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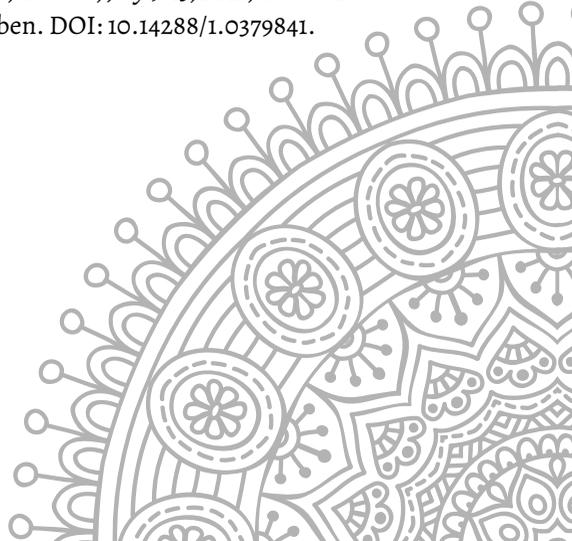
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Scope of Early Sanskrit Usage: A Wider Approach

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Abstract

Sheldon Pollock's stimulating book *Language of The Gods In The World Of Men* has offered numerous new ideas on the nature and the place of Sanskrit in ancient India. While I agree with many of his views, I want to offer a different view on the antiquity of the non-ritual Sanskrit usage, and in doing so I will offer a critique of some of Pollock's ideas. To state it briefly, Pollock advocates a view that Sanskrit usage in Vedic times was pretty much restricted to the domain of ritual, and that only in later or post-Vedic times, and under patronage by certain dynasties, the usage of Sanskrit extended to non-ritual domains and eventually it became a language of the cosmopolis. However, I want to claim that the availability of literature blinds us to a most likely reality of early language use that probably extended more widely beyond the domain of ritual. How does one deduce that conclusion? Towards this aim, I shall offer some methodological solutions. They include the following considerations:

1. Vedic texts present us a ritual, literary and a poetic register. Can such a high register exist in the absence of other registers of usage?
2. One needs to take a close look at Sanskrit vocabulary that is not found in the known Vedic texts, and is recorded by Pāṇini and found in later literature, that has Indo-European cognates.
3. Detecting traces of rare dialects, such as women's usages, in the Vedic texts.
4. Reviewing Pāṇini's description of Sanskrit for non-ritual and yet living areas of Sanskrit usage.

With such approaches, I shall argue that one can detect the existence of wider domains of the usage of Sanskrit beyond ritual during and after the Vedic period.

Keywords: Sanskrit Dialects, Indo-Aryan, Linguistic Variation, Diglossia

1. Need for a Wider Approach

Sheldon Pollock's stimulating book *Language of The Gods in The World of Men* (Pollock 2006) offers numerous new ideas on the nature and the place of Sanskrit in ancient and medieval India. I agree with many of his views. However, while reading the second chapter of his book, I noticed the subtitle "From Liturgy to Literature," and I have gone through his long narrative describing the development of Sanskrit essentially from being a language of liturgy in the Vedic period to a language of literature (*kāvya*), including its appearance in Sanskrit inscriptions *praśastis*. To state it briefly, Pollock advocates a view that Sanskrit usage in Vedic times was pretty much restricted to the domain of ritual, and that only in later or post-Vedic times, and under patronage by certain dynasties, the usage of Sanskrit extended to non-ritual domains such as Sanskrit *kāvya* and eventually it became a language of the cosmopolis. However, I want to point out that the availability of a limited range of texts from ancient India limits us to such a narrower range of early language use that in reality extended far more widely beyond the domain of liturgy or ritual. I am not so much interested in contesting Pollock's views, but rather I would like to use his description of the development of Sanskrit as a starting point for a wider historical introspection into the available evidence about Vedic and Sanskrit to find out what other dimensions of the usage of Sanskrit we can detect beyond the liturgical domain so prominently displayed in the mass of the Vedic texts. This is somewhat of a shift from the genre-oriented perspective of Pollock to the historical linguistics of Vedic and Sanskrit dialectology and variety of contemporaneous registers.

