [*pratyayaḥ* 3.1.1] [*paraś ca* 3.1.2] [*dhātoḥ* 3.1.91] 'any affix labelled as *kṛt* is introduced after a verbal base in the sense of agent'.

¹² Cf. the following textual example from early Vedic, which contains the *-tum* infinitive *prāṣṭum* (from *prach-* 'to ask'): RV 1.164.4cd: *bhūmyā āsur āsrg ātmā kūva svit/ kó vidvāmsam úpa gāt prāṣṭum etát//* 'Where is the life, blood, and breath of the earth? Who will approach the knowing one to ask this?' (tr. Jamison and Brereton 2014). In this connection it may be worth pondering on the legitimacy of the operation of testing Pāṇini's rules (which date back to the 4th century BCE) against early Vedic material (RV and the two recensions—*Paippalāda* and *Śaunakīya*—of the *Atharvaveda*, spanning ca. 1200-1000 BCE). I limit myself to referring the reader to the studies on early Vedic bahuvrīhi compounds and dative-marked infinitives by Candotti and Pontillo (2022) and Mocci and Pontillo (2026), where it is argued that this operation is not only philologically sound, but may also advance our detailed understanding of the textual material under examination. Cf. Deshpande (1985) and Ozono (2010) for an updated overview of the complex relationship between Pāṇini and the Vedas. I am thankful to an anonymous Reviewer for the Journal for the stimulating discussion on this point.

2.3. Second constraint: the infinitive as a co-occurring unit

The second constraint provides for the verbal base to which *-tum* is affixed to co-occur with another verbal base. This ultimately results from A 3.3.10 being a rule of the section headed by A 3.1.91. Let us consider how. By A 3.1.92, the locative-marked words contained in any rule of the section headed by A 3.1.91 denote a co-occurring word, technically dubbed as *upapada*.¹³ A 3.3.10, which belongs to this section, contains the locative-marked words *kriyāyām kriyārthāyām*. Accordingly, these locative-marked words denote an action that co-occurs with another action; in plain words, they qualify the verbal base to which *-tum* is affixed as co-occurring with another verbal base, which can conveniently be referred to as the ‘governing verb’ (i.e., the verb that governs the infinitival clause).

For example, the governing verb of (3) is the verbal base *vraj-* ‘to move’ (*vrajati*), which co-occurs with the verbal base *pac-* of the infinitive *paktum*.

2.4. Third constraint: the infinitival clause as a purpose clause

In keeping with the third constraint imposed on *-tum* by A 3.3.10, the action denoted by the *-tum* infinitive must be the purpose for which the action denoted by the governing verb is fulfilled. This is also expressed by Pāṇini by means of the locative-marked words *kriyāyām kriyārthāyām*. Specifically, *kriyāyām* refers to the action Y denoted by the governing verb, and *kriyārthāyām*—a bahuvrīhi compound—qualifies Y as having the action denoted by X as Y’s own purpose, where X is the verbal base to which *-tum* is affixed. Put another way, the infinitival clause headed by the *-tum* infinitive is a purpose clause.

Thus, for example, the infinitival clause *paktum* ‘in order to cook’ is a purpose clause in (3): the action of cooking denoted by *pac-* is

¹³ A 3.1.92: *tatropapadaṃ saptaṃsthāṃ* ‘What is marked with the locative here (i.e., in a rule of the section headed by A 3.1.91: *dhātoḥ*) goes under the rubric of *upapada* (i.e., co-occurring unit).’

the purpose of the action of going or moving denoted by the governing verb *vraj-*.

2.5. Fourth constraint: the infinitive as a future-denoting unit

The fourth constraint to be discussed here is that the action denoted by the verbal base to which *-tum* is affixed must take place in the future relative to the action denoted by the governing verb. In other words, the action denoted by the verbal base to which *-tum* is affixed takes place after the action denoted by the governing verb. This, Pāṇini provides for by means of the locative-marked segment *bhaviṣyati* 'when an action in the future is to be signified'. The reader can easily verify that this constraint is also complied with in (3).

In this section I have sketched out Pāṇini's model of the infinitive. In the following section I provide an outline of Patañjali's deviations from this model.

3. Patañjali's break from Pāṇini's model of the infinitive

Patañjali takes it that the infinitival suffixes (e.g., *-tum*, *-tave*, *-tavai*, *-se*) convey the sense of *bhāva-* by virtue of *tumarthe* continuing in A 3.4.26 from A 3.4.9 via the mechanism of *anuvṛtti* (Deshpande 1980: 49–50).¹⁴ This is shown in the following excerpt from his *Mahābhāṣya* (ca. 2nd century BCE):

M 2.175 ll. 20–22 *ad* A 3.4.26

*tat tarhi vaktavyam ā ca tumunaḥ samānādhikaraṇe iti. na vaktavyam.
avyayakṛtaḥ bhāve bhavanti iti bhāve bhaviṣyanti. kim vaktavyam etat.*

¹⁴ For completeness's sake, I reproduce here the wording of A 3.4.26: *svādumi ṇamul [pratayayaḥ 3.1.1] [paraś ca 3.1.2] [dhātoḥ 3.1.91] [samānakartrkayoḥ pūrvakāle 3.4.21] [kṛṇāḥ 3.4.25]* 'Affix *ṇamUL* occurs after the verbal base *kṛṇ* that co-occurs with *svādu-m* (lit. pleasant-ACC.SG.M), when [*ṇamUL*] signifies: (i) a point in time that is prior (to the point in time signified by another verb form B); and (ii) the same agent (as B).' See above, §2.1, for the wording of A 3.4.9.

na hi. katham anucyamānam gaṃsyate. tumarthe iti vartate. tumarthaḥ ca kaḥ. bhāvaḥ.

Then, should one make the statement: “Affixes up to *-tumUN* should be co-referential (with the inflection of the main verb)”? Such a statement should not be made. On the basis of the statement, i.e. “indeclinable *kṛt* formations denote the action,” (affixes such as *-ṆamUL*, *-Ktvā*, and *-tumUN*) will denote the action. Should this (second) statement be made? No. How can something which has not been stated be understood? The word *tum-arthe* continues (from P.3.4.9¹⁵ into the following rules). What is the meaning of *-tum*? Action. (transl. Deshpande 1980: 51)

Note that Deshpande is translating *bhāva-* as ‘action’, which calls for some elaboration. To start with, in Pāṇini’s grammar this term does not refer to the antonym of ‘state’ (e.g., ‘to smash’ as opposed to ‘to be happy’). Indeed, following Wezler (1975: 104), *bhāva-* ‘action’ designates an eventuality considered in and of itself, i.e., in opposition to the agent and the patient of that eventuality:¹⁶ e.g., both the eventuality of smashing and the eventuality of being happy satisfy this definition of *bhāva-*, but the smasher (agent), the smashee (patient), or the person who is happy, do not.

The assignment of the meaning of *bhāva-* to the infinitival suffix *-tum* represents a substantial break from Pāṇini’s own model of the infinitives.¹⁷ This is because the infinitives are classified as *kṛts* by Pāṇini, which implies that they all convey the sense of agent (as opposed to *bhāva-*) in accordance with A 3.4.67, as discussed above (see §2.2). Patañjali motivates his shifting the denotation of the Old Indo-Aryan infinitives from ‘agent’ to *bhāva-* along the following lines:

¹⁵ In Deshpande’s translations, ‘P’ stands for ‘Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī*’.

¹⁶ In modern linguistics, ‘eventuality’ is a technical term that refers to anything that can be predicated, including states and actions (Bach 1981: 67–69; Lowe 2015: 95 n. 1).

¹⁷ As Deshpande (1980: 51) and Mocci and Pontillo (2026: 214–215) point out, Patañjali’s view also differs substantially from Kātyāyana’s.

M 2.171 ll. 9–17 *ad* A 3.4.9

*tumarthe iti ucyate. kaḥ tumarthaḥ. kartā. yadi evam na arthaḥ tumar-
thagrahaṇena. yena eva khalu api hetunā kartari tumun bhavati tena
eva hetunā sayādayaḥ api bhaviṣyanti. evam tarhi siddhe sati yat tumar-
thagrahaṇam karoti tat jñāpayati ācāryaḥ asti anyāḥ kartuḥ tumunaḥ
arthaḥ iti. kaḥ punaḥ asau. bhāvaḥ. kutaḥ nu khalu etat bhāve tumun
bhaviṣyati. na punaḥ karmādiṣu kārakeṣu iti. jñāpakāt ayam kartuḥ apa-
krṣyate. na ca anyasmin arthe ādiṣyate. anirdiṣṭārthāḥ pratyayāḥ svārthe
bhavanti iti svārthe bhaviṣyati tat yathā guptijikidbhyaḥ san yāvādibhyaḥ
kan iti. saḥ asau svārthe bhavan bhāve bhaviṣyati. kim etasya jñāpane
prayojanam. avyayakṛtaḥ bhāve bhavanti iti etat na vaktavyam bhavati.*

The rule says: “in the meaning of *-tum*”. What is indeed the meaning of *-tum*? (*Prima facie argument*): The meaning of *-tum* is the agent. (*Objection*): If this is so, there is no purpose in saying “in the meaning of *-tum*” (in P.3.4.9). The reason because of which *-tum* is said to denote the agent (i.e. P.3.4.67 [...]) will also be the reason by which affixes such as *-se* would have to denote the agent. [...] (*Final view*): Therefore, since Pāṇini explicitly says “in the meaning of *-tum*” (in P.3.4.9) even though the desired result may be (apparently) accomplished (without doing so), the teacher implies that the meaning of *-tum* is other than the agent. What is it? It is *bhāva* ‘action’. Why is it this way? Why would *-tum* occur in the meaning of action and not in other syntactic meanings such as the object? (*The answer is as follows*): On the basis of (above- given) implication, the affix *-tum* is dissociated from the meaning ‘agent’. It has not been prescribed in any other meaning. Since affixes with no explicit meaning ascribed to them occur in the meaning of the stem, the affix *-tum* would denote the meaning of the stem. Thus, denoting the meaning of the stem (i.e. the verb root), it would denote the action. What is the purpose of this indication? (With this indication accepted) we do not have to make an explicit statement that indeclinable *kṛt* formations denote the action. (transl. Deshpande 1980: 50–51)

The main claim made by Patañjali in this long excerpt is that, if one applies A 3.4.67 to let the Vedic infinitival affixes taught in A 3.4.9,

including *-se*, *-tave*, and *-tavai*, convey the sense of agent like any other *kṛt* affixes, Pāṇini's teaching 'in the meaning of *-tum*' (*tumarthe*) would fulfill no function in A 3.4.9.¹⁸ Therefore, Patañjali concludes that Pāṇini included the segment *tumarthe* 'in the meaning of *-tum*' in A 3.4.9 only in order to make it clear that the Old Indo-Aryan infinitival suffixes (i.e., the Vedic infinitival suffixes taught by A 3.4.9, as well as the unmarked infinitival suffix *-tum* taught by A 3.3.10) carry the meaning component *bhāva-* 'action'.

Indeed, several arguments can be deployed to show that Patañjali's conclusion is unwarranted. Some of these arguments were originally presented by Deshpande (1980) and were recently confirmed by Mocci and Pontillo (2026: 216). Thus, for one thing, the segment *tumarthe* of A 3.4.9 fulfills multiple functions in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*: not only the signification of the meaning of 'agent' (*karṭr-*), but also the signification of the meaning of 'purpose' (*artha-*) and 'future' (*bhav-iṣyat-*). Therefore, contrary to Patañjali's contention, *tumarthe* 'in the meaning of *-tum*' still fulfills some function in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (i.e., that of endowing the Old Indo-Aryan infinitival suffixes with the meaning components 'purpose' and 'future'), even when one lets the Vedic infinitival suffixes carry the meaning component 'agent' (Deshpande 1980: 53).

Furthermore, Pāṇini explicitly ascribes the meaning component *bhāva-* to the Vedic infinitival suffix *-tavai* (i.e., to one of the suffixes that serves as a *de facto* substitute of *-tum* in compliance with A 3.4.9) in A 3.4.14, by teaching that this suffix is used *kṛtyārthe* 'in the sense of the *kṛtya* affixes', where the sense of the *kṛtya* affixes is *bhāva-* and 'patient'.¹⁹

A 3.4.14: *kṛtyārthe tavaikenkenyatvanah* [pratyayaḥ 3.1.1] [paraś ca 3.1.2] [dhātoḥ 3.1.91] [kṛt 3.1.93] [chandasi 3.4.6]

¹⁸ See above, §2.1, for the wording of A 3.4.9.

¹⁹ See A 3.4.70: *tayor eva kṛtyaktakhalarthāḥ* [pratyayaḥ 3.1.1] [*karmaṇi bhāve akarmakebhyah* 3.4.69] '*kṛtya* affixes, as well as affixes used in the sense of *Kta* and *KHaL*, occur to denote only these, i.e., only patient (*karman-*) and action (*bhāva-*)'.

In the Vedic *saṃhitās*, affixes *-tavai*, *-KeN*, *-Kenya* and *-tvaN* occur after a verbal base in the sense of the *kṛtya* affixes.

Since Pāṇini resorts to a specific rule (i.e., A 3.4.14) to let *-tavai* carry the meaning component *bhāva-*, the segment *tumarthe* of A 3.4.9 must in itself be unable to ascribe this selfsame semantic component to any Old Indo-Aryan infinitival suffix in the system of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (Deshpande 1980: 55).

In the next section, I provide a fresh argument against Patañjali's contention that *-tum* (and, for that matter, the Vedic infinitival suffixes such as *-te*, *-tave*, and *-tavai*) denotes *bhāva-*. I argue that Patañjali's contention reveals a serious misunderstanding of Pāṇini's syntactic model, but at the same time helps us to identify a core point of Pāṇini's syntax that has so far gone unnoticed, which I will refer to as 'semantic hierarchy'.

4. The notion of semantic hierarchy in Pāṇini's grammar

Patañjali's claim that the infinitival suffix *-tum* denotes *bhāva-* 'action' clashes with the way Pāṇini models verb-argument relations (argument structure). I prove this by making crucial use of A 2.3.15.

4.1. On the difference between 'agent' (*kartṛ-*) and 'action' (*bhāva-*) in A 2.3.15

The wording of A 2.3.15 reads as follows:

A 2.3.15: *tumarthāc ca bhāvavacanāt* [*caturthī* 2.3.13] [*anabhihite* 2.3.1]

Provided that an action is not otherwise signified, the fourth *vibhakti* (dative ending) also occurs after a linguistic item (that ends in a suffix X) such that: X expresses an action; and X is used in the meaning of *-tum*.

This rule provides for the formation of sentences like (4), where a dative ending applies to a deverbal derivative nominal (*kṛt*), i.e., *pāka-* (from the verbal base *pac-* ‘to cook’), thereby yielding *pākāya*.

(4) *pākāya vrajati*

He goes to cook.

Qua *kṛt*, *pāka-* should convey the meaning ‘agent’ in compliance with A 3.4.67 (*kartari kṛt*), but A 2.3.15 blocks this meaning by teaching that the nominal base to which the dative ending applies signifies an action (*bhāvavacanāt*). In this way, *pāka-* denotes not the agent of the action of cooking, but rather the very action of cooking. At this point, Pāṇini specifies that the *bhāva*-signifying *pāka-* to which a dative ending is to be applied (thereby giving *pākāya*) is used in the meaning of the infinitival suffix *-tum* (*tumarthāt*). This is tantamount to saying that (4) is meaning-equivalent to (5):

(5) *paktum vrajati*

He goes to cook.

If taken seriously, this meaning equivalence implies that, in (4), *pākāya* is assigned the three semantic values assigned to *-tum* in accordance with A 3.3.10: i.e., ‘agent’, ‘purpose’, and ‘future’ (see above, §§2.2–2.4). Let us consider these assignments in turn.

The assignment of the values ‘purpose’ and ‘future’ to *pāka-* is straightforward: the action of cooking denoted by *pac-* (i.e., by the verbal base to which both *pāka-* and *paktum* are formed) is envisioned: (i) as the purpose of the action of going/moving denoted by *vraj-* (i.e., by the verbal base to which *vrajati* is formed); (ii) as taking place at a point in time that follows the point in time when the action of going/moving takes place. However, the assignment of the value ‘agent’ to *pāka-* may strike us as an absurdity: as a result of this assignment, Pāṇini switches the denotation of *pāka-* from ‘agent of the action of

cooking' (in compliance with A 3.4.67) to 'action of cooking' (in compliance with the segment *bhāvavacanāt* of A 2.3.15), only to return to the denotation 'agent of the action of cooking' (in compliance with the segment *tumarthāt* of A 2.3.15).

Indeed, I believe that the assignment of the value 'agent' to *pāka-*, far from being an absurd complication of Pāṇini's model, is perfectly consistent with his treatment of finite active sentences. Let us consider how in the following subsections.

4.2. On the sentences that denote an 'agent' (*karṭṛ-*) and an 'action' (*bhāva-*)

The affixation of the second person active verbal ending *-si* to *pac-* in this sentence ensures that 'you' (i.e., the denotatum of *tvad-*) is co-referential with the 'agent of the action of cooking' (i.e., the denotatum of the verbal ending *-si*):

(6) *tvam pacasi*

You are cooking.

This co-referentiality is enjoined by A 1.4.105, here interpreted along the lines of Mocci and Pontillo (2023):

A 1.4.105: *yuṣmady upapade samānādhikaraṇe sthāniny api madhyamaḥ*

When the second-person pronoun *yuṣmad-* co-occurs and is co-referential with LA, even if *yuṣmad-* is a substituendum, then LA is instantiated by a second-person verbal triplet.²⁰

²⁰ 'LA' is a fictitious term used by Pāṇini to collectively refer to the entire set of Old Indo-Aryan verbal endings. See Mocci and Pontillo (2023) for a detailed discussion of this and other aspects of the interpretation of A 1.4.105.

As a consequence, the meaning of (6) is properly ‘you are the agent of the action of cooking’. Crucially, this means that the meaning of *pac-a-si* is to be computed cyclically, from right to left (i.e., from the outside in), as indicated in (7):²¹

(7) [[pac-a]^{ACTION}-si]^{AGENT}

Here the meaning of the outer, or less embedded, morphological exponent (i.e., *-si*, which denotes an agent) supersedes the meaning of the inner, or more embedded, morphological exponent (i.e., *pac-a-*, denoting the action of cooking).²² Put another way, (7) does not convey the meaning ‘there is an action of cooking that involves you as an agent’

²¹ The occurrence of the thematic vowel in between the verbal base *pac-* and *-si* is governed by A 3.1.68: *kartari śap [pratyaṣaḥ 3.1.1] [paraś ca 3.1.2] [dhātoḥ 3.1.22] [sārvadhātuke 3.1.67]* ‘The affix *ŚaP* occurs after a verbal base but before a *sārvadhātuka* affix that conveys the sense of agent.’ The technical term *sārvadhātuka* primarily refers to the verbal triplets according to A 3.4.113: *tiñśit sārvadhātukam [pratyaṣaḥ 3.1.1] [paraś ca 3.1.2] [dhātoḥ 3.1.91]* ‘Verbal triplets (*tiñ*), as well as affixes that have *Ś* as their marker, occur after a verbal base and are designated as *sārvadhātuka*.’ The thematic vowel conveys no meaning in (7), so it can be disregarded for the purposes of computing the meaning of *pac-a-si*.

²² Specifically, *pac-a-* denotes a *kriyā-* which, just like *bhāva-*, is also ordinarily translated as ‘action’. This raises the issue of the relationship between *bhāva-* and *kriyā-* in Pāṇini’s grammar. Following Wezler, *kriyā-* is superordinate to *bhāva-* in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, in the sense that *kriyā-* includes *bhāva-*: ‘Es besteht folglich ein deutlicher und genau bestimmbarer Unterschied zwischen *bhāva* und *kriyā*, da der Terminus *kriyā* [...] die „Handlung“ als die allen Verbalwurzeln gemeinsame abstrakte Bedeutung bezeichnet, ohne [...] zugleich auch ihren Vollzug durch einen Agens oder ihr Sich-realisieren mitzunehmen. Eine *kriyā-* ist etwas, das entweder von einem Agens angeführt werden oder sich ohne einen Agens realisieren kann. Dementsprechend bezeichnen die Suffixe, die an die Würzel angefügt werden, um nomina agentis und bestimmte finite und infinite Verbalformen, bzw. nomina actionis und bestimmte andere Verbalformen zu bilden entweder den Agens (*kartr*) oder das bloße Sein, d. h. Sich-ereignen (*bhāva*)’ (Wezler 1975: 104). Cf. Cardona (1970: 216–217), (1976: 197), and Ogawa (2005: 157–200) for a detailed discussion of the relationship between *bhāva-* and *kriyā-* in the Indian grammatical tradition. I am indebted to an anonymous Reviewer for the Journal for helping me to correct and refine my understanding of this relationship.

(where the meaning component 'action' supersedes the meaning component 'agent'), but rather 'you are an agent of the action of cooking'.²³

By contrast, in a sentence like (8), where the third person passive verbal ending *-te* denotes *bhāva*- 'action', the meaning of the inner morphological exponent (i.e., *supya*-) is passed on, as it were, to the outer morphological exponent of the verb (i.e., *-te*),²⁴ as indicated in (9):²⁵

(8) *mayā supyate*

'I sleep'

(9) [[sup-ya]^{ACTION}-te]^{ACTION}.

All in all, Pāṇini's treatment of infinitival sentences parallels that of finite active sentences in that the outermost morphological exponent of both the infinitival and the finite active verb (e.g., *-tum* and *-si*, respectively) can, and in fact must, denote an agent.

²³ By capitalizing on the logical representations of formal semantics (see May 1985 for a classic example), one may perhaps expose the meaning carried by (7) in Pāṇini's system as follows: 'there is an agent of the action of cooking and the identity of this agent is you'.

²⁴ More precisely, *sup-ya*- denotes *kriyā*- 'action' and *-te* denotes *bhāva*- (also 'action'), *bhāva*-being the name given to a *kriyā*- when it is passed on to an outer morphological exponent (in this case, *-te*).

²⁵ *-ya*- immediately precedes the medio-passive verbal endings, which denote either a patient or an action, in compliance with A 3.1.67: *sārvadhātuke yak [pratyayah 3.1.1] [paraś ca 3.1.2] [dhātoḥ 3.1.22] [bhāvakarmaṇoḥ 3.1.66]* 'Affix *-ya*- occurs after a verbal base but before a *sārvadhātuka* affix when an action (*bhāva*-) or a patient is to be signified (by this very *sārvadhātuka* affix).' Accordingly, the passive-forming suffix *-ya*- in itself conveys no meaning and can be disregarded for the purposes of computing the meaning of (8). The Pāṇinian analysis of this sentence is also discussed in Kiparsky (2009: 54–56).

4.3. The ultimate purpose of *bhāvavacanāt* in A 2.3.15

The approach to the argument structure of (6) and (8) that was illustrated above (§4.2) has a corollary: an outer meaning component ‘agent’ must be computed before an inner meaning component ‘action’. For example, the constructed representation (10) is ill-formed, inasmuch as the outermost meaning component ‘agent’ is computed before the meaning component ‘agent’ of the *kṛt* affix *-a*:²⁶

$$(10) * [[[pāk-]^{ACTION} -a-]^{AGENT}]^{AGENT}$$

In plain words, one cannot have an agent of an agent of cooking; an agent can only be the agent of an action. This corollary, I refer to as ‘semantic hierarchy’. We now have all the ingredients to understand the seemingly absurd shift imposed by A 2.3.15 on the meaning of *pāka-* (i.e., ‘agent’ > ‘action’ > ‘agent’).

Thus, the segment *bhāvavacanāt* of A 2.3.15 (in combination with A 3.3.11, as discussed by Deshpande 1980: 53–54) rewrites the denotation of the *kṛt pāka-*, i.e., (11a), where the intermediate meaning component is ‘agent’, as (11b), where the intermediate meaning component is instead ‘action’.

$$(11) \text{ a. } [[[pāk-]^{ACTION} -a-]^{AGENT}]^X \\ \text{ b. } [[[pāk-]^{ACTION} -a-]^{ACTION}]^X$$

Next, the segment *tumarthāt* of A 2.3.15 specifies that the value of the outermost meaning component of (11b), here labelled as X for convenience, is ‘agent’. This denotation is now well-formed because a meaning component ‘agent’ is computed before a meaning component ‘action’ (*bhāva-*):²⁷

²⁶ The ill-formedness of (10) is indicated by the asterisk.

²⁷ At a finer level of analysis, (12) should also include the meaning components (or semantic values) ‘future’ and ‘purpose’, which are provided to *pāka-* along with ‘agent’ by the segment *tumarthe* of A 2.3.15 (cf. above, §2, for a discussion of the semantic values enjoined by *tumarthe* in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*). A distinction should

(12) [[[pāk-]^{ACTION}-a-]^{ACTION}]^{AGENT}

Crucially, however, if Pāṇini had not specified *bhāvavacanāt* in A 2.3.15, the derivation of (4) (*pākāya vrajati*) would have necessarily proceeded with the assignment of the value ‘agent’ to the X-labelled bracket of (11a), thereby resulting in the ill-formed representation (10). Therefore, in this perspective, the ultimate purpose of *bhāvavacanāt* (i.e., of the re-writing of (11a) as (11b)) is to suspend the assignment of the value ‘agent’ to the X-labelled bracket of (11a), and to license the assignment of the value ‘agent’ to the X-labelled bracket of (11b) in its stead.

In this way, the re-writing of (11a) as (11b) is far from being an absurd complication; instead, it is needed to avoid the illegal representational scheme (13a) (instantiated in (10)) in favor of the well-formed representational scheme (13b) (instantiated in (12)):²⁸

- (13) a. *[[X]^{AGENT} Y]^{AGENT}
 b. [[X]^{ACTION} Y]^{AGENT}

4.4. The ultimate purpose of *tumarthāt* in A 2.3.15

The main takeaway from the previous subsection is that the rule segment *tumarthāt* in A 2.3.15 assigns *pāka-*, i.e., the stem of the dative-marked nominal *pākāya* occurring in (4) (*pākāya vrajati*), the meaning component ‘agent’, alongside ‘purpose’ and ‘future’. A crucial question now arises. Since (4), repeated below as (14), denotes an agent in the system of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, shall we conclude from this that Pāṇini interpreted (14) as in (15)?

also be made between the token of ‘action’ denoted by *-a-*, which corresponds to Pāṇinian *bhāva-*, and the token of ‘action’ denoted by the vṛddhied verbal base *pāk-*, which corresponds to Pāṇinian *kriyā-* instead.

²⁸ In fact, one can go as far as to claim that *bhāvavacanāt* feeds *tumarthāt*, in the sense that *tumarthāt* can only apply to the output of *bhāvavacanāt* (i.e., to a representation like (13b)).

(14) *pākāya vrajati*

(15) *He moves towards the agent of the action of cooking.

This would of course be an unwelcome result, inasmuch as (15) clashes with the message conveyed by (14) in Old Indo-Aryan, namely that the agent of the action of cooking and the agent of the action of going/moving are one and the same entity. Indeed, I submit that the ultimate purpose of the rule segment *tumarthāt* in A 2.3.15 is to block the interpretation in (15).²⁹ Let us consider how by contrasting (15) with (16), also an interpretation of (14).³⁰

(16) He goes in order to be the agent of the action of cooking.

The fundamental difference between (15) and (16) is that only in (16) is the action of cooking (i.e., the denotatum of the verbal base *pac-*) envisioned as the purpose of the action of going/moving (i.e., the denotatum of the verbal base *vraj-*).³¹ In point of fact, the segment *tumarthāt* of A 2.3.15 ensures that, in (14), *pākāya* carries the meaning components ‘agent’, ‘purpose’, and ‘future’, as discussed above (§4.1). Accordingly, (15) is to be considered as an illegitimate interpretation of (14) inasmuch as, under this interpretation, (14) violates

²⁹ It may be worth recalling that the previous discussion (§4.3) provides a rationale for Pāṇini’s inclusion of the rule segment *bhāvavacanāt* in A 2.3.15 but says nothing as to the rationale for *tumarthāt* in this selfsame rule.

³⁰ Indeed, (16) should be refined as ‘There is an agent who performs the action of going in order to be an agent of the action of cooking’, if one is to account for the fact that finite verbs like *vrajati* of (14) also denote an agent. We shall disregard this refinement here for convenience, but cf. above, §4.2, for relevant discussion.

³¹ Note that the agent of the governing verb (e.g., *vrajati*) systematically has control over the action denoted by the verbal base of a purpose clause (e.g., *paktum*). However, the agent of the action of going/moving lacks any control whatsoever over the action of cooking in (15). Therefore, the absence of this control in (15) is further confirmation that the action of cooking fails to qualify as a purpose in (15). Cf. Mocchi and Pontillo (2026: 202–203) for evidence that some notion of an agent’s control over an action is involved in Pāṇini’s account of infinitives.

the purpose constraint enjoined by the segment *tumarthāt* of A 2.3.15. By contrast, when it is interpreted as in (16), (14) does comply with the three meaning constraints enjoined by *tumarthāt* of A 2.3.15.

All in all, (14) is to be assigned an interpretation very much like (16) in compliance with A 2.3.15. This implies that (5), repeated below as (17), should also be assigned the interpretation in (16), given the meaning equivalence between (14) and (17), which was established above (§4.1).

(17) *paktum vrajati*

A side advantage of this account is that it makes it possible to express the difference between *-tum* infinitives and *-syant-* (future) participles in fully explicit terms.³² Thus, in *pakṣyan vrajati* ‘he who intends to cook moves’, the future participle *pakṣyan* conveys the meaning components ‘agent’ and ‘future’ (in keeping with A 3.3.14, combined with A 3.2.127 and 3.3.13)³³ but crucially does not convey the meaning component ‘purpose’: the action of cooking denoted by the verbal base *pac-* is not envisaged as the purpose of the action of going/moving denoted by the verbal base *vraj-*. Accordingly, *pakṣyan vrajati* differs from *paktum vrajati* only in the meaning component ‘purpose’, which is signified by *paktum* but not by *pakṣyan*.

4.5. Back to Patañjali

We saw above (§3) that, according to Patañjali, the infinitival suffix *-tum* does not carry the meaning ‘agent’, but rather ‘action’ (*bhāva-*) in (17). This of course implies that *pāka-* also conveys the meaning ‘action’ in (14) (*pākāya vrajati*) according to Patañjali, for *pāka-* is constrained by the rule segment *tumarthāt* of A 2.3.15, i.e., *pāka-* must

³² I am thankful to an anonymous Reviewer for the Journal for drawing my attention to this point.

³³ See Cardona (1997: 172) for a lucid discussion of these rules.

be used in the meaning of *-tum*. With reference to (14), this yields the semantic representation in (18):³⁴

(18) [[[pāk-]^{ACTION} -a-]^{ACTION}]^{ACTION}

While (18) is not in itself a deviant semantic representation – at least insofar as it does not violate the semantic hierarchy – it is nonetheless problematic: it is hard to see why the intermediate meaning component ‘action’ (enjoined by *bhāvavacanāt*) should be embedded within the outermost meaning component ‘action’ (enjoined by *tumarthe* according to Patañjali) in (18). Put another way, by letting ‘action’ (*bhāva-*) be signified by both rule segments *tumarthe* and *bhāvavacanāt* in A 2.3.15, Patañjali causes the wording of this rule to be blatantly redundant.

Indeed, in the reconstruction of Pāṇini’s model of the infinitive adumbrated above, the infinitival suffix *-tum* signifies ‘agent’ (as opposed to ‘action’) in accordance with A 3.4.67, while the rule segment *bhāvavacanāt* of A 2.3.15 ensures that the meaning component ‘action’ is embedded within the meaning component ‘agent’ signified by *-tum*, in compliance with the principle referred to as ‘semantic hierarchy’ (see above, §4.2). This was depicted in (12), repeated below as (19):

(19) [[[pāk-]^{ACTION} -a-]^{ACTION}]^{AGENT}

In this way, no redundancy is detected in the wording of A 2.3.15: the wording of this rule is in fact crafted in a way that aims at avoiding the violation of the semantic hierarchy. I take this as fresh evidence against Patañjali’s model of the infinitive and conclude that *-tum* invariably denotes an agent in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

³⁴ To be specific, the outermost and intermediate (*-a-*) tokens of ‘action’ translate *bhāva-*, while the innermost token of ‘action’ (*pāk-*) translates *kriyā-*. See above, §4.2, on the distinction between *kriyā-* and *bhāva-*.

5. Conclusion: The art of embedding meanings within other meanings

In the present contribution I have provided a fresh argument against Patañjali's assumption that *-tum* signifies *bhāva-* 'action'. The gist of this argument consists in showing that Patañjali's assumption not only makes the wording of A 2.3.15 redundant, but also—more importantly—obliterates Pāṇini's fine-grained theory of the argument structure of Old Indo-Aryan verbs: this theory makes crucial use of the principle referred to here as 'semantic hierarchy', which bans semantic representations where a meaning component 'agent' is computed immediately after (i.e., is embedded within) another meaning component 'agent': formally, *[[X]^{AGENT} Y]^{AGENT}.

However, Patañjali's reflections on the meaning of *-tum* have the merit of drawing attention to the complex interactions between the meaning components of Old Indo-Aryan verbs in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, in fact pointing out that there is more to Pāṇini's theory of argument structure than meets the eye. Accordingly, primary importance must be attached to Pāṇini's *usus scribendi* when we interpret the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* rules (as forcefully argued for by Candotti and Pontillo 2021), but Pāṇini's commentators still qualify as a fundamental heuristic to study the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

While in this study I have offered a solution to an issue internal to the Indian grammatical tradition, I hope I have managed to demonstrate that there are many good reasons for linguists to study the syntactic system of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* that go well beyond the specific issue dealt with here.

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The Rejection of the Variationist System

How Commentators Interpreted Pāṇini's General Rule on *taddhita*-derivations¹

ABSTRACT: On the basis of Bhate 1989 and Pontillo 2013, A 2.1.1 is assumed to create a variationist system between the phrase mentioned or hinted at in the wording of the single formation rule used to teach *taddhitas* and the output of the rule itself. This variationist system is hierarchically superordinate to other single optionality phenomena taught by *vā*, *vibhāṣā*, *anyatarasyām*.

The present paper aims to understand how this variationist system, which is consequently introduced by A 4.1.82 *samarthānām pathamād vā*, was rejected by commentators from Patañjali onwards by resorting to a morphologically oriented reading of A 4.1.82.

KEYWORDS: *taddhita*, *samartha*, *nityatva*, Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, Patañjali

¹ All translations are by the author, unless explicitly stated otherwise. Only quotations of texts are accented. I would like to explicitly recognize my debt to the anonymous reviewers, who suggested some important improvements.

1. Introduction: the common interpretation of the general *taddhita* rule (A 4.1.82)

Before dealing with the general rule that teaches what is called *taddhita* derivation in the title, it is worth recalling that the technical term *taddhita* is commonly used to designate not only secondary derivative nominal affixes, but also secondary derivative nominal stems, which should be more literally called *taddhitāntas* (i.e. [nominal stems] ending with a *taddhita* affix). In this paper, the term is mainly used with the second meaning: thus, a denominal stem such as *vaiyākaraṇā-* “the one who studies grammar”, will be called a *taddhita*, since it is a nominal stem ending with a *taddhita* affix, namely *-ā* (= *āṆ*), which applies to the etymon² *vyākāraṇa-* “grammar” (with the specific ablaut *vrddhi ai* in place of the *i* of the first syllable of the nominal base). Analogously a patronymic name such as *aupagava-* derives from its etymon *upagu-* as “Upagu’s descendant”, through the affix *-a* (with the specific *vrddhi* ablaut of the initial vowel of the nominal base).

The general *taddhita* rule reads as follows:

A 4.1.82: *samarthānām prathamād vā [taddhitaḥ 76]*.

The common translation of this rule considers the genitive *samarthānām* as a *nirdhāraṇa śaṣṭhī vibhakti*, i.e. as a partitive genitive (“among the *samartha* items”):

- “A *taddhita* affix is introduced optionally after the first *pada*³ syntactically (and semantically) connected with others (provided by the rules themselves”) (tr. Katre 1987: 418).

² i.e. to the lexeme that supplies the linguistic material on which the derivative morpheme depends.

³ *pada* is the term used to designate each constituent of the syntactical combination used to analyse a *taddhita*- derivative stem or a compound etc. It must be translated as ‘inflected word’ in accordance with A 1.4.14: *suptināntam padam* “a *pada* is a [linguistic expression] ending in a nominal or a verbal ending”.

- “An affix termed *taddhita* occurs (from here on, prior to 5.3.1 *prāg diśo vibhaktiḥ* after the first among syntactically related (*samartha*) nominal stems” (tr. Sharma 1987–2003, 4: 78).
- “(the *taddhita* suffixes are) preferably (added) to the first among the semantically equivalent words” (tr. Bhate 1989: 2).
- “The rule would then provide that elements to be specified occur, optionally, after the first of semantically and syntactically related items.” (Cardona 1997: 15).
- “An affix introduced in the following rules occurs optionally after the first of syntactically connected words.” (Scharf 2021: 128).

In brief, the rule is interpreted as if it taught that, given a pair of related *padas*, a *taddhita* occurs after the first of the two related *padas*. Let us see a couple of single *taddhita* rules read within the perspective of the most common interpretation.

A 4.1.92 *tasyāpatyam* [*taddhitaḥ* 4.1.76 *vā* 4.1.82 *aṅ* 4.1.83]

This rule is supposed to teach that the *taddhita* affix *aṅ* occurs after a nominal stem ending in the genitive case to denote a descendant, so that for instance after the nominal stem *upagu-* inflected in the genitive case (*upagoḥ*) the affix *-a* occurs, to form the derivative stem *au-pagava-*, which conveys the sense of “Upagu’s descendant”.

A 4.2.1 *tena raktam rāgāt* [*taddhitaḥ* 4.1.76 *vā* 4.1.82 *aṅ* 4.1.83]

Analogously this rule is supposed to teach that the *taddhita* affix *aṅ* occurs after a nominal stem ending in the instrumental case denoting a colour to express the sense of dyeing, so that for instance after the nominal stem *kuṅkuma-* “saffron”, inflected in the instrumental case (*kuṅkumena*), the affix *-a* occurs, to form the derivative stem *kaṅkuma-*, which denotes “a cloth dyed with saffron”.

Note that the demonstrative pronoun in these rules represents a variable (X), which must be replaced with any lexeme under the specific

constraint of each single rule. In A 4.1.92 *tasya* represents this variable, for which any name of a human being may be substituted. Analogously, in A 4.2.1 *tena* can be replaced by any noun denoting a *rāga* “a dye”.

2. Which problems do commentaries address with this rule?

Kātyāyana indeed rejects rule A 4.1.82 in its entirety because his criticism concerns all three segments of the wording.

2.1 The first two problems

Vt. 1 on A 4.1.82 (M 2.234 l. 4):

samarthavacanam anarthakaṃ, na hy asamarthenārthābhīdhānam

The mention of *samartha* is purposeless, because the [desired] meaning [of the *taddhita* affix] is not expressed, [if it is combined] with an a-*samartha* item.

Patañjali introduces this Vt. by explaining that *samartha* is mentioned with the aim of allowing the *taddhita* affix to occur after a *samartha* item, and not after a non-*samartha* item.⁴ The example is *upagor apatyam* and the counterexample is *kambala upagor apatyam devadattasyeti*. *upagoḥ* is *samartha* with respect to *apatyam* in the mentioned phrase, which means “Upagu’s descendant”. On the contrary, in the counterexample, *upagoḥ* is *samartha* with respect to the preceding word, i.e. *kambalaḥ*, to convey the sense of “Upagu’s shawl”. Instead, *upagoḥ* is contiguous but not *samartha* with respect to *apatyam*, which is in turn *samartha* with respect to *devadattasya*, to convey the sense of “Devadatta’s descendant”.

⁴ M 2.234 ll. 2–3 *ad* A 4.1.82: *samarthavacanam kim artham. samarthād utpattir yathā syāt. upagor apatyam. asamarthān mā bhūd iti. kambala upagor apatyam devadattasyeti.*

This leads one to ask exactly what meaning Patañjali assigns to *samartha*: on the basis of these two easy examples, it is clear that *samartha* is a qualifier used for items that are related to each other. There is indeed a long discussion on the definition of this term in Patañjali's commentary on A 2.1.1 *samarthaḥ padavidhiḥ*.

Let us now read some authoritative translations of this very important rule and note that *padavidhiḥ* is interpreted as if it were a *padakāryam* “a grammatical operation prescribed for an inflected word”. Moreover, the translation of the nominative *samarthaḥ* appears to be forced in an unexpected manner.

- “An operation on *padas* [takes effect] only when they are semantically and syntactically connected” (Katre 1987: 105).
- “An operation concerning fully inflected words is to be syntactically related” (Sharma 1987–2003: 3: 1).
- “An operation pertaining to *padas* applies to *padas* that are syntactically and semantically related” (Cardona 1997: 66).
- “An operational rule concerning finished words takes effect only if the elements to which the rule refers are *samarthaḥ* ‘semantically (and syntactically) connected’” (Houben 1997: 94).
- “An operation that pertains to inflected words ending in nominal or verbal terminations (*padas*) applies to words that are syntactically and semantically related.” (Scharf 2021: 143).⁵

The unexpected syntactical interpretation of the nominative *samarthaḥ* depends on Vt. 18 *ad* A 2.1.1 (*siddhaṃ tu samarthānām iti vacanāt*), which establishes that it should be read as a plural genitive (*samarthānām*). But what is the origin of this common interpretation of *samartha* as a qualifier for constituents that show a semantic and syntactic connection? This is also the common modern interpretation

⁵ The original assumption that the *samartha* label should be extended to the so-called “networks” of semantic syntactic relations, “networks” whose boundary is governed by pitch, in accordance with A 8.1.28 (which states that “an inflected verbal word [is *anudatta*] after an inflected non-verbal word”) is crucially due to Deshpande (1980: 14–20; 1987: 58–71).

of the term as can be seen in the translation of A 4.1.82. It mainly depends on the fact that A 2.1.1 is classified as an *adhikāra*, i.e. as a heading rule that only applies to the compounding section of the grammar.⁶ Within such a perspective a couple of alternative interpretations of the term *samartha* are discussed at length, either as ensuring *ekārthībhāva*, i.e. the “merging [of the constituents] in a single integrated meaning”⁷ or as being characterised by *vyāpekṣā*, i.e. ‘mutual expectancy’ [of the constituents].⁸ *ekārthībhāva* is brought about when the matching compound *rājapuruṣaḥ* is obtained from the combination of two inflected words such as *rājñāḥ puruṣaḥ*.⁹ *vyāpekṣā* is the relation between the genitive form *rājñāḥ* and the constituent which is modified by it, i.e. *puruṣaḥ*.¹⁰ By contrast there is no mutual expectancy between *rājñāḥ* and *puruṣaḥ* in a sentence such as *bhāryā rājñāḥ puruṣo devadattasya*,¹¹ where the genitive form *rājñāḥ* is a modifier

⁶ Kātyāyana and Patañjali (see especially M 1.359 ll. 4–8 ad A 2.1.1) already tackled the problem of the right classification of A 2.1.1 as a heading-rule (i.e. as an *adhikāra*) limited to the compounding section or as a metarule (i.e. as a *paribhāṣā*) as a general statement aimed at helping the correct interpretation of the whole text to be extended to at least all the types of the so-called *vṛttis*, i.e. traditionally compounds, deverbal and denominal derivative nominal stems, deverbal derivative verbal stems and elliptic dual/plurals (i.e. *samāsas*, *kṛts*, *taddhitas*, *sanādyanta-dhātus*, *ekaśeṣas*—see e.g. the commentary on VLK 909 = A 2.1.4: *kṛttaddhitasamāsaikaśeṣasanādyantadhāturūpāḥ pañca vṛttayaḥ*). Finally Patañjali argues that A 2.1.1 is an *adhikāra*, even though he is conscious that treating this rule as a *paribhāṣā*, could make the rule more consistent, less vulnerable (M 1.359 ll. 15–16 ad A 2.1.1): *tatraikārthībhāvaḥ sāmāthyam paribhāṣā cety evaṃ sūtram abhinnatarakaṃ bhavati* “Among these alternatives, (if we accept) that ‘semantic connection’ is (here) ‘single integrated meaning’ and (the rule is) a *paribhāṣā*, then the rule can be better kept as it is (than in other alternative interpretations)” (transl. Joshi 1968: 10).

⁷ M 1.361 l. 26 Vt. 1 ad A 2.1.1: *prthagarthānām ekārthībhāvaḥ samarthavacanam* “The expression *samartha* is the merging in a single integrated meaning of words having separate objects.”

⁸ M 1.365 l. 9 Vt. 4 ad A 2.1.1: *parasparavyapekṣā sāmāthyam eke* “Some [maintain that] the semantic connection is mutual expectancy”.

⁹ M 1.361 l. 28 ad Vt. 1 ad A 2.1.1.

¹⁰ M 1.365 l. 10 ad Vt. 4 ad A 2.1.1.

¹¹ M 1.361 ll. 15–16 ad A 2.1.1.

of *bhāryā* to convey the sense of ‘the king’s wife’ and *devadattasya* is a modifier of *puruṣaḥ* (“Devadatta’s attendant”).

The counterexample is very close to *kambala upagor apatyam devadattasya*, i.e. the example used by Patañjali¹² in order to explain Vt. 1. By means of Vt. 1 in fact Kātyāyana maintains that the *samartha* constraint is purposeless in 4.1.82, because A 2.1.1 is sufficient to block the formation of *aupagava-* on the basis of the sentence *kambala upagoḥ*. This is because indeed a given *taddhita* affix, in the case a patronymic *taddhita* affix, cannot convey the desired meaning, when the nominal stem to which it should apply is not *samartha* with respect to the other combined word. So, the *taddhita* affix cannot appear after *upagu-* in combinations of words like *kambala upagor apatyam devadattasya*.

All in all, Kātyāyana rejects the word *samartha* in the general *taddhita*-rule because the meaning of the affix is intrinsically connected with a *samartha* item and not an *asamartha* one.

The second Vārttika on A 4.1.82 rejects the word *prathama-*.

M 2.234 l. 9 Vt. 2 ad A 4.1.82:

prathamavacanam anarthakaṃ na hy aprathamenābhidhānam.

The mention of *prathama* is purposeless because there is not the [desired] denotation [of the *taddhita* affix] [if it is combined] with an item which is not the first (in the input phrase).

Indeed, before introducing this Vt. 2, Patañjali explains that the ablative *prathamāt* is used in the sense of a qualifier of the *prakṛti*, i.e. of the nominal base, so that the *taddhita* affix arises after the first word (i.e. the nominal stem which constitutes the etymon of the derivative stem) and not after a nominal base which is not the first, i.e. e.g. after the word *apatyam* in the input phrase *upagor apatyam*.¹³

¹² See above, fn. 3.

¹³ M 2.234 ll. 7–8 ad Vt. 1 ad A 4.1.82: *atha prathamavacanam kim artham. prathamavacanam prakṛtiviśeṣaṇārtham. prathamāt pratyotpattir yathā syād aprathamān mā bhūt. upagor apatyam iti apatyaśabdān.*

In other words, the desired denotation cannot be conveyed by a *tad-dhita* affix after an item which is not the first in the input phrase, because for instance the meaning of the patronymic affix is intrinsically connected with the first word included in the input phrase and not with the second one.

2.2 The third problem

The final Vārttika on A 4.1.82 is devoted to the word conveying the sense of optionality, namely *vā*, which is of course crucial for the research question tackled in the present paper.

M 2.234 l. 13 Vt. 3 ad A 4.1.82:

vāvacane cōktam

And it has [already] been said about the mention of *vā*.

Kātyāyana maintains that this word *vā* is also purposeless on the basis of something explained elsewhere (*uktam* lit. “[already] said”), which according to Patañjali’s commentary is a Vārttika on the rule teaching to form desiderative verbal bases, which also includes the mention of *vā*, namely Vt. 9 ad A 3.1.7.¹⁴ A desiderative verbal form such as *cikīrṣati* “he wants to do” is optional (preferable according to Pāṇini) with respect to its input *kartum icchati*, which conveys the same sense. Kātyāyana maintains that such a case of optionality is purposeless.

¹⁴ A 3.1.7: *dhātoḥ karmanāḥ samānakartṛkād icchāyām vā* [san 5] “[The affix *saN*] preferably occurs after a verbal base which denotes [an action] which is the object of another verbal base sharing the same agent in the sense of desire.” According to this rule, for instance, *cikīrṣati* (‘he wants to do’) is formed by applying the affix *-sa* to the verbal base *kṛ-* (with reduplication and other phonic replacements taught by A 7.4.60; 62; 66; 79; 6.4.16, 7.1.100, 8.2.76), when this verbal base is the patient of another verbal base which shares the same agent. In the input phrase *kartum icchati* it is clear that “the action of doing” (conveyed by the verbal base *kṛ-*) is the patient of the verb *icchati* ‘he wants’ and the agent of *kartum* is the same as that of *icchati*.

Vt. 9 ad A 3.1.7:

vāvacanārthakyaṃ ca tatra nityatvāt sanaḥ

And here the mention of *vā* is purposeless due to the permanence of the affix *-sa*.

Patañjali explains the sentence *tatra nityatvāt sanaḥ* as follows: “There are two alternatives, that of the *ṛtti*¹⁵ and that of the non-*ṛtti*, i.e. the complex synthetic form and the analytical one.¹⁶ And this is by nature (*svabhāvataḥ* lit. “due to its own condition”), i.e. due to their intrinsic features.¹⁷ There are both the sentence (e.g. *kartum icchati*) and the affix (*-sa*). Here, since the domain of the *ṛtti* is natural (*svabhāvika-*), the affix is permanently obtained. What else can be connected with it except for the designation (of the affix, i.e. its technical name)? But the presence and absence of the designations are not desired. Therefore, there is no purpose in saying *vā*.”¹⁸

As a matter of fact, if *samartha* is interpreted as ensuring *ekārthi-bhāva* (“merging [of the constituents] in a single integrated meaning”), *ṛttis* (conveying a single meaning) and analytical strings of words (conveying separate meanings) can be used at will, since they are completely independent of each other.

Thus, this expression *svabhāvataḥ* indicates the independent application of any further provision to the desiderative verbal bases. Nevertheless, there are at least two possible interpretations of the expression

¹⁵ The secondary verbal bases are included in the group of the so-called *ṛttis*. See above fn. 5.

¹⁶ The matching analytical sentence also works as a constituent-analysis of the *ṛtti*, i.e. as a *vigraha*. The noun *vigraha-* m. may designate “the procedure of replacing certain synthetic expressions (i.e. certain compounds and certain words formed by means of suffixes) by analytical ones” (Thieme 1982: 30).

¹⁷ As for the grammatical use of the term *svabhāva-* see Candotti and Pontillo 2010; Candotti and Pontillo 2015.

¹⁸ M 2.14 ll. 4–7 ad Vt. 9 on A 3.1.7: *vāvacanārthakyaṃ kiṃ kāraṇam. tatra nityatvāt sanaḥ. iha dvau pakṣau ṛttipakṣaś cāvṛttipakṣaś ca. svabhāvataś caitad bhavati. vākyam ca pratyayaś ca. tatra svabhāvike ṛttiviśaye nitye pratyaye prāpte vāvacanena kim anyac chakyam abhisambandhum anyad ataḥ saṃjñāyāḥ. na ca saṃjñāyā bhavābhāvau iṣyete. tasmān nārtho vāvacanena.*

svabhāvataḥ, which clearly emerge in another two similar passages by Patañjali. His commentary on vt. 3 on the general *taddhita* rule (A 4.1.82) is identical to the commentary on Vt. 3 on A 3.1.7 except for the use of the general term *pratyaya* instead of the specific desiderative affix *-sa* at the beginning and *ṛttis* instead of *pratyayaḥ* when they are contrasted with the sentence.¹⁹

An analogous reflection is proposed in the commentary on Vt. 2 on A 2.1.1. Vt. 3 on A 4.1.82 might hint at this Vārttika and not at Vt. 3 on A 3.1.7, as instead Patañjali maintained. In Vt. 2 on A 2.1.1 Kātyāyana himself uses the expression *svabhāva* instead of *nitya*, seemingly in close relation with each other. All three *ṛttis* analysed in these passages are considered as a given datum, i.e. a permanent feature of the language.

M 1.364 l. 1 Vt. 2 on A 2.1.1: *vāvacanānarthakyam ca svabhāvasiddhatvat*
And the mention of *vā* is purposeless because of its being established by nature.

Here too, Patañjali's explanation is identical to the commentary on Vt. 3 on A 3.1.7 except for the mention of the compound instead of the affix *-sa* both at the beginning and when the analytical sentence (*vākya*) is opposed to the *ṛtti*, when *samāsa-* is used instead of *pratyayaḥ*.²⁰ However, it is clear that Kātyāyana considers the relationship

¹⁹ M 1.264 ll. 14–18 ad Vt. 3 ad A 4.1.82: *kim uktam. tatra tāvad uktam vāvacanānarthakyam. ca tatra nityatvāt sana iti. ihāpi vāvacanam anarthakyam. kiṃ kāraṇam. tatra nityatvāt pratyayasya. iha dvau pakṣau ṛttipakṣaś cāvṛttipakṣaś ca. svabhāvataś caitad bhavati. vākyaṃ ca ṛttiś ca. tatra svabhāvike ṛttiviśaye nitye pratyaye prāpte vāvacanena kim anyac chakyam abhisambandhum anyadataḥ saṃjñāyāḥ. na ca saṃjñāyā bhavābhāvau iṣyete. tasmān nārtho vāvacanena.*

²⁰ M 1.364 ll. 2–5 ad Vt. 2 ad A 2.1.1: *vāvacanānarthakyam. kiṃ kāraṇam. svabhāvasiddhatvāt. iha dvau pakṣau ṛttipakṣaś cāvṛttipakṣaś ca. svabhāvataś caitad bhavati vākyaṃ ca samāsaś ca. tatra svābhāvike ṛttiviśaye nitye samāse prāpte vāvacanena kim anyac chakyam abhisambandhum anyad ataḥ saṃjñāyāḥ. na ca saṃjñāyā bhāvābhāvau iṣyete. tasmān nārtho vāvacanena.*

between *vṛttis* and analytical phrases as something which is definitely beyond the grammar domain.

Thus, Kātyāyana uses these three Vārttikas to completely reject rule A 4.1.82. As a result, the *taddhita* section of Pāṇini's grammar simply becomes a list of *taddhita* affixes taught after a nominal stem (which is the etymon) with some special morphological or semantic constraints, with no relation of equivalence with the matching analytical phrase. This leads one to wonder whether some sort of relationship actually existed in this kind of grammar between the traditional *vigraha* of each *taddhita* form and the *taddhita* form itself.

Patañjali (M 2.234 ll. 19–23) does not reject rule A 4.1.82. He confirms that the mention of the word *samartha* in the wording of the rule is mandatory to ensure that the *taddhita* affix appears after a *samartha* [*pada*] and not after a non-*samartha* [*pada*].²¹ Then, he wonders again what is said to be *samartha* and the answer is that *samartha* is the [*pada*] fit to express a given meaning, namely that whose sounds are realised in regular order.²²

He therefore quotes two examples, namely *sautthitiḥ* and *vaikṣamāṇiḥ*,²³ which are two patronymic names derived from the names *sūthitaḥ* and *vīkṣamāṇaḥ* according to A 4.1.95 by applying the *taddhita* affix *-i* (*iñ*). Indeed these two examples are used in Patañjali's commentary on A 4.1.2,²⁴ in order to show how the *antarāṅga* operations

²¹ M 2.234 ll. 19–20: *athaitatsamarthagrahaṇaṃ naiva kartavyam. kartavyaṃ ca. kiṃ prayojanam. samarthāḍ utpattir yathā syād asamarthān mā bhūt.*

²² Although the meaning Patañjali attributes to the term here is neither etymological nor in common usage, but rather seems to have been assigned *ad hoc*, later tradition has retained it without question. See e.g. Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita (SK 1072), who (with reference to the etymon of a *taddhita* derivative stem) defines *sāmarthyam* as the status of being completed, i.e. the status of having undergone the sandhi replacements (*sāmarthyam pariniṣṭitatvam. kṛtsandhikāryatvam iti yāvat*).

²³ M 2.234 ll. 20–21: *kiṃ punaḥ samartham. arthābhidhāne yatsamartham. kiṃ punas tat. kṛtavarnānupūrvikaṃ padam. sautthitiḥ vaikṣamāṇir iti.*

²⁴ M 1.306 ll. 21–22: *vṛddher ekādeśaḥ. vaikṣamāṇiḥ sautthitiḥ. vṛddhiś ca prāpnoty ekādeśaś ca. paratvād vṛddhiḥ syāt. ekādeśo bhavaty antarāṅgataḥ*—“A single

(i.e. those whose application is grounded on linguistic items which exclusively lie within the *pada*-boundary) take priority over the *ba-hiraṅga* operations (i.e. those whose application is grounded on linguistic elements that cross the *pada*-boundary). For instance, when the affix *-i* (*iṅ*) applies to the *prātipadika* *vīkṣamāṇa*-,²⁵ two mutually exclusive rules become applicable, namely A 6.1.101 *akāḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ*, “An *a*, *i*, *u*, *r*, *l* and the following homogeneous vowel are replaced by a single long homogeneous vowel” and A 7.2.117: *taddhi-teṣv acām ādeḥ* “A *vṛddhi* vowel replaces the first vowel of the nominal pre-suffixal base before the *taddhita*-affixes [with markers *Ṇ* or *Ṛ* 115]”. A 6.1.101 is an *antaraṅga* operation and is applied first. Then the *vṛddhi* replacement takes place according to A 7.2.117.

Finally, Patañjali wonders whether the word *vā* has to be eliminated, but without any *vā* rule—he points out—A 4.1.82 would only allow the *taddhita* derivative stem excluding the analytical sentence to be formed. The purpose of *vā* is to allow speakers to use the *a-vṛtti* form i.e. the analytical phrase.²⁶ Thus, even though Patañjali attributes a questionable and unprecedented morphological meaning to the term

substitute sandhi replacement (A 6.1.101) takes priority over (lit. is *balīyaḥ* “stronger than” + ablative— see M 1.306 l. 12 ad A 1.4.2) a *vṛddhi* replacement (A 7.2.117). See e.g. *vaikṣamāṇiḥ* ‘Vīkṣamāṇa’s descendant’ and *sautthitiḥ* ‘Sūtthita’s descendant’. Both the *vṛddhi* replacement and the single substitute sandhi replacement risk obtaining. Due to its being *para*- (according to A 1.4.2) the *vṛddhi* replacement should take place [first]. [Nonetheless,] the single substitute sandhi replacement is realised due to its being *antaraṅga*.”

²⁵ The *prātipadika* *vīkṣamāṇa*- is a compound obtained by combining two *padas*, namely the indeclinable *vi*- with the nominative singular participle *īkṣamāṇaḥ* [(*vi*- + *-s0*) + (*īkṣamāṇa*- + *-s0*)]. The nominative ending (*-s*) of the indeclinable is replaced with zero in accordance with A 2.4.82 *avyayād āpsupaḥ* [luk 58] “After an indeclinable, [LUK zero-replacement] occurs in the place of a feminine *āP* affix or of a nominal ending.” However, this nominative ending would have been replaced with zero in the same way that the nominative singular ending *-s* of the participle is replaced with zero according to A 2.4.71.

²⁶ M 2.234 ll. 21–23 *ad* vt. 3 *ad* A 4.1.82: *atha tad vāvacaṇaṃ naiva kartavyam. kartavyaṃ ca. kiṃ prayojanam. nityāḥ śabdāḥ. nityeṣu śabdeṣu vākyasyānena sādhutvaṃ anvākyāyate*—“Then, this mention of *vā* has not to be made. It has to

samartha in A 4.1.82—which suggests that he did not understand its meaning in line with the other occurrences in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*—he is well conscious that the optionality of the *taddhita* derivative stems with respect to the matching analytical sentences is something indispensable for grammar.

3. *Candavyākaraṇa* and the traditional reading of *taddhita* rules

In line with Kātyāyana's *Vārttikas*, which reject the whole rule A 4.1.82 word by word, in the *Candavyākaraṇa*, which was probably the earlier re-reading of Pāṇini's grammar based on the proposals by Kātyāyana and Patañjali and dating back to the 5th c. CE, the general *taddhita* rule A 4.1.82 has been *de facto* eliminated. Thus, in this grammar, the interpretation of the single *taddhita* rules is in line with Kātyāyana's choice of considering the use of *taddhita* rules, at least from the semantic point of view, as something autonomous from the matching analytical phrases. Such a peculiar interpretation also occurs in the *Kāśikāvṛtti* and did indeed influence the most accepted way of reading these rules, as can easily be seen in the current translations of Pāṇini's grammar, such as those by Katre and Sharma. Let us now read *Candavyākaraṇa*'s *Vṛtti* on the rule matching A 4.1.92 *tasyāpatyam*, namely *Candavyākaraṇa* 2.4.16:

śaṣṭhyantād apatyē yathāvihitam aṇādayo bhavanti. aupagavaḥ, daityaḥ, bārhaspatyaḥ

After a form ending in the genitive case ending, (the *taddhita* affixes) *aṇ* and the like occur in the sense of “descendant”, in accordance with the grammatical provision. [For instance,] *aupagavaḥ* [is formed by applying the affix *aṇ* after the nominal form ending in the genitive case—*upagoḥ*], *daityaḥ* [...*diteḥ*], *bārhaspatyaḥ* [...*brhaspateḥ*].

be made. What is the purpose? Words are permanent. Since words are permanent, by this [word *vā*] the [matching] sentence is acknowledged as correct usage.”

In the *Kāśikāvṛtti* this pattern of explanation even occurs in the commentary on rule A 4.1.82 which has instead not been eliminated:

prathamād iti kim. saṣṭhyantād yathā syāt prathamāntād mā bhūt

Why after the first [*samartha* item]? so that [the *taddhita* affix may occur] after a word ending in the genitive case (i.e. in the classic example, *upagoḥ* which is the first *samartha* item mentioned—and not after the word ending in a nominative case i.e. *apatyam*).

In line with this reading of the linguistic phenomenon of the *taddhita* derivation, most modern translations indicate the *taddhita* rules as commonly involving just a nominal stem, i.e. the etymon of the derivative stem and an affix. The second *samartha* item becomes a semantic constraint for what could be called the head of the new synthetic formation. The general rule A 2.1.1 is considered as a simple tool that prohibits the combination of words that are not syntactically and semantically connected. The first *samartha* item indicates the etymon which is considered as a unique matrix conveying a relation with the other element in the input phrase that is provided by the rule itself. This means that there should be no mention of any equivalence of meaning between the *taddhita* formations and the matching analytical phrase in *taddhita* rules.

For instance, Katre's (1987: 380) translation of A 4.1.92 *tasyāpatyam*, reads as follows:

The *taddhita* affix *aN* is introduced after a nominal stem ending in the sixth nominal triplet to denote a descendant.

Analogously Sharma's (1987–2003: 4: 91–92) translation reads as follows:

A *taddhita* affix, namely *aN*, is taught to denote the sense of *apatya* after the first syntactically related nominal stem which ends in *ṣaṣṭhī* 'genitive'.

4. Pāṇini teaches something more than a morphological derivation

Of course, the mentioned translations are not wrong, especially because—as we have seen above—rule A 4.1.82 was interpreted in this way by the grammatical tradition from the very beginning. And it is precisely within this traditional framework that one can appreciate the importance attached to the supposed conflict between A 4.1.82 and the heading rule A 4.1.1 (*nyāpprātipadikāt* “[An affix taught in the present section] occurs after a nominal base or a word form ending in [a feminine affix] -ī or -ā”) both by Bhate (1989: 2–3) and by Scharf (2021). In fact the latter rule (which governs the entire section devoted to *taddhita* formations) requires to apply *taddhita* affixes to a nominal base (i.e. after a *prātipadika*), whilst the former (which governs *taddhita* formations up to the end of the second Pāda of the fifth Adhyāya) requires to apply the affixes after an inflected word (i.e. after a *pada*).²⁷

Within such an authoritative and traditional perspective, A 4.1.82 is explained as a rule that positions the affix after the *pada* that occurs as a value of the inflected pronoun mentioned in each single *taddhita* rule (e.g. *tasya* in A 4.1.92). According to Scharf (2021: 130), for instance, rule A 4.1.92 “specifies that applicable affixes occur after a word that ends in a sixth-triplet nominal termination (*ṣaṣṭhī vibhakti*) in the sense of an offspring of the person denoted by the word.”

Nonetheless, I believe that due to A 4.1.82 each of Pāṇini’s *taddhita* rules contains much more than such simple and mainly morphological

²⁷ Bhate (1989: 3) brilliantly solved the problem, by advancing a combined interpretation of the two rules as follows: *samarthānām prātipapadikaprakṛtikāt prathamāt subantāt vā* “(the *tad.* suffix) is preferably added to the first among the semantically equivalent case-inflected words whose stems is a noun”. After analysing several traditional interpretations of this conflict, Scharf (2021: 166) also concludes that “the provision of *taddhita* affixes after *padas* [...] succeeds without problems”. In particular, as mentioned above, A 2.4.71 provides a zero-replacement of the ending of the *pada* after which the *taddhita* affix applies. Moreover, as far as the designation of the etymon as an *aṅga* which could risk being blocked by its designation as a *pada*, Scharf (2021: 166) maintains that “one is required to accept that the term *aṅga* provided by A. 1.4.13 [...] retains applicability even where the term *pada* [...] is applicable” in line with Cardona (1970: 46–48).

data. A 2.1.1 has to be read as something different from the mentioned constraint. There are in fact two points in the interpretation of A 2.1.1 which need to be changed:²⁸ first of all, on the basis of Pāṇini's *usus scribendi*, *samartha* means *tulyārtha* “meaning-equivalent”,²⁹ which the *Kāśikāvṛtti* also records in a commentary on one of its four occurrences in Pāṇini's grammar itself. Saroja Bhate (1989: 2) in her translation of A 4.1.82 (see above § 1) already interpreted *samartha* as “semantically equivalent word”. Joshi and Roodbergen (1994: 70–71; 1996: 1) advanced this explanation for the term *samartha* in A 2.1.1 even justifying the form with short vowel *samartha-* instead of **samārtha-* from *sama-* “equal” + *artha-* “meaning”) with the penultimate *ā*, on the basis of the replacement of *samāna-* “equal” with *sa-* in various contexts, taught in rules A 6.3.84–87.³⁰ Moreover, *samartha-* in rule A 2.1.1 is singular and agrees with *padavidhiḥ* and hence there is no reason to abandon such a syntactical structure. Thus, the mentioned Vt. 18 ad A 2.1.1 which interprets the nominative singular *samarthaḥ* in A 2.1.1 as if it were a genitive plural form has to be rejected. Second, again on the basis of the Pāṇini's *usus scribendi*, and especially based on the survey of all the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* occurrences of compounds with *vidhi-* as right-hand constituent Candotti and Pontillo 2004 realised that *padavidhi-* is “a provision that depends on *padas*” (almost by mentioning them).

For instance, the following rule is a *pada-vidhi* because it depends on the two *padas* mentioned in the rule:

A 2.1.37:

pañcamī bhayena

[A *pada* 4 ending with] a fifth case-ending combines with the word *bhaya* [to form a *tatpuruṣa* compound 22].

²⁸ This hypothesis was presented in Pontillo 2012 and then various aspects were clarified in Pontillo 2018 and Candotti and Pontillo 2026.

²⁹ See A 1.3.42, 2.3.57, 3.3.152; 8.1.65 and KV on A 1.3.42 where *samartha* is overtly explained as such.

³⁰ In this text the two authors emphasise their substantial deviation from the translation of the term adopted by Joshi (1968: 1).

In other words, *bhayena* stands for itself and constitutes the so-called head of the compound, while the non-head *pañcamī*, i.e. the *upasarjana* in Pāṇini's terms, is a more generic indication for a *pada* inflected in the ablative case, which can be represented by whatever lexeme at the surface level of the formation. Therefore, the compound *vrkṣa-bhaya-* has the same meaning as *vrkṣebhyaḥ bhayam*, where *vrkṣebhyaḥ* is merely a *pada* inflected in the ablative case in accordance with the mentioned provision. This is something more than a simple rule teaching that *bhayam* is combined to form a *tatpuruṣa* compound with a nominal stem inflected in a given case. In actual fact, here an extremely important semantic constraint is being taught.

The translation of A 2.1.1 *samarthaḥ padavidhiḥ* adopted here is the following:

“A provision which depends on inflected words denotes the same object [of the output of rule, i.e., of the words formed in accordance with the rule itself].”³¹

The focus of this rule will consequently shift to the concurrence between

- syntagms (*vākya*) and
- morphological syntagms (*samāsa*, *taddhita*, secondary verbal bases, *ekaśeṣa*)

and to a functional comparison between

- word-formation-rules (metalinguistic input) and
- relevant linguistic forms (linguistic output).

Furthermore, the analytical phrase which is the *padavidhi* is also a practical tool for checking whether the derivation is correct on the basis of equivalent meaning. All in all, a sort of *laukika* replacement³²

³¹ Cf. Joshi and Roodbergen's (1996: 1): “An operation involving finished words conveys the same meaning.”

³² i.e. not a case of replacement governed by all the specific rules taught by A 1.1.56 etc., rather a spontaneous substitution pattern. Nevertheless, this sort of substitution taught by the single *taddhita* rules cannot be described in the terms used by

of the analytical phrase with the synthetic form—based on the shared meaning—is suggested within a typical variationist pattern. There is only one meaning input but more than one realisation. This variationist system is hierarchically superordinate to the several phenomena of optionality taught by *vā*, *vibhāṣā*, *anyatarasyām* as reconstructed by Kiparsky 1979, because it is based on a paradigmatic relation between the “input phrase” and its linguistic output, taught by A 2.1.1.

This is the reason why the general rule A 4.1.82 *samarthānām pathamād vā* in my opinion has to be interpreted as follows: “In the place of the [*padas*] which convey the same meaning, [a *taddhita* affix] is preferably introduced after the first [*prātipadika*].”

In this way, on the one hand, the ablative *prathamād* is regularly linked to the ablative *prātipadikāt* of the heading rule A 4.1.1, in line with the following Bhate’s (1989: 3) crucial explanation: “The word *prātipadikāt* is thus a qualifier of *prathamāt* and means *prātipadikaprakṛtikāt* ‘after that which has a noun as its base’.” On the other hand, the term *samartha* is associated with A 2.1.1, as expected, in its sense of “meaning-equivalent”, a sense which potentially applies both to a *vṛtti* (in this case the derivative *taddhita* stem) and, symmetrically, to the matching analytical phrase introduced by the rule itself. As such, the plural form of the term in A 4.1.82 refers to the two or more *padas* which constitute the meaning-equivalent input phrase as a variant of the *taddhita* stem. The domain of the heading rule of A 4.1.82 is automatically extended up to the end of the second Pāda of the fifth Adhyāya of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and not beyond (as emphasised by KV ad A 4.1.82), because the following *taddhita* rules do not involve two or more *padas* as an input phrase for the *taddhita* formation.