There were two types of Latin: Classical Latin and Vulgar Latin. Classical Latin was used by the educated Romans. It is the one used by the Roman Catholic Church and studied by students around the world. Vulgar Latin was the more common spoken variety used by the common Romans. How and what can we detect about the earliest phase of Vedic Sanskrit known to us? What sort of popular Sanskrit usage existed alongside the liturgical usage that is found in the Vedic texts? How does one deduce the existence of such multiple layers and registers for Sanskrit during the Vedic period? Towards this aim, I shall offer some suggestions.

2. Language of the Vedic Hymns: A Select Special Subset

Vedic texts present us a high ritual, liturgical and especially in the *Ṛgveda* a poetic register. Can such a high elite register exist in the absence of other registers of

usage? One of the verses of the *R̥gveda* describes the process of the poetic/liturgical selection of language:

saktum iva titaunā punanto yatra dhīrā manasā vācam akrata (*R̥gveda* 10.71.2ab).

When the Wise created language with the mind, as if winnowing barley with a sieve...

This is a wonderful description of the process of selecting a special subset from the totality of the linguistic usage, the special subset that was deemed to be more appropriate for addressing the gods during sacrifice. If we look at this description, it tells us that the linguistic usage found in the Vedic texts is this special subset, and not the totality of the linguistic usage which may have been in use in the day-to-day life of the Vedic people. Similarly, the users of this special subset are called *dhīra*, “the Wise.” They are the elites in this society, and they represent a special subset of the users of language, and do not represent the rest of the users of that language, who may be considered to be the common speakers of Vedic Sanskrit and related dialects. Thus, the attested Vedic texts provide us a thin slice of the then current linguistic usage. This is predominantly the domain of Vedic liturgy. But the same passage also clearly tells us that there exists a much larger domain of linguistic usage, a more pedestrian one and used by commoners in their daily life. That domain is available to us mostly indirectly, but its existence is beyond doubt.

3. Indo-European Sanskrit Words not found in Vedic Texts

Granting the Indo-European prehistory of Vedic Sanskrit, how can we find anything about this wider domain of linguistic usage of Vedic Sanskrit and related dialects that must have existed contemporaneously and yet is only rarely attested in the available Vedic texts? One way to infer the existence of such usage that is not attested in Vedic texts is to find examples of Sanskrit vocabulary that are known from the post-Vedic classical grammars and literatures that are of Indo-European origin and yet are not attested in Vedic. For example, consider the verb *pard*, “to fart.” Whitney (1885: 95) says: “Not quotable either in verb-forms or derivatives.” Walde (1927, Band II, 49) lists numerous Indo-European cognates for this verb. Also, see: Mayrhofer (1963: 225). Given its meaning, it is clear why the verb *pardate* would not be found in the select vocabulary of the liturgical texts, and yet it is not only listed in Pāṇini’s *Dhātupāṭha* as *parda kutsite śabde* (Bohtlingk 1887: 61), it has cognates in many modern Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages (see: Turner 1966: 447).

This example indicates that there must have been historical continuity of this expression from its Indo-European prehistory to post-Vedic Sanskrit and Indo-Aryan vernaculars. The fact that *pard* is not attested in the available Vedic texts simply means that this expression was not appropriate for the liturgical context. One cannot imagine that an Indo-European expression somehow was discontinued during the Vedic period and was reintroduced into the post-Vedic usage. This indicates the existence of layers of linguistic usage during the Vedic period that are not part of the Vedic liturgical subset, and yet must have existed contemporaneously in the popular linguistic domain.

4. Prakritisms in Vedic Texts: Implications

The existence of the so-called Prakritisms in the language of the Vedic texts is another indicator of the existence of more popular Indo-Aryan Sanskrit and related dialects contemporary with Vedic Sanskrit. Walter Petersen (1912: 415-6) points out:

In the first place, it is a well-known fact that the Vedic hymns already contain a number of Prakritisms, forms which distinctly belong to the "middle-Indian" period and do not represent the normal status of the Vedic sounds, but are exceptional cases and consequently borrowings from a different dialect. Thus Wackernagel, loc. cit., quotes as examples words with a cerebral, e.g., *kāṭā* "Tiefe"; *kartā* "Grube"; words with *ṇ* (< *n*), e.g., *maṇi* "Perle"; words with *ṣ* (< *ṛs*, *rs*, *ḷs*, *ls*), e.g., AV. *kaṣati* "kratzen" ...; *prāuga* =**prāyuga*, *tītau* =**tītasu*, etc. To quote Wackernagel himself: "Daneben (sc. der priesterlichen Sprache) aber war (wenigstens in bestimmten Volksschichten) schon zu der Zeit, da die uns erhaltenen Hymnen entstanden, eine Sprache gebräuchlich, die über jene priesterliche Sprache weit hinaus entwickelt war, und die Haupteigenheiten der ältesten Phase des Mittelindisch, der sogenannten Palistufe, an sich trug." The conclusion therefore cannot be avoided that during the period of composition of the Vedic hymns two distinct groups of Indian dialects were developed and separated by an uncrossable gulf, on the one hand the priestly language of the Veda, on the other hand the popular dialects, which later became "Pali" and "Prakrit."