In this way, each *taddhita*-rule would not merely indicate a nominal stem and a case-relationship linking the affix (which is the head) and

Scharfe (2009: 157), when he writes as follows: “[...] a so-called *taddhita*-suffix is attached to the first of these integrated nouns, replacing the second noun while expressing its meaning in a more general or abstract way.” The whole combination of *padas* suggested by each *taddhita* rule is rather replaced by the whole *taddhita* formation.

the etymon (which is the non-head of the *taddhita* derivative stem), but it would provide a whole analytical sentence which is a distributive variant of the derived nominal stem. Thus, let us see a couple of examples showing how the single *taddhita* rules could be read if the present proposal were accepted:

A 4.2.1: *tena raktam rāgāt* [*prātipadikāt* 1 *taddhitaḥ* 76 *vā* 82 *aṅ* 83]

[The *taddhita* A 4.1.76 affix *aṅ* A 4.1.83] preferably occurs [after the nominal stem X A 4.1.1] which conveys the sense of dyeing in place of the phrase “dyed with X”.

An easy example is *kaunkuma-*, which is a *taddhita* derivative stem, whose meaning is equivalent to the phrase *kuṅkumena raktam*. It thus conveys the sense e.g. of [*vastra-*], i.e. [a cloth] “dyed with saffron”, which the matching *padavidhi* realised on the basis of A 4.2.1.

Analogously, the traditional example *aupagava-* is meaning equivalent to *upagor apatyam* “Upagu’s descendant” and this equivalence is based on A 4.1.92, which in my opinion has to be read as follows:

A 4.1.92 *tasyāpatyam* [*prātipadikāt* 1 *taddhitaḥ* 76 *vā* 82 *aṅ* 83]

[The *taddhita* A 4.1.76 affix *aṅ* A 4.1.83 preferably occurs [after a nominal stem X A 4.1.1] in place of the phrase “descendant of X”.

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**Why Does the Tradition Approach
the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* the Way It Does?
Some Methodological Reflections about Pāṇinian Studies**

ABSTRACT: This article starts by summarizing my doctoral work in the field of Pāṇinian studies and uses the same as a pivot to ask the following questions: What kinds of methods, approaches, lenses, and loci have the tradition and subsequently modern scholarship been using thus far to examine Pāṇini's grammar? What are the advantages and disadvantages of adopting these practices and perspectives? In particular, it seeks to tease out the cultural factors and intellectual attitudes that underlie the methods employed to study Pāṇini's grammar. It dwells on the role of *paribhāṣā* literature and *jñāpakas*, ideas about respect and hierarchy, especially vis-à-vis Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, and Patañjali, commentators' ways of disagreeing with the author, and the prizing of memorization and complexity in the Indian tradition. It then expounds on the relationship between the past, present, and future of the Pāṇinian tradition. Finally, it outlines the overall outlook of Pāṇinian studies as a discipline and argues that a change in the same will entail better learning outcomes for students.

KEYWORDS: Pāṇini, Sanskrit grammar, tradition, *Mahābhāṣya*, *vyākaraṇa*, *paribhāṣās*

In this article, I try to explicate certain methodological questions that beset Pāṇinian studies as a discipline. Likewise, I explore the cultural and intellectual attitudes that give birth to these methodological challenges. I also attempt to understand how these methods, and the beliefs underlying them might influence the learning experience of students at various levels: right from those who have just begun to study Pāṇini's *saṃjñā sūtras* to those who have already taken a dive into the world of the *Mahābhāṣya* and *paribhāṣā* literature.

Recently, I focused on the problem of rule conflict in Pāṇini's grammar (Rajpopat 2025). What happens when two or more rules become simultaneously applicable at any given step in the derivation of a word? Which of these rules should be applied at that step? Pāṇini has provided only one guideline in his entire *Aṣṭādhyāyī* to tackle the problem of rule conflict: 1.4.2 *vipratishedhe param kāryam* 'In the event of rule conflict, the operation that comes later [should be performed]'. But what exactly does Pāṇini mean by a 'later operation'? Starting with Kātyāyana, who was the first to comment on Pāṇini's grammar, traditional scholars have interpreted 'later' as 'later in the serial order of rules' (see the *Mahābhāṣya* on 1.4.2). However, this interpretation creates several problems, or to put it differently, results in the construction of grammatically incorrect words at the end of so many derivations.

Kātyāyana, the first commentator, was aware of these rule-conflict related problems but assumed the problem was with 1.4.2 itself, rather than with his own interpretation of this rule. So, he started proposing rudimentary tools to overcome this problem: he suggested that 1.4.2 should not apply to cases of conflict wherein one rule is *niravakāśa* 'with no scope to apply elsewhere' and the other *sāvakāśa* 'with scope to apply elsewhere' (for details, see Rajpopat 2025, Ch. 7). The argument was simple: if Pāṇini has composed a rule, it should apply somewhere, and if the present scenario is the only place where it is applicable, then it has to apply, irrespective of what 1.4.2 says. This allowed Kātyāyana to exclude several problematic cases from the ambit of 1.4.2: once one declares an example of conflict to be *anavakāśa-sāvakāśa*, one doesn't have to deal with the undesirable outcome of

the application of 1.4.2. Similarly, Patañjali created tools like *nitya* and *antaraṅga* based on Kātyāyana's *vārttikas* (Rajpopat 2023). These are, unfortunately, not the only instances where ad hoc solutions have been resorted to by the tradition. Such convenient solutions might appear attractive but open a can of worms because they are applicable to a small number of conflict scenarios, thereby requiring other tools to be fashioned for the other conflict types—not to mention the sheer number of derivations one would have to go through to conclusively show a rule is definitely *anavakāśa*. Creating a habit out of this practice is what gave birth to the unnavigable web of rule conflict related *paribhāṣās* 'metarules'. Candotti and Pontillo (2018) provide valuable insights into this process and Bronkhorst (1986) demonstrates how complicated matters have become. In the past, Cardona (1970), Pataskar (1985), and Joshi and Kiparsky (1979, 2005) have sought to simplify complex conflict resolution procedures.

Although I don't agree with these scholars about everything, I too criticize the traditional approach for its complexity. I argue that the problem is not in 1.4.2 itself but in the way in which Kātyāyana and all the commentators that followed have interpreted it. I argue that 'later' in 1.4.2 means that which comes later in the structure of the uttered word. Since we write Sanskrit from left to right, this implies going further from left to right within a written word. So, 1.4.2 means: In the event of a conflict the rule prescribing the right-hand-side operation wins. I have also shown that in every single instance where Pāṇini has used the term *para* 'later' in a technical way, he clearly means Right Hand Side rather than the later rule in the serial order. Moreover, my work (Rajpopat 2023) provides overwhelming derivational and philological evidence supporting my interpretation.

The responses my work elicited from the pundits present a unique opportunity to understand how an ancient tradition looks and behaves in the face of challenges and innovation. Some argued that the news that I had solved a 2500-year-old research problem was fake simply because there was no problem to solve in the first place. One may find this confusing: how is it possible to completely deny the existence of this research problem when over the centuries the tradition

has laboured untiringly to produce all kinds of tortuous *paribhāṣās* to tackle rule conflict?

Let us examine ideas from the tradition that might make it difficult for some traditional scholars to accept my work. Firstly, traditional scholars are taught that it is justified for them to add new *paribhāṣās* ‘metarules’ to the Pāṇinian system so long as they are able to justify doing so using *jñāpakas* ‘hints’ which they claim Pāṇini left behind to indicate that his system should be interpreted in a certain way.¹ But the tradition offers no convincing justification explaining how and why these rather local hints can be converted into more generally applicable metarules (for more on this, see Wujastyk 1983).

A further complication of this extrapolation of ‘hints’ provided by a single *sūtra* to a much broader set of scenarios is that many *paribhāṣās* are *anitya*, i.e., they are not always applicable, or put differently, they are applicable only on some occasions. And how do we know where a certain *paribhāṣā* should or should not be applied? There is no precise instruction given about this; the only way to check if a *paribhāṣā* applies at a certain place is to try applying it and if it helps the derivation, that means it is a *nitya paribhāṣā*, and if it doesn’t, then it is *anitya*. How such *paribhāṣās* help is anyone’s guess. Unfortunately, young traditional scholars are encouraged to—and subsequently do—buy into such convoluted reasoning frameworks—especially if they have not had the opportunity or academic training required to examine this or any other material for that matter from a more distant, detached, or dispassionate perspective. Such conditioning makes it difficult for them to seriously engage with the proposition that the ‘*paribhāṣā* literature’ approach is problematic. The roots of this approach lie in the tradition’s attitudes towards its three oldest thinkers, and its acceptance of the idea that Pāṇini’s grammar can and should be reworked in significant ways.

The mythology, if you will, of the tradition contains two important figures who actively championed the enterprise of ‘improving’

¹ Texts such as *Paribhāṣenduśekhara* contain lists of and commentaries on such *paribhāṣās*.

Pāṇini's grammar, namely Kātyāyana and Patañjali. Students, especially those belonging to traditional Brahmin families, regularly recite verses such as:

*vākyakāraṃ vararuciṃ bhāṣyakāraṃ patañjalim
pāṇiniṃ sūtrakāraṃ ca praṇato 'smi munitrayam*

'I bow to the three *munis*/saints: Vararuci (Kātyāyana) who wrote the *vākyas* (*vārttikas*), Patañjali who wrote the *bhāṣya*, and Pāṇini who wrote the *sūtras*'.

If the two commentators take the liberty to make significant alterations to Pāṇini's system, which they most certainly do, what will young scholars, who essentially worship them, learn from them? That it is fine to make changes to Pāṇini's system as one pleases.

As if this were not already enough to encourage the traditional tendency to interfere with Pāṇini's apparatus, traditional scholars, going as far back as Kaiyaṭa's² time, decided that Kātyāyana's authority supersedes Pāṇini's and Patañjali's effectively overrides both Kātyāyana's and Pāṇini's. This means we must trust Kātyāyana and Patañjali to have known more about Pāṇini's grammar than Pāṇini himself. And all this in turn implies that not only is it fine to pile things onto Pāṇini's system but in fact we must receive what has been piled onto it willingly. For more on this process of deification and the relationships between these three teachers, see Kielhorn (1876), Bhandarkar (1972), Vergiani (2011), and Deshpande (2019). But more broadly, the fact that these three scholars are so venerated has implications for how boldly and openly one is allowed to disagree with them—not to mention the fact that disagreement itself as a traditional practice is a complicated affair. Several things are left unsaid but seem to be true in this regard.

² *yathottaraṃ hi munitrayasya prāmāṇyam | uttarottaraṃ munīnām prāmāṇyam*
'Of the three saints, the one that comes later has greater authority than the one that comes earlier [in time]' (see *Pradīpa* on *Mahābhāṣya* on 1.1.29).

Although the tradition has historically been open to disagreement, it has certain stylistic preferences: firstly, if the person one is disagreeing with is senior or belongs to a preceding generation, then one must disagree very respectfully, which in this context means indirectly. The tradition has had a long and rich history of commentators using their opportunity to comment on the author's writing to introduce their own views into its purport without admitting or explicitly stating that they are presenting a new idea or disagreeing with the author.

The evolution of conflict resolution tools in the tradition is a prime example of this: Patañjali read terms such as *nitya* and *antaraṅga* as conflict resolution tools in Kātyāyana's *vārttikas* even though Kātyāyana had not used them in that way in his writing. I have discussed this in detail in chapter seven of my book (see Rajpopat 2025, Ch. 7). This tendency muddies the waters and poses a significant hurdle for intellectual historians who are interested in understanding who pitched which idea and exactly how ideas have evolved over time and across geographies. But these complications are not necessarily viewed as a negative thing by the tradition. Complexity and convoluted, labyrinthine systems are used as proxies for intellectual sophistication or richness. I could not disagree more with this attitude: I believe the role of the scholar is to find the simplest possible explanation—lending clarity to an elusive concept or resolving a longstanding problem rather than marvelling at and revelling in how unimaginably complex and nightmarishly difficult a certain textual system has become.

Now that we have discussed some methodological problems and the cultural attitudes underlying them, we can proceed to summarize the intellectual journey of a typical traditional student—an important component of which is memorization.

What deserves to be memorized in the Indian grammatical tradition? Of course, traditional texts including Pāṇini's grammar are worthy of committing to memory. But why? One might say because these texts help us better understand Pāṇini's grammar. While this may be true, this answer does not present the complete picture. Both today and historically, these texts have derived their value and prestige from who wrote them and how popular or widely read these texts have been.

And what constitutes knowledge for the Indian grammatical tradition? First and foremost, it is what the giants of the tradition such as Patañjali, Jayāditya and Vāmana, or Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa have said. Their thoughts constitute knowledge by virtue of having been written by them—irrespective of any logical fallacies or internal contradictions that might plague these writings.

For most students, the next step involves subconsciously accepting this knowledge as the truth. The third step involves finding logical arguments that could help prove the verity of these ideas. This appears to be a textbook case of confirmation bias and authority fallacy. There is a cultural expectation of students to demonstrate their brilliance within the bounds of traditional conduct, without being perceived as rebellious, without disrespecting or infuriating someone senior in their traditional learning environment.

The fourth step involves asking questions and disagreeing which some traditional scholars certainly allow and even encourage. But questions must be asked out of curiosity, a desire to dispense with one's ignorance, and a certain awareness that one does not know something. One ought not to sound as though one is challenging authority either textual or personal because that does not bode well for the student. Similarly, one can get into trouble if one presents a firm even if well-developed contrarian opinion on something. On the other hand, if one demonstrates that one has textual authority on their side, that drastically increases the weight of their position. While using logic and rational argumentation is one way to make one's point in a conversation or commentary, an equally legitimate if not more potent route involves invoking scriptural authority. This is considered to be an almost guaranteed way of winning a debate or definitively establishing the correctness of one's claim.

Traditional scholars are trained—and thus value immensely the ability—to quote verbatim the thoughts or verses of this or that scholar. The statement is considered weighty simply because an authority figure has said something in favour of the speaker's opinion. In this scenario, truth ends up becoming a function of authority rather than that of evidence or logical argumentation.

If the authority of a commentator is so valuable, then what does that say about the goals and priorities of the tradition? In other words, what truly matters to the Indian grammatical tradition today? Protecting the honour and reputation of their ancestors is arguably the most important goal of traditional scholars. Equally important perhaps is the goal of passing down traditional knowledge to coming generations so that they might be able to keep the torch of Brahminical knowledge burning. This combination of past and future concerns eclipses all consideration of what the present of the tradition should look like and what kinds of contributions existing scholars can or should make. This is also reflected in the manner in which scholarship operates: traditional scholars are encouraged to pick up themes directly from commentaries and work on them, not to find or discover something new—because that is considered not important—but to improve one’s own understanding, so that one might be able to teach it well to his students. The idea is to perpetuate the past so that a sturdy future may be secured.

In sum, traditional scholarship revolves not around critical scrutiny but instead around getting to know the commentator better, improving one’s knowledge of traditional concepts and categories, and becoming a scholar who is well-versed in existing texts—someone who can recall any excerpt at will in an impressively short period of time. This has little to do with purely truth-seeking or investigative endeavours.

One might wonder at this juncture: Has the tradition always been as conservative or liberal as it is today? It is clear from the writings of Kātyāyana and Patañjali that they were remarkably open-minded in their attitude towards dissenters and disagreement. Their work bears the mark of their flexibility and willingness to adapt: they felt free to contradict their own remarks from a few paragraphs back, simply because they were keen to explore another line of reasoning or a different set of examples. But as we move towards the *Kāśikā*, the *Kaumudī*, and *paribhāṣā* texts, one cannot help but notice that certain ideas have become more firmly embedded and established, and certain approaches and possibilities have come to occupy the centre stage while others have received lesser attention. As time passed, inquiries in certain directions became the norm whereas the remaining directions came to

be overlooked and perhaps forgotten. Such funnelled thinking and directional bias crop up with the passage of time in most intellectual traditions, so there are no grounds to single out the Pāṇinian tradition in this respect.

Ever since the English-language educational model has come to occupy the mainstream—thereby relegating traditional Sanskrit-based learning to the margins—traditional scholarship seems to have become more conservative. This is understandable: the fear of losing precious knowledge and the scary prospect of the tradition dying out makes scholars cling to what remains and resistant to further change. Preservation takes precedence while innovation and discovery take a backseat: when survival itself is not guaranteed one might not want to venture beyond familiar territories—minimizing risk and any further negative outcomes in the face of uncertainty and adversity.

Having understood traditional attitudes and how they impact the methodology of Pāṇinian studies, it is time to examine what I call the “philosophy” of the discipline of Pāṇinian studies itself—just as we have the philosophy of physics, linguistics, or medicine. Here, rather than prescribing specific methodological changes, I argue in favour of a change of perspective which will, if taken seriously, impact the pedagogy of Pāṇini’s grammar. There are two main aspects of such a reconsideration for which I have chosen, admittedly, somewhat peculiar names: one ‘epistemological’ and the other ‘ontological’. However, I think these two labels help lend clarity to the arguments I make below. Because the tradition treats not only Pāṇini’s grammar but also a variety of secondary texts such as Kātyāyana’s *vārttikas*, the *Mahābhāṣya*, the *Kāśikā*, and so on as authoritative sources of knowledge, this creates what I consider an epistemological challenge: What if there is internal contradiction between two statements in the *vārttikas* or between two statements in the *Mahābhāṣya*, as there very often is³? And what if something written in the *Mahābhāṣya* disagrees with something written in the *Kāśikā*? While having an entire literary canon, i.e., traditional texts of the Pāṇinian tradition, as one’s

³ Thieme (1956) discusses similar issues in an engaging way.

knowledge base can be a blessing in that it can give one access to so many different ideas and examples, the internal inconsistencies can leave one without an epistemological compass or touchstone guiding one about what constitutes ‘knowledge’, what is correct, what is incorrect, and how one must proceed to establish the truth.

My proposal is of course to solve this problem by treating Pāṇini’s grammar alone as the epistemological base for conducting any enquiry into Pāṇini’s grammar and to treat everything else, including the secondary sources mentioned above, as mere ideas which one may or may not want to scrutinize. Of course, it can be a rewarding experience to read a commentary or derived text, but such exposure should not be allowed to cloud one’s independent judgement in matters pertaining to the interpretation and functioning of Pāṇini’s rules. This shows how the philosophy of a discipline plays a crucial role in one’s learning experience: rather than viewing Pāṇini’s rules through the lens of Patañjali or Bhaṭṭojī Dīkṣita, if one simply applies one’s own mental faculties to understand Pāṇini, the result is bound to open many an intellectual door. Let me emphasize here that I am not suggesting that we avoid reading Kātyāyana and Patañjali altogether. Rather, I am arguing that we must approach and engage with these two and other commentators only after we have had a chance to examine the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in and of itself and to make up our own mind and develop our own opinions on certain critical questions and challenges. This ensures that we grow intellectually and gain confidence while also avoiding our judgements becoming clouded by the opinions of revered authors in whose awe we might be. The question is not so much about whether or not we should read Kātyāyana and Patañjali as it is about when and at what stage we access their work, with what mindset, and at what level of intellectual maturity, exposure, and experience we engage with it.

Moving on, the second, somewhat related problem of perspective, involves the contents of these texts and the concepts and categories contained therein. The question is: How does the ‘ontological’ structure of Pāṇini’s grammar look? Firstly, have we accurately understood his concepts and categories and secondly, is it wise to introduce new ones into his system—especially without ensuring that we have

understood it properly? The traditional answer to these questions becomes clear upon examining its writings: take for instance the many new rule-conflict categories and tools such as *nitya*, *antaraṅga*, *anavakāśa*, and *pūrvavipratīṣedha* that the tradition has smuggled into Pāṇini's infrastructure. The problem is aggravated by the fact that the introduction of these categories has led to the overriding of Pāṇini's original algorithm. Had Pāṇini been around, he would have been appalled at how radically later thinkers have overhauled the technical workings of his grammar. How ethical and wise is it to do so centuries after Pāṇini passed away—now that he cannot even consent or object or share his opinion with us? And how sensible is it to hold on to these new categories even after realizing that they are making matters worse rather than better insofar as handling rule conflict is concerned?

I think that we should strive to make sense of Pāṇini's system by focusing purely on the concepts and rules he has given us without adding any metarules or tools to his system. This non-interventionist approach has paid off handsomely in my research and will certainly prove useful in future endeavours too. I have shown that Pāṇini's machine is closed and self-contained and does not require nor benefit from, for that matter, any fiddling with his grammatical apparatus whatsoever. As I have shown through my work, incorporating new concepts, categories, and *paribhāṣās* into Pāṇini's system ends up breeding lazy, band-aid, and easy-escape solutions. Making such changes might seem convenient and tempting and might provide localized, temporary answers but cannot address the larger technical or structural issues plaguing the system. Instead, we can sharpen our intellect by focusing our efforts on finding the solutions that Pāṇini himself, the genius that he was, has devised for his extraordinarily well-oiled machine.

By implementing these changes in the approach of the discipline and consequently its teaching practices, we will be able to help students become more creative and imaginative, test things by themselves, and achieve a level of confidence that commentarial handholding or ontological tampering cannot offer. These enhancements will also sharpen their critical thinking skills which will stand them in good stead well beyond traditional learning—in various areas and endeavours of life itself.

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***Laghupāṇinīyam*: the Relevance
of a *navya vyākaraṇa* Text in Kerala
with a Special Reference to the *sarvanāman* Section***

ABSTRACT: The *Siddhāntakaumudī* of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita and the *kaumudīs* of Varadarāja were normally used as primers to introduce the Indian students to the *vyākaraṇa* science. Nevertheless, as times passed, Sanskrit became less practiced, and these grammatical works began to be considered as too difficult. For this reason, new handbooks have been created during the 20th century, both in other vernacular languages—such as in Hindī—and in a simpler contemporary Sanskrit, including the *Laghupāṇinīyam* by Rājarājavarma.

KEYWORDS: Pāṇini, *vyākaraṇa*, *sarvanāman*, *Laghupāṇinīyam*

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All the translations are by the author, unless specifically stated.

1. Introduction to the *Laghupāṇinīyam*²

The present research analyses the *sūtras* of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (A) of Pāṇini devoted to the pronominal stems as they are treated in the *Laghupāṇinīyam* (LP)³ with the aim of grasping the characteristics of this Sanskrit grammatical primer, in order to understand why this manual becomes so popular—even more than the *kaumudīs*—in the south of India, and in particular in Kerala.

The *Laghupāṇinīyam* was composed in Sanskrit by A. R. Rājarājavarma (1863–1918) and was then published in 1911 in Trivandrum. This commentary, defined by the same author as *Popular Sanskrit Grammar for Beginners*,⁴ can be methodologically placed between the *Kāśikāvṛtti* (KV), as the main exponent of the ‘ancient grammar’ (*prācīna vyākaraṇa*), and the very first attempt at the ‘new grammar’ (*navya vyākaraṇa*), namely, the *Rūpāvatāra* (R).

In fact, in the introduction to the *Laghupāṇinīyam*, Rājarājavarma compares the treatise of Pāṇini to a citadel that, surrounded by moats and walls, is extremely difficult to be approached. The author continues by mentioning a double entrance—formed by the *Kāśikāvṛtti* and the *Rūpāvatāra*—opened by the ancients for those who desire to enter this inaccessible citadel. However, these commentaries show

² The Sanskrit text of the *Laghupāṇinīyam* is slightly corrupted. For this reason, all diacritics and final letters not shown in the printed version of the manual are here enclosed in square brackets, while typos and incorrect word separations are signalled with the sigla (*sic!*).

³ This article is part of a broader research project on *sarvanāmans* presented for the first time in my PhD dissertation “*Sarvanāmaprakaraṇam*. Tracing the relevance of pronouns by reading *navya vyākaraṇa* commentaries”. It moves from the necessity to present a new original work on *sarvanāmans*, aiming at re-establishing the importance of this grammatical category; in fact, even if the pronominal stems are treated in a peculiar way in the entire history of Sanskrit literature, no other scholars have worked in a detailed way on this topic.

⁴ *Popular Sanskrit Grammar for Beginners* is the English subtitle of the *Laghupāṇinīyam*, so called because it is composed in a manner similar to the *navya vyākaraṇa* commentaries that are usually employed in teaching Pāṇinian grammar to beginners; moreover, this manual is so appreciated for its simplification of the Sanskrit language adopted in the explanation of the *sūtras* of Pāṇini.

a completely different approach to the subject that, according to the author of the *Laghupāṇinīyam*, is too complicated for a student: the *Kāśikāvṛtti* guides a precise investigation of the individual rules at the expense of a general understating of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, while the *Rūpāvatāra* tries to recreate a complete picture of the topic in question without clarifying the individuality of the aphorisms. For this reason, having abandoned these two old approaches, Rājarājavarma proposes a new method in his work, the *Laghupāṇinīyam*.⁵

The *sūtras* treating the *sarvanāman* designation, the compounds made up of pronominal stems and the pronominal inflection are analysed in detail in order to better understand the structure of this grammatical commentary composed by Rājarājavarma. Its drawing from the *Kāśikāvṛtti* and the *Rūpāvatāra* is reflected in the clarity of exposition found in the analysis of the pronominal compounds, and in the *prakriyā* explanations of the pronominal inflection respectively. It is undeniable that the *Laghupāṇinīyam* is also based on the *Siddhāntakaumudī* (SK) of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita that, along with the following *kaumudīs* of Varadarāja, was currently used in India when this commentary was composed. In particular, the works of *navya vyākaraṇa* are the main sources to recover the traditional *vṛttis* and some of the classical instances, which were already well-established and widely accepted by the general public by the beginning of the 20th century—and

⁵ *eva ca pāṇinīya[m] tantra[m] parikhābhi prākāraiś ca parikṣipta durgam iva durāsada[m] saṃvṛttam. durge śmin pravivikṣūṇā[m] purātanaṁ uddhāṭita dvāradvayaṃ vartate – kāśikākṛtam eka, rūpāvatārakṛtam anyad iti. tatra ca prathamena (dvareṇa) praviśan didṛkṣu puruṣo rathyoparathyākameṇa babhramyamāṇa sarvato nīto 'pi tatratyānām adbhutapadārthānā[m] śakalikṛtya tata ito vikīrnatvāt prthak kṛtān ekadeśāneva paśyati, na tu samagra kim api dr̥śya vastu. dvitīyena tu praviśan śakalikṛtya vikṣiptānekadeśānuccitya yathāsthāna vini-veśya samagrīkartum pura paścāt pārśvayoś ca padepade vikṛpyamāṇa āyāsyate. eva ca dvārābhyām ubhābhyām api praveśe kleśa eva praviṣṭasya. ato vaya[m] prakāṣam ida[m] prācinai prahata dvāradvayaṃ api viḥāya pakveṣṭa kacit āmv api prākārabhittiṣu tatra tatra sulabhair jālamārgair bālān anta[m] praveśya tatra ca sukhasavāsocitāsu virālāsv api kāsucid valabhiṣu niveśya dūradarśinīprabhṛtīnā[m] navinadr̥ṣṭānā[m] yantrāṇā[m] sāhāyyena dūravikīrṇāni śakalāni sannidhāpy āvaśyadarśanīya[m] sarvam apy arthajāta darśayiṣyāma (LP: 4–5).*

which, in fact, continue to shape teaching practices even today, well into the first quarter of the 21st century, at least in northern India and as far south as Maharashtra and Gujarat.

After investigating the sources of the *Laghupāṇinīyam*, and their importance in the establishment of this grammatical text in the context of Sanskrit teaching, some preliminary conclusions will be drawn on the work of Rājarājavarma with the final purpose of verifying if it can be considered a valid primer to teach Sanskrit grammar through the masterpiece of Pāṇini. In fact, the present research aims at finding a modern commentary that can decide the future perspectives of the ancient *vyākaraṇa* science.

2. The tradition of the *Siddhāntakaumudī* in the *sarvanāman* designation

The *Laghupāṇinīyam* is divided into four *kāṇḍas*: *śikṣākāṇḍaḥ* (concerning the phonemes of the language), *pariniṣṭā°* (dealing with morphological problem), *nirukta°* (focusing on the etymologies, that is, the derivation of words) and *ākāṅkṣā°* (regarding the word-relationship). In particular, in the *pariniṣṭākāṇḍaḥ*, there is a further sub-division into *liṅgaprakaraṇam* (treating the feminine affixes), *subantaprakriyā* and *tiṇantaprakriyā* (dealing with the nominal declension and the verbal conjugation respectively), *kṛtprakaraṇam* (mentioning the *kṛt* affixes), and so on and so forth.

This article focuses mainly on the *sarvanāman* designation, the compounds made up of pronominal stems and the pronominal inflection. This is the reason why the present research is conducted within the *subantaprakriyā* section; in fact, the *sarvanāman* designation (A 1.1.27 *sarvādīni sarvanāmani*) is first quoted in the sub-section called *saṃjñā*, as well as the aphorisms dealing with compounds made up of pronominal stems (see below, A 1.1.28–A 1.1.31), whereas the pronominal declension (A 7.1.14–A 7.1.17 and A 7.1.52) will be subsequently mentioned in another sub-section entitled *pratyāyānām ādeśā[h]*.

A 1.1.27 *sarvādīni sarvanāmani*

LP 170: *sarvādīni śabdarūpāṇi sarvanāmasaṃjñāni syu[h]*.

The word-forms beginning with *sarva-* will be designated as *sarvanāman*.

First of all, it is worthy to note that the numbers of aphorisms are different from the previous commentaries, because the author of the *Laghupāṇinīyam* modifies once again the order of *sūtras* of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*; for this reason, A 1.1.27 *sarvādīni sarvanāmani* is the rule number (170) here in the *Laghupāṇinīyam*, while it is number (213) in the *Siddhāntakaumudī*.

Even though the explanations of the *Laghupāṇinīyam* are generally clear, as this work is thought as a Sanskrit Grammar for Beginners, some passages of these aphorisms result more understandable after studying the other *kaumudīs*, in particular the *Siddhāntakaumudī*. This appears as very clear in the analysis of the *sarvanāman* designation, because it is extensively based on the text of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita. First of all, the traditional *vṛtti* is repeated:

SK 213: *sarvādīni śabdasvarūpāṇi sarvanāmasaṃjñāni syuh*.

The word-forms beginning with *sarva-* will be designated as *sarvanāman*.

The 35 *sarvādī* are then listed:

LP 170: *sarva, viśva, ubha, ubhaya, ḍatara, ḍatama, anya, anyatara, itara, (tvat, tva), nema, sama, (= sarvaparyaya ‘synonym of sarva’) sima. pūrvarāvaradakṣiṇottarāparāvarāṇi vyavasthāyām asaṃjñāyām. svam ajñātidhanakhyāyām. antara[m] bahīryogopasa[m]vyānayo[h]. [trīṇy etāni gaṇasūtraṇi “these are three gaṇasūtra”] tyad, tad, yad, etad, idam, adas, eka, dvi, yuṣmad, asmad, bhavatu, kim.*⁶

⁶ The term *sarvādī* is used to introduce a list of thirty-five pronominal stems, the first member of which is *sarva*, i.e., (1) *sarva* ‘all’, (2) *viśva* ‘all’, (3) *ubha* ‘two’, (4) *ubhaya* ‘both’, (5) word-forms ending with the affix *Ḍatara*, and (6) word-forms ending with the affix *Ḍatama*, (7) *itara* ‘other’, (8) *anya* ‘other’, (9) *anyatara* ‘either’, (10) *tvat* ‘other’, (11) *tva* ‘other’, (12) *nema* ‘half’, (13) *sama* ‘all’,

Furthermore, some of these pronominal stems are better explained by simplifying the very lucid analysis made by the author of *Siddhāntakaumudī* in different points of the *sarvanāman* section:

LP 170: [...] *svābhidheyāpekṣo 'vidhiniyamo vyavasthā. tatraiva pūrvādīnā[m] sarvanāmatā. tena kuśala ity arthe dakṣiṇaśabdo na sarvanāma. asaṃjñāyām ity ukte uttarā kurava ity ādau satyām api vyavasthāyā[n] na sarvanāmatā* (see SK 218 ad A 1.1.34).⁷

The relative position (*vyavasthā*) consists in the specification of a determinate point with reference to its own denotation (i.e., the denotation of the pronominal stems). Here, there is the property of being [designated as] *sarvanāman* for the word-forms beginning with *pūrva-* (namely, the *pūrvādī*).⁸ For this reason, the word-form *dakṣiṇa-* is not [designated as] *sarvanāman* when it is used in the sense of *kuśala* ‘skilful’. There is not the property of being [designated as] *sarvanāman* [for the *pūrvādī*] when they are used in the meaning of *vyavasthā*, such as in [the example] *uttarāḥ kuravaḥ* ‘the inhabited northern Kuru country’, because it is said *asaṃjñāyām* ‘not in the case of a proper name’.

(14) *sīma* ‘whole’, (15) *pūrva* ‘east or prior’, (16) *para* ‘subsequent’, (17) *avara* ‘west or posterior’, (18) *dakṣiṇa* ‘south or right’, (19) *uttara* ‘north or inferior, subsequent’, (20) *apara* ‘other or inferior’, (21) *adhara* ‘west or inferior’, (22) *sva* ‘own’, (23) *antara* ‘outer or an under or lower garment’, (24) *tyad* ‘he, she, it’, (25) *tad* ‘he, she, it’, (26) *yad* ‘who’, (27) *etad* ‘this’, (28) *idam* ‘it’, (29) *adas* ‘that’, (30) *eka* ‘one’, (31) *dvi* ‘two’, (32) *yuṣmad* ‘you’, (33) *asmad* ‘we’, (34) *bhavat* ‘you’, (35) *kim* ‘what’ (see KV ad A 1.1.27).

⁷ SK 218 ad A 1.1.34: *eteṣāṃ vyavasthāyām asaṃjñāyām sarvanāmasaṃjñā gaṇapāthāt sarvatra yā prāptā sā jasi vā syāt. pūrve, pūrvāḥ. svābhidheyāpekṣāvidhiniyamo vyavasthā. vyavasthāyām kim? dakṣiṇā gāthakāḥ. kuśalā ity-arthaḥ. asaṃjñāyām kim? uttarāḥ kuravaḥ.*

⁸ The *sarvanāmans* comprehended in the *pūrvādī* list are those enunciated by Pāṇini in aphorism A 1.1.34, i.e., *pūrva*, *para*, *avara*, *dakṣiṇa*, *uttara*, *apara*, and *adhara* (see (15)–(21) in fn. 6), when their signification is restricted to that of a spatial limit (*vyavasthā*), and provided they are not used as proper names (*asaṃjñā*).

LP 170: *svaśabdasya* (1) *ātmā*, (2) *ātmīya*, (3) *jñāti*, (4) *dhana iti ca-turṣv artheṣu prathame 'rthadvaya eva sarvanāmasaṃjñā* (see SK 219 ad A 1.1.35).⁹

The *sarvanāman* designation only applies to the first two senses of the four meanings of the word-form *sva-*,¹⁰ i.e., (1) *ātman* 'self', (2) *ātmīya* 'own', (3) *jñāti* 'kinsman', and (4) *dhana* 'belonging'.

LP 170: *ḍataraḍatamau pratyayau, tatas tadantā grāhyā[h]*. *anyathā hi saṃjñā niṣprayanā syāt. etau ca pratyayau kiyattadekebhya eva bhavata[h]*—*katara, katama, yatara, yatama, tatara, tatama, ekatara, ekatama, iti* (see SK 217 ad A 7.1.52).¹¹

Ḍatara and *Ḍatama* are two affixes, [when these *pratyayas* are mentioned,] the items ending with them should be understood. Diversely, the [*sarvanāman*] designation will be without a scope. These two affixes are [prescribed] after *kim-*, *yad-*, *tad-*, and *eka-*; therefore, *katara* and *katama*, *yatara* and *yatama*, *tatara* and *tatama*, *ekatara* and *ekatama*.

LP 170: *anyatara, anyatama ity api śabdau vartete, kintu tau na ḍataraḍatamāntau, tayo 'anyatara' śabdo gaṇe viśiṣya pāṭhitatvāt sarvanāma, anyatamas tu na [...]* (see SK 217 ad A 7.1.52).¹²

anyatara- and *anyatama-* are also two word-forms, but these two do not end with [the affixes] *Ḍatara* and *Ḍatama*; of these two, the word-form *anyatara* is [designated as] *sarvanāman* as is read in the [*sarvādi*] list, whereas *anyatama* is not [read there].

⁹ SK 219 ad A 1.1.35: *jñātidhanānyavācīnaḥ svaśabdasya yā prāptā saṃjñā sā jasi vā syāt. sve. svāḥ. ātmīyā ityarthaḥ. ātmāna ita vā. jñātidhanavācīnastu svāḥ jñātayo 'rthā vā.*

¹⁰ The pronominal stem *sva-* is mentioned in *sūtra* A 1.1.35 (see (22) in fn. 6) and, according to the author of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, it can be designated as *sarvanāman* only when it does not stand for 'kinsman' (*jñāti*) or 'wealth' (*dhana*).

¹¹ SK 217 ad A 7.1.52: *ḍataraḍatamau pratyayau. pratyayagrahaṇe tadantagrahaṇam iti tadantā grāhyāḥ. yadyapi saṃjñāvidhau pratyayagrahaṇe tadantagrahaṇam nāsti. sūptiṇantam iti jñāpakāt. tathāpīha tadantagrahaṇam kevalayoh saṃjñāyāḥ prayojanābhāvāt.*

¹² SK 217 ad A 7.1.52: *anyatarānyatamaśabdāvavyutpannau svabhāvāddvibahuviṣaye nirdhāraṇe vartete. tatrānyatamaśabdasya gaṇe pāṭhābhāvānna saṃjñā.*

For the sake of completeness, it is worthy to note that Rājarājavarṇa composed the following *kārikās* containing a very brief explanation of all the *sarvādi*:

LP 170:

sarvaviśvobhayasama ḍatara ḍatama puna[h] /
itarānye anyatarat (svamor aḍ (sic!) ḍatarādiṣu) //1//

sarva, viśva, ubhaya, sama, Ḍatara, Ḍatama, and also *itara, anya, anyatara* (*aḍ* in the place of *su* and *am* in [the word-forms] beginning with *Ḍatara*).¹³

pūrvāparāvarasvāntarādharaṭṭaradakṣiṇam /
para (pūrvādinavaka smāt-smin-śīṣu vikalpitam) //2//

pūrva, apara, avara, sva, antara, adhara, utara, dakṣiṇa,
para (the nine *pūrvādi* are optionally [*sarvanāman*] before *smāt-smin-Śī*).¹⁴

tadyadetadida cādo dvyekam (atva tadādiṣu) /
yuṣmadasmadbhavatu kim iti sarvādaya smṛtā //3//
tad, yad, etad, idam, adas, and dvi, eka (the substitute *-a* in *tadādi*)¹⁵
yuṣmad, asmad, bhavatu, kim – sarva-, etc. are thus taught.

¹³ A 7.1.25 *aḍ ḍatarādibhyaḥ pañcabhyaḥ* prescribes the substitute *aḍ* in the place of the affixes *sU* (nom. sg.) and *am* (acc. sg.) when they occur after the five pronominal stems beginning with *Ḍatara*, i.e., the word-forms ending with the affixes *Ḍatara* and *Ḍatama*, *anya*, *anyatara*, and *itara*.

¹⁴ First of all, A 1.1.32 *vibhāṣā jasi* teaches an optional replacement of the substitute *Śī* in the place of the affix *Jas* (nom. pl.) when it occurs after the nine pronominal stems beginning with *pūrva-*, namely, *pūrva, para, avara, dakṣiṇa, utara, apara,* and *adhara* (A 1.1.34), *sva* (A 1.1.35), and *antara* (A 1.1.36); moreover, A 7.1.16 *pūrvādibhyo navabhyo vā* teaches an optional replacement of the substitutes *smāt* and *smin* in the place of the affixes *ṆasI* and *Ni* (abl. and loc. sg.) when they occur after the same pronominal stems beginning with *pūrva-*.

¹⁵ A 7.2.102 *tyadādīnām aḥ* prescribes the final substitute *a* in the place of the final phonemes of those pronominal stems beginning with *tyad* when a *vibhakti* follows. It is important to mention that the word-form *tyad* is not cited in these *kārikās*; therefore, the list of *tadādi* is here quoted, including *tad, yad, etad, idam, adas, eka,* and *dvi*.

3. The clarity of exposition of the *Kāśikāvṛtti* in the pronominal compounds

The *Laghupāṇinīyam* paraphrases the *sūtras* dealing with compounds made up of pronominal stems (i.e., A 1.1.28 *vibhāṣā dīksamāse bahuvrīhau*, A 1.1.29 *na bahuvrīhau*, A 1.1.30 *ṭṭīyāsamāse*, and A 1.1.31 *dvandve ca*) immediately after A 1.1.27 *sarvādīni sarvanāmāni*.¹⁶ Thus, if A 1.1.27 is the rule number (170), A 1.1.28 *vibhāṣā dīksamāse bahuvrīhau* is (171) and so on and so forth.

bahuvrīhi compounds denoting direction

A 1.1.28 *vibhāṣā dīksamāse bahuvrīhau*

LP 171: *uttarasūtreṇa vakṣyamāṇena prāpte viśedhe vibhāṣate*.

Once obtained the prohibition [of the *sarvanāman* designation] through the mention of the following *sūtra* (namely, A 1.1.29 *na bahuvrīhau*), the optionality is stated.

The *Laghupāṇinīyam* introduces *sūtra* A 1.1.28 by referring to one of its models, the *Kāśikāvṛtti*. In fact, while paraphrasing this rule, the *Kāśikāvṛtti* explains that the prohibition will be mentioned in the next rule, that is, in A 1.1.29 *na bahuvrīhau* “not in a *bahuvrīhi* compound”—‘*na bahuvrīhau*’ *iti pratiśedham vakṣyati*—but once established that the prohibition is permanent, the optionality is undertaken here in A 1.1.28 *vibhāṣā dīksamāse bahuvrīhau*—*tasmin nitye pratiśedhe prāpte vibhāṣeyam ārabhyate* (see KV ad A 1.1.28).

¹⁶ The author of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* dedicates a specific section of rules to those compounds that are made up of pronominal stems. In fact, according to rule A 1.1.28 *vibhāṣā dīksamāse bahuvrīhau*, the pronouns are marginally (*vibhāṣā*, see Kiparsky 1979: 1) designated as *sarvanāmans* when they are used in a *bahuvrīhi* compound signifying direction (*dīksamāse bahuvrīhau*). However, they cannot be designated as *sarvanāmans* when they are used in a *bahuvrīhi* compound (A 1.1.29 *na bahuvrīhau*), in an instrumental *tatpuruṣa* compound (A 1.1.30 *ṭṭīyāsamāse*) or in a *dvandva* compound (A 1.1.31 *dvandve ca*).

LP 171: ‘*diñnāmāny antarāḷe*’ *iti sūtreṇa vihita pūrvasyā uttarasyāś ca diśo* ‘*ntarāḷa uttarapūrvā ity ādi samāso diksamāsa, tasya bahuvrīhitve*’ *pi vikalpena sarvanāmatā syāt*.

A compound indicating direction (*diksamāsa*) is a compound such as *uttarapūrvā-* that indicates the direction in the middle of *uttara* ‘north’ and *pūrvā* ‘east’, according to the aphorism *diñnāmāny antarāḷe* (A 2.2.26); in the *bahuvrīhi* [compound] of this [*diksamāsa*], there will optionally be the property of [being designated as] *sarvanāman*.

The *Siddhāntakaumudī* simply paraphrases this rule as *atra sarvanāmatā vā syāt* (see SK 292 *ad* A 1.1.28), that is, “Here (i.e., *diksamāse bahuvrīhau*), there will optionally be the property of [being designated as] *sarvanāman*”. It is evident that the final part of the *vṛtti* provided by the *Laghupāṇinīyam* is very similar to that of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, with the difference that Rājarājavarma explains the optionality with the word *vikalpa* ([...] *vikalpena sarvanāmatā syāt*), typical of modern and contemporary works, while the *Siddhāntakaumudī* and the following *kaumudīs* still prefer to use *vā* ‘optionally’.

LP 171: *tena ca uttarapūrvasyai, uttarapūrvāyai iti rūpavikalpa phalam* (*sic!*).

Therefore, the forms *uttarapūrvasyai/uttarapūrvāyai* (dat. sg.) are the fruit of the optionality.

The examples *uttarapūrvasyai/uttarapūrvāyai* (dat. sg.) are the traditional ones, quoted for the first time by the *Kāśikāvṛtti ad* A 1.1.28 and then repeated by Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita in his masterpiece. Nevertheless, in order to justify this optionality, the *Siddhāntakaumudī* mentions a counterexample taken from the *Mahābhāṣya*, that is, *uttarapūrvāyai* ‘for the [confused] person (feminine) according to whom the northern [direction] is the eastern one’.¹⁷ It appears as immediately clear

¹⁷ See SK 292 *ad* A 1.1.28: [...] *yottarā sā pūrvā yasyā unmugdhāyās tasyai uttarapūrvāyai* ‘for the [person (feminine)] (dat.) according to whom—confused (gen.)—the northern [direction] is the eastern one’.

that, even though the constituents of the compound individually denote direction, the *bahuvrīhi* compound thus obtained signifies here something different from the ‘intermediate direction’ (*antarāle*) and, therefore, *uttarāpūrva-* is inflected as a nominal stem (and not as a pronominal one).¹⁸

***bahuvrīhi* compounds**

A 1.1.29 *na bahuvrīhau*

LP 172: *bahuvrīhisamāsasyottarapadabhūta sarvādir (sic!) api na sarvanāma*.

[The word-forms] beginning with *sarva-* consisting of the last member of *bahuvrīhi* compounds will also not be [designated as] *sarvanāman*.

The *Kāśikāvṛtti* better explains that, since the *tadantavidhi* principle (see A 1.1.72 *yena vidhis tadantasya*)¹⁹ can be resorted to in the *sarvanāman* designation, the risk is that there would also be the *sarvanāman* designation for *sarva*, etc. when they consist in the last member of a *bahuvrīhi* compound; thus, a prohibition is undertaken—*sarvanāmasaṅjñāyām tadantavidher abhyupagamād bahuvrīher api sarvādyantasya saṅjñā syāt iti pratiṣedha ārabhyate* (see KV *ad*

¹⁸ It is worthy to note that the interpretation of *diksāmase bahuvrīhau* as ‘in a *bahuvrīhi* compound signifying direction’ is given by *Mahābhāṣya* (Kielhorn 1880–1885, in short: M) *ad* A 1.1.28, Böhtlingk (1887: 4) and Vasu (1891–1898: 23–24), whereas, according to Katre (1987: 14), Sharma (1999–2002, II: 28–30), and Joshi and Roodbergen (1991–2011, I: 36), these word-forms are marginally designated as *sarvanāmans* ‘in a *bahuvrīhi* compound, the constituents of which signify direction’. Therefore, Patañjali provides the counterexample *tasmai pūr-vottarāya dehi* ‘give it to the [confused] one according to whom the eastern [direction] is the northern one’ to justify his interpretation of this rule at the expense of this second reading.

¹⁹ A 1.1.72 *yena vidhis tadantasya* “That by means of which a provision is made, it denotes an item which ends in it”.

A 1.1.29)²⁰. Therefore, there will not be the *sarvanāman* designation in that which is intended to be designated as a *bahuvrīhi* compound—*ba-huvrīhau cikīrṣīte sarvanāmasaṃjñā na syāt* (see SK 222 *ad* A 1.1.29).

LP 172: *priyo viśvo yasya sa priyaviśva iti bahuvrīhe priyaviśvāya ity eva rūpa na tu priyaviśvasmai iti sarvanāmakāryam*.

In the *bahuvrīhi* [compound] *priyaviśva-* ‘the one to whom everyone is dear’, the form is *priyaviśvāya* (dat. sg.), and not the pronominal version *priyaviśvasmai*.

The instance *priyaviśvāya* (dat. sg.) comes directly from *Mahābhāṣya ad* A 1.1.29 and this is then repeated by *Kāśikāvr̥tti ad* A 1.1.29. However, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita mentions two other examples of Patañjali, namely, *tvatkapitṛkaḥ* ‘the one whose father is you, poor you’, and *matkapitṛkaḥ* ‘the one whose father is me, poor me’, that show a nominal construction with the affix *ka* (see A 5.3.70 *prāg ivāt kaḥ*); in this way, he demonstrates that the *taddhita* affix *akaC* (see A 5.3.71 *avyayasarvanāmnām akac prāk ṭeḥ*) cannot be introduced after the word-forms that do not have the pronominal status (in this case, *tvat* and *mat*).²¹

²⁰ The Sanskrit term for ‘designation’ is here transliterated as *sañjñā*, and not as *saṃjñā* (as in the rest of the article), in accordance with the Devanagari text of the *Kāśikāvr̥tti* (see KV).

²¹ The *taddhita* affix *ka* is taught by the *adhikāra* rule A 5.3.70 *prāg ivāt kaḥ* that prescribes the affix *ka* from this aphorism up to A 5.3.96 (*ive pratikṛtau*); the affix *ka* is introduced after a nominal stem to denote the meaning listed in this section. In these two examples, *ka* is understood in the meaning of A 5.3.75 *kutsite* (lit. ‘contemptible’); for this reason, *tvatka-* and *matka-* have been here translated as ‘you, poor you’ and ‘me, poor me’ respectively. On the other hand, the *taddhita* affix *akaC* is taught by *sūtra* A 5.3.71 *avyayasarvanāmnām akac prāk ṭeḥ* that prescribes the affix *akaC* before the syllable beginning with the last vowel (*prāk ṭeḥ*) of nominal stems consisting of *avyaya* ‘indeclinables’ and *sarvanāman* ‘pronouns’, and before the syllable beginning with the last vowel of verbal stems, to denote the senses listed before *iva* (A 5.3.96). This affix *akaC* together with its meanings has been analysed in detail in Ferrero 2023a.

Instrumental *tatpuruṣa* compounds

A 1.1.30 *ṭṛtīyāsamāse*

LP 173: *ṭṛtīyāsamāse ca sarvanāmatā na*.

The property of [being designated as] *sarvanāman* will not [belong to the word-forms beginning with *sarva*-] in the instrumental *tatpuruṣa* compound.

The *Siddhāntakaumudī* simply paraphrases this rule as *atra sarvanāmatā na syāt* (see SK 223 *ad* A 1.1.30), that is, “Here (i.e., *ṭṛtīyāsamāse*), there will not be the property of [being designated as] *sarvanāman*”.

LP 173: *māsenā pūrvo māsapūrva tasmai māsapūrvāya ity eva, na tu -pūrvasmai iti*.

[In the instrumental *tatpuruṣa* compound] *māsapūrva*- ‘the one who was born a month before’, [the form is] *māsapūrvāya* (dat. sg.), and not *-pūrvasmai*.

Once again, the example *māsapūrvāya* (dat. sg.) is the traditional one, which was quoted for the first time by the *Mahābhāṣya ad* A 1.1.30 and then repeated both by the *Kāśīkāvṛtti* and the *Siddhāntakaumudī*.

dvandva compounds

A 1.1.31 *dvandve ca*

LP 174: *dvandvasamāse ca na sarvanāmatā*.

The property of [being designated as] *sarvanāman* [will not belong to the word-forms beginning with *sarva*-] in the *dvandva* compound.

In conclusion, it is evident that the *sarvanāman* designation is also not applicable to the word-forms *sarva*, etc. when they are used

in a *dvandva* compound— *dvandve uktā saṃjñā na* (see SK 224 *ad* A 1.1.31).

LP 174: *varṇaś ca āśramāś ca itare ca varṇāśrametarā iti dvandve varṇāśrametarāṇā[m] ity eva rūpa, na tu itareṣām iti*.

[In the *dvandva* compound] *varṇāśrametarā-* ‘classes, stages of life and other (thing)’, [the form is] *varṇāśrametarāṇām* (gen. pl.), and not *varṇāśrametareṣām*.

The instance *varṇāśrametarāṇām* (gen. pl.) can be found only in the work of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, because the *Mahābhāṣya* does not paraphrase this aphorism, while the *Kaśikāvṛtti ad* A 1.1.31 uses two other examples, that is, *pūrvaparāṇām* ‘of prior and subsequent (items)’ and *katarakatamānām* ‘of which of two and of which of many?’.

4. The *prakriyā* explanations of the *Rūpāvatāra* in the pronominal inflection

In the *pratyayānām ādeśā[h]* sub-section, the pronominal declension is presented, following the original order of Pāṇini’s rules: (208) A 7.1.14 *sarvanāmnaḥ smai*, (209) A 7.1.15 *naśinyoḥ smātsminau*, and (211) A 7.1.17 *jaśaḥ śī*. Therefore, there is not here the anticipation of *sūtra* A 7.1.17 treating the nominative plural, such as in the *Siddhāntakaumudī*—see SK 214 *ad* A 7.1.17, SK 215 *ad* A 7.1.14, and SK 216 *ad* A 7.1.15. Finally, the *Laghupāṇinīyam* concludes the analysis of the pronominal declension with aphorism (244) A 7.1.52 *āmi sarvanāmnaḥ suṭ*, which is discussed a few aphorisms later.

Dative singular

A 7.1.14 *sarvanāmnaḥ smai*

LP 208: *adantāt sarvanāmnas tu ñe ity asya ‘smai’ ity ādeśa[h]*.

The substitute *smai* replaces this *Ñe* when it occurs after a pronominal stem ending in the short vowel *-a*.

The traditional *vṛtti* of the *Siddhāntakaumudī* *ad* A 7.1.14—and the following rules—is recalled: *ataḥ sarvanāmno ñe ity asya smai syāt* (see SK 215 *ad* A 7.1.14), that is, “*smai* will replace this *Ñe* (dat. sg.), when it occurs after a pronominal stem ending in the short vowel *-a*”, with the difference that Rājarājavarma desires to be more clear in explaining that this substitution takes place when the affix *Ñe* occurs after a pronominal stem ending in the short vowel *-a* (*ad-antāt*), whereas the *Siddhāntakaumudī* directly mentions the well-known Pāṇinian formula *ataḥ* ‘ending in the short vowel *-a*’.

LP 208: *yathā—sarvasmai, pūrvasmai, anyasmai, tasmā ity ādi*.

For instance, *sarvasmai, pūrvasmai, anyasmai, tasmā*, etc.

These instances of the pronominal dative singular shown by the *Laghupāṇinīyam* cover all the secondary *gaṇas* present in the list of *sarvādi* by simply mentioning their first member.

Ablative and locative singular

A 7.1.15 *naśiṇyoḥ smātśminau*

LP 209: *adantāt sarvanāmna ity eva*.

It is said ‘after a pronominal stem ending in the short vowel *-a*’, and only after that.

Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita analyses this *sūtra* A 7.1.15 on the basis of the traditional *vṛtti* just seen above—*ataḥ sarvanāmno naśiṇyor etau staḥ* (see SK 216 *ad* A 7.1.15), while the author of the *Laghupāṇinīyam* focuses here on the second part of the *Kāśikāvṛtti*’s explanation, which specifies *ataḥ ity eva bhavataḥ, bhavati* (see KV *ad* A 7.1.15), that is, “It is said: ‘after [a pronominal stem ending in the short vowel] *-a*’, and only after that; [otherwise,] *bhavataḥ* (abl. sing.), *bhavati* (loc. sing.).”

LP 209: *yathā—sarvasmāt, sarvasmin. tasmāt, tasmin.*

For instance, *sarvasmāt, sarvasmin; tasmāt, tasmin.*

Only the ablative and locative singular of *sarva-* and *tad-* are quoted as examples for this aphorism.

Nominative plural

A 7.1.17 *jasah śī*

LP 211: *adantāt sarvanāmno jasa śī ity ādeśa[h].*

The substitute *Śī* replaces *Jas* when it occurs after a pronominal stem ending in the short vowel *-a*.

Once again, Rājarājavarma explains this rule concerning the nominative plural with the traditional *ṛtti* that can be previously found in the *Siddhāntakaumudī*—*adantāt sarvanāmnaḥ parasya jasaḥ śī syāt* (see SK 214 *ad* A 7.1.17).

LP 211: *śittvād aya[m] sarvādeśo bhavati.*

Because of the marker *Ś* (of *Śī*), this is a complete substitution.

The rest of the analysis of A 7.1.17 is clearly taken from the *Rūpāvatāra*. However, in order to completely grasp its meaning, it is important to previously mention the aphorism A 1.1.55 *anekāl śit sarvasya*.²² In fact, the *Laghupāṇinīyam* focuses on the fact that the phoneme *Ś* of the substitute *Śī* has the aim of a total replacement of the affix *Jas* (nom. pl.), because it does not consist of more than one phoneme (*an-anekāltvāt*)—*śakāras sarvādeśārthaḥ ananekāltvāt* (see R *ad* A 7.1.17). These grammatical commentaries in-between the *prācīna* and *navya vyākaraṇa*, i.e., the *Rūpāvatāra* and the *Prakriyākaumudī* (Trivedi 1925, in short: PK), are the last commentaries that explain this

²² A 1.1.55 *anekāl śit sarvasya*: “A substitute consisting of more than one phoneme (*anekāl*) or marked with *Ś* (*śit*) replaces the whole (substituend)”.

substitution by defining $\acute{S}\bar{t}$ as $\acute{s}it$ ‘having the marker $\acute{S}$ ’. Conversely, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita (followed by the other *kaumudīs*) starts designating $\acute{S}\bar{t}$ as *anekāl* ‘consisting of more than one phoneme’.²³

LP 211: *yathā sarva + as = sarva + ī = sarve*.

Thus, *sarva + as = sarva + ī = sarve*.

After the total replacement of *sarva-* + *Jas* with *sarva + \acute{S}\bar{t}*, the *Rūpāvatāra* also provides the *prakriyā* explanation *guṇaḥ; sarve* (see R ad A 7.1.17), that is, “[According to rule A 6.1.87] *ād guṇaḥ*,”²⁴ *sarve*”, to obtain the final form *sarve*.

LP 211: *eva[m̐] viśve, anye, eke ity ādi*.

Similarly, *viśve, anye, eke*, and so on.

All the other pronominal stems ending in the short vowel *-a* follow this pattern to form their nominative plural.

LP 211: *pūrvādīnā[m̐] jasi sarvanāmasamjñāyā[m̐] vikalpitaṭvāt pūrve, purvāḥ iti rūpadvayam*.

The word-forms beginning with *pūrva-* are optionally designated as *sarvanāman* when they occur before *Jas*: thus, *pūrve / pūrva*.

²³ The point in Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita’s thesis is that the substitute $\acute{S}\bar{t}$ is presented by A 7.1.17 *jasah \acute{s}\bar{t}*; however, the designation of *pratyaya* is taught by A 3.1.1 *pratyayah* and it extends up to the end of the fifth *adhyāya* (A 5.4.160 *niṣpravāṇiś ca*). This is why, in the beginning, $\acute{S}\bar{t}$ cannot be designated as *pratyaya*. In fact, Patañjali comments rule A 1.1.55 as follows: in the absence of the designation of *pratyaya*, the marker $\acute{S}$ will not be designated as *it* (A 1.3.8); moreover, in the absence of the designation of it, the marker $\acute{S}$ will not be zero-replaced (A 1.3.9); finally, in the absence of zero-replacement, the substitute $\acute{S}\bar{t}$ will be designated as *anekāl* ‘consisting of more than one phoneme’. This change of perspective has been analysed in Ferrero 2023b.

²⁴ A 6.1.87 *ād guṇaḥ* prescribes a *guṇa*-replacement of both, a vowel following *a* and the *a* preceding that vowel, when they are in continuous utterance. In this specific case, the final *-a* of *sarva* and the $\bar{t}$ of the affix $\acute{S}\bar{t}$ are both substituted by the *guṇa*-vowel *e* and we obtain *sarve*.

The *Laghupāṇinīyam* remembers that the word-forms of the *pūrvādi* list, i.e., *pūrva-para-avara-dakṣiṇa-uttara-apara-adhara* (A 1.1.34), *sva* (A 1.1.35), and *antara* (A 1.1.36), are optionally designated (and hence inflected) as *sarvanāman* in the nominative plural, according to A 1.1.32 *vibhāṣā jasi*.²⁵

Genitive plural

A 7.1.52 *āmi sarvanāmnaḥ suṭ*

LP 244: ‘*āt*’ *ity anuvartate. avarṇāntāt (na tu adantāt) sarvanāmnaḥ parasya āma suḍāgama syāt.*

‘*āt*’ continues [here (from A 7.1.50)]. The increment *suṭ* will be inserted at the head of [the affix] *ām* when [it is prescribed] after a pronominal stem ending in the phoneme *a* (and not ending in the short vowel *-a*).

What is important to note is that the analysis of this rule is completely based on the *Kāśikāvṛtti ad A 7.1.52* and the *Rūpāvatāra ad A 7.1.52*. In fact, the *Kāśikāvṛtti* is taken as a model for the *vṛtti* of the *sūtra* with slight modifications—*āt iti vartate. avarṇāt sarvanāmna uttarasya āmaḥ suḍ āgama bhavati* (see KV *ad A 7.1.52*).

sarva + ām – sarva + sām—‘*bahuvacane jhaly et’* (227) *sarvesām*—*ṣatva, sarveṣām*. [...]

Therefore, *sarva + ām* > *sarva + sām* (A 7.1.52) > [because of] ‘*bahuvacane jhaly et’* (A 7.3.103), [the substitute *e* replaces *a*:] *sarvesām* > [there is] the occurrence of the retroflex *ṣ* [in the place of the dental *s*:] *sarveṣām*.

On the other hand, the *Rūpāvatāra* is the reference work in the explanation of the several sandhi passages involved in the formation of the genitive plural forms; in fact, once obtained the insertion of the

²⁵ A 1.1.32 *vibhāṣā jasi* [*sarvādīni sarvanāmāni* #27 *dvandve* #31] “The word-forms beginning with *sarva-* are marginally designated as *sarvanāman* when they occur in a *dvandva* compound before *Jas* (nom. pl.)”.

increment *suT* at the head of *ām* (therefore, *s-ām*), it is prescribed *et-vaṃ śatvaṃ ca; sarveṣām* (see R *ad* A 7.1.52), that is, “There is the occurrence of *e* [in the place of *a*]²⁶ and of the retroflex *ṣ* [in the place of the dental *s*]:²⁷ *sarveṣām*”, to obtain the form *sarveṣām* (gen. pl.).

5. Conclusions on the *Laghupāṇinīyam*

The investigation of the main sources of the grammatical commentary composed by Rājarājavarma has been extremely useful to understand how this text works, not only concerning the re-organisation of the rules (and topics) inside the book, which is typical of the *navya* vyākaraṇa works starting from the *Rūpāvatāra*, but also in reference to the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini and to the previous commentaries, first of all the *Kāśīkāvṛtti* and the *Siddhāntakaumudī*.

It results as evident from the research delineated in this article that the *Kāśīkāvṛtti* is the reference work for those aphorisms of Pāṇini concerning the compound made up of pronominal stems. In fact, Jayāditya and Vāmana simplify the study of this complex topic (see above—KV *ad* A 1.1.28 and KV *ad* A 1.1.29) and introduce for the first time (or directly take from the *Mahābhāṣya*) some examples that are repropounded by the *Laghupāṇinīyam* for their easiness. For instance, *uttarapūrvasyai* / *uttarapūrvāyai* (see KV *ad* A 1.1.28), *priyaviśvāya* (see M and KV *ad* A 1.1.29), and *māsapūrvāya* (see M and KV *ad* A 1.1.30). Furthermore, the *Kāśīkāvṛtti* is also used because of its precision in recalling specific *anuvṛttis* that are fundamental to understand

²⁶ A 7.3.103 *bahuvacane jhaly et* prescribes the substitution of *e* in the place of the final *-a* of a nominal stem when a plural affix beginning with a non-nasal consonant follows. In the inflection of the word-form *sarva-* + *sām*, the final *-a* of *sarva-* is substituted by *e*, because it is followed by a plural affix beginning with a non-nasal consonant.

²⁷ A 8.3.59 *ādeśapratyayaḥ* states that the retroflex *ṣ* replaces the dental *s* of a substitute or of an affix when it occurs after a vowel other than *a* or after a retroflex consonant, independently from what intervenes between them. With the substitution of the final *-a* of *sarva-* with *e*, also the replacement of *s* with *ṣ* is justified and we obtain *sarveṣām*.

the meaning and the application of the *sūtras*—*āt iti vartate* (see KV *ad A* 7.1.52).

On the other hand, the *Rūpāvatāra* is here considered as the very first attempt at the ‘new grammar’ and is taken as the model for the re-organisation of the *sūtras* according to the subject they deal with. For this reason, the *sarvanāman* rules are generally treated in what the *Laghupāṇinīyam* calls *subantaprakriyā* section: the *sarvanāman* designation, as well as the aphorisms dealing with compounds made up of pronominal stems, is mentioned in the *saṃjñā[h]* sub-section, while the pronominal declension is quoted in the *pratyayānām ādeśā[h]* sub-section. Another important contribution of the commentary of Dharmakīrti is constituted by the *prakriyā* explanations the author gives in the pronominal inflection—*śakāras sarvādeśārthaḥ ananekālvāt*. [...] *guṇaḥ; sarve* (see R *ad A* 7.1.17) and *etvaṃ śatvaṃ ca; sarveṣām* (see R *ad A* 7.1.52).

The *Siddhāntakaumudī* is also one of the sources of the *Laghupāṇinīyam* since, as anticipated above, it provides the traditional *vṛtti* and the classical instances to many of these rules. At first, the *sūtra* focusing on the *sarvanāman* designation is completely based on the analysis of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita (see SK 213 *ad A* 1.1.27). Moreover, the *vṛttis* of the aphorisms dealing both with the compounds made up of pronominal stems and the pronominal inflection seem to be modelled on those created by the author of the *Siddhāntakaumudī*.²⁸ In conclusion, some of the classical examples seen above are re-proposed by this commentary, such as *uttarapūrvasyai / uttarapūrvāyai* (see SK 292 *ad A* 1.1.28), and *māsapūrvāya* (see SK 223 *ad A* 1.1.30), while *varṇāśrametarāṇām* (see SK 224 *ad A* 1.1.31) is presented by the author as a new instance.

Therefore, it is evident that being so well rooted in the grammatical tradition, the *Laghupāṇinīyam* becomes one of the most important grammatical works in Kerala. This handbook, which is similar to the

²⁸ For the pronominal composition, see SK 292 *ad A* 1.1.28, SK 222 *ad A* 1.1.29, SK 223 *ad A* 1.1.30, and SK 224 *ad A* 1.1.31, whereas for the pronominal inflection, see SK 215 *ad A* 7.1.14, SK 216 *ad A* 7.1.15, SK 214 *ad A* 7.1.17, and SK 217 *ad A* 7.1.52.

navya vyākaraṇa commentaries, is so appreciated also because of the simplification of the Sanskrit language and this is the reason why the Sanskrit students can really appreciate this manual as a Sanskrit Grammar for Beginners. Nevertheless, these qualities cannot face the standardisation of the entire subcontinent to a unique system of education, which prefers ‘the more traditional *kaumudīs*’, already well-established in India, to a new commentary known and appreciated only regionally.

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When Poetic Usage Becomes Normative On the Interpretation of *A* 1.3.37¹

ABSTRACT: This article examines the interpretation of *A* 1.3.37 in light of an apparent irregularity in the *Kirātārjunīya*, a major epic poem in Sanskrit. It traces how commentators sought to reconcile the grammatical rule with the poetic usage, often by restricting the scope of the sūtra rather than treating the verse as anomalous. The case study illustrates how the interaction between grammatical description and literary practice shaped the interpretative history of a Pāṇinian rule.

KEYWORDS: *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, *Kirātārjunīya*, *Ātmanepadaprakaraṇa*, agentive ātmanepada, *A* 1.3.37

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1. Introduction

This article examines the reception of a relatively minor grammatical sūtra of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in light of an apparent irregularity in Bhāravi's court epic, the *Kirātārjunīya*. A construction in the poem, which appears to conflict with the grammatical rule, prompted sustained attempts at reconciliation over several centuries. Rather than dismissing the poetic usage as anomalous,² commentators sought to accommodate it within the grammatical framework, either by refining the scope of the rule or by reconsidering the syntactic analysis of the verse.

The present study is concerned primarily with a particular case of interaction between *kāvya* and *vyākaraṇa* within the commentarial tradition. It therefore does not attempt either to evaluate the individual interpretative proposals discussed below or to determine the original intention behind the formulation of the sūtra itself. Nor does it undertake a comprehensive investigation of the underlying linguistic usage that might clarify the historical background of the rule or possibly even point to textual corruption. These broader questions deserve a separate treatment and will, I hope, be addressed elsewhere.

Despite these limitations, the case offers a focused perspective on the diachronic development of the Pāṇinian tradition. It illustrates how even a relatively circumscribed provision could generate a layered interpretative history when confronted with literary usage, and how poetic practice functioned as authoritative data capable of shaping subsequent grammatical reflection.

² A well-known example of such treatment is the form *triyambaka-* in *Kumāra-sambhava* 3.44, used in place of the expected *tryambaka-*. Unlike the case discussed in the present article, however, this usage is generally acknowledged in the commentarial tradition to fall outside the standard grammatical provisions of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and is treated as an exceptional poetic usage.

2. A 1.3.37 and an apparent irregularity in KiĀ 2.35

The sūtra under consideration is located in the subsection of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (A) commonly labelled the *Ātmanepadaprakaraṇa* (ĀtmaPra), “section [dealing with the affixes termed] ātmanepada” (A 1.3.12–77).³ It is introduced by A 1.3.12 *anudāttaṇita ātmanepadam*, from which the string *ātmanepadam* is carried forward through the subsequent rules up to and including A 1.3.77. For the most part, this section consists of restrictive (*niyama*) rules that confine the choice between parasmaipada and ātmanepada affixes—introduced as replacements of L-affixes (cf. A 3.4.78, A 3.2.124, etc.)—to those termed ātmanepada.

For a brief introduction to A’s treatment of agentive (*kartari*) ātmanepada and parasmaipada, it will suffice to look briefly at two core sūtras of the ĀtmaPra together with the first sūtra of the immediately following *Parasmaipadaprakaraṇa*:

A 1.3.12 *anudāttaṇita ātmanepadam*

A 1.3.72 *svaritaṇitaḥ kartrabhiprāye kriyāphale*

A 1.3.78 *śeṣāt kartari parasmaipadam*

A 1.3.12 states that verbal roots marked in the *Dhātupāṭha* with an *anudātta* vowel or consonant *Ñ* take only ātmanepada affixes, independently of any semantic specifications. A 1.3.72 concerns roots marked with a *svarita* vowel or with *Ñ̃* and provides ātmanepada affixes when an agent is to be signified (string *kartari* supplied from A 1.3.14) and when the result of the action is intended for that agent. A 1.3.78—the first sūtra following the ĀtmaPra—covers all remaining cases not specifically addressed in A 1.3.12–77 and stipulates that only parasmaipada affixes are selected as replacements of L-affixes when an agent is to be signified.