While Petersen talks about the "uncrossable gulf" between the priestly language of the Veda and the popular dialects, the very fact of the existence of Prakritisms in the Vedic texts seems to suggest otherwise, namely there was rather a close relationship between the language of the Veda and the popular

dialects, so that words could easily pass from one to the other. This implies diglossia going back all the way to the Vedic period. If the very select register of the Vedic liturgy already contains Prakritisms, the home language of these Vedic priests – and more so the language of the commoners of that period – must have had even more Prakritisms. Whether such dialects were Sanskrit or Prakrit is a mere question of nomenclature, but the very existence of such multiple dialectal layers of Indo-Aryan during Vedic times seems unquestionable. Tedesco (1944: 215) points out:

The three forms of the late hymn RV 1.191: *marāti*, *marāma*, *maranti*, differ from the others, and from the general deponent character of the verb in Sanskrit, Iranian, and Latin, by their active inflection. This feature is already Middle Indic (cf. Pāli *mīyati* etc.), one of the oldest definite testimonies for this Middle Indic movement. Middle Indic tendencies sometimes come out more clearly in the popular Rigveda and Atharvaveda than in later Sanskrit texts, because the language was not yet standardized.

Several other scholars have dealt with this phenomenon of Prakritisms in the Veda. For a comprehensive discussion, See: Grierson (1888), Emeneau (1966), Devasthali (1970), Elizarenkova (1989), Pinault (1989), and Witzel (1989) and (1990).

5. Vedic Etymologies suggesting Prakrit-like mother-tongues

Mehendale (1963: 40) suggests that the Upaniṣadic etymology of *puruṣa* as *puri śete* is most likely based on the fact that the Prakrit cognates for Sanskrit *puruṣa* are mostly like *purisa*, *puliśa*. This suggests that the home dialects of the authors of some of the Upaniṣads were closely related to what we know as Middle Indic or Prakrits. The same conclusion can be reached with other pieces of evidence.

6. Other Registers of Speech in Vedic Usage: Women's Language

There is another source of information regarding some different registers of Vedic Sanskrit coexisting with the main liturgical register. To take just one example, the Indo-Iranian affix *-ka-* has been studied by Jamison with reference to its occurrences in Iranian, Vedic, Sanskrit and Prakrit texts. She remarks (2009: 312):

I will begin by stating my conclusions in advance, since they are, in my opinion, the least interesting part of the paper: the extremely common secondary **-ka-* suffix of Indo-Iranian (and indeed the **-ko-* suffix of PIE, however we want to represent it phonologically), generally described as a

diminutive or the like, is really a feature of linguistic register rather than of semantics or grammatical function. It belonged to a popular/affective/informal level, which is not regularly represented in the high-culture texts of the most ancient stages of the languages, but which breaks through occasionally in them, often precisely to signal a striking change in tone and style.

She further adds (2009: 213-4):

Other kinds of evidence can be adduced to support the view that Indo-Iranian *-ka-* was far more common in speech than its relatively restrained representation in the texts of the oldest stages of Indo-Aryan and Iranian might suggest. One most important piece of such evidence is the unbelievably prolific growth the suffix shows in the “middle” periods of both branches, Middle Indic and Middle Iranian. Since speakers of, say, Pāli and Middle Persian were not in linguistic contact, it is hard to explain why the middle-period languages on both sides simply explode with *-ka* forms—unless the suffix had already been regularly on the lips and tongues of Proto-Indo-Iranian speakers when they were not aiming at the high and dignified style of praise hymns or royal pronouncements.