³ The label *ātmanepadaprakaraṇa*, familiar from editions of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and the *Mahābhāṣya* (M) published since the late nineteenth century, is already attested in the M (see, for example, M to A 1.3.60.1 in Kielhorn 1880: 285).

Taken together, these three sūtras form the basis for the familiar tripartite classification of verbal roots into *ātmanepadin* (exclusively ātmanepada affixes; cf. A 1.3.12), *ubhayapadin* (both types of agentive affixes; cf. A 1.3.72), and *parasmaipadin* (exclusively agentive parasmaipada; cf. A 1.3.78).

The bulk of the ĀtmaPra addresses the *ubhayapadin* and *parasmaipadin* roots and describes conditions—semantic factors, presence of particular indeclinables, or both—under which ātmanepada affixes are selected. To give but one example, A 1.3.20 *āño do 'nāsyaviharaṇe* states that only ātmanepada affixes are used to express an agent after the root *ḌUdāñ* when it is preceded by the preverb *āñ* and is not used in the sense of ‘opening the mouth’ (*an-āsyaviharaṇe*). Since *ḌUdāñ* is marked with *ñ*, agentive ātmanepada affixes are already licensed under A 1.3.72 when the result of the action is intended for the agent. The present rule, then, further restricts the distribution by enforcing ātmanepada even in cases where the semantic conditions of A 1.3.72 are not fulfilled.⁴

The sūtra under consideration is:

A 1.3.37 *kartṛsthe cāśarīre karmaṇi*

“Ātmanepada affixes (*ātmanepadam*, < A 1.3.12) occur also (*ca*), when an agent is to be signified (*kartari*, < A 1.3.14), after verbal base *ñnī* (*niyaḥ*, < A 1.3.36) when the grammatical object is located in the agent (*kartṛsthe karmaṇi*) and is not the [agent’s] body (*aśarīre*).”

There is no M on this sūtra. The *Kāśīkā* (K) explains that the agent (*kartṛ*) referred to in the compound *kartṛsthe*, “located in the agent,” is identical with the main agent of the action, *i.e.*, the one expressed by the L-affixes (substituted by ātmanepada). It also comments on the word *aśarīre*, explaining that the term *śarīra*, “body of a living being,”

⁴ Cf. K ad loc.: *akartrabhiprāyārtho 'yam ārambhaḥ*.

covers here not only the body as a whole but also any of its parts.⁵ Thus K's examples of the sūtra application are:

[1] *krodhaṃ vinayate*, "Removes one's anger."

[2] *manyuṃ vinayate*, "Removes one's rage."

K's counterexamples illustrate the reasons for each of the conditions to be mentioned in the sūtra (in the following I reproduce only a selection):⁶

[3] *devadatto yajñadattasya krodhaṃ vinayati*, "Devadatta removes Yajñadatta's anger."

[4] *gaḍuṃ vinayati*, "Removes one's neck-swelling."

[5] *buddhyā vinayati*, "Removes with intellect."

In [3], the object — Yajñadatta's anger — is not located in the agent of action; in [4], neck-swelling forms a part of the agent's body; and in [5], no grammatical object is expressed. Hence, A 1.3.37 does not apply in any of the above cases. Jinendrabuddhi's *Nyāsa* (KNyā), an 8th-century commentary on the K,⁷ notes further that the results of the actions illustrated in [1], [2] and [4] — disappearance of anger (*krodhāpagama*), etc. — are naturally intended for the agent and that, since the verbal root *ñiñ* is marked with *ñ*, ātmanepada affixes are available by 1.3.72. He concludes that this sūtra restricts agentive ātmanepada affixes to cases where the grammatical object does not form a part of agent's body. Accordingly, there is no ātmanepada in [4].⁸

⁵ K ad loc.: *nayateḥ kartā devadattādir lakāravācyah. kartṛsthe karmaṇy aśarīre sati nayater ātmanepadaṃ bhavati. śarīraṃ prāṇikāyah, tadekadeśo 'pi śarīram.*

⁶ K ad loc.: *kartṛsthe iti kim? devadatto yajñadattasya krodhaṃ vinayati. aśarīre iti kim? gaḍuṃ vinayati. ghātāṃ vinayati. karmaṇi iti kim? buddhyā vinayati. prajñayā vinayati.*

⁷ Unless otherwise stated, the dating of grammatical texts follows the excellent overview provided in D'Avella 2018:28ff.

⁸ KNyā ad loc. (Misra 1985: 1.441): *atra ca krodhādyapagamaḥ kriyāphalaṃ kartrabhiprāya eveti "svaritañītaḥ kartrabhiprāye" (1.3.72) ity anenaiva*

In the absence of other early grammatical texts belonging to the Pāṇinian tradition, we may briefly consider two early non-Pāṇinian descriptions of the same linguistic phenomenon found in Devanandin's *Jainendravṛtyākaraṇa* (J) and Candragomin's *Cāndravṛtyākaraṇa* (C), composed around the middle and the end of the 5th century, respectively.

C 1.4.83 (Liebich 1918:87): *karṭṛsthāmūrtāpyāt*

“Affixes *tañ* and *āna* (*tañānāḥ*, < C 1.4.46)⁹ occur after the verbal root $\sqrt{ni}$ (*niyaḥ*, < C 1.4.82), whose object (*āpya*) is located in the agent (*karṭṛstha*-) and is non-material (*amūrta*).”

The text of Dharmadāsa's *Vṛtti* (CVṛ) explains the grammatical construction of the sūtra but is otherwise virtually identical with the K and provides the same set of examples and counterexamples.¹⁰

J 1.2.32 (Tripathi and Chaturvedi 1956:28): *karṭṛsthe karmaṇy amūrtau*

“Affixes termed *da* (*daḥ*, < J 1.2.6)¹¹ occur after verbal root *nī* (*niyaḥ*, < J 1.2.31), when its object is located in the agent and is non-material.”

Abhayanandin's ca. 7th-century *Mahāvṛtti* (JMVṛ) provides a few additional examples that parallel [1] and [2] and also contains a note on the restrictive force of this rule similar to that later found in the KNY

siddhe niyamārtham etad vacanam veditavyam—karṭṛsthe karmaṇy aśarīre eva, nānyatreṭi.

⁹ Note that while A 1.4.100 *tañānāv ātmanepadam* separately defines the term *ātmanepada*, which covers the nine verbal endings abbreviated as *tañ* (cf. A 3.4.78 ~ C 1.4.1) as well as the suffixes *ŚānaC* and *KānaC*, C avoids this intermediate step.

¹⁰ CVṛ ad loc.: *karṭṛstham amūrtaṁ akāṭhinaṁ vyāpyaṁ yasya tasmān nayates tañānā bhavanti. krodhaṁ vinayate. manyuṁ vinayate. karṭṛstha iti kim? deva-datto yajñadattasya manyuṁ vinayati. amūrta iti kim? gaṇḍuṁ vinayati. āpyād iti kim? buddhyā vinayati.*

¹¹ The term *da* is an equivalent to Pāṇinian *ātmanepada*. Cf. J 1.2.151.

and discussed above.¹² To complete the list of non-Pāṇinian systems from the 1st millennium, we may briefly refer to Śākaṭāyana's 9th-century composition (Ś):

Ś 1.4.15 (Tripathi 1971:100): *karṭṛsthe 'tanāv āpye*

Śākaṭāyana's own *Amoghavṛtti* largely repeats the JMVṛ, slightly rephrasing Abhayanandin's remark on the larger context of the sūtra within the Ś's section equivalent of Pāṇini's *ĀtmaPra*.¹³

A fitting example of this linguistic usage is found in a verse of Bhāravi's *Kirātārjunīya* (KiĀ), a poem composed prior to the K (since KiĀ 3.14 is quoted in the K on A 1.3.23) but likely after the composition of the J and C:

KiĀ 2.41: *śrutam apy adhigamya ye ripūn vinayante na śarīrajanmanah / janayanty acirāya sampadām ayaśas te khalu cāpalāśrayam //*

"Those who, though having studied the sciences, fail to remove the enemies born in their own body soon indeed give rise to infamy, the ground of the instability of royal fortune."¹⁴

¹² JMVṛ ad loc.: *nayateḥ kartā lakāravācyah. rūpādyātmikā mūrtiḥ. Karṭṛsthe karmaṇi mūrtivarjite sati nayater do bhavati. krodham vinayate. harṣam vinayate. śramaṇi vinayate, śamayatīty arthaḥ. atra karṭṛsthatvāt karmaṇaḥ kartrāpyaphalatā karmatā. tena kartrāpye kriyāphale siddhe 'pi de niyamārtham etat. karṭṛstha iti kim? Devadatto Jinadattasya krodham vinayate. karmaṇi kim? buddhya vinayati. amūrtāy iti kim? gaḍḍam vinayati.*

¹³ *Amoghavṛtti* ad loc.: *krodham vinayata ityādaḥ krodhāpagamādeḥ kriyāphalasya karṭṛsamavāyitvāt siddhas taṇ, tatredaṇ niyamārtham.*

¹⁴ I translate the compound *cāpalāśraya-* as a tatpuruṣa, predicative to *ayaśas*, and—admittedly slightly awkwardly—understand it as a *sāpekṣasamāsa*, construing the genitive *sampadām* with *cāpala-*. Cf. Cappeller 1912:13: "[...] ziehen sich bald die mit der Flatterhaftigkeit des Glücks verbundene Schmach zu." It is, however, also possible—following Roodbergen 1984:130—to understand *cāpalāśraya-* as a bahuvrīhi and to construe *sampadām* (gen., pl.) with *ayaśas*: "[...] soon give royal fortune a bad name based on fickleness." Peterson 2016:33 appears to construe the compound in the same way: "[...] soon taint royal fortune with the stigma of infidelity."

Here, the situation described in the first hemistich aligns perfectly with the grammatical conditions described in A 1.3.37 and its counterparts: the construction is based on the verbal root *ṇīṅ*; its grammatical object—the six internal enemies—is clearly located in the agent of the action and does not refer to any part of the agent’s body. There is therefore good reason to assume that Bhāravi was aware of the linguistic peculiarity described in the A. Notwithstanding this, in KiĀ 2.35—only a few stanzas earlier—we encounter a construction that appears to run counter to the same rule:

KiĀ 2.35: *śivam aupayikaṃ garīyasīm phalanīṣpattim adūṣitāyatim / vigaṇayya nayanti pauruṣaṃ vihitakrodhajayā¹⁵ jigīṣavaḥ //*

“Those intent on victory, who have won victory over their anger, having calculated that the attainment of their goal will be great and yield unimpaired future prosperity, direct their manly prowess toward favorable means.”

The main clause—*jigīṣavaḥ pauruṣaṃ aupayikaṃ nayanti*¹⁶—aligns with the conditions described in A 1.3.37: the action is expressed by the root *ṇīṅ*, while the principal grammatical object¹⁷—*pauruṣa*, “manly prowess”—though located in the agent, does not form a part of the agent’s material body. One would therefore expect Bhāravi to use an ātmanepada affix (e.g., *nayante*, which would, of course, be unmetrical in the current position). As I will show below, the grammatical

¹⁵ The reading *vihitakrodhajayā* is supported by the majority of commentaries on the KiĀ (Prakāśavarṣa, Pītāmbara, Devarāja, Ṭaṇa, Jonarāja Lokānanda), whereas only three other commentators—Mallinātha, Vidyāmādhava and Dharmavijaya—read here *vijitakrodharayā*.

¹⁶ For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that the syntactic construction of the verse, with its two ditransitive verbal roots and multiple accusatives, may invite discussion. To the best of my knowledge, however, all commentaries on the KiĀ adopt this syntactic analysis as their primary interpretation and mention other possible combinations only as alternatives.

¹⁷ On Sanskrit ditransitive construction and the distinction between principal (*pradhāna*, i.e., *īpsitatama*) and secondary (*apradhāna*, i.e., *akathita*) objects, see Deshpande 1991.

justification of this construction gave rise to several novel interpretations of A 1.3.37.

3. Interpreting the irregularity: The reception of A 1.3.37 in light of KiĀ 2.35

The construction in KiĀ 2.35 prompted several attempts at grammatical justification. The following discussion examines how technical commentators on A 1.3.37 reconciled Bhāravi's usage with the rule. In many cases, reconciliation is achieved by further restricting the scope of A 1.3.37 rather than reinterpreting Bhāravi.

The earliest deliberation on this verse in grammatical terms appears in the *Laghuṭīkā* (KiĀLaTī), a commentary on the KiĀ attributed to Prakāśavarṣa. As discussed in Klebanov 2021, Prakāśavarṣa—author of the KiĀLaTī and of a versified *Gaṇapāṭha*, the *Gaṇapāṭhavivṛti*—hailed from Kashmir and was likely a teacher of Vallabhadeva, which places him around the late 9th century. The transmission of his commentary is, however, intricate: nine manuscripts of the text show an unusual degree of variation. For the present chapter, only six manuscripts are available, and the version of the KiĀLaTī quoted below is attested only in two of them: JO and PA₁.¹⁸ Both belong to what Klebanov 2021:33 terms the JAGADDATTA-group that likely reflects an early layer of the text. The passage is, however, missing from the manuscript JAI,¹⁹ which also belongs to this group, rendering the evidence of JO and PA₁ less conclusive. The historical value of the quotation must therefore be assessed cautiously: while it may date to the late 9th century, its precise chronology cannot be established with certainty.

¹⁸ JO = Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur, Acc. Nr. 29969; PA₁ = Hemachandra Jain Gyan Mandir, Patan, Acc. Nr. 10693. See Klebanov 2021 for further details.

¹⁹ JAI = Jain Bhandara, Jaisalmere, Acc. Nr. 2774. *ibid*.

KiĀLaṬī to KiĀ 2.35 (Jo 13v8 and PA₁ 22r11): “*kartṛsthe cāsarīre kar-maṇi*” *ity ātmanepadam sopasargād ity āhuḥ*—“*vinayante na śarīra-janmanaḥ*” *iti, tathā ca “krodham vinayate, manyuṃ²⁰ vinayate” ity udāharaṇadvayam²¹ //*

“They state that the ātmanepada affixes [provided in] A 1.3.37 are assigned [to root *ṇīṅ*] when preceded by a preverb, [as illustrated in Bhāravi’s own verse, KiĀ 2.41]: ‘fail to remove [the enemies] born in their own body.’ and likewise in two examples [provided in the K]: ‘Removes one’s anger,’ ‘Removes one’s rage.’”

In this way, the author of the quoted passage effectively proposes to restrict the scope of A 1.3.37 to constructions in which, in addition to the explicitly stated conditions, *ṇīṅ* is preceded by an *upasarga*. This proposal is justified by Bhāravi’s own usage in KiĀ 2.41 (discussed above) and by the stock grammatical examples [1] and [2], cited in the K—a usual source for grammatical quotations in the KiĀLaṬī—and likewise attested in early non-Pāṇinian grammatical texts, all of which, as shown above, display no explicit awareness of such an additional restriction.

A somewhat similar, though technically more sophisticated, interpretation of A 1.3.37—seeking to justify further constraints on the sūtra’s application from within A itself—appears in three key 12th-century works of what Wielńska-Soltwedel 2006 calls the Bengali tradition of Pāṇini’s grammar: Maitreyarakṣita’s *Tantrapradīpa* (TaPra), Puruṣottamadeva’s *Bhāṣāvṛtti* (BhāVr), and Śaraṇadeva’s *Durghaṭavṛtti* (DurVr), listed here in chronological order. It is worth noting that a version of the KiĀLaṬī similar to that transmitted in the JAGADDATTA-group of MSS circulated in Bengal around the 12th century²² and may, hypothetically, have informed the technical

²⁰ *manyuṃ*] conj., *manyur* Jo PA1.

²¹ *ity udāharaṇadvayam*] conj., *ity āha raṇadvayam* Jo PA1.

²² See Klebanov (2021: 40), who observes that a relatively long quote attributed to a *bhāravīyavyākhyā*, “a commentary on Bhāravi’s work,” in the *Durghaṭavṛtti* on A 5.4.135 coincides with the version of the KiĀLaṬī preserved in the MSS of the JAGADDATTA-group on KiĀ 8.21.

interpretations found in these grammatical works. Even apart from questions of direct influence, the Bengali grammarians display sustained engagement with *kāvya* literature, and it is therefore unsurprising that they took note of Bhāravi's grammatically contentious usage. In what follows, I will first quote and translate the relevant passages from these three texts and then offer a discussion.

TaPra on A 1.3.37 (Kanjilal and Kanjilal 2007: 58f.): *etac cātmanepadam “veḥ śabdakarmanāḥ” iti ver iti anuvṛtter apanayanavacanād eveti lakṣyate / tathā ca bhāraveḥ prayogo “nayanti pauraṣam” iti, vi-pūrve ca tasyaivātmanepadam “vinayante na śārīrajanmanāḥ” iti / evaṃ ca “apanaya mānini mānaṃ,” “buddhiṃ vṛddhiṃ²³ nayati” ityādaḥ na bhavaty ātmanepadam //*

“And this ātmanepada affixation, since the string *veḥ* carries over from A 1.3.34 (*veḥ śabdakarmanāḥ*), is understood by extension to apply only [after the root *ñīñ*] denoting removal. And likewise, there is Bhāravi's usage ‘*nayanti pauraṣam*’ (KiĀ 2.35), while in ‘*vinayante na śārīrajanmanāḥ*’ (KiĀ 2.41), by the same author, when [the root *ñīñ*] is preceded by *vi-*, the ātmanepada is used. And in the same way, ātmanepada does not occur in expressions like ‘Remove your pride, proud lady!’ and ‘Leads the intellect to growth.’”

BhāVṛ on A 1.3.37 (Wielńska-Soltwedel 2006:1.86): *maṇḍūkaplutyā ver iti eva / “krodhaṃ samunnayati” “apanaya mānini mānaṃ”//*

“[The string *veḥ* is continued] by a frog's leap [and the ātmanepada affixes] apply only [after *ñīñ*] preceded by *vi-*. [When this condition is not fulfilled, we obtain usages such as] ‘Elevates one's wrath,’ ‘Remove your pride, proud lady!’”

DurVṛ on A 1.3.37 (Miśra 1985: 30): *kathaṃ “vigaṇayya nayanti pauraṣaṃ vijitakrodharayā jigīṣavaḥ” iti bhāraviḥ / “veḥ” ity anuvartate / tena na taṇ iti rakṣitaḥ / evaṃ ca “apanaya mānini mānaṃ”//*

²³ *buddhiṃ vṛddhiṃ*] conj., *buddhir vṛddhir* Kanjilal and Kanjilal 2007.

“How [are we to justify that] Bhāravi [does not use the ātmanepada] in KiĀ 2.35? The string *veḥ* continues, hence there are no *tañ* affixes—so [Maitreya]rakṣita. And in the same way [we explain the parasmaipada in] ‘Remove your pride, proud lady!’”

All three texts advance the same formal argument: the string *veḥ* is carried forward from a prior sūtra, A 1.3.34 *veḥ śabdakarmanah*, which provides agentive ātmanepada affixes after the root *krñ* (*krñah*, < A 1.3.32), when preceded by the preverb *vi-* and when its object is a word signifying sound. This results in a further restriction of A 1.3.37: in addition to the established conditions, the root *ñiñ* must be preceded by the preverb *vi-*. The irregularity lies in the fact that the *anuvṛtti* of *veḥ* skips an intervening sūtra: while both strings *krñah* (< A 1.3.32) and *veḥ* carry over into A 1.3.35, both cease in A 1.3.36. Maitreyarakṣita does not thematize this, but the BhāVṛ justifies the interpretation by invoking the so-called *maṇḍūkapluti*, “a frog’s leap,” also known as *maṇḍūkagati*, “a frog’s movement,” a device already discussed in the M and frequently attested in both the K and the BhāVṛ.²⁴

At this point, a further subtle difference in presentation may be observed. While Maitreyarakṣita explicitly links his additional restriction to Bhāravi’s usage in the KiĀ, Puruṣottamadeva formulates the same qualification without reference to its literary point of departure, presenting it instead as an adjustment derived from the internal logic of the sūtra and illustrating it with generalized examples.

Maitreyarakṣita adds yet another interpretative layer, according to which the specific combination of *vi-* + *ñiñ* suggests that the sūtra applies only where removal is denoted. Yet, given one of his counter-examples—*apanaya mānini mānam*, where *ñiñ* denotes removal but

²⁴ Note that in the M, both terms are used as bahuvrīhi compounds qualifying *adhikāra* and thus need to be interpreted as “those whose leap is like that of a frog.” For a brief explanation of the device and the difference between a bahuvrīhi and a tatpuruṣa interpretation, see, for example, Joshi and Roodbergen 2000: 57 and Roodbergen 2008: 330. Though the history of this device warrants deeper study, we will not delve into it here.

apa- is used instead of *vi-* and *parasmaipada* occurs—we may infer that, on his interpretation, the formal continuity of *vi-* takes precedence over the semantic nuance.

By contrast, Haradatta Mishra, a grammarian from Tamil Nadu whose work appears independent of the Bengali tradition and who perhaps flourished in the 13th century,²⁵ presents a view that explicitly foregrounds the semantic restriction as the principal means of resolving the same tension between grammatical description and linguistic usage. Since his work shows no direct dependence on Maitreyarakṣita, this suggests that the notion of a further restriction of the meaning of *ñīñ* circulated in pan-Indian grammatical circles of the time.

Padamañjarī on K on A 1.3.37 (Miśra 1985:441): *atha katham “vigaṇayya nayanti pauraṣam vijitakrodharayā jigīṣavaḥ” iti? kecid āhuḥ—apagame vartamānād idam ātmanepadavidhānam bhavati, atra tu karotyarthē prāptyarthē vā vartate, anekārthatvād dhātūnām iti //*

²⁵ Haradatta’s dating remains uncertain. Cardona 1976:281 argued for placing Haradatta as early as the 9th century on the basis of a view attributed to him in the vulgate of Dharmakīrti’s *Rūpāvatāra*. By contrast, Pathak 1931, followed recently by D’Avella 2026, argues for a considerably later date, placing Haradatta around the 12th or 13th century. D’Avella observes that quotations from Haradatta’s works in both *dharmasāstra* and *vyākaraṇa* literature begin to appear only in late-13th- and 14th-century sources, while earlier authors otherwise rich in citations—notably Devaṇṇabhaṭṭa and Śaraṇadeva’s *Durghaṭavṛtti* (1173/74 CE)—do not mention him. On this basis, D’Avella suggests that the attribution to Haradatta found in the vulgate of the *Rūpāvatāra* may represent a secondary addition, whether introduced during the manuscript transmission of the text or at the editorial stage itself, the reliability of the vulgate having already been questioned by Belvalkar 1938. Additional complications arise from the surviving excerpts of Maitreyarakṣita’s *Tantrapradīpa* edited by Kanjilal and Kanjilal 2007. As far as I can see, several opinions there attributed to a certain *ṭīkākāra* closely resemble passages found in Haradatta’s *Padamañjarī*, while other views attributed to the same authority differ markedly from Haradatta’s positions. It is therefore conceivable that both Haradatta and Maitreyarakṣita drew on an earlier authority, and that the attribution to Haradatta in the *Rūpāvatāra* arose secondarily during textual transmission. Further research, especially a systematic evaluation of the *Tantrapradīpa* material, will be necessary before the question can be settled with greater confidence.

“Now, how [are we to justify the use of the *parasmaipada*] in KiĀ 2.35? Some [scholars] explain as follows: this provision of *ātmanepada* affixes applies only after [the root *ṇīṅ*] used in the sense of departure (*apagama*). In this verse, however, it is used in the sense of the verbal root *√kr*, “to do,” or in the sense of obtainment, since verbal roots have multiple meanings.”

It is noteworthy that Haradatta, while clearly aware of the problematic passage in Bhāravi’s work and acknowledging the need to account for it within grammatical theory, advances the additional semantic restriction of the *sūtra* only under the attribution to “some [scholars],” thereby perhaps signaling that he does not fully endorse it. It is clear, moreover, that Haradatta was not aware of usages such as “*apanaya mānini mānam*,” which would contradict his reasoning.

A further shift in the status assigned to this argument becomes visible in the commentarial tradition on Rāmacandra’s 14th-century *Prakriyākaumudī*. The interpretation cautiously attributed by Haradatta to “some [scholars]” is here integrated into the ordinary exposition of the *sūtra*. While Rāmacandra’s own *vṛtti* remains faithful to the K and does not introduce further restrictions,²⁶ his later commentators incorporate the semantic qualification into their principal explanation. Thus Viṭṭhala, in his 15th-century *Prasāda* (Trivedi 1931:411), succinctly notes *apagame vartamānād iti ca jñeyam*, “and one should know that this *sūtra* applies [to *ṇīṅ*] in the sense of departure,” whereas Kṛṣṇa Śeṣa’s late 16th-century *Prakāśa* not only restates Haradatta’s reasoning but substantially reproduces his formulation, with only slight rearrangement and changes in wording.²⁷ What had earlier been framed

²⁶ *Prakriyākaumudī* on A 1.3.37: *ṇīṅaḥ kartṛsthe ’mūrte karmaṇi kārake pūrvavat. krodhaṃ vinayate. kartṛsthe kim? guroḥ krodhaṃ vinayati. amūrte kim? gaḍaṃ vinayati*. Note Rāmacandra’s paraphrase of *āsarīre* as *amūrte*, thereby aligning his formulation with non-Pāṇinian reformulations of the *sūtra*.

²⁷ *Prakāśa* on PraKau on A 1.3.37 (Miśra 2000:3.390f.): *etac cāpanayane vartamānād evātmanepadaṃ vidhīyate, nārthāntare. teneha na—“vigaṇayya nayanti pauraṣaṃ vijitakrodharayā jigīṣavaḥ” iti. iha hi karotyartho prāptyarthe vā vartate ’nekārthatvād dhātūnām*.

as a reported opinion thus reappears as part of the standard interpretative framework, reflecting the gradual stabilization of this semantic restriction within the later grammatical tradition.

The same interpretation finds its way back into the commentarial tradition on the KiĀ itself, notably in Devarāja's early modern South Indian (likely Keralan) *Sukhabodhinī* (KiĀSuBo).²⁸ Commenting on KiĀ 2.35, Devarāja invokes A 1.3.37 and explains its inapplicability in familiar terms, following this with a series of additional considerations:

KiĀSuBo on KiĀ 2.35 (Chatterji 1934:65): *pauruṣaṃ nayantīty atra "kartṛsthe cāśarīre karmaṇi" ity ātmanepadena bhāvyam / ucyate—apagamārthān*²⁹ *nayates tenātmanepadavidhānam / iha tu tasya prāpaṇam arthaḥ/ kecid arthasiddhiṃ vigaṇayya sāmādyupāyam eva nayanti*³⁰ *pauruṣaṃ parākramam iti vadanti / anye pauruṣaṃ svasāmartyaṃ paryālocyocitam sāmādyupāyam phalaṇiṣaptiṃ prāpayantīty āhuḥ /* "[Objection:] In the clause '*pauruṣaṃ nayanti*', on account of A 1.3.37, there should be ātmanepada affixation. We reply: this sūtra provides ātmanepada affixes after *√nī* in the meaning of departure. In this verse, however, the root denotes bringing.

Others say [that the verse should be construed differently]: having calculated the accomplishment of their goals, they direct conciliation and other means towards manly prowess, that is, enterprise. Yet others explain the verse as follows: having considered the manly prowess, that is, their own capability, they direct conciliation and other means towards the attainment of their goal."

The general hermeneutic strategy—two examples of which Devarāja attributes to unnamed scholars—consists not in modifying the grammatical rule but in adjusting the syntactic interpretation of the verse—that is, in assigning a different syntactic function to

²⁸ For the dates and provenance of Devarāja and other commentators on the KiĀ, I rely on the information provided in Klebanov 2021.

²⁹ *apagamārthān*] conj., *avahamārthān* Chatterji 1934.

³⁰ *nayanti*] conj., *yanti na* Chatterji 1934.

the accusative forms—so that the conditions for the application of A 1.3.37 no longer obtain. In this way, both alternative interpretations invoked by Devarāja make *aupayika*, “means,” which do not reside in the agent, the principal grammatical object of $\sqrt{ni}$.

Such alternative construals are by no means unique to Devarāja. A number of commentators on the KiĀ—including Vidyāmādhava (14th c., Kerala), Jonarāja (15th c., Kashmir), Pītāmbara (early 16th c., Bengal), and Lokānanda (post-Mallinātha), to name but a few—while agreeing on what may be regarded as the principal construal of the verse, also record a range of syntactic alternatives. It is noteworthy that many of these commentators do not refer to the grammatical problem at all, even though, as shown above, it had been discussed in grammatical literature since at least the 12th century.

A notable exception is the *Ghaṇṭāpatha* (KiĀGhaPa), a commentary by the influential Mallinātha (14th c., modern-day Telangana), who offers a distinct grammatical interpretation of the passage.

KiĀGhaPa on KiĀ 2.35 (Durgaprasad et al. 1917:29): *nayatiḥ prāpaṇārthe dvikarmakaḥ / atra pauruṣasya karṭṛsthakarmatve 'py upāyasyātathātvāt "krodhaṃ vinayate" ityādivat "karṭṛsthe cāśarīre karmaṇi" ity ātmanepadaṃ na bhavati //*

“The root $\sqrt{ni}$ in the meaning of bringing takes two objects. In this verse, although ‘manly prowess’ is a grammatical object located in the agent, since ‘the means’ lacks this qualification (*i.e.*, it is not located in the agent), the ātmanepada affixes—such as in the expression ‘removes one’s anger’—provided by A 1.3.37 do not occur.”

In brief, we may observe that Mallinātha advances a distinctly novel approach to the problem at hand. Rather than reinterpreting either the sūtra or the verse of the KiĀ, he argues that the formal conditions for the application of A 1.3.37—namely, that the object be located in the agent, etc.—are not fulfilled in this case. Instead of focusing solely on the principal object of the verb *nayati*, namely, *pauruṣa*, “manly prowess,” he maintains that both objects—*pauruṣa* and *aupayika*, “the means”—must be taken into account, the latter of

which does not satisfy the conditions of the sūtra. Remarkably, apart from Lokānanda—who quotes Mallinātha anonymously—this interpretation does not appear to have been adopted in either grammatical or poetic commentarial traditions.

Finally, several centuries later, the problem is taken up once more in the *Siddhāntakaumudī* (SiKau) by Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita (17th c.), whose discussion of the passage represents the last substantial contribution to the tradition on this issue.

SiKau 2710 = A 1.3.37 (Sastrigal 1911:409): *krodhaṃ vinayate, apagamayati / tatphalasya cittaprasādasya kartṛgatvāt “svaritañītaḥ” ity eva siddhe niyamārtham idam / [...] kathaṃ tarhi “vigaṇayya nayanti pauṣaṃ” iti / kartṛgāmītvāvivakṣāyāṃ bhaviṣyati/*

“Removes, that is, causes to depart, one’s anger. Since the result of this action—namely, the clarity of one’s mind—goes to the agent, the ātmanepada affixation is already provided by 1.3.72, and, this being the case, the purpose of the current sūtra is to impose a restriction. [...] How then [are we to explain the use of parasmaipada] in KiĀ 2.35? [Parasmaipada affixes] will obtain when the speaker does not intend to express that the [result of the action] is directed at the agent.”

We may observe that Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, though clearly aware of the centuries-long attempts by grammarians to align the interpretation of the present sūtra with Bhāravi’s usage, does not engage in further speculative interpretation. Rather anticlimactically, he reduces the interpretation of the sūtra to its bare essentials, as presented in the early texts of both the Pāṇinian and non-Pāṇinian grammatical traditions. Reiterating the function of the sūtra within the ĀtmaPra—namely, to restrict the application of the ātmanepada provided by 1.3.72 to cases where the object of *ṇīṅ* is located in the agent and is not the agent’s body—he states that the very application of 1.3.72 depends on the speaker’s intention to present the action as one whose result is directed toward the agent. In the present case, given Bhāravi’s avoidance of the ātmanepada, we may infer that he did not intend to express this semantic aspect, which forms the basis for the application

of A 1.3.72 and, by extension, A 1.3.37. Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita thus, albeit in an anticlimactic manner, offers perhaps the most economical resolution of the problem inherited from the tradition, without recourse to additional semantic refinements or to irregular continuations of strings from earlier sūtras. *vivakṣā*—a device difficult to supersede—provides the final explanatory key.

4. Conclusion

This article has examined the reception of A 1.3.37 *kartṛsthe cāśarīre karmaṇi* in light of the apparent irregularity in KiĀ 2.35. After outlining the function of the sūtra within the ĀtmaPra of the A and its early interpretation in both Pāṇinian and non-Pāṇinian grammatical traditions, the discussion traced the various attempts to reconcile Bhāravi's parasmaipada usage with the rule. These range from formal restrictions based on extended *anuvṛtti* (notably in the Bengali grammatical tradition), through semantic qualifications limiting the sūtra to cases of "removal" or "departure," to syntactic reinterpretations of the verse in poetic commentaries. Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita's appeal to *vivakṣā* relocates the issue to the level of speaker intention and thereby removes the need for additional formal or semantic adjustments.

Taken together, these interpretations show two complementary exegetical strategies. Technical grammarians tended to refine the interpretation of A 1.3.37 by narrowing its scope through additional formal or semantic conditions. Several commentators on the poem, by contrast, adjusted the syntactic construal of the verse so that the rule would not apply. A comparison of these approaches—restriction of the grammatical provision versus reinterpretation of the literary passage—clarifies how the tension between grammatical description and poetic usage was addressed in different textual contexts.

The material also illustrates the diachronic development of the Pāṇinian tradition. A sūtra concerned with a relatively circumscribed construction generated a layered interpretative history extending across several centuries. While its core syntactic formulation remained

stable, its scope was repeatedly reconsidered in light of engagement with *kāvya*. In the present case, the trajectory of interpretation appears to have been prompted less by internal structural pressure than by the need to account for a particular poetic usage.

At the same time, the episode sheds light on the status of certain poetic works within the Sanskrit intellectual sphere. Bhāravi's usage was not treated as erroneous but as a datum requiring grammatical explanation. In this respect, the poem functioned as authoritative usage, capable of prompting renewed scrutiny of the rule itself. Rather than subordinating poetry to grammar, the tradition allowed literary practice to inform grammatical reflection, illustrating the sustained interaction between the two domains.

References

- JMVṛ – *Mahāvṛtti* = *Jainendravyākaraṇamahāvṛtti*
 Jo – Rajasthan Oriental Research Institute, Jodhpur, Acc. Nr. 29969
 K – *Kāśikāvṛtti*
 KiĀ – *Kirātārjunīya*
 KiĀGhaPa – *Ghaṇṭāpatha*
 KiĀLaTī – *Laghuṭīkā*
 KiĀSuBo – *Sukhabodhinī*
 KNyā – *Nyāsa* = *Kā ikāvivarāṇapañcikā*
 M – *Mahābhāṣya*
 PA₁ = Hemachandra Jain Gyan Mandir, Patan, Acc. Nr. 10693
 PraKau – *Prakriyākaumudī*
 Ś – *ākāṭāyanavyākaraṇa* = *abdānu āsana*
 SiKau – *Siddhāntakaumudī*
 TaPra – *Tantrapradīp*

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Kumārila’s Engagements with the Pāṇinīyas— Towards Any Future Study of Vyākaraṇa’s Presence in Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā¹

ABSTRACT: Kumārila-bhaṭṭa might be treated as an exemplary student of the paradigmatic Brahmanical *śāstras*. He represented Mīmāṃsā tradition of Vedic ritual exegesis, and for doctrinal reasons heavily relied on its two main fellow branches of knowledge: Vyākaraṇa and Dharmaśāstra. In both the fields he proved to be an important commentator, but it is the former which really informed much of his oeuvre. In the article I trace the main directions of Kumārila’s references to the grammatical tradition and its personal authorities, with particular interest to those preceding Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* which on the other hand seems to be one of the most influential inspirations for Kumārila’s discussions.

KEYWORDS: Kumārila, Mīmāṃsā, Pāṇini, Vyākaraṇa

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Kumārila-bhaṭṭa (ca. 600–660²) might be treated as an exemplary student of the paradigmatic Brahmanical *śāstras*. He represented the Mīmāṃsā tradition of Vedic ritual exegesis and heavily relied on its two main fellow branches of knowledge: Vyākaraṇa and Dharmaśāstra. In both the fields he proved to be an important commentator, but it is the former which widely informed much of his oeuvre, especially in those aspects where Vyākaraṇa intertwines with and enters the domain of *dharma* (on that see more below). In particular, one of Kumārila's treatises titled *Tantravārttika* draws heavily from Patañjali, in parts almost tracing the whole discussions recorded in the *Mahābhāṣya*. But Pāṇini himself as an authoritative figure, not only his monumental opus, also finds a significant place in Kumārila's philosophical argumentation. It is thus important to assess the background and the sources of Kumārila's writings to be able to appreciate his own contributions and not to be astonished by his apparently surprising claims, which under further scrutiny often appear to be rooted within or inspired by earlier and contemporaneous debates. It might also help towards not accusing him of shallow or narrow-minded religious bias, while he, fully immersed in his own tradition, offered a newly systematized ideological Brahmanical worldview. Moreover, he carried out his argumentative endeavours according to the spirit of the times, i.e. meeting the obligation to account for all the prior claims in each discussion. That good practice would meet with approval and understanding in many a current of contemporary philosophy, too. Kumārila was the product of his Brahmanical upbringing, formed by his tradition, and while being an active participant of the ongoing cultural or even civilisational debates, he reached for arguments from various sources and perspectives.

This article is a follow-up to my earlier summary of the observations collected over years on the influence of grammatical tradition generally on Mīmāṃsā and particularly on Kumārila (Nowakowska

² The dates proposed for example by Kataoka (2011: 14). One should note that Yoshimizu (2015: 43) sets Kumārila's dates quite earlier, ca. 560–620, with additional arguments in Yoshimizu (2024: 27, fn. 32).

2022), which reported on a number of identifications of Kumārila's sources or indirect references. In this contribution, I focus initially more on pre-Patañjali Vyākaraṇa and the status of the grammatical tradition in Kumārila's treatises, with only subsequent partial attention to the *Mahābhāṣya* itself. I was interested in underlining Kumārila's reasons for his sustained involvement in some aspects of the grammatical literature. In my approach in this preliminary survey, I followed Mīmāṃsā's perspective, guided first by their direct references to Pāṇini or *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. Fortunately, there are informed publications of scholars (in our context for example Yoshimizu 2012, 2024; Bronkhorst 1987, 2016;), covering both traditions, which help us to navigate through often subtle, complex, and technical argumentation of both, Vyākaraṇa and Mīmāṃsā.

1. The early relationship of Vyākaraṇa and Mīmāṃsā

Mīmāṃsā represents the Vedic ritual functionaries as ritual exegetes who also quite early tried to support their professional interests with metaphysical and epistemological claims about the special status of the source of their ritual instructions, i.e. the Vedas. By the latter they understood broadly the whole Vedic corpus of ritual instructions and formulas. From the viewpoint of an individual human being, according to Mīmāṃsā, this corpus (the metrical hymns, *chandas*, and their exegetical addenda) has always already been there, together with the language of its instruction and interpretation, i.e. Sanskrit. Both, the Vedas and the perfectly formed (*samskr̥ta*) language—Sanskrit, were understood within the Mīmāṃsā tradition to be independent of and thus uninfluenced by any personal or generic human defects and agendas, as both the Vedas and the Sanskrit language in its most authoritative capacity were believed to be, in their sound and meaning, *nitya*, i.e. permanent, already established, without any beginning, never subject to any convention or creation. Or, to put it in ontologically weaker terms, any assumed temporal beginnings of the Vedas or the perfect language could never have been an object within the domain

of human cognition as such. To a human being, the Vedas and Sanskrit have always been there. According to early and classical Mīmāṃsā, to ask about their starting point would be like asking about the emergence of the first human. Even if under certain conditions the event is at least conceivable, it could not but remain imperceptible, the moment having no other witnesses, and thus remaining beyond the horizon of human cognition.

Therefore, Mīmāṃsā dealt with the Vedas and Sanskrit as constant (*nitya*), already present and transmitted by Āryas from generation to generation. Both corpora were learnt and studied as speech, the object of auditory perception, and their linguistic character meant that one had to control that medium to be able to master the world of ritual. Which also explains why the world of Vedic ritual and recitation produced so profound and sophisticated disciplines of linguistic knowledge (the majority of *vedāṅgas*). Mīmāṃsā was not included among *vedāṅgas*, while Vyākaraṇa and Nirukta were, so the exegetical school most probably emerged later than the six auxiliary “limbs of the Vedas”, maybe because there arose the need for its metalinguistic approach and for specialists in syntax, i.e. sentences (*vākyajñā*, see ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepa*) 27).³ It might also have evolved with time from *kalpavedāṅga*, i.e. ritualistic expositions, as an independent discipline with its own name (Nowakowska 2022). A significant argument for the latter theory would be the strong textual relationship between *kalpasūtras* (with their various subclasses) and Mīmāṃsā. Asko Parpola showed in his articles (1981: 165; 1994: 298–305⁴) a telling statistical identity of topics discussed, and vocabulary used between the foundational exegetical *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* (MS, ca. 400?–300? BC) and ritualistic *Kātyāyanaśrautasūtras*. According to Parpola, the latter could be slightly posterior, dated around 250 BC. Parpola also argued (1994: 298) that there were good reasons to consider that eponymous

³ See also the discussion on the status of Vyākaraṇa and argumentation against its placement within the category of *smṛti* in the *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* ad MS 1.3.24–29 (see below).

⁴ Referring to Paranjpe 1922 and Garge 1952. One should also mention here Kane (1962: 1155–1156).

Kātyāyana “both a *mīmāṃsaka* and a grammarian”, and he identified him with the author of grammatical *vārttikas* to Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (400–350? BC), transmitted as contained in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* (MBh, ca. 200–150? BC; cf. more in Bronkhorst 1987b).

As I noted earlier (Nowakowska 2022), and for the above-mentioned reasons, we must consider Vyākaraṇa and Mīmāṃsā as interconnected, firstly because of the common material of their reflection, i.e. the Vedic and Sanskrit languages, but also because of their shared educational Brahmanical formation. Let us recall again Kane (1962: 1156) in his observation that “Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* is full of Pūrvamīmāṃsā matters”. Patañjali does also use the term *mīmāṃsaka* (“a practitioner of Mīmāṃsā,” Kane *ibid.*) in his commentary.⁵

2. Kumārila-bhaṭṭa

Similarly, within the Mīmāṃsā camp, one of the main predecessors of Kumārila, Śabara, the author of the first surviving direct commentary (*bhāṣya*) on the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras*, i.e. the *Śabarabhāṣya* (ŚBh), is considered to have drawn heavily from the grammatical authoritative trinity, with the MBh as his main source. Kane (1924) and Garge

⁵ Kane refers us to A 2,2.29. According to the KA, the first occurrence of the term *mīmāṃsaka* falls under A 1,2.64.4 (*sarūpāṇām ekaśeṣa ekavibhaktau*, or as explained by Cardona (1997: 260): “only one of the possible series of items having the same form occurs, as a single remainder”), in the MBh: *mīmāṃsakaś ca mīmāṃsakaś ca mīmāṃsakau*, which was the grammatical explanation for derivation of dual (and in the same vein plural) nominal forms. Another mention of a practitioner of Mīmāṃsā is given under the *sūtra* A 2,2.29.1 (*cārthe dvandvaḥ*; Cardona 1997: 221: “An unrestricted number of *padas* may combine to form a compound called *dvandva* under the condition that part of the derivative’s signification is a meaning of *ca* ‘and’”) in the discussion of compounds, where one of the border cases between *dvandva* and *karmadhāraya* compounds is considered: *aukthikaś cāyaṃ mīmāṃsakaś ceti*, in reference to one and the same person (the case of *samānādhikaraṇa*) who is an *aukthika* (i.e. who knows the Ukthas) and *mīmāṃsaka*. See Joshi, Roodbergen 1974: 46/145. More on the various problems related to A 1,2.64 and A 2,2.29, see Pontillo 2013: 107–110.

(1949, 1952) demonstrated the respectful approach of the ŚBh to Pāṇini and Kātyāyana, whom Śabara mentions by name beside Piṅgala, Nirukta, Upavarṣa, Manu. Although Śabara's commentary does not refer to the author of the MBh by name, as Garge points out (1952: 23–24; 239–242), he quotes from him, calling him *ācārya* (“guide, master”) and *abhiyukta* (“competent specialist”). The latter term will come back in the linguistic context in Kumārila's discussion on the question of human expertise on the matters of meaning in various languages (see below).

Mīmāṃsā's main declared interest was *dharma* (MS I.1.1 *athāto dharmajijñāsā*, lit. “And now for the desire to know *dharma*”), which however underwent intensive reinterpretation in the tradition while it followed in the footsteps of Dharmaśāstra's innovations (see for example Wezler 2009). And yet Mīmāṃsā specified the concept even further. For Mīmāṃsā, *dharma* was first a ritual duty, enjoined by ritual instructions, an abstract idea of ritual obligation which could only be learned about and denoted by ritual injunctions (*codanā*, *vidhi*). It was the meaning and the objective of verbal injunctive or optative formulas, a sphere of future ritual outcome, not yet there, only to be realized.

Therefore, in the light of such a conceptualisation of *dharma*, one can appreciate the indispensable role of the language, and in particular of the linguistic corpus of Vedic ritual instructions which were the source of learning *dharma* and providing the only access to the realm of *dharma*. To get there, to perform ritual duties, one had to follow the word, i.e. one had to understand it, and to preserve its denotative power with utmost diligence, not allowing for any language corruption (we will come back to that point below).

Kumārila joined or perhaps even led the Brahmanical ranks in their response to the growing position and influences of other religious offers available, which Vedic ritual specialists considered as competition.⁶ He reorganized the structure of Mīmāṃsā system, strengthening and supplying it finally with various as yet missing or unarticulated

⁶ See Yoshimizu 2022 for substantiated assumptions on Kumārila's historical circumstances. On a more general plane, see Verardi 2011.

elements, hoping to resist Buddhists, Jains, and a number of other according to him non-Vedic proposals such as Pāñcarātra, Paśupata, Sāṃkhya, Yoga (see the list of *sāṃkhya-yoga-pāñcarātra-pāśupata-śākyā-nirgrantha* in his *Tantravārttika* (TV) ad MS I.3.4.⁷). In this project, he drew from the two oldest *dharmaśūtras*, i.e. *Gautama-* and *Āpastamba-* (see Nowakowska 2020a), and was an avid student of the *Mānavadharmasāstra* (MDhŚ). From the latter comes the idea of the four sources of human knowledge of *dharma*: *śruti*, *smṛti*, *sadācāra* and *ātmatuṣṭi*, which cover first (*śruti*) the Vedas, secondly (*smṛti*) other traditional authoritative texts such as *vedāṅgas*, epics, *dharmaśūtras*, thirdly (*sadācāra*) the practices and customs of good moral people (*sat*, i.e. *śiṣṭa*, see below), as well as fourthly (*ātmatuṣṭi*) the moral internal compass of such people. In the MDhŚ, this basic list with slight variations appears twice (MDhŚ 2.6 and 2.12), with no information about the relations among them. Kumārila systematically and with extended argumentation, following the MS and ŚBh, placed the four categories hierarchically, with the Vedas as the most important and the only independent source for learning *dharma*.

In this endeavour, Kumārila often reached over to the MBh. Because of the historical developments and transmission outcomes of what was considered as authoritative by later generations, as well as in result of the activities of Bhartṛhari (Bronkhorst 1987a; 1987b), Patañjali's line of grammatical knowledge and interpretation (as one of among the trinity: Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, and Patañjali) was to become the pillar of Brahmanical education. As I already stressed (Nowakowska 2022), Kumārila not only was the product of that education, but he also importantly helped to strengthen it. The MBh famously defines *Āryāvarta* (the land “inhabited by Āryas”) in terms of its geography⁸ and its population as the land of people linguistically (Sanskritically) educated and morally exemplary, *śiṣṭas*. Kumārila would use these identifiers, beside the teachings of *dharmaśāstras*, as ethical, religious, and linguistic criteria to establish and define a society governed by

⁷ TV in MS, p. 194.

⁸ See Sastri 1944: xv–xvi, Killingley 2007: 125, Deshpande 2008: 180.

Brahmanical *dharma* and *dharmaśāstras*' institutions. It seems again to be Patañjali (following Kātyāyana) who lends the *mīmāṃsaka* the distinction between the *vaidika* (Vedic, religious, not of human origin) and the *laukika* (secular, of human origin) in the context of moral and dharmic disquisitions, which is so ever-present in Kumārila's analyses. Or at least both, the MBh and the TV refer to the distinction while mentioning dharmaśāstric matters.

Kumārila authored four commentarial texts, of which three are extant—the *Ślokaṣvārttika* (ŚV), the *Tantravārttika* (TV) and the *Ṭupṭikā* (ṬṬ), while the *Bṛhaṭṭikā* (BṬ) has survived only in quotations in other authors' texts. The chronological order of the four works is the subject of analyses (cf. Yoshimizu 2007), but in sequential terms, the former three are commentaries on the consecutive portions of the *Mīmāṃsāsūtras* (MS) and the *Śabarabhāṣya* (ŚBh): the ŚV comments in verses on the first *pāda* (so-called *Tarkapāda*) of the MS and the ŚBh, the TV continues commenting on the MS up to the end of third *adhyāya* with the ŚBh, in prose and in verses, while the ṬṬ provides occasional short prosaic remarks on the rest of the MS (4th–12th *adhyāyas*) and the ŚBh. The BṬ seems to have been a separate work, one large commentary on the whole *Mīmāṃsā* fundaments (MS and ŚBh).

2.1. The *Ślokaṣvārttika* and the epistemological grounding

The *Tarkapāda* of the MS (1.1.1–32), and especially the ŚBh interpreting it and quoting fragments of earlier commentaries by enigmatic Vṛttikāras (see Frauwallner 1962: 96; 1968: 82), inspired Kumārila in his ŚV to expand into epistemological analyses of *pramāṇas* (means of valid cognitions) and related subjects, with a prolonged section (ad MS 1.1.5), covering several subchapters, commenting upon and developing the line of *sūtras*. Firstly, he did a survey of the means of valid cognitions other than perception (i.e., *pratyakṣa*, which cannot reach *dharma*) and authoritative speech (i.e., *śabda*, being the only instrument of reaching *dharma*), such as inference, comparison, etc., and their definitions and application. Secondly, he analyzed arguments

for and against the permanent meaningfulness and independent validity of Vedic injunctions as the sole means to learn what was *dharma* and what was *adharma*. Because it was also one of the Vṛttikāras who quoted Patañjali's definition of a linguistic sound (ad MS 1.1.5⁹) which introduced into Mīmāṃsā the discussion on the meaning carrier and on the relationship between words and objects, Kumārila while following the ŚBh developed these topics and entered into numerous arguments with various points of view, including grammarians' idea of *sphoṭa*, i.e. of indivisible, meaningful sound-forms of up to three categories of speech: phonemes, words, and sentences (see Saito 2020). This last group comes back in the last but one chapter of the ŚV—in a long discussion on the meaning of a sentence (*vākyādhikaraṇa*). While arguing in the two sections (*sphoṭavāda* and *vākyādhikaraṇa*) against the proponents of *sphoṭa* (*sphoṭavādins*), Kumārila referred to theories of Bhartṛhari but did not name him.

2.1.1. The grammarians themselves, not only their works, happen to be recalled as authoritative figures, especially as authors, too. In his ŚV Kumārila mentioned Pāṇini's name five times. Four times in two groupings the name of the author of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* was recalled in the section on *sambandhākṣepaparihāra* (lit. “the confutation of objections against [the original character of] the relationship [between words and their meanings]”) of the *autpattikasūtra* (ŚV 5) which proclaims that the relationship is “original”, inborn (*autpattika*). The section famously gathers arguments against the idea of an act of world creation, and of a god-creator, to strike down the concept of a god as the creator of language and the author of the Vedas. One of the claims against such divine figures stresses that there is no memory of them as bound to the language in general. On the other hand, the text voices a doubt why people should follow and understand at all a jargon or a formula artificially created by one person.

⁹ For some introduction, see Nowakowska 2020b; for grammatical context, see Candotti 2020.

In the discussion, a polemical argument was raised that the meanings (*artha*) of linguistic sounds (*śabda*) could have been set not by their own denotative power (*svaśakti*) but by a trustworthy person (*āpta*) who by his own authority could propagate their usage. This raises a question then how it could have happened when there is no memory of such a figure.¹⁰ Because one can observe from experience that people who rely on the teachings of some person believe them to be reliable because of the very fact of those teachings coming from that person, like for example Buddhists (*bauddhādayas*) who do not accept any statement, even if they understand it, unless they know it comes from Buddha.¹¹ The counterargument of the *pūrvapakṣa* points out that some verbal conventions (*samaya*) are known and used by people who do not necessarily remember their authors, like in case of Pāṇini's *ādaic* known as *vṛddhi* (cf. A 1.1.1 *vṛddhir ādaic*)¹².¹³ The answer to this objection emphasizes that the convention has been being remembered precisely because it was taught by Pāṇini.¹⁴ Furthermore, the case of *vṛddhi* belongs to the domain of perception, we can hear the phenomenon, it can be identified ostensively.¹⁵ However, *dharma* which is at stake in this discussion is imperceptible, the only means of knowing it is *śabda*. No linguistic rules or restrictions for

¹⁰ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 123cd–124ab: *yadā cāptapraṇītatvāc chabdo 'rthaṃ pratipādayet* ||123cd|| *na svaśaktiā tadāptatvam ito* na smaryate katham* (*the reading noted in ŚV (1), p. 478, fn.).

¹¹ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 124cd–125ab: *yathā bauddhādayo yāvad budhdhadyuktam na jānate* ||124cd|| *na tāvat pratipadyante bodhe vākyaena saty api*.

¹² In Katre's translation: "(The technical term) *vṛd-dhi* denotes the vowel phonemes long *ā* (=āT) and the diphthongs *ai*, *au* (= aiC)." (A 1.1.1, p. 7). As Cardona (1987: 4) explains: the first *sūtra* "provides that *ā*-, *ai*-, and *au*-vowels [...] have the class name (*saṃjñā*) *vṛddhi*". The *sūtra* not only begins the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, in this way functioning as an identifier of the text, but it also introduces a specific technical name learnt and used by everyone learning Sanskrit the Pāṇinīyan way.

¹³ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 125cd–126ab: *samaye kathyamāne 'nyair asmaranto 'pi pāṇinim* ||125 || *ādaicāḥ pratipadyante vṛddhiṃ kartuṃ smṛtir vṛthā*.

¹⁴ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 126cd: *sūtrasthaḥ pāṇinis tatra svasaṃjñāṃ pratipādayet*.

¹⁵ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 128cd: *dṛṣṭārthavyavahāratvād vṛddhyādau sambhaved api*.

the sake of *dharma* could have been established without a Pāṇini-like figure.¹⁶ And yet, people do not have any memory of any author of everyday language. Moreover, in case of *ṛddhi*, without Pāṇini there would be no certainty about a correct use of the rule (for example to explain the *taddhita* form “Āśvalāyana” according to A 7,2.117–118).¹⁷

The reference to Buddha was not random by all means, as the whole commotion about the anchoring of the Vedas as the most important source of knowledge of *dharma*, and the idea and identification of the *dharmamūlas* (lit. “roots of *dharma*”) as such came up in the Brahmanical circles as their answer to the idea of Buddha’s teachings, i.e. *Buddhavadāna* as the source of Buddhist *dharma* (see Olivelle 2018). The argumentation in this section of the ŚV is complex and layered, firstly it is about determining whether words are meaningful by themselves (*svaśakti*), whether in result of some agreement (*samaya*) or usage (*vyavahāra*), or whether someone individually ascribe them their meaning. Secondly, at the level of searching for epistemologically trustworthy authors and individuals as sources of some linguistic corpora, we refer to people respected in given circles, identified by name, indicating in this manner that certain formulas or texts may be accepted in wider use precisely because they are associated with the status of the respected figures in the tradition. And thirdly, we

¹⁶ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 129ab: *dharmāya niyamo ’rāpi na vinā pāṇiner bhavet*. Cf. Yoshimizu 2022: 53–54, fn. 166.

¹⁷ ŚV 5 (*sambandhākṣepaparihāra*) 129cd–130ab: *ākārānugamo yo hi ṛddhyā syād āśvalāyane ||129|| nāsāv apāṇinīyatve sādthur ity avagamyate*. As Cardona (1997: 316) explains A 7,2.117 (*taddhiteṣv acām ādeḥ*) and A 7,2.118 (*kiti ca*): “Taddhita affixes [...] with [*ñ* or *ṇ*] markers condition particular operations on their stems. The first vowel (*acām ādeḥ*) of a stem is replaced by a *ṛddhi* vowel (*ṛddhiḥ*) before a taddhita affix that is marked not only with *ñ* or *ṇ*, but also with *k* (*kiti ca*),” where marker *k* (*phak*) sends us to A 4,1.99 which teaches the formation of gotra descendants (*-āyana*, *Āśvalāyana* “a descendent of *Āśvala*”), in which already the *ṛddhi* vowel replacement occurs and stays put throughout in subsequent derivation, for example to refer to something related to *Āśvalāyana* (also *Āśvalāyana* with a difference in pitch (*svara*) only). As Pārthasārathimiśra expands in his commentary on the ŚV (ŚV 1: 677): *yo hi kiti cetyādivṛddhividhānād āśvalāyanādiṣu padeṣv acām āder akāśyākārānugamo nāsāv asati pāṇinīyatvasmaraṇe sādthur iti niṣeṣyata iti*.

return to the issue of the authority of the Vedas as a superior analogue of *Buddhavacana* on *dharma* issues in response to Buddhist dharmic competition. Mīmāṃsā claims that the case is qualitatively different, the two are not comparable because such figures as Buddha known by name nevertheless belong hierarchically to a level lower than the Vedas, and besides, these personalities enjoying respect of their followers could have said what they said precisely because language already existed. Therefore, in the very following verses of the ŚV, the discussion returns to common nouns like cow. No one, says Mīmāṃsā, has ever connected cow with the word “cow.” From a human perspective, this connection has existed forever (see below).

2.1.2. Pāṇini as the author of rules of vowel-alternation or rather, as we will see, of substitution, together with his name, returns in the long chapter on *śabdanityatādhikaraṇa* (ŚV 6.202) (see Kanazawa 2001: 113), in the *siddhānta* section. As the topic of the chapter implies, the discussion concerned the *nitya* character of the linguistic sound (*śabda*), i.e., its established, permanent nature. The opponent in the *pūrvapakṣa* raised the often-articulated, standard argument that something which is *nitya* cannot undergo any modification or changes. And yet, the Sanskrit language and its phonemes undergo changes, for example for euphonic reasons, claims the *pūrvapakṣin*, when the vowel <i> changes into <y> before another vowel (*dadhi* -> *dadhya*). So, the opponent’s claim was that *śabda* could not be *nitya*. That is a point cleverly referring those who state that *śabda* is *nitya* to the authority of Pāṇini. But Kumārila immediately points out that Pāṇini did not make such a rule, or rather that his rule established something else.¹⁸ The grammatical *sūtra* A 6,1.77 does not teach a modification of a vowel, but a substitution of one phoneme with another.

Furthermore, and that is very important to Mīmāṃsā’s stand: a meaningful language, words with established meanings, have to be prior to any grammatical regulations of their usage, because otherwise

¹⁸ ŚV 6.202cd–203ab: *na hy evaṃ pāṇiner vacaḥ* ||202 || *ikārapariṇāmena yakāraḥ kriyātām iti* (referring to *iko yaṇ aci* A 6,1.77).

their meaning could not be ever established.¹⁹ The formula *siddhe śabdārthasambandhe* is a direct reference to the MBh and Kātyāyana's *vārttika*: *siddhe śabdārthasambandhe* (Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 20/90²⁰) and indirectly to the discussion in the MBh. The regulatory function of grammar is possible only when the language is already to be used and in use. Moreover, Pāṇini's *sūtra* teaches that in specific phonetic circumstances, in place of the word *dadhi* one should use the word *dadhya*. This is not the case of any modification (*vikāra*).²¹

2.1.3. Towards the end of the ŚV, the last but one, an exceedingly long chapter amounting to 369 verses, called *vākyādhikaraṇa* [lit. "the topic of a sentence"], offers commentary on the MS I.1.24–26. It treats sentences and their meanings, and syntactical connections, it analyses the working of stems and inflectional affixes, the mechanisms of compounding and their semantic dimension, and it discusses if and what role all these elements play towards the meaning of a sentence, what the relationship between the sentence meaning and the meanings of sentence parts is, etc. The discussion is conducted in technical grammatical terminology, though no names of grammatical authorities are given. The chapter argues against the theses and idea of *spṛṣṭa*, therefore mainly against Bhartṛhari or his circles (but see: Scharfe 1977: 170, fn. 5). The chapter is being edited and translated by Hugo David, thus it soon will be available for a better appreciation.

¹⁹ ŚV 6.203cd–204ab: *siddhe śabdārthasambandhe tacchāstraṃ hi pravartate ||203|| prayoganiyamārthāya na caivaṃ siddhatā bhavet.*

²⁰ See Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 90: "When (it is assumed that) the relation between a word and (its) meaning has already been (established on account of the usage of people)."

²¹ As Katre translates and explains the *sūtra* A 6,1.77: "The substitute semivowel phonemes denoted by the siglum yaṆ (=y, v, r, l) [...] replace the vowel phonemes denoted by the siglum iK (=i, u, ṛ, ḷ) (before) a vowel phoneme (aC-i) [in continuous utterance] (A: 675)." In the words of Cardona (1997: 78) on A 6,1.77, this is "Pāṇini's general rule of semivowel replacement".

2.2. Topics of Mīmāṃsā proper in the *Tantravārttika*

In his TV, Kumārila recalls Pāṇini four times. First time, in the *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* (the section commenting on MS 1.3.24–29), secondly, in the *upamāśūyājādhikaraṇa* (ad MS 2.2.9–12), and twice in the discussion on the meaning of *rājan* in the *aveṣṭyadhikaraṇa* (ad MS 2.3.3). All these cases, except for the second one, use in fact the formula *pāṇiniprabhṛta-*, referring to Pāṇinīya grammarians in general.

The name Kātyāyana appears in the TV mostly as the *kalpavedāṅga* authority, once only as a grammarian. He is recalled six times in the *kalpasūtrādhikaraṇa* (ad MS 1.3.11–14), once, importantly, in the conclusion of the *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* (ad MS 1.3.27, referring to the *vārttika*: *jñāne dharma iti cet tathādharmah*; Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 30/145²²), and once again as an authority on ritual (*kalpa*) matters in the *caturdhākarāṇādhikaraṇa* (ad MS 3.1.26–27), while Patañjali's name is as expected absent, although the presence of his great commentary can be time and again felt in the background of many a discussion.

2.2.1. Some linguistic difficulties, relevant to the question of a correct language, were already tackled by Kumārila in the TV ad MS 1.3.8–9, under *śāstrasiddhapaḍārthādhikaraṇa* (“the topic of the meanings of words as established in the *śāstra* [the Vedas]”), known also in part as *yavavarāhādhikaraṇa* (“the topic of [such terms as] *yava*, *varāha*”).²³ MS 1.3.8–9²⁴ state that differentiation of meanings of some terms in the Vedic corpus can be treated as optionally and equally valent (*samā*), unless there is some contradiction (*virodha*). Yet the meaning supported by the Vedas and Veda experts is preferred as they define what is the source of human knowledge of *dharma* (*tannimittatvāt*).

²² See the translation in Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 145: “If (it is argued) that *dharma* ‘religious merit’ (lies) in *jñāna* ‘(grammatical) knowledge,’ (then we say that) there would be a chance for *adharma* ‘religious demerit’ as well.”

²³ For more context and detailed analysis see Nowakowska 2014.

²⁴ MS 1.3.8 (p. 216): *teṣv adarśanād virodhasya samā vipratipattiḥ syāt*. MS 1.3.9 (p. 217): *śāstrasthā vā tannimittatvāt*.

ŚBh reports on semantic variations (quoting the words noted in Vedic literature: *yava*, *varāha*, *vetasa*) and suggests that the correct understanding of the terms depends on their contexts and uses, with upmost respect for Vedic reading. Commenting on the following MS 1.3.10, ŚBh again confronts the problem of words that are part of the Vedas but are not normally current among Āryas (who are depositaries and recipients of the hymns), but happen to be in use among Mlecchas (non-Sanskrit speakers, religious outsiders and cultural aliens), such as *pika*, *nema*, *sata* and *tāmarasa*. ŚBh discusses the question of their meanings and the source of knowledge about them (either by Sanskrit explanations, etymology and grammar, i.e. *nigamaniruktavyākaraṇa*, or with reference to the Mlecchas' usage, i.e. *ācāra*), while MS 1.3.10²⁵ is interpreted as sanctioning such words' place in the Vedic canon as they are understood as long as they are not contradictory (*avirodha*) to the rest of the Veda. ŚBh mentions the standpoint which denies Mlecchas any linguistic competence, but he decides that because such terms are part of the Vedas' lexicon and as long as they are not contrary to the Vedic instruction, though being understood in reference to the usage of Mlecchas only, they should be accepted in that very sense used by Mlecchas. ŚBh adds that linguistically learned people (*śiṣṭa*) are the source of guidance on matters that are not accessible to sense-perception (as for example *dharma*), while Mlecchas can be better versed (*abhiyuktatara*), for example, in talking about rearing and catching birds (*pakṣiṇām poṣaṇe bandhane ca*). Reliance on Sanskrit linguistic instruments only would not have made sense with words not understood by anyone, as there would have been no criterion of final certainty in the process of their analysis. Therefore, ŚBh proposes understanding the above non-Aryan terms according to the usage of Mlecchas.²⁶

²⁵ MS 1.3.10: *coditaṃ tu pratīyetāvirodhāt pramāṇena*.

²⁶ SBh ad MS 1.3.10 (p. 228): *pika iti kokilo grāhyo, nemo 'rdham, tāmarasaṃ padmam, sata iti dārumayam pātram parimaṇḍalaṃ śatachidram* ("pika should be understood as meaning 'cuckoo', *nema* 'half', *tāmarasa* 'lotus', [and] *sata* as 'wooden vessel, round, with hundred-holes'"). See Nowakowska 2014.

Kumārila — while following ŚBh in the TV — develops extensively the argumentation on whether the meanings supplied by Mlecchas should be accepted and whether their usage is less or more important than the attempts to arrive at their meaning using Sanskrit linguistic weaponry. Kumārila's *pūrvapakṣin* claims that Mlecchas cannot be trusted, and even less so on linguistic matters because they do not know correct speech (*samskṛtaḥ śabdāḥ*), but admits that one can find words in the idiom of Mlecchas resembling the proper tongue, and make sense of them, but this is only by resorting to several additional procedures, like adding or cutting out syllables from the words to arrive at something resembling Aryan vocabulary. And then he famously illustrates his argument with quoting Dravidian terms on which some Āryas “from the elements of speech ending in consonants produce meanings according to their own language by such operations as affixation with vowel endings, case terminations, feminine gender, etc.” (see Nowakowska 2014). The illustration, although not traced back to any textual source, seems to refer to a real procedure, maybe a grammatical treatise.

In the *siddhānta* section, Kumārila still follows the position of Śābara, and he is of the opinion that it is more reasonable to accept non-Aryan derivations for non-Aryan words than to stretch Sanskrit etymologies and grammar rules, especially when these explanations and understandings are not against the Vedas. And in the case of the non-Aryan words being part of the Veda, the problem of establishing their meaning is even slighter for those Āryas who are bilingual (*āryair dvaibhāṣikais*). Furthermore, Kumārila explains that even in the context of Vedic ritual, there are domains of expertise into which priests do not venture (like killing animals—*prāṇivadhā*) and in which they depend on others. In the case of *pika*, *nema* and similar words forming part of the Vedic ritual injunctions, if their meaning cannot be known from the Veda or the usage of Āryas, it must be accepted from Mlecchas. And, again, Kumārila also points out that the inferiority and weakness (*daurbalyam*) of Mlecchas' linguistic competency concern only *dharma*. In the context of secular (*laukika*) activities (*dr̥ṣṭārthavyavahāra*) like farming etc., (*kṛṣyādi*) Mlecchas' verbal

competence and terminological adequacy does not have to capitulate to that of Āryas (there rules equality — *tulyatā*), and in the case of service jobs or housework etc., Mlecchas' competence is much higher (the opinion tells us something about the social structure of Kumārila's environs). The same applies to the context of products or objects made by Mlecchas or brought from their countries. Kumārila emphasizes that etymology and grammar are of help only in reference to already known and used vocabulary. In other words, Sanskrit etymology and grammar operate in Sanskrit or to a degree in languages related to it. Outside this area both disciplines cannot retain their corrective power (*na bādhakāni*; TV ad MS 1.3.10, p. 228).

2.2.2. The question of correct language resurfaces in the same third *adhyāya*, ad MS 1.3.11–14 in the *kalpasūtrādhikaraṇa* (lit. “the topic [of the status] of *kalpasūtras*”). In his commentary, Kumārila analyses how much *kalpasūtras* were authoritative on the matter of *dharma* as understood by Mīmāṃsā, allowing for them only dependent legitimacy, as programmatically, according to Mīmāṃsā, the Vedas solely held independent command over dharmic matters.