Jamison further points out that the *-ka* affix is to be found particularly in passages that represent women’s speech, where words like *aśvaka* are used to refer to the horse in the *Aśvamedha* (TS VII.4.19.2h; VS XXIII.22). The same passages also contain other rare vocabulary like the verb *yabhati* “cohabit,” which like the verb *pardate* “fart” is otherwise not to be found in the liturgical language. Such evidence points to the presence of other registers, like the women’s register, contemporary with the liturgical register which is largely that of elite males. For further details, see Jamison 1996, 2008 and 2009.

Within the Veda itself, segments like the *Uṣas* Hymns, the Frog Hymn, the *Vṛṣākapi* Hymn, or the Quail Hymn indicate slightly different registers, and one needs to recognize that the liturgical register itself is not one single homogeneous register. The ritualistic prose of the *Yajurveda* and the poetic hymns of the *Ṛgveda* will not fit into one and the same register, and there may be sub-registers within the poetic hymns of the *Ṛgveda*.

7. Sub-Regional Variation within the Veda

Thomas Burrow (1955: 31-2) pointed out:

There are dialectal differences between the Vedic language of the North West and the later classical language of Madhyadeśa. The most striking of these is that the Vedic language turns *l* into *r* whereas the classical language, to a large extent, preserves the distinction between *r* and *l*. This Vedic feature is characteristic of the whole of Iranian, and furthermore it can be traced in the Aryan of the Near East and in some Aryan words in Finno-Ugrian. Clearly the fact that the more easterly dialects of early Indo-Aryan have avoided this change indicates a comparatively early separation from the main body, in comparison with the Vedic dialect which has undergone this change in common with the rest of Aryan before being introduced into India.

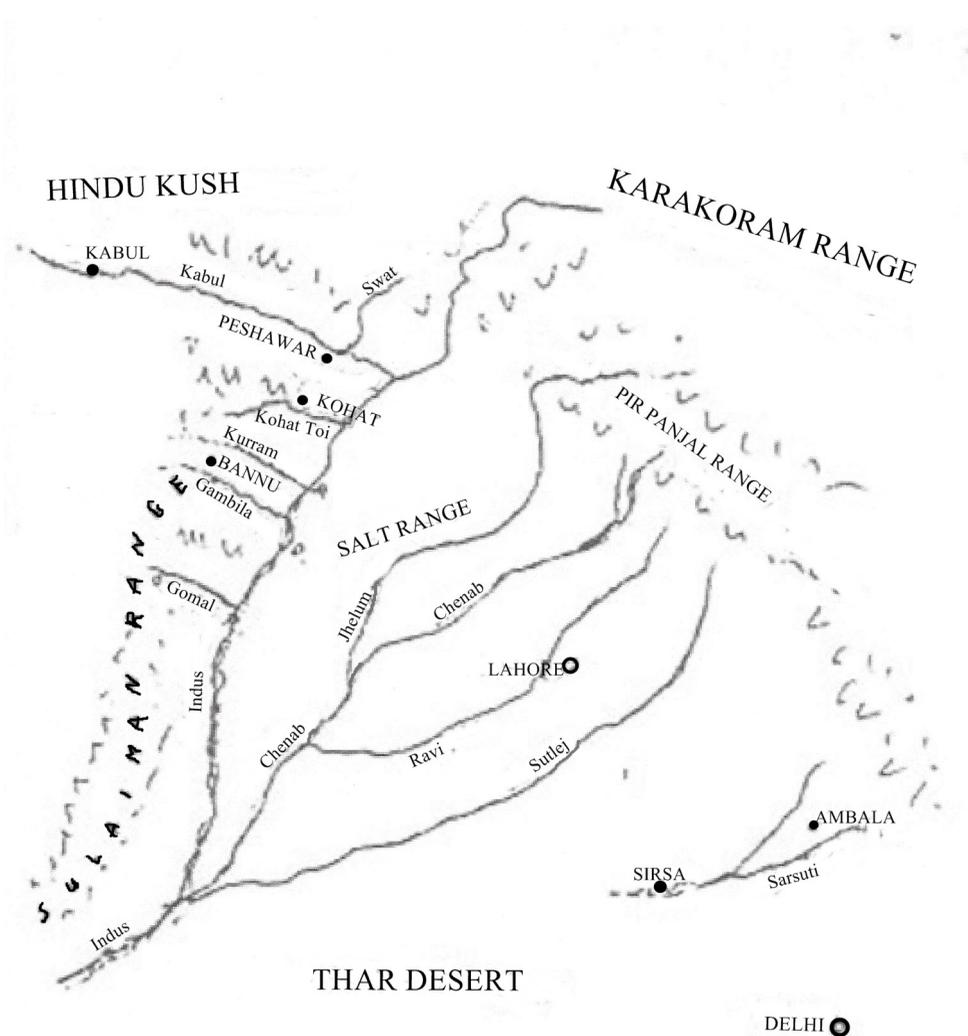
Are there different linguistic layers within a single Vedic text like the *Ṛgveda*? Scharfe (2016) shows how the different family books of the *Ṛgveda* come from somewhat different geographical zones ranging from the river Kubhā in the northwest to Gaṅgā and Yamunā in the east. With an insightful analysis of the names of rivers, animals, mountains etc. besides peculiarities of grammatical and phonetic variation, Scharfe shows how these different Maṅḍalas of the *Ṛgveda* belong to different micro-geographies within the region from Afghanistan to Haryana. His demonstration suggests that originally there must have been significant dialectal differences between different Vedic communities, and many of these dialectal differences were perhaps leveled when the hymns composed by different families from different regions came to be collected into a single Saṃhitā. For instance, Scharfe points out (2016: 231):

Two decades ago I pointed out that a dialect feature divided maṅḍalas IV, V, and VI (and perhaps VIII) from maṅḍalas II, III, and VII: the former group has *dhakṣi* “burn!” and *dhukṣata* “milk!”, the latter *dakṣi* “burn!” and *dúdukṣan* “desirous to milk.”

The micro-geographies of the different family Maṅḍalas so minutely described by Scharfe probably suggest the existence of somewhat different dialects, though closely related to each other. It is important to note that the variation like *dakṣi* ~ *dhakṣi* survived even after the process of Saṃhitā-formation, while many other variations may have been lost in that process. For a most re-

cent extensive discussion of Vedic and Sanskrit dialectology, see Smith (2017). As far as the discussion of Vedic and Sanskrit dialectology, he divides his discussion into Pre-Vedic, Western Vedic, Central Vedic, Eastern Vedic, Northwestern Vedic and Other Sanskrits. In any case, the discussions by Scharfe (2016) and Witzel (1989 and 1990) provide the most minute analysis of the dialectal variation during the Vedic period.

Figure 1: Map in Scharfe (2016, 456) [with permission of the author]



8. Does kāvya truly begin with Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*, or is there kāvya as far back as in the *Ṛgveda* and *Atharvaveda*?

One of the important arguments in Pollock's book is if kāvya is truly of post-Vedic origin. Pollock recognizes that often the Vedic texts refer to composer ṛṣis with the word *kavi*, and yet he emphasizes that the Indian tradition recognizes Vālmiki as Ādi-Kavi, and this suggests that the Indian tradition itself sees a beginning of a new kind of literature with Vālmiki. There is some truth to this perception in the tradition of Kāvyaśāstra where the Vedic texts are largely seen as issuing direct commands (*śrutisammīta*), while the advice given in kāvya is seen as a sugar-coated pill, advice in the mode of a beloved (*kāntāsammīta*). It is this sugar-coating that distinguishes the command-issuing Vedas from the sweet poetry in the wide spread opinion of the Sanskrit Kāvyaśāstra. However, such a characterization of the Vedic literature applies more realistically to the Yajurvedic texts with the language of sacrificial injunctions, rather than to the language of the *Ṛgveda*, which can be highly poetic as in the hymns addressed to Uṣas. A significant number of Indian and Western scholars have seen poets and poetry in the hymns of the *Ṛgveda* and *Atharvaveda* – see Elizarenkova (1995), Shende (1967), Raja (1963), Tripathi (2007), Tripathi (2012), Mainkar (1977), Paczkowski (2016) and Thornton (2015). For the Indo-European background of Vedic poetics, see Watkins (1997). The poetic register of the *Ṛgvedic* hymns needs to be distinguished from the liturgical register of the *Yajurveda*. Jamison (2007) has offered an extensive analysis of the poetic aspects of the *Ṛgveda*. Following this line of understanding, the latest 2014 translation of the *Ṛgveda* by Stephanie Jamison and Joel Brereton is titled *The Rigveda: The Earliest Religious Poetry of India*. The continuity of Vedic meters like triṣṭubh into the *Mahābhārata* is another sign of the Vedic poetic registers flowing into the epic poetry, and some scholars like Smith (1975) have claimed that the triṣṭubh portions of the *Mahābhārata* constitute the oldest core of that epic. This indicates likely continuity between Vedic and epic literatures than a completely new beginning of kāvya.