While situating *kalpasūtras* within the hierarchy of texts in terms of their authoritativeness on *dharma*, Kumārila discusses also false traditions (pseudo-*smṛtis*), with Buddhists at the head of the list. He claims that the teachings of Buddhists, Jains and others overflow with incorrect words, and they are often articulated in corrupt or regional dialects (*māgadha*, *dākṣīṇātya*, *apabhraṃśa* etc.).²⁷ He then spices his

²⁷ TV ad MS 1.3.12 (p. 237): *asādhuśabdabhūyiṣṭhāḥ śākyajaināgamādayaḥ | asannibandhanatvāc ca śāstratvaṃ na pratīyate || māgadhadākṣīṇātyata-dapabhraṃśaprayāsādhuśabdanibandhanā hi te* (quoted in de la Vallée Poussin 1902; and in Pollock 2007: 55–56). See a recent English translation of the fragment in Yoshimizu (2022: 54): “Literature handed down in Buddhism and Jainism mostly consists of incorrect language (*asādhuśabda*). Because they are written in incorrect (language), they cannot be understood as scripture. In fact, they are based on incorrect language from the Magadha region and the south that has been corrupted (*apabhraṃśa*) from that (Sanskrit).”

tirade with some illustrative quotations as he seems to like to do (compare the case of the Dravidian languages).²⁸

The point is that words incorrect in pronunciation and grammar cannot be true and meaningful (*arthasatyatā*), they cannot have unchanging, established meaning (*anāditā*).²⁹ Even if by any chance every now and then for example Buddhists would manage to use correct words in a correct manner, their texts are full of defective terms, grammatically incorrect language (for example *prajñapti-vijñapti-paśyanā-tiṣṭhana* as faulty verbal forms),³⁰ as well as disformed, sloppily recorded and transmitted vocabulary like *bhikkhave* (not to mention the suffix *e* present in the plural Accusative, but absent in the Nominative or Vocative³¹), sometimes so deformed that impossible to recognize (like in Apabhraṃśa instead of Sanskrit *saṃskṛta* one can see *sakkata*, not even *sakkaḍa*, etc.³²). Therefore, Kumārila concludes, because of the

²⁸ These illustrative quotations were identified and grammatically cleared by Yoshimizu (2022: 55).

²⁹ TV ad MS 1.3.12 (p. 237): *tataś cāsaty aśabdeṣu kutas teṣv artha-satyatā | drṣṭāpabhraṣṭa-rūpeṣu katham vā syād anāditā*.

³⁰ TV ad 1.3.12 (p. 238): *śākyādigrantheṣu punar yad api kiṃcit sad-huśabdābhiprāyeṇāvinaṣṭabuddhyā prayuktaṃ tatrāpi prajñaptivijñapti-paśyanātiṣṭhanādiprāyaprayogāt kiṃcid evāviplutaṃ labhyate*. Cf. Edgerton 1993: 358, 485. Translated in Yoshimizu (2022: 56, fn. 181): “In the literature of Buddhism, etc., even the certain pieces spelled with an unhindered intellect generally use *prajñapti*, *vijñapti*, *paśyanā*, *tiṣṭhana*, and other [irregular word forms] from the intention to use language properly, so only a small number of proper items can be obtained.”

³¹ The matter is complex but see for example Collet 2014.

³² TV ad 1.3.12 (p. 239, corr. after Yoshimizu 2022): *kim uta yāni prasid-dhāpabhraṣṭadeśabhāṣābhyo 'py apabhraṣṭatarāṇi bhikkhave ity evam ādīni. dvitīyābahuvacanasthāne hy ekārantaṃ prākṛtaṃ padaṃ drṣṭam, na prathamā-bahuvacane sambodhane 'pi. saṃskṛtaśabdasthāne ca kakāradvayasamyogo 'nusvāralopaḥ. rvarṇākārāpattimātram eva prākṛtāpabhraṃṣeṣu drṣṭam, na ḍakārāpattir api*. (The form with *ḍ* was noted among earlier quoted fragments (*saṃkkaḍā dhammā*)). Yoshimizu (2022: 56): “In addition, [Buddhist scriptures] have (word forms) like *bhikkhave*, which are further corrupted, compared to the regional languages, which are well known as corrupted forms, because Prākṛit (derived language) forms ending in *e* are observed in places with the accusative plural cases, but not in places with the nominative plural and vocative plural cases.

linguistic incompetency in Buddhist texts they cannot be considered as authoritative as the Vedas, nor even can they be considered as *nitya* which would be the first required step towards any meaningfulness and authority. Kumārila stresses that grammar is the only discipline which provides means for determining what is original, what derived. The Vedas' language is correct and amenable to structure analysis which cannot be said about the medium of Buddhist texts. Therefore, the expression *asaṃniyama* (lit. "without regulation", that is not precise enough, interpreted also in the commentarial discussion as *asan-ni-yama* as "with no rules", see Nowakowska 2020c) originating in MS 1.3.12 (*nāsaṃniyamāt*) as one of the reasons why *kalpasūtras* cannot be part of the Vedas (they lack accents, see Yoshimizu 2008: 63, fn. 52), which Kumārila used also against the Buddhist teachings, implies their abuse or even lack of any grammatical rules. Parenthetically, one can note that Kumārila seems to be ignorant of or to have ignored intentionally any Buddhist authors wielding their Sanskrit efficiently. On the other hand, the reason for this omission on Kumārila's part might be the fact that the point under discussion is authoritativeness and epistemic validity of the root dharmic texts, in this case Buddha's words, contending to have such validity, which according to the Buddhist tradition were not articulated in Sanskrit on purpose.

2.2.3. In the light of the above, it seems only logical for Mīmāṃsā to introduce a discussion on the role and purposes of Vyākaraṇa, i.e. the *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* (the chapter on "the topic of grammar") which is Kumārila's contribution to the discussion ad MS 1.3.24–29 as commented on by the ŚBh. His chapter is well known and acknowledged in the Sanskrit grammatical line of research.³³ This is because Kumārila, following the arguments of the MBh (*paspaśāhnikam*,

Moreover, concerning the word *saṃskṛta*, the various languages derived [from Sanskrit] and corrupted have doubled the *k* sound and lost *anusvāra*, changing the *r* sound into the *a* sound (in other words, to make *sakkata*) and nothing else, and the change [of the *t* sound] into a *ḍ* sound [as in *sakkaḍḍa[h]* in the quoted Buddhist scripture] is not [observed]."

³³ See for example the comments by Joshi and Roodbergen (1986: i; v).

KA I,1.14–I,5.11; Joshi, Roodbergen 1986: 6–13; 26–69), discusses there in great detail the tasks of and needs for the science of grammar and its rules, in the overall context of the reflections on the authority of texts classified as *smṛti* (‘[traditions transmitted as] memory’, considered authoritative if complying with the Vedas). Again, in his analysis Kumārila does not use the names of his grammatical authors but employs the appellations *sūtrakāra* (‘the author of the *sūtras*,’ i.e., of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*), *vārttikakāra* (‘the author of the *vārttikas*’), and *bhāṣyakāra* (‘the author of the *bhāṣya*’) instead. The last one is not a unique designation, as most often, in other parts of the TV, it refers to Śabara.³⁴ The *vyākaraṇādhikaraṇa* has been being edited and translated by Alessandro Graheli for a couple of years now and should be soon accessible to appreciate it with all its contextuality and background. Let us only note that the chapter begins with returning to the question of polysemic words like *yava*, i.e. words that can mean various things, and to the problem of more or less “corrupt” variants of one word (*gauḥ* → *gāvī*, etc.) denoting the same element of the world (a cow). All that should be seen in the overall frame of Mīmāṃsā insistence on the *nitya* character of word-meaning relationship. This gives rise to the analysis of the purposes of grammar, inspired by the MBh. In the conclusion of this section Kumārila states that Vyākaraṇa not only is an indispensable *śāstra*, offering useful linguistic restrictions which help in realisation of *dharma*, but it is in its continuity beginningless (*anādi*) and also as permanent (*nitya*) as *nitya* is the practice of making the sacrificial post etc. (*yūpādikaraṇavadvyavahāra*).³⁵ And the ultimate argument, a quotation from the Vedic śabda is supplied: *tasmād eṣā vyākṛtā* (*vāg*), i.e. the Vedas also talk about speech (*vāc*) grammatically organized. Therefore, the practice (*vyavahāra*) of Vyākaraṇa is timeless, permanent (*nitya*).³⁶

³⁴ For instance, in the preceding chapter, *holākādhikaraṇa* (TV ad MS.1.3.16–23).

³⁵ TV ad MS 1.3.27–29 (p. 228): *tatra yūpādikaraṇavadvyākaraṇaparamparānāditvād [...]*.

³⁶ TV ad MS 1.3.27–29 (p. 228): *tasmād eṣā vyākṛtā—iti ca vyākaraṇavyavahāranīyatvam uktam*. Harikai (2021: 250) traced the Vedic quote to “*Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 6.4.7.3, with *iyam* for *eṣā*.”

2.2.4. As for other chapters of the TV, not dedicated any longer to the question of the sources of human knowledge of *dharma* (*dharma-mūlas*) but concerned with Mīmāṃsā hermeneutical analyses, in the technical section *upāṃśuyājādhikaraṇa* (“the topic of the *upāṃśuyāja*”) ad MS 2.2.9–12, while applying proper Mīmāṃsā exegetical and grammatical analyses, Kumārila (following the MS and ŚBh) discusses a particular expression *upāṃśuyājam* and its possible function (whether it is a separate sacrifice with *upāṃśu* as its manner, reciting “quietly”, whispering) and reference (or just a reference to a series of sacrifices mentioned together with it). And in this context Pāṇini’s name is recalled together with A 7,3.52³⁷ in the *pūrvapakṣa* (following the ŚBh), and then again in the *siddhānta* (the problem is the form of the term *upāṃśuyāja*, not *upāṃśuyāga*, as the *sūtra* teaches). The point is tiny and subtle: according to the *pūrvapakṣa*, if the sentence in question (*upāṃśuyājam antarā yajati*, see below) had been interpreted as an injunction characterized by the manner *upāṃśu*, then the formation of the compound in line with A 7,3.52 would have been regular, i.e. *upāṃśuyāga*, understood as *upāṃśu ijjate yaḥ sa* (lit. “the one which is sacrificed whispering”), or would be considered ungrammatical (*asādhū*), unless it would be treated as a name (*nāman*) for other sacrifices, mentioned immediately after.³⁸ The *siddhānta* does not accept this stand, and while pointing out other important aspects of the sacrificial setting, it is able to classify and locate the *upāṃśuyājam* within their sacrificial system, interpreting the sentence *upāṃśuyājam antarā yajati* (“he performs in the meantime an *upāṃśu*”³⁹ sacrifice”) as an injunction of a separate, specific

³⁷ A 7,3.52 (p. 926): *ca-j-oḥ kU GHIT=NyàT-oḥ*. In Katre’s translation: “A substitute velar stop (kU) replaces phoneme c or j [...] with IT marker GH and NyàT.” Cardona explains (1987: 290): “-c and -j (*cajoh*) of a verb stem are replaced by velar stops before an affix marked with gh (*ghit*) and before *nyat* (*ghinnyatoh*).”

³⁸ The derivative *yāja* (*śatayājam*) seems to be noted in *Atharvaveda* (both recensions), while -*yāga* as the second member of compounds belongs to *kalpasūtras* and younger *upaniṣads*, see Werba 1997: 394.

³⁹ Cf. Benson (2010: 381): “between them he offers an *upāṃśu* (whispered) sacrifice.”

sacrifice (MS 2.2.10). Again, the grammatical awareness of the mechanisms of Sanskrit helps to navigate ritualistic instructions, but might be wielded also against exegets. Or in other words, the exegets themselves defuse a potential missile of the allegation of ungrammaticality of a formation, including that grammatical rule in their exegesis, skillfully deflecting the weight of the accusation.

2.2.5. A fascinating long chapter combining Mīmāṃsā and Vyākaraṇa interests and instruments is the *karṭṛ-adhikaraṇa* (“the topic of the subject”) ad MS 3.4.12–13, recently analyzed and contextualized by Yoshimizu 2012. The discussion initially starts with a prohibition (*nāṇṛtam vadet* “one should not tell an untruth,” see *ibid.*: 555) which is articulated within the context of *daśapūrṇamāsa* sacrifice. One of the main lines of analysis concerns the sentence subject (the agent, *karṭṛ*) and its syntactical construal, and precisely whether and which part of a finite verb (the base or the suffix) denotes an agent. As Yoshimizu (*ibid.*) phrases it: in the discussion “Mīmāṃsakas resort to a grammatical maxim that gives a suffix priority over a base within a word: “A base and a suffix express the meaning of the suffix together” (*prakṛtipratyayau pratyayārthaṃ saha brūtaḥ*).” However, as Yoshimizu (*ibid.*: 558) points out the maxim “is not accepted in the Pāṇinian school. According to the *Kāśikāvṛtti* on *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (A) 1.2.56 this maxim was formulated by a previous teacher (*pūrvācārya*), but Pāṇini laid down A 1.2.56 in order to refute it.” Moreover, though Patañjali quotes the maxim in his MBh ad A 3,1.67, he applies it differently than Mīmāṃsakas. “With this quotation he maintains that the components of a word cooperate harmoniously, but he does not say that a suffix is the principal component” (*ibid.*: 558). Yoshimizu in his article meticulously proves the engagement of the debate in the TV with the grammatical tradition, concluding that Kumārila debated in fact with a posited opponent, who could be identified neither as a Mīmāṃśaka nor a grammarian, just to show off his knowledge and skills in grammar. However, as it was pointed out by Bronkhorst (2016), a careful consideration of the time frame allows for another hypothesis: that in fact Kumārila just reported on an earlier stage in

the development of Vyākaraṇa tradition. As Bronkhorst (2016: 2–3) put it: “Kumārila may [...] have discussed [...] with grammarians who did not in all respects agree with the *Kāśikā*”, as he preceded this text.

2.2.6. The name of Pāṇini and his treatise return in the discussion on the meaning of *rājan* in the *aveṣṭyadhikaraṇa* (“the topic of the *aveṣṭi* [offerings]” ad MS 2.3.3). It was studied and carefully translated into English by Yoshimizu (2024), so it is easier now to appreciate the main points of the discussion. The linguistic aspect under consideration is the meaning and semantic scope of the term *rājan*. In this context *sūtra* A 5,1.128⁴⁰ is mentioned, teaching the derivation of *rājya* from the noun *rājan*, which implies that first someone is a *rājan*, and then his power and prerogatives are termed *rājya*, i.e. royal, not the other way round. On the other hand, Kumārila reports on the whole range of interpretational possibilities of understanding the term *rājan*—from any representative of *kṣatriya* class to a ruler (of any class), distinguishing etymology (*yoga*) and usage (*prayoga*).⁴¹ From our perspective, however, the most important conclusion from the discussion is Kumārila's linguistic flexibility (cf. Halbfass 1990: 183). Although in the ritual context he tends to be literal and rigorous (*rājan* as a *kṣatriya* ruler only), he records after the ŚBh that people from the country of Āndhrās (Kumārila prefers to call them Draviḍās) apply the term *rājan* to every *kṣatriya*, even if he is not a king. For one, it is of significance that apparently Āndhrās or Draviḍās use or used Sanskrit, secondly that Kumārila deemed it proper to note this usage in his analysis (see also above the case of Dravidian languages).

⁴⁰ A 5,1.128 (Katre, p. 548): *pāti=anta-puró-hita=ādi-bhyaḥ=yáK*. In Katre's translation: “[...] *yáK* is introduced [after [...]] nominal stems] terminating in -*pāti*- (in composition: -*anta*-) and the class of words beginning with *puró-hita*- ‘chaplain’ [...]”

⁴¹ The whole discussion was translated into English, analyzed and grammatically explained in Yoshimizu 2024. One should only add that also in the *Mahābhārata* *kṣatriyas* are politely addressed *rājan*, even if they are not kings, do not wield royal power nor would they ever do.

3. Concluding remarks

Kumārila was a very well-educated scholar, proponent of Brahmanical ritualist version of religion. Curious, interested, and interesting, in his approaches to various Mīmāṃsā problems and more philosophical questions he tried to be as comprehensive as possible, and to account for various positions on a given subject. Schooled in Sanskrit grammar, he remembered and reminded us in his texts about the contentious topics and paradigmatic illustrations of various aspects of linguistic knowledge. He treated the famous personalities of scholarly traditions, even if legendary, as authorities in his own world, as representatives of the *smṛti* class. But that did not stop him from maintaining an independent perspective as he would use grammar and grammatical rules for his own agenda, for his Mīmāṃsā purposes. Ultimately, his main goal was the project of (re)grounding Vedic ritualists and improving the position of Vedic religion. The project that most probably was anachronistic already in his time.

Within his schedule, Sanskrit grammar was indispensable as the instrument of controlling the correct form and voice of Sanskrit in its most important role, which was the medium of ritual instruction, but one should not limit oneself to grammar nor treat it dogmatically as the only instrument to deal with languages. Kumārila allowed also for other languages to play their role, even if by definition outside of ritual context. Although sometimes those other languages had to be accommodated somehow as they were already part of the Vedas. To accept them as such was pragmatically a better option than to attack them with all the weaponry of Sanskrit morphology. Thus, Kumārila seemed to offer a broader perspective, a more practical approach, not allowing to be trapped in a narrow stiff tradition if it seemed irrational and unjustified.

Therefore, when one looks at the above illustrative survey of the presence of Pāṇini and *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in Kumārila's commentaries, the great grammarian appears first of all as the authority behind his Sanskrit grammar. His treatise is quoted and referred to in Kumārila's commentaries on behalf of opponents and proponents in various

linguistic and exegetical deliberations. One of the most important aspects of Vyākaraṇa's engagement is the question of correct language (*sādhūśabda*) and the access it gives—via the Vedas and ritual injunctions—to *dharma*. On the other hand, as the great grammarian, Pāṇini and his name get involved in the discussions about the sources of valid verbal knowledge (*śabdapramāṇa*, *śāstra*), while his person with the whole authority behind exemplifies a human, individual (*pauruṣeya*) source of knowledge and a respected author. He was used in the discussion as an additional argument for the extraordinary status of the Vedas, i.e. their lack of any author. When human beings author anything of importance, other people tend to remember their names. Which is not the case with the Vedas, according to Mīmāṃsā.

Kumārila would use grammar and grammatical terminology as means of linguistic and textual analysis, but he was also an active participant of linguistic and cultural discussions of both the earlier and his own times. In this aspect he is an important witness to various traditions, precisely because of his education and surprisingly liberal curiosity, his openness, even if just dialectical, to other propositions. One just wishes now, seeing the publication of Giudice and Pontillo 2025, that a similar volume accounting for both direct and implied references to grammatical literature in early Mīmāṃsā or preferably in Kumārila's works is written one day.

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BṬ = see Frauwallner 1962.

KA = *The Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali*, edited by F. Kielhorn (1880–1885), revised by K. V. Abhyankar, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona 1972–1996. (->GRETIL, input by G. Cardona)

MBh = see KA.

MDhŚ = see Olivelle 2005.

MS = *Śrīmajjaiminipraṇīte Mīmāṃsādarśane: Ādita Ārabhya Dvitiyādhyāyaprathamapādāntaḥ Prathamō Bhāgaḥ. Tatra ca prathamā tarkapādaḥ. Mīmāṃsākaṇṭhīravamīmāṃsāratanetyādīpadavibhūṣitaśrīvadyanāthaśāstripraṇītaprabhābhīdhavyākhyāsametaśābarabhāṣyopetaḥ. Dvitiyapādaprabhṛti. Śrīkumārīlabhaṭṭaviracitantravārtikākhyavyākhyāśahitaśābarabhāṣyasametaś ca*, edited by V. G. Āpte, Ānandāśramasamskṛtagranthāvaliḥ, no. 97, Ānandāśramamudraṇālaye, Poona 1929.

Nirukta = see Sarup 1967.

ŚBh = see MS.

ŚV = ŚV 1. *The Mīmāṃsāśloka-vārtika of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa* with the commentary called *Nyāyaratnākara* by Pārtha Sārathi Miśra, edited by Rāmaśāstrī Tailaṅga, The Chowkhambā Sanskrit Series, No. 21, Benares 1899.

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TV = see MS.

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The Reception of Indian Grammatical Tradition in the Indo-European Linguistics: The Concept of the Root, the Ablaut and the Laryngeal Theory¹

ABSTRACT: This paper examines the reception and impact of the Indian grammatical tradition, especially of Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, on the development of Indo-European linguistics. While Pāṇini's grammar was initially introduced to Europe in the context of Sanskrit studies, its methodological precision and systematic character influenced comparative and historical linguistics more broadly. After sketching European scholars' early encounters with the Indian grammatical tradition, the paper focuses on two main areas of reception: the concept of the root and its role in morphological analysis, and the problem of Ablaut and its reinterpretation in light of Indo-European reconstruction, culminating in the laryngeal theory.

¹ This article is a revised and expanded version of the paper given at the International Seminar "Constructing and Deconstructing Pāṇini's Grammar: The Role of Commentators" on Pāṇini and the Indian grammatical tradition organized at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków on May 9–10, 2025. I would like to thank Prof. Lidia Sudyka for the invitation to take part in the Seminar, the participants of the Seminar and especially the anonymous reviewers for many helpful comments on the earlier version of this article, and drawing my attention to numerous publications on the topic. Needless to say, all remaining errors are my own responsibility.

KEYWORDS: Indian grammarians, Pāṇini, Indo-European linguistics, Ablaut, laryngeal theory

1. Introduction

Human interest in language can be traced back to the earliest written records. Already in the ancient Near East, attention was drawn to language for practical reasons, namely, the creation of small glossaries acting as a bridge between the two most commonly used languages in that culture, namely Akkadian and Sumerian (Woods and Stauder 2023). In Egypt, according to the Greek historian Herodotus, the Pharaoh was interested in discovering which language was the oldest in the world (Heinz 1978: 12). Other ancient civilizations developed their own schools of linguistic inquiry, focusing on different aspects of language. In ancient Greece and Rome, these studies were often connected to philosophy and philology, aimed primarily at editing, standardizing, and commenting on the texts of Homer (Heinz 1978; Woodard 2023). In China, they originated in the context of poetry and the creation of manuals for poets (Peyraube et al. 2023).

The study of language and its aspects developed in ancient India very early on and, compared to other regions of antiquity, reached a remarkably high level of scientific sophistication—especially in the field of grammatical analysis. Heinz lists the following reasons for this early linguistic interest and the development of the Indian grammatical tradition (Heinz 1978: 19):

1. social stratification and the need to preserve linguistic distinctiveness;
2. the metaphysical attitude of Indians toward language;
3. philological needs—the study and analysis of religious texts to ensure their precise transmission to future generations.

Other scholars of Indian grammatical tradition emphasize above all this last aspect, which gave rise to linguistic reflection: the connection between reflection on language and the interpretation and recitation of the oldest Indo-Aryan texts from the Vedic canon. The

importance of precise textual transmission and performance is illustrated by Madhav Deshpande, who cites a passage from the late Vedic text, *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*. In it, the demon Tvaṣṭar, by mispronouncing a word during a ritual, obtained the opposite of the desired result. Wanting to have a son who would kill the god Indra, he intended to utter the formula *indraśatrú-* (“slayer of Indra”) but pronounced it incorrectly as *indraśatru-* (“the one whose slayer is Indra”), which led to tragic consequences (Deshpande 2023: 78). This passage also demonstrates that Indian grammarians were fully aware of the importance of linguistic analysis for the proper understanding of texts. Yāska, in his treatise on etymology, observed that only a combination of grammatical analysis and correct contextual meaning of a word can lead to a successful interpretation (Sarup 1921; Cardona 1994: 31; on Yāska’s *Nirukta* see also Kahrs 1988, 2005).

Interestingly, at roughly the same time that Indian philosophy—including that concerning language—was developing, philosophy was also flourishing in ancient Greece. Greek traditions of linguistic analysis, like the Indian, also had textual origins (in addition to philosophical ones), namely, in an effort to edit and interpret older Greek texts, primarily those of Homer. However, differing philosophical approaches and the different nature of the source texts (religious in India, epic in Greece) led to divergent developments in both philosophy and linguistic thought (on similarities, see Seaford 2020).

Indian linguistic studies developed along several major lines (Heinz 1978: 19–26; Scharfe 1977; Cardona 1994; Wielńska 1994; Sajdek 2011):

1. Analysis of Vedic texts in terms of phonetics (*sandhi*), grammar, textual structure, and meaning (*Padapāṭha* of Śākalya, *prātiśākhya* of Śaunaka, *mīmāṃsā*);
2. Word-formation and semantic analysis (*Nirukta* of Yāska), often based on Vedic textual analysis and accompanied by a lexical corpus (*Nighaṇṭu*);
3. Grammar *sensu stricto* (*vyākaraṇa*)—the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini, *Vārttika* of Kātyāyana, *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, *Kāśikavṛtti* of Jayāditya and Vāmana, *Mugdhabodha* of Vopadeva;

4. Philosophy of language (*Vākya-padīya* of Bhartṛhari).

2. The Indo-European linguistics and Indian grammatical tradition

Indian linguistic inquiry was primarily synchronic in nature (Heinz 1978: 25; Sajdek 2011: 32). Interest in linguistic diversity or historical-comparative linguistics was minimal, though ancient scholars were certainly aware of differences between languages, as well as of variations within the Indo-Aryan itself (Cardona 1994: 46).

The only diachronic interest concerned the differences between various stages of the Old Indo-Aryan—the Vedic and the Classical Sanskrit—in the interpretation of religious texts. Alongside this, there developed a tradition of studying word-formation in a synchronic sense and by way of semantic analysis.

The most famous work on this subject in the Indian tradition is undoubtedly Yāska's *Nirukta*, which builds on an earlier scholarly lineage (it mentions antecedent grammarians such as Sākaṭāyana and the etymologist Gārgya, with whom Yāska debates; see Cardona 1994: 32; Sarup 1921). In the *Nirukta*, Yāska distinguishes four classes of words—later recognized as parts of speech: noun, verb, preposition, and particle (Sajdek 2011: 28).

However, as noted recently by Hans Hock, it took some time before European scholars fully appreciated the methods and analyses of Indian grammarians (Hock 2023: 329). Their early encounters with Sanskrit were usually by way of local Indian pandits like that of William Jones' (cf. Rocher 1995; Alfieri 2014, 2023, 2024), who, following the earlier claims of missionaries and scholars, famously observed the close proximity of Sanskrit to Latin, Ancient Greek and other languages used in Europe (Hock 2023: 330). Though, as noted by Hock and other scholars, the influence of Jones' statement on Indo-European linguistics is often overestimated, it did popularize the idea further (cf. *ibid.* with further references there).

Early European grammarians of Sanskrit, such as Colebrooke (1805) and Carey (1806), often followed the native Indian traditions

and engaged with Pāṇini's system more directly, though at times mediated by the rich commentarial traditions (cf. *ibid.*: 329; Milewska 2019; on Wilkins 1808 see Alfieri 2023: 190–191, 2024). Rocher (1995) has shown that while these early scholars relied heavily on Indian grammarians, they also reinterpreted them through the lens of European philology. The very first Western translations of the complete treatises of the Indian grammarians did not appear until the half of the 19th century with the editions of Pāṇini's grammar by Otto Böhtlingk (1840) and the phonetic treatises by Weber (1858) and Whitney (1862, 1868) (cf. Hock 2023: 329).

Despite the fact that it was the English scholars who first came into contact with Sanskrit and despite the fact that it was William Jones who made the claim of linguistic affinity between Sanskrit and the languages of Europe, claim that became popular as early as 1786, the science of Indo-European linguistics first developed in Germany and not in England (for the research on the reasons for such a development see Lehmann 1995, Rabault-Feuerhahn 2013). It was actually Franz Bopp, a German, who, in 1816, published the first systematic study of the system of conjugations in the Indo-European languages and became the founding father of the new scholarly discipline (Hock 2023: 358). In his correspondence and writings, Bopp acknowledged his debt to Indian grammatical traditions, but he also criticized Indian grammarians for lacking an organic perspective on language change (Lefmann 1891: 110*). This was understandable given their completely synchronic perspective. Bopp's goal, on the other hand, was to discover the path of language development and determine the laws according to which its forms evolved. He viewed the adherence of contemporary Sanskrit grammarians to Indian textbooks as unsatisfactory and claimed in his *Ausführliches Lehrgebäude der Sanskritsprache* that:

(...) further advancement of the subject could not come from a more extensive use of native grammarians, but only from an independent critique of the language itself, which strives to discover the path by which it arrived at its forms, or to determine the laws according to which they have developed. (Bopp 1827: v, English translation mine)

In his 1834 *Kritische Grammatik der Sanskrita-Sprache in kürzerer Fassung* Bopp explicitly stated that:

(...) my sole aim was to provide a critique and description of the nature of language itself, which could only have been disturbed and marred if I had wanted to interweave the techniques of native grammarians with it, for example, to teach that where in my grammar, as in the language itself, no word-forming suffix is contained, but a root appears in its naked form, such as *vid* “to know” in *arma-vid* “dutiful,” the Indian grammarians have proposed a fictitious suffix *kvip*, which would then have to be reported as consisting entirely of servile letters, all of which must be stripped away to arrive at the real suffix, i.e., none at all in the present case. In another place, it would have been worth mentioning that Indian grammarians have established, among other personal endings, *mip*, *sip*, and *tip* for our *mi*, *si*, and *ti*, where the *p* serves to indicate that an extension of the root or intermediate syllable takes place before the endings with which it has identified. (Bopp 1834: iv–v, English translation mine)

He did, however, borrow the notion of the linguistic root from Indian grammatical tradition and its specific morphological analysis of words though in a diachronic perspective, i.e. trying to trace back the words to their original roots (cf. Delbrück 1882: 73–74). As Sternemann aptly described, Bopp used a special kind of a combinatory method which was diachronic in principle but operated with synchronic instruments of comparison (Sternemann 1984: 24²). On Bopp’s method of research, his inspirations and views on language and its development see especially Jankowsky 1985: 328, Morpurgo Davies 1987, Rosiello 1967: 172, Timpanaro 1973: 573 n. 59, Koerner 1975: 730, 1984: 313 and Bologna 1992.

Despite Bopp’s reservations regarding the application of Pāṇini’s techniques, often due to lack of direct knowledge of Indian grammatical tradition, later generations of scholars found ways to utilize or

² I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for drawing my attention to this observation.

parallel the Pāṇinian framework, especially thanks to Otto von Böhtlingk, whose edition of Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* still serves as a model (von Böhtlingk 1840). Interestingly, von Böhtlingk himself wrote a review of Bopp's Sanskrit grammar in which he meticulously pointed out its shortcomings (von Böhtlingk 1847).

It is probably not due to pure chance that the precision and rule-based nature of Pāṇini's system found conceptual parallels later in the 19th century Europe. The Neogrammarian movement emphasized methodological principles that resonated with Pāṇinian formalism, focusing on sound laws without exception, strict rule application, and a drive toward internal consistency (cf. Jankowsky 2023).

The ideal pairing of the Pāṇinian concepts and the Neogrammarian doctrine came in 1896 with Jacob Wackernagel's Old Indic grammar (Wackernagel 1896). As pointed out by Rüdiger Schmitt, Wackernagel's grammar was the first that had fully encompassed the achievements of the native Indian grammatical tradition of Pāṇini and his followers (cf. Schmitt 2014).

3. The root (*dhātu*) in Indian grammatical tradition and the Indo-European linguistics

Modern linguistics owes to Indian grammatical tradition its precise morphological analysis of words, which in ancient India reached its peak in works of Pāṇini and his successors and commentators.

This deep level of linguistic analysis may have partly resulted from the fact that writing was less frequently used in the Indian tradition than, for example, in Greek or Roman culture. As Paweł Sajdek notes, the Greeks and Romans never freed themselves from the analysis of "letters" and written words, whereas the Indian tradition from its very beginnings analyzed orally transmitted texts (Sajdek 2011: 14–18).

Futher, Paul Thieme remarked in his preface to Betty Shefts's work (1961: ix):

Nowadays, it is sometimes not clearly realized that the analysis of speech into its units—sentences, words, sounds (wrongly called ‘letters’)—as it was introduced by the Greeks (Dionysios Thrax, 2nd century B.C.) and practiced in Europe until the beginning of the last century, was deficient in one essential point: it ignored the abstract functional elements (morphemes) of words, taking the words, naively, to be natural, indissoluble wholes; and that it was only acquaintance with Pāṇini’s method that furnished the means to perfect it: now it became possible to dissect nominal and verbal forms of other Indo-European languages also into their elements – ‘root’, ‘suffix(es)’, ‘ending’ – each with its own shape and function, combining into word forms through strictly definable, regularly recurring processes.

The root (*dhātu*)—an abstracted result of linguistic analysis—is a hallmark of the Indian grammatical tradition and of the Indian mode of linguistic thought, in contrast to the Greco-Roman tradition, which did not operate with such an abstract notion.

Within the Indian etymological tradition, there was an on-going discussion concerning whether all nominal forms (nouns) were derived from verbal roots or whether some nouns existed independently of any verbal base. Both hypotheses appear in Yāska’s *Nirukta*: the derivation of all nouns from verbal roots is attributed to Sākaṭāyana, while the opposing view, that not all nouns can be explained in this way, is attributed to Gārgya (Sarup 1926; Sajdek 2011: 30).

Yāska sides with the latter hypothesis but admits that most forms may indeed be derived from verbal roots. Sajdek notes that the outcome of this grammatical tradition—reducing word analysis to the root—is visible even today in the didactic tradition of teaching Old and Middle Indo-Aryan languages, which is organized around verbal roots (Sajdek 2011: 30).

Interestingly, although this root-based approach is not used in teaching Latin and Ancient Greek—due to different linguistic concepts and reliance on the first person singular or infinitive verb forms—there is a growing number of pedagogical materials that analyze vocabulary in both languages in terms of etymological families based on lexical

morphemes (roots), most of which are verbal in nature. This may actually be traced back to the work of Theodor Benfey and his dictionary of Greek roots (Benfey 1839), quite parallel to the lexicon of roots of Sanskrit (cf. Benfey 1852: 71; Alfieri 2014: 77).

The Indian discussion on the derivation of nouns was, of course, descriptive rather than historical, yet it is fascinating that two millennia later a similar debate emerged in the Indo-European historical-comparative linguistics—a debate that continues to this day. It concerns the status and the origins of reconstructed Proto-Indo-European roots, the majority of which are verbal. Indeed, the very concept of the “root” as the smallest morphological unit carrying core meaning originates from the Indian grammatical tradition and has directly influenced European linguistic thought.³ As already mentioned above, Franz Bopp, despite his skepticism towards Indian grammarians, used the concept of “root” and added the diachronic dimension to the Indian notion of the term since he viewed “root” as the most primitive element of the word (cf. Delbrück 1882: 73–74). The discussion whether roots are the actual reality present in the mind of the speakers of a language or whether they are just linguistic abstractions used by linguists, is also currently debated – cf. the recent polemic on this very topic between Keydana (2022) and Alfieri (2016, 2021, 2023, Alfieri et al. 2025).

The vast majority of reconstructed Proto-Indo-European roots are verbal. Even basic words such as the -t-stem noun *nok^w-t-s ‘night’ are traced back to the verbal root *neg^w- ‘to get dark’ (Rix et al. 2001: 449, Wodtke et al. 2006: 504). The lexicon of the Indo-European verbs (*Lexikon der indogermanischen Verben*, in short LIV) lists 1,178 verb roots with their reflexes in individual Indo-European languages, serving as the basis for reconstructing proto-forms. In contrast, the lexicon of the Indo-European nouns (*Nomina im Indogermanischen Lexikon*, NIL in short) lists only 207 nominal formations,

³ Although it should be borne in mind that the knowledge of the Semitic languages and their analysis in terms of roots was probably also in part influential (cf. Rousseau 1984; Alfieri 2017 and Alfieri and Luinetti 2024).

many of which are secondary derivatives from verbal roots although it should be borne in mind that the nominal lexicon does not take into account all of the nominal formations since some of the basic words are absent and it concentrates on nouns which often have verbal counterparts or verbal derivatives parallel to the ones presented in LIV. Still, if we look at the data presented in the old dictionary of Proto-Indo-European roots by Julius Pokorny (1959) the situation is more or less the same – according to Alfieri (2024: 259) there are 1191 primary lexemes in Pokorny’s dictionary out of which 927 are verbs, 233 nouns and 31 adjectives (Alfieri 2024: 259).