9. Multiple Registers in Vedic Texts

Within the liturgical register of the Veda, there are indeed significantly different sub-registers. Among them must be recognized the medical sub-register. Certainly, in terms of its specialized vocabulary, this register as seen primarily in the hymns of the *Atharvaveda* is a distinct linguistic domain, requiring specialized expertise not available to other Vedic priests. In all likelihood, there was a conti-

nuity of the medical/magical register from the hymns of the *Atharvaveda* to the more systematic works of Āyurveda (see Bahulkar 1994).

10. Early Beginnings of Itihāsa and Purāṇa Literature during the Vedic Period

In the 15th *kāṇḍa* of the Śaunakīya *Atharvaveda*, the so called *Vrātyakāṇḍa*, we have clear evidence of communities of Vrātyas. The hymn 15.2, for instance, refers to the Vrātyas moving to the eastern direction (15.2.1: *sa udatiṣṭhat sa prācīm diśam anu vyacalat*). Verse 15.2.5 (*śraddhā puṃścalī mitro māgadho ...*) and several subsequent verses refer to the eastern region of Magadha and the local culture of Puṃścalī and Māgadha as part of the culture associated with the Vrātyas. This already takes us to the eastern margins of the Vedic area, as compared to the northwestern regions reflected in the *Ṛgveda*, and into dialects of the east. Instead of using the retroflexed form *pariṣkanda*, the Śaunakīya *Atharvaveda* 15.3.10 uses the eastern form *pariskanda*. Pāṇini (*pariskandaḥ prācyabharateṣu*, P. 8.3.75) explicitly recognizes this eastern tendency for this expression.

Verses 15.6.11-12 (*tam itihāsaś ca purāṇaṃ ca gāthās ca nārāśaṃsīs cānuvyacalan /11/ itihāsasya ca vai sa purāṇasya ca gāthānām ca nārāśaṃsīnām ca priyaṃ dhāma bhavati ya evaṃ veda /12*) refer to a whole range of popular literature, namely Itihāsa, Purāṇa, Gāthā and Nārāśaṃsī. While the literature referred to here in the *Atharvaveda* is the precursor of the epics and Purāṇas that became available in later times, and its early forms not entirely preserved for us, such references in the *Atharvaveda* indicate the existence of popular levels of literature from very early times, and the existence of related different linguistic registers for such literature different from the strictly liturgical literature. Certainly, such literatures and the registers associated with them are contemporaneous with the hymns of the *Atharvaveda*, but not preserved for us from those ancient times, except as occasional snippets like the Gāthās referring to the sacrifice of Janamejaya in the *Brāhmaṇas*. Janamejaya is mentioned as a great king and conqueror in a number of late Vedic texts. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VIII.21) informs us that his priest Tura Kāvaṣeya anointed him with the great anointing of Indra. The *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* mentions that he performed an *Aśvamedha* (horse sacrifice) at a place named Āsandīvat. The prominent role played by the Kuru dynasty in the consolidation of the *Ṛgvedic* texts is discussed by Witzel (1995). This also suggests some significant continuities from the Vedic traditions to the traditions recorded in the *Mahābhārata*.

11. Evidence from Pāṇini for non-liturgical domains of Sanskrit usage

Pāṇini's rules provide us some indication of different registers of Sanskrit usage. For example, P.4.3.110 (*pārāśarya-śilālibhyāṃ bhikṣu-naṭasūtrayoḥ*) says: "The taddhita affix *ṆinI* is introduced after the nominal stems *pārāśarya* and *śilālin* to designate respectively the Bhikṣusūtra and Naṭasūtra." It talks about the existence of a Bhikṣusūtra and a Naṭasūtra. The pre-Pāṇinian existence of these two genres of literatures takes us beyond the realm of liturgy into the realms of renunciation and theater.

P.8.4.48 (*nāḍinyākrośe putrasya*) says: "Gemination does not replace *t* of *putra* in composition with *adinī* when indicating insult or censure." This rule refers to a feature of colloquial Sanskrit used as a home language. While cursing a woman, the expression *putrādinī*, "Eater of Son," does not have doubling of *t*, while describing something like a mother cat eating her cub the same expression could have the doubling. Again, we are given a glimpse of a realm of Sanskrit usage that is part of the home language and not related to any liturgy.

P.8.2.83 (*pratyabhivāde 'śūdre*) says: "A prolated vowel which is high-pitched replaces the syllable beginning with the last vowel of an utterance when responding to a respectful greeting, except in the case of a Śūdra." The modes of responding to greetings from various social layers, Śūdras and non-Śūdras, take us into a domain of widespread popular usage, rather than anything restricted to liturgy.

There is evidence of regional variation of Sanskrit usage in Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. For example, P.8.3.75 (*pariskandaḥ prācyabharateṣu*) tells us that the expression *pariskanda*, without retroflexion, is current among the Eastern Bharatas, while the retroflexed expression *pariṣkanda* was used elsewhere. P.4.2.109 (*udīcyagrāmāc ca bahvaco 'ntodāttāt*) tells us that the taddhita affix *aÑ* is introduced after a polysyllabic nominal stem designating a village name in the north ending in a high-pitched vowel to denote previously unspecified meanings. There are references to eastern and northern usages in many other rules of Pāṇini. Pāṇini also refers to nine previous grammarians who record specific usages known to them, possibly referring to local dialectal variation.

12. Not so well-known dialects of Sanskrit recorded by other ancient grammarians

There are some interesting indications of dialects of Sanskrit in the few surviving quotations from grammarians other than Pāṇini. For example, P.6.1.77 (*iko yaṇ aci*) says that the sounds *i*, *u*, *ṛ*, and *ḷ* are respectively substituted by *y*, *v*, *r*, and *l*, if followed by a dissimilar vowel. On the other hand, a surviving opinion of Vyāḍi and Gālava says that, in the same environment, *y*, *v*, *r*, and *l* are inserted after *i*, *u*, *ṛ*, and *ḷ*, respectively, (cf. *ikāṃ yaṇbhir vyavadhānaṃ vyāḍi-gālavayoḥ*, cited in Puruṣottamadeva's *Bhāṣāvṛtti* on P.6.1.77). With Pāṇini's rule as it stands, we can derive the word *vyākaraṇa* from the combination of *vi+ā+kaṛaṇa*. However, in that case, the derivation of the secondary form *vaiyākaraṇa* from *vyākaraṇa* becomes irregular, and Pāṇini needs to provide an exception rule that says that there is an insertion of *ai* after *v* in this derivation (cf. P.7.3.3: *na yvābhyām padāntābhyām pūrvau tu tābhām ai*). On the other hand, if we follow the opinion of Vyāḍi and Gālava, the combination of *vi+ā+kaṛaṇa* results in *viyākaraṇa*, rather than *vyākaraṇa*. Then the secondary form *vaiyākaraṇa* can be derived naturally from *viyākaraṇa* without the need for any exception rule for insertion of *ai*. What we need to note is the somewhat uneven nature of Sanskrit known to Pāṇini, which looks like an interesting mixture of dialects. Our understanding of other dialects clears some of the difficulties in understanding this unevenness.

13. Regionality of Pāṇini's description: Pāṇini as a Frontier Grammarian

I have pointed out in a previous publication (Deshpande 1983) that Pāṇini's dialect of Sanskrit is in some sense a dialect from the frontier of subcontinental India. Pāṇini's rule for the use of gerunds (*samānakartṛkayoḥ pūrvakāle ktvā*, P. 3.4.21) requires that the gerund clause and the main clause must have the same agent. However, no such condition is laid down in his rule that prescribes the use of the infinitive *-tum* in the sense of one action being the purpose of another action (*tumunṅvulau kriyāyām kriyārthāyām*, P. 3.3.10). I have pointed out that in most of the Sanskrit literature known to us, the infinitive construction seems to follow the same condition as that of the gerund. Then why did Pāṇini not include it in his rule for the infinitives? I have shown that examples like *vaidyaḥ rogiṇe auśadham pātuṃ dadyāt*, "The doctor should give the medicine to the patient to drink," with different agents for the main clause and the infinitive clause, are

found in the older chapters of the *Carakasamhitā*, but not in the chapters added later by Dṛḍhabala, and rare in other Ayurvedic works. Older chapters of *Carakasamhitā* are believed to originate in the region of Gāndhāra, a region close to Pāṇini's town of Śalātura in the Swat valley.