Some formations today lack attested verbal roots, but this may be due to the loss of such base forms. Thus, in a sense, the ancient Indian debate among the grammarians continues even in modern linguistics. This is yet another testament to the sophistication and versatility of the Indian grammatical tradition in phonetic, phonological, and morphological analysis—especially when compared to the Greek and Roman traditions, which remained dominant in Europe until the discovery of Sanskrit (cf. Alfieri 2014).

4. Ablaut and the laryngeal theory

The most profound, though indirect, methodological influence may be attributed to Ferdinand de Saussure, who had an in-depth knowledge of Sanskrit and devoted his doctoral dissertation to the topic of the genitive absolute construction in that language (cf. D’Ottavi 2010; Joseph 2012). Most importantly, De Saussure’s earlier work focused on interpreting irregularities in the synchronic description to perform an internal reconstruction of the older system, prioritizing the system over diachrony. Before he published his doctoral dissertation, de Saussure became interested in the operation of the Proto-Indo-European Ablaut system—the synchronic alternation of vowels whose function was to differentiate words both in derivation and in paradigms (Fortson 2010: 79–80). The system which was usually reconstructed at the time was somewhat irregular since two different types of Ablaut

were assumed—one operating with short vowels and the other with long vowels. De Saussure's great contribution was the reformulation of the system so as to explain the long-vowel Ablaut as similar to the short-vowel one with additional elements. The additional elements, termed by de Saussure as 'coefficients sonantiques' were not attested directly in any Indo-European language but had to be reconstructed because of the coherence of the Ablaut system. Indo-European scholarship before de Saussure recognized Ablaut in the following patterns: the short vowel type e.g. in the root **pet-* 'to fly' **pet-* E-grade, **pot-* O-grade, **pt-* Zero-grade and the long vocalism type in e.g. the root **dʰē-* 'to put' **dʰē-* E-grade, **dʰō-* O-grade, **dʰə-* Zero-grade. De Saussure considered this reconstruction uneven and irregular and tried to reanalyze the long-vowel Ablaut pattern using inferred, unattested phonemes (nowadays called laryngeals), leading ultimately to root forms like **dʰeh₁-* (E-grade), **dʰoh₁-* (O-grade), and *dʰh₁-* (Zero-grade) with the Ablaut pattern similar to that of the short vowels. This pursuit led to complete reinterpretation of the Proto-Indo-European Ablaut and the subsequent development of the laryngeal theory, following the work of Hermann Möller, Albert Cuny and especially Jerzy Kuryłowicz and the identification of the phonemes postulated by de Saussure with the phonemes attested in the Hittite language (cf. Fortson 2010: 81–83).

Interestingly, de Saussure also observed important indirect traces of the reconstructed phonemes in a certain irregularity visible in the pattern of the Sanskrit morphology (de Saussure 1879: 239–249), namely in the class seven and nine of Sanskrit verbs—originally nasal presents—he noticed that the parallel formations of the two classes of verbs—e.g. present *yunakti* 'yokes' and *punāti* 'cleanses' can be traced back to a similar pattern, i.e. **yu-na-k-ti* and, analogically, **pu-na-X-ti* where the postulated "X" element was the equivalent of "k" in *yu-na-k-ti* but developed as compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel and it also surfaces as /i/ in the formation of the infinitive giving *pav-i-tum* 'to cleanse' as equivalent of *yo-k-tum* 'to yoke' (cf. Beekes 1986; Fortson 2010: 81–82). Again, with the use of the internal reconstruction and by observing irregularities in the synchronic state of

affairs, de Saussure was able to put forward a solution that solved the origin of this class of verbs in Sanskrit. And yet again, his hypothesis was vindicated after his death and became the standard view in the Indo-European linguistics (cf. Fortson 2010: 82–83). Interestingly, the twofold distinction of the roots was already observed by Pāṇini in his division of the roots into *seṭ* and *aniṭ* (i.e. with or without /i/). In today's Indo-European linguistics, this distinction is still used to discern between roots ending in laryngeals, as in e.g. **peuH* of **pu-na-H-ti* visible in Sanskrit *punāti*, and those ending in other consonants as in e.g. **yeug-* 'to yoke' of **yu-na-g-ti* continued in Sanskrit *yunakti* (cf. *ibid.*).

The connection between de Saussure's *Mémoire* and the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* lies in their similar methodological approach although in different dimensions—for Pāṇini the synchronic system and its basis is the ultimate goal, for de Saussure it is the diachronic aspect that is important though approached from a close review of the synchronic state. The common element in both of these approaches is the ordered and systematic arrangement of elements within the language (D'Ottavi 2013).

However, it is also important to note the warning mentioned by George Cardona (cf. Cardona 1987) against directly observing and transposing Ancient Indian grammatical concepts to the ones postulated in modern linguistics (and the linguistics of the 19th century). After all, the main perspective was crucially different for Indian grammarians and European scholars—the former were interested in constructing a synchronic grammar of the language, the latter's interest centered on explaining the historical development of the languages and on the search for their common source. Cardona also points out that the influence of Pāṇini on de Saussure's work was important but certainly not the sole one (cf. Cardona 2000).

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, Pāṇini's grammar provided a rigorous, formalized model that anticipated modern analysis of linguistic structures. While early Indo-European scholarship, led primarily by Franz Bopp, prioritized organic historical reconstruction over Pāṇini's synchronic mechanism, later scholars like Jacob Wackernagel fully integrated the system for both descriptive and historical purposes, and Ferdinand de Saussure utilized its mechanism to revolutionize the understanding of the Proto-Indo-European vocalism, confirming Pāṇini's lasting but often subtle and indirect legacy in the history of linguistic thought.

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Patterns of Substitution in the Zoroastrian Sanskrit Translation of *Ogamadecā* Linguistic Features of Parsi Sanskrit¹

ABSTRACT: This study examines the Sanskrit translation of a text designated in the target language as *Ogamadecā*. The original Middle Persian text was based on selected quotations from Avesta with its title derived from the first word: *aogamadaēcā* ‘and we pronounce’. The result is a multi-layered document of intertwined grammar, vocabulary and syntax drawing from Indian and Iranian heritage. The analysis centers on systematic deviations from Pāṇini’s grammatical framework, with particular emphasis on substitution, a foundational principle in *Aṣṭādhyāyī* and a key mechanism in Pāṇinian linguistics. The methodological approach adopted here foregrounds phonological, morphological, and syntactic irregularities within the translation, thereby elucidating characteristic features of Parsi Sanskrit renderings. The structural clarity inherent in Pāṇini’s system is juxtaposed with examples drawn from *Ogamadecā*, accompanied by detailed commentary on the violated rules. This comparative perspective advances our understanding of Zoroastrian Sanskrit

¹ This paper originates from a presentation delivered at the conference *Constructing and Deconstructing Pāṇini’s Grammar: The Role of Commentators* (Kraków 10 May 2025) and builds upon research undertaken for my unpublished master’s thesis, *Wybrane cechy charakterystyczne sanskrytu zaratusztriańskiego w oparciu o analizę tekstu Ogamadecā* (Kraków 2021).

translations within their broader linguistic, cultural, and religious conditions, contributing to the study of Indo-Iranian textual transmission and the adaptation of classical grammatical norms in Zoroastrian setting.

KEYWORDS: Zoroastrian Sanskrit, Parsi Sanskrit, Pāṇini's Grammar, *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, substitution, *Aogāmadaēcā*, Old- and Middle Iranian linguistics, Sanskrit linguistics

The Sanskrit translation of *Ogamadecā* belongs to the long-standing tradition of rendering and commenting upon Zoroastrian literature. It is traditionally attributed to Neryosang Dhaval, who served as an editor of these translations. The precise dating of this corpus remains uncertain; however, most scholars situate his activity between the 12th and 14th centuries in Gujarat (Rezai Baghbidi 2012: 1). According to Goldman (2018: 6), this period can be narrowed down to mid-14th to mid-15th centuries CE. The structure of the text underwent significant modifications as a result of multiple layers of editorial and translational intervention, shaping its present form. These alterations become evident through comparative analysis of the Sanskrit version vis-à-vis its Middle Persian counterpart. Much of the observed ambiguity can be attributed to the translator's imperfect command of Sanskrit grammar, lexicon, and cultural context, although this is not the sole explanatory factor. The emergence of such translations of Middle Persian and Avestan literature was driven by broader socio-religious motivations. According to Palladino (2022: 26), the Sanskrit translations may have been the product of the acclimatisation of the Zoroastrian culture, a sort of academic exercise in order to master a language that was directly associated with Indian intellectual milieu. On another note, one principal impetus was the effort to consolidate the Zoroastrian community's position within the complex cultural and religious milieu of Western India, particularly Gujarat. The presence of numerous religious texts from diverse local traditions likely stimulated this translational enterprise, as Zoroastrians sought to articulate their doctrines in a form aligned with prevailing literary conventions. At the time, these conventions were largely shaped by Sanskrit treatises, whose stylistic

norms were selectively emulated by Zoroastrian clergy in their renderings of sacred texts, while retaining their characteristic practice of highly literal translation. *Ogamadecā* is of particular interest owing to its composition and thematic focus: It explores the destiny of the human soul following death in Zoroastrian doctrine. In this manner it is possible to correlate it with a lost *Hādōxt Nask*, especially in its structure: three phases of ascent to afterlife by the deceased: 1. the dereliction of the male soul *uruuan* during three nights; the appearance, at the third dawn, of the female soul *daēnā*; and the matrimonial dialogue of the two souls, their joint departure to the afterlife and the reception by Ahura Mazda (Kellens and Redard 2021: 69). Numerous technical terms of Avestan or Middle Persian origin are either translated into Sanskrit through semantic equivalence or adapted by direct Sanskritization of the original lexemes.

The text of the *Ogamadecā* is preserved through two lines of transmission: a Pazand version contained in a manuscript that also includes texts in Sanskrit and Old Gujarati, and a Pahlavi version derived from an early Pazand manuscript (JamaspAsa 1982: 9). In this paper, all fragments are cited from the critical edition prepared by Bharucha in *Collected Writings of the Parsis, Consisting of Old Translations of Avesta and Pahlavi Pāzend Books as well as Original Compositions with Various Readings and Notes; Part VI*, which is based on manuscripts M.L.H.L2 and E.M.U. A detailed description of the available manuscripts is provided by JamaspAsa in *Aogāmadaēcā. A Zoroastrian Liturgy*. *Ogamadecā*, as a text, is of considerable importance, as it preserves certain Avestan passages unattested elsewhere. The extant versions represent translations of the Middle Persian original. As is characteristic of such literature, Middle Persian translations of the Avesta exhibit strong influence from the source language in both vocabulary and syntax. This observation is crucial when analyzing the Sanskrit translation, since numerous linguistic features are transmitted across languages. The same holds for mistranslations, which have led to a shift in meaning in the very first word of the text and thus its title. The error first appears in Middle Persian, where the expected term meaning ‘and we pronounce’ is replaced by *rasam* ‘I arrive’, and

this misinterpretation is subsequently retained in the Sanskrit *āyāmi* ‘I come’.

An important factor in understanding the complexity of *Ogamadecā* is the multi-layered process of translation that culminated in the preserved version of the text. Its foundation consists of quotations from the Avesta. Twenty-nine fragments are attested in *Ogamadecā*, of which only five appear in Geldner’s edition of the Avesta, while twenty-four are new and predominantly composed in octosyllabic verse (Duchesne-Guillemin 1986: 145). These fragments were rendered into Middle Persian in a relatively indirect manner, involving certain modifications of the original meaning. A striking example of this process occurs at the opening of the text, which coincides with its title. The Avestan term *aogāmadaē* is formally the first-person plural present indicative of a root stem in athematic conjugation (Skjærvø 2007: 914), followed by the enclitic conjunction *-cā*. The form *aogāmadaē* derives from the root *aoj-* ‘to speak’, ‘to pronounce’, and is attested in cognate forms such as OAv. *aogādā*, YAv. *aoxta* < Ilr. *aug-dha* < *augh-ta* (Martínez and de Vaan 2014: 28). Notably, the translator substitutes the original term with the form *āyāmi*, derived from the root *yā-* prefixed with *ā*. This substitution significantly alters the meaning of the text from ‘we pronounce’ to ‘we come’. Numerous instances of such semantic, morphological, phonological, and syntactic transformations occur throughout the work. The aim of this paper is to investigate the patterns underlying these alterations and to demonstrate how some of them diverge from Pāṇinian rules, particularly those governing substitution. Broader insights into Zoroastrian Sanskrit can be extrapolated from the material presented in *Ogamadecā*. Selected forms exhibiting notable peculiarities will be juxtaposed with the relevant grammatical rules in order to highlight key differences and characteristic features of Sanskrit translations of Zoroastrian texts. The clarity afforded by Pāṇini’s model of rules provides a compelling rationale for employing this framework in the presentation of data. It is important to emphasize the connection between the Pāṇinian grammatical tradition and the text of *Ogamadecā*. Pāṇini’s grammar served as the normative model for the formation of Sanskrit grammatical structures; consequently, the

translators were required to rely on it both to produce a text conforming to established linguistic rules and to interpret the forms they encountered through this grammatical framework. Curiously, one of the principal motivations behind the emergence of the Pāṇinian tradition was the preservation of the language in its unaltered form. A comparable motivation may be observed among the Parsis, who employed this tradition in the translation and preservation of various Middle Persian and Avestan texts in Sanskrit. This raises a broader question concerning the Sanskritisation of Zoroastrian texts resulting from such translational practices, a phenomenon illustrated through several examples discussed in this paper. The material is organised into phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactic categories, within which specific features are examined and compared with the corresponding prescriptions of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, accompanied by detailed description and explanation.

Substitution in Pāṇini's grammar is a process of replacement governed by specified rules. The most fundamental of these is A 1.1.49, according to which the element to be substituted is expressed in the genitive case, conveying the sense of "in place of X", while the right and left contexts of the substitution are indicated by items inflected in the locative and ablative cases respectively (Candotti and Pontillo 2004: 2). Many grammatical operations are explained according to this pattern when viewed from the perspective of the Pāṇinian tradition. It is important to note that all such transformations occur under specific conditions, determined primarily by phonological and morphological environments. A clear example is the emergence of long vowels as a result of the proximity of two short vowels of the same type at morphological boundaries, the so-called *savarṇa dīrgha*. Rule 6.1.101 states: *akāḥ savarṇe dīrghaḥ*, so an *aK* (vowels such as *a*, *i*, *u*, etc.), when followed by a vowel of the same type, is replaced by a long vowel; for instance, *upa + agni = upāgni*. In this case, the conditioning environment is the adjacency of two short, identical vowels. In the case of different vowels, e.g. *a + e*, a different rule applies. The result of substitution is a new vowel, a long *ā*. Pāṇini makes it very clear when a change occurs because of the hierarchy of rules that

apply. The more general operations are constrained by specific rules governing grammatical phenomena in particular contexts.

Pāṇini's grammar provides mechanisms for addressing complex phenomena that might otherwise be interpreted as belonging to a different linguistic variety. Such is the case with certain rules employed to account for Vedic forms. According to Kiparsky, Pāṇini's system was organised on the basis of Classical Sanskrit structure, and almost always Vedic peculiarities are derived by "patch-up rules" added to those established for Classical Sanskrit (Kiparsky 1979: 56). These rules can be understood as extensions of the system for the specific purpose of describing Vedic. However, this does not resolve issues posed by other varieties of Sanskrit, which were not described by Pāṇini and exhibit forms that contradict rules applicable to the Classical language. For every linguistic variety differing from what can be considered standard Classical Sanskrit, a new set of particular rules would need to be formulated to account for the peculiarities found in the given source. Since general rules apply universally unless superseded by specific ones, such a model would be necessary to provide a comprehensive and accurate description of Zoroastrian Sanskrit. This observation is particularly relevant to *Ogamadecā*, where numerous forms diverge from Pāṇinian norms and cannot be explained by the existing framework, thereby necessitating a systematic analysis of substitution patterns and other deviations.

Although the Sanskrit translators of *Ogamadecā* were likely somewhat familiar with the grammatical tradition of Pāṇini's system, they either deliberately or inadvertently circumvented certain rules. This inclination is evident in their general preference for forms that conform to established grammatical tradition; however, as the examples below indicate, their adherence to Pāṇinian rules was not absolute. A clear illustration is the conjugation of certain verbs according to classes other than those recognized in classical Sanskrit. Part of this tendency can be attributed to the decision to maintain practices employed in translating Avestan texts into Middle Persian, such as retaining Avestan syntax or avoiding the translation of technical terms. Similarly, in the Sanskrit version, certain names are preserved in their Avestan forms to maintain

proximity to the original, while other terms are translated on the basis of perceived similarity between Avestan and Sanskrit words. Although these sometimes derive from the same root, their meanings in the two languages differ significantly. This results in portions of the translation being unintelligible without prior knowledge of the original, thereby undermining the purpose of translation from the perspective of modern translation theory. Furthermore, the grammar is frequently unclear or erroneous, despite evident efforts to approximate Classical Sanskrit. This is observable, for instance, in the use of compounds unattested in the Middle Persian original and in the replacement of certain native terms with Sanskrit equivalents that are often poorly suited to the context (e.g. *ātman* for MP *ruvān*).

These deviations, particularly in the domain of substitution, form a crucial part of the analysis presented in this study, as they illustrate how Zoroastrian Sanskrit negotiates fidelity to the source text with the constraints of Pāṇinian norms. Among the peculiarities of *Ogamadecā*, the first that strikes the reader is its lack of conformity with standard orthographical conventions. The translators imitate Avestan orthographic practices, such as the use of digraphs for certain diphthongs. In devanagari written Sanskrit, *au* and *ai* are represented by औ and ऐ respectively, yet throughout the text there are forms combining signs for consonants with inherent vowels followed by separate vowel symbols. Such examples appear in sources including the facsimile of manuscript K 42, the same used by W. Geiger in *Aogemadaêcâ. Ein Pârsentractat in Pâzend, Altbaktrisch und Sanskrit* (1878) and in E. Bharucha's critical edition in *Collected Writings of the Parsis, Consisting of Old Translations of Avesta and Pahlavi Pâzend Books as well as Original Compositions with Various Readings and Notes*.

A clear instance of non-adherence to orthographical norms is the form *ganāmainio* (spelled as गनामइनिओ instead of गनामैय्यो). This reflects direct influence from Avestan orthography, which employs digraphs to denote diphthongs. The form *ganāmainio* corresponds to Middle Persian *gannāg mēnōg* 'Foul Spirit', 'Evil Spirit' (MacKenzie 1971/2014: 35), ultimately derived from the Avestan term for 'spirit': *aka mainiū* 'Evil Spirit' (Bartholomae 1904: 1138). Another factor

may relate to phonetic differences between the Sanskrit diphthong *ai* and its Avestan counterpart. From a diachronic perspective, Avestan preserved certain original Indo-Iranian diphthongs, whereas Sanskrit reduced them to monophthongs such as *e* and *o*. It is plausible that Zoroastrian translators employed a sound slightly different from the Sanskrit *ai* and therefore preferred the Avestan orthographic convention for representing *ai*. This strategy, intended to distinguish Sanskrit *ai* from Avestan *ai*, resulted in divergent spelling practices. Another explanation for this orthographical phenomenon is, to some extent, the influence of regional Prakrits, which frequently employed similar spelling conventions. Their significance as the basis for certain orthographic norms, together with their relevance for Old Gujarati spelling, may have contributed to the manner in which some words are written in the Sanskrit translation of the *Ogamadecā*. Such practices, however, create discrepancies between forms preserved in the text and the rules codified by Pāṇini. One relevant rule concerns vowel changes governed by well-known *sandhi* operations. Rule 6.1.84 states: *āt guṇaḥ*, meaning that when the first word ends in *a* and the second begins with a vowel, the two sounds coalesce into the *guṇa* of the initial vowel of the second word. This rule governs external *sandhi* and is based on the principle of avoiding hiatus wherever possible. In the case of *ganāmainio*, the spelling employed should have triggered a change of the adjacent vowels *a* and *i* into the *guṇa* of *i* namely *e* to prevent hiatus. Yet the Avestan orthographic convention prevailed, producing a form with a clear hiatus despite the Middle Persian equivalent *mēnōg* with *ē*.

The translators also employed a term resembling the Sanskrit word *manyu* ‘spirit’ (Monier-Williams 1899: 786), a frequent strategy in the text whereby Avestan vocabulary is rendered through forms selected for their similarity to Sanskrit. *Ganāmainio* further illustrates divergence from Pāṇini’s rules, as another sequence of adjacent vowels fails to conform to *sandhi* norms. Specifically, Rule 6.1.78 (*ecaḥ ayavāyāvah*) is disregarded: *i* does not change to *y* before *o* in final position. According to this rule, *i*, *u*, *ṛ*, *ḷ* should be substituted by *y*, *v*, *r*, *l* before vowels, yet *Ogamadecā* preserves *mainio* instead of *mainyo*. This reflects another Avestan orthographic feature, where double

i denotes *y*. In *ganāmainio*, multiple vowels remain unchanged to semi-vowels despite adjacency, contravening the expected transformations prescribed by the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. The persistence of local orthographic tradition thus produced forms such as *ganāmainio* in Zoroastrian Sanskrit. Other examples of similar spelling conventions include *īajda* Av. ‘yazata’², *cinuadpula* MP *činwad puhl* < Av. *cinuuat.pərətu-* ‘činwad bridge’³, and *sausīūsa* ‘saošyant’⁴. These orthographic anomalies, combined with deviations from Pāṇinian *sandhi* rules, underscore the complex interplay between inherited Avestan practices and Sanskrit grammatical norms.

Another phenomenon worth noting is the presence of non-canonical consonant clusters that are foreign to Classical Sanskrit. Given the precise lists of stems in the *Dhātupāṭha* and suffixes in the grammatical tradition, it is possible to determine from these positive rules which clusters are permissible and which are alien. While foreign words and certain names could enter Sanskrit texts, they were typically Sanskritized to conform to the criteria of permissible clusters. In Zoroastrian Sanskrit, however, this practice is not consistently observed, as numerous names borrowed from Avestan or Middle Persian appear in forms closely resembling their originals. A striking example is *gvahmana* ‘Bahman’⁵, a form unattested in Middle Persian, where the word occurs as *vahman*, while New Persian uses *bahman*. This form derives from Avestan term *vohu manah* ‘good thought’, who is one of six beings begotten by Ahura Mazda and named as *aməša spənta* ‘bountiful immortals’. According to Narten they were treated not only as abstract beings but they were often personified in Avestan text (Narten 1982: 38). Particularly Vohu Manah is attributed to take care of all the beneficial animals created by Ahura Mazda (Boyce 1975: 203). The Sanskrit

² A type of being worthy of sacrifice in Zoroastrianism. See: Bartholomae 1904: 1279–1280.

³ A bridge used by a soul to cross to paradise or to fall into hell. See: Tafazzoli 1991: 594–595.

⁴ An eschatological, saviour figure in Zoroastrianism. See: Malandra 2000.

⁵ One of the Amesha Spentas. Av. *Vohu Manah*. See: Narten and Gignoux 1988: 487–488.

translation of *Ogamadecā* thus provides an intriguing instance of instability in the alternation between $v > b$ and $v > g$. In New Persian, numerous examples of these changes occur, such as Middle Persian *vafr* ‘snow’ > New Persian *barf* ‘snow’, or Middle Persian *varg* ‘wolf’ > New Persian *gorg* ‘wolf’. The conditioning environment for these shifts in New Persian remains unclear: both Middle Persian words exhibit the structure $_vV$, yet yield b and g respectively in the modern language. The form *gvahmana* attested in *Ogamadecā* not only introduces an unexpected cluster into Sanskrit but also represents an unusual development of a word otherwise known with initial v or b . While the precise circumstances underlying the emergence of gv in this example merit further investigation, the occurrence of such an unanticipated cluster underscores the broader tendency of Zoroastrian Sanskrit to preserve foreign phonological patterns rather than fully assimilate them to Pāṇinian norms. This phenomenon, alongside orthographic and morphological anomalies, forms part of the evidence analyzed in this study to illustrate the interplay between inherited Iranian features and the Sanskrit grammatical system.

There are additional types of consonantal clusters occurring in borrowings from Middle Persian or Avestan, which include j as a rendering of Middle Persian or Avestan z . Sanskrit frequently employs this sound to represent z , which is absent from its phonological system yet widely attested in Iranian languages. It remains uncertain whether Zoroastrians in India during the time of Neryosang Dhaval, continued to pronounce z in a manner inherited from Middle Persian, or whether it had already shifted to j , although Gujarati employed by the Parsis does in most cases retain z in the pronunciation. In the translated texts, names such as *Ahura Mazda* appear in their Sanskritized forms, for example *ahurmijda*. Pāṇini enumerates the elements of the Sanskrit phonological system in the *akṣarasamāmnāya*, thereby providing a positive description of its full inventory of sounds. Translators attempting to convey Iranian names in Sanskrit were constrained by this system and ultimately chose to render z as j . The consonantal clusters resulting from this decision are often alien to the classical language and even to its earlier stages. Words such as *īajda* exemplify

this phenomenon: not only do two vowels occur at the beginning of the word, but the medial cluster *-jd-* is also highly atypical.

Among the morphological irregularities characteristic of Zoroastrian Sanskrit, one may note the occasional use of a noun with an atypical gender or a verb belonging to a conjugation class other than that generally employed in Classical Sanskrit (Rezai Baghbidi 2012: 5). Such forms occur frequently in *Ogamadecā*, together with instances of case usage diverging from standard practice in order to convey a grammatical function, as well as words entirely lacking case endings. The latter phenomenon most commonly pertains to proper nouns borrowed from Avestan or Middle Persian, where translators were uncertain which declensional paradigm to apply. A recurrent example in the text is *aṃgramainio* ‘Evil Spirit’, which in *Aog.* 90 appears in the aforementioned uninflected form, despite functioning as the direct object of the sentence, where one would expect the accusative case. The case ending is thus omitted, although elsewhere in the text Avestan *mainiiu* is generally declined according to the *-a* declension, as in *deva*. The omission of the accusative for a direct object constitutes a clear violation of Rule 2.3.1 (*karmaṇi dvitīyā*), which prescribes the use of the second case (accusative) for the word denoting the object upon which the action is performed. In place of the expected accusative, an uninflected form directly based on the Avestan original is employed.

Instances of lack of concord between nouns and adjectives, as well as pronouns, are also attested. This phenomenon can be partially explained by the disappearance of case and gender in Middle Persian, which made it difficult for translators to determine the appropriate gender assignment in a language such as Sanskrit, where these categories are obligatory. A notable example occurs in the *Ogamadecā* form *tasmin tanau*, where *tanū* ‘body’ is predominantly treated as a feminine noun belonging to the *-ū* declension, while *tasmin* represents the masculine locative form of the pronoun *tad*. *Aog.* 2 states: *sānaṃdas tasmin tanau yad iha vartitaṃ sviya ātmanaḥ* ‘Happy is (a man) who in this body acts according to his soul’. From this sentence, it may be inferred that the intended case is locative. The lack of agreement

between the governing noun and the deictic pronoun creates a discrepancy in reference between the two elements. The expected pronominal form agreeing with *tanū* should be *tasyām* rather than *tasmin*. According to Pāṇini's rules, this form is derived from *tad* following 7.2.102 (*tyadādīnām aḥ*), which prescribes the substitution of *aḥ* for nominative singular endings of *tyad* and related pronouns, and subsequently applying the rules of feminine declension beginning with 4.1.3 (*striyām*). For the locative, it is necessary to form *tasya* and add the locative ending *-ām*, while observing the relevant *sandhi* rules. The translators of *Ogamadecā*, however, employ *tasmin* rather than *tasyām*, thereby departing from the normative rules governing feminine pronominal declension. The reason for this change may be attributed to the influence of Prakrit on the Sanskrit forms used during the period, particularly given that the text belongs to a category of works situated outside the canon of classical literature.

Beyond nominal irregularities, the text also exhibits verbal forms constructed in ways inconsistent with the rules set forth in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. Although many Avestan verbs share structural similarities with Sanskrit, the translators of *Ogamadecā* did not exploit these correspondences. Rather than employing vocabulary derived from cognate roots and conjugated according to established classes, they introduced defective and unattested forms. A salient example is the form *pratigrhṇāt* in *Aog.* 12. From the context of *tathā anaśvarāt-manah hastaṃ pratigrhṇāt* 'then may he take the hand of the deceased' it is evident that the intended root was *grah-* 'to grab' 'to take'. Normatively, one would expect the third person present optative conjugated according to class IX, namely *pratigrhṇīyāt*, rather than *pratigrhṇāt*. From a grammatical perspective, *pratigrhṇāt* is incorrect because class IX forms employ the infix *-nā-* in strong forms and *-nī-* in weak forms (Mayrhofer 1978: 82). The optative is derived from weak forms and should therefore contain the *-nī-* infix rather than *-n-*. Another striking example is *akāri*, the third person singular aorist passive of *kṛ-*, attested in *Aog.* 59: *prthivyāḥ madhye lohadhātughaṭitam rājagṛhaṃ akāri* 'in the middle of the earth he built an iron palace'. The use of the aorist in this sentence is correct within Classical Sanskrit, where

it functions as a narrative tense for an unspecified past event. Historically, the aorist was employed to denote a pure action, neutral with respect to aspect, in contrast to the imperfect, which conveyed durative action (Kuryłowicz 1987: 318).

In their attempt to render Zoroastrian technical terminology, the translators of *Ogamadecā* frequently adapted Middle Persian or Avestan words to Sanskrit phonology and, in many cases, preferred linguistic calques over culturally established equivalents in the target language. This strategy becomes particularly problematic in the case of the word *deva* in *Ogamadecā*. Rezaī Baghbidi observes that Parsi Sanskrit generally avoids using *deva* in the sense of ‘god’, as Iranian religious tradition associates this term primarily with ‘false gods’ or ‘demons’ (Rezaī Baghbidi 2012: 6). Nevertheless, *Ogamadecā* contains an instance where *deva* is employed to denote ‘demon’, a choice that is misleading given the semantic range of the term in Sanskrit and its deep cultural and religious associations within the Indian tradition. Historically, *deva* was the original Indo-Iranian term for ‘god’, cognate with Latin *deus* and ultimately derived from a root meaning ‘shine, be bright’, but Zoroaster condemned this class of beings following the doctrinal shift from polytheism (Gnoli 2004: 98). According to the *Gāthās*, Avestan *daēuuas* were reproached for their inability to exercise proper divine discernment and for having embraced bad religion alongside the good, initiating their rejection and demonisation (Kellens and Herrenschildt 1993: 599). *Daēuuas* have chosen their bad purpose as stated in Y. 30.6 *The daēvas chose not rightly, because blindness came upon them as they consulted...* (Boyce 1975: 201). In later Zoroastrian literature, they are portrayed as malevolent beings. Consequently, the decision to retain *deva* as ‘demon’ in Sanskrit translation, rather than substituting it with a culturally appropriate term such as *piśāca* ‘demon’, further obscures comprehension for Sanskrit scholars. As noted earlier, these translations often remain unintelligible to readers lacking prior knowledge of the original text; a difficulty that frequently stems from the translators’ lexical choices.

A clear example of a linguistic calque in *Ogamadecā* is the compound *anaśvarātman*, consisting of *anaśvara* ‘imperishable’ and *ātman*

‘soul, self’. This is a direct translation of Middle Persian *anōšag-ruwān* ‘immortal soul’, often employed as a *bahuvrīhi* compound meaning ‘one possessing an immortal soul’. It occurs in *Aog.* 103: *asya anaśvarātmanaḥ svargasamṛddhiḥ bhūyāt* ‘may this deceased possess the riches of paradise’. In the text, this term is used to describe the fate of the soul after death and, in most contexts, could be replaced by a conventional Sanskrit term for ‘deceased’. Nevertheless, the Middle Persian calque predominates throughout the translation, with only rare exceptions such as *muktātman* for ‘deceased’. Numerous other examples illustrate this tendency, including *duṣṭajñānin* ‘one who has wrong knowledge’, an epithet of Angra Mainyu modelled on an Avestan expression of equivalent meaning, and *prabhūtamṛtyu* ‘full of death’, corresponding to Avestan *pouru-mahrkō*. Such vocabulary is distinctive to Zoroastrian Sanskrit and does not occur in other works of the classical tradition, rendering the text less accessible to readers familiar only with the standard corpus. In addition, certain literal translations of Avestan passages preserve the original syntactic structure, making the Sanskrit version appear opaque despite the common descent of the two languages, both originating from the Indo-Iranian branch.

Avestan passages exhibit features characteristic of Young Avestan syntax, although many entered *Ogamadecā* through Middle Persian translations that preserved much of their original structure. Long sentences with multiple subordinate clauses, repetitions, and enumerations exemplify the source language’s syntactic patterns. The frequent use of formulaic language reflects the text’s ritual function, as it was often recited during funerary rites and had to be memorised by the officiating clergy. Formulaic descriptions of Mithra, Angra Mainyu, or Yima are well known throughout Old and Middle Iranian literature and occur repeatedly. Rather than substituting these terms with Sanskrit equivalents, the translators retained the original expressions wherever possible, sometimes at the expense of clarity for readers of Sanskrit. Certain passages are repeated with only the acting character altered, a structure also found in Avestan *Yashts*, such as the hymn to Anahita, where different mythical rulers offer gifts to the goddess, who either accepts or rejects them. A similar pattern appears in

Ogamadecā, where figures such as kings Kahoś (Av. *Kauui Usa*, Per. *Key Kāvus*), Aprakaśa (Av. *Fraŋrasyan*, Per. *Afrāsyāb*), and Dahaka (Av. *Aži Dahāka*, Per. *Zahāk*) commit various renowned or heinous deeds yet fail to escape death. For each of these characters, formulaic passages recur, such as: *samaṃ svīyena mṛtyunā pratidvamdvitum na śaktaḥ* ‘similarly he was unable to defy his own death’, repeated after the description of their actions.

The language of *Ogamadecā* constitutes a distinctive variety of Sanskrit that diverges in numerous respects from the normative idiom codified by Pāṇini. These deviations arise primarily from the translators’ dual objective: to preserve the rich Zoroastrian tradition transmitted through Middle Persian versions of the Avesta, while simultaneously conforming, at least in part, to the conventions of the target language. In practice, this balancing act produced a hybrid register marked by orthographic, phonological, morphological, and syntactic irregularities, compounded by the extensive incorporation of Iranian vocabulary adapted to Sanskrit phonology. Although the translators were exposed to traditional Sanskrit pedagogy and sought to employ forms associated with scientific, philosophical, and religious discourse, they frequently adhered to a principle of literalness. This approach often conflicted with the grammatical norms recognised by Sanskrit scholars of their own time, resulting in declined and conjugated forms that would have been considered erroneous within the linguistic tradition. Many such forms violate Pāṇini’s substitution rules, undermining the systematic coherence of the language and creating significant obstacles to comprehension. In some cases, entire passages remain opaque without prior knowledge of the source. Uncharacteristic consonant clusters, foreign vocabulary and syntax often imitating Avestan result in general obfuscation of the translated text. Consequently, the reader faces different than usual challenges in area of comprehension of a text written in Sanskrit. Despite these challenges, Zoroastrian Sanskrit offers invaluable material for philological inquiry. Its peculiarities illuminate the cultural and religious dynamics of the Parsi community in India, their strategies of linguistic adaptation, and their efforts to safeguard doctrinal integrity within

a new socio-cultural environment. The study of this corpus not only enriches our understanding of Indo-Iranian linguistic interaction but also sheds light on processes of translation, identity formation, and textual transmission that shaped the continuity of Zoroastrian tradition into the modern era.

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