Discussing the situation of Sanskrit described by Pāṇini in relation to the language of the Vedas and other contemporary Indo-Aryan languages, Kulikov (2013: 59) says:

There are certain discrepancies between the forms and constructions prescribed by Pāṇinian grammarians and the forms and constructions that are actually attested in the Vedic corpus (a part of which is traditionally believed to underlie Pāṇinian grammar). Concentrating on one particular aspect of the Old Indian verbal system, viz. the morphology and syntax of present formations with the suffix *-ya-*, I will provide a few examples of such discrepancy. I will argue that the most plausible explanation of this mismatch can be found in the peculiar sociolinguistic situation in Ancient India: a number of linguistic phenomena described by grammarians did not appear in Vedic texts but existed within the semi-colloquial scholarly discourse of the learned community of Sanskrit scholars (comparable to Latin scholarly discourse in Medieval Europe). Some of these phenomena may result from the influence of Middle Indic dialects spoken by Ancient Indian scholars, thus representing syntactic and morphological calques from their native dialects onto the Sanskrit grammatical system.

Such interactions of the users of Sanskrit with “Middle Indic dialects spoken by Ancient Indian scholars,” seen even more explicitly in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, indicate a wider usage of Sanskrit than the purely liturgical use, where one would expect simply repetition of the received formulas.

14. Regional Variation noted by Yāska and Patañjali

Yāska, the author of the *Nirukta*, also describes regional variation in the usage of Sanskrit. For instance, *Nirukta* 2.1.2 says: *athāpi bhāṣikebhyo dhātubhyo naigamāḥ kṛto bhāṣyante ... athāpi naigamebhyo bhāṣikāḥ ... prakṛtaya evaikeṣu bhāṣyante vikṛtaya ekeṣu / śavatir gatikarmā kambojeṣv eva bhāṣyate ... vikāramasyāryeṣu bhāṣante śava iti / dātir lavanārthe prācyeṣu dātram udīcyeṣu /* – “Further, primary forms alone are employed (in speech) among some people; secondary forms among others. The verb *śavati*, meaning to go, is used by the Kambojas only. ... Its modified form *śava* is

used by the Aryans. The verb *dāti*, in the sense to cut, is employed by the people of east, while the people of the north use the noun *dātra* (sickle).”

A more expanded version of this passage is found in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* (Kielhorn edn, Vol I, p. 9): *etasmin atimahati śabdasya prayogaviṣaye te te śabdās tatra tatra niyataviṣayā dṛśyante / tayathā / śavatir gatikarmā kambojeṣv eva bhāṣito bhavati vikāra enam āryā bhāṣante śava iti / hammatiḥ surāṣṭreṣu raṃhatiḥ prācya-madhyeṣu gamim eva tv āryāḥ prayuñjate / dātir lavanārthe prācyeṣu dātramudīcyeṣu*, “In this very wide domain of the usage of words, particular words are found restricted in certain regions. Such as, the verb *śavati*, in the sense to go, is used only among the Kambojas. The Āryas use the modified noun *śava*. The verb *hammati* is used in Surāṣṭra, *raṃhati* is used in the middle region and the east, and the Āryas only use the verb *gacchati*. The verb *dāti*, in the sense to cut, is used in the east, while the derived nominal form *dātra* (sickle) is used in the north.”

Thieme’s articles (1937, 1938, etc.) draw our attention to the connection of Sanskrit usage to the usage in the Iranian borderland. I have earlier pointed to some aspects of Pāṇini’s grammar as being due to Pāṇini being a resident of this border region (Deshpande 1983), and more recently, Hock (2012) has again drawn our attention to the difference of usage between the frontier region of Pāṇini and the Madhyadeśa of Patañjali.

Such regional variation in the usage suggests existence of regional dialects of Sanskrit such that the differences were clearly noticeable to the grammarians. I have earlier pointed out the existence of dialects even as regards the syntax of ditransitive verbs in Sanskrit as seen from the usage in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* (Deshpande 1992).

15. Existence of Sanskrit Interlanguage

Patañjali reports that if we do not explicitly study grammar, we will speak incorrectly like girls or women. The *Mahābhāṣya* on P. 1.4.21 (Kielhorn edn, Vol. I, p. 322) tells us: *dṛśyate khalv api viprayogaḥ / tad yathā / akṣīṇi me darśanīyāni / pādā me sukumārā iti* / – “Some contrary usage is indeed seen. For example: [A girl says] ‘My eyes are beautiful, and my feet are delicate.’” Here, the girl who has not learned the proper Sanskrit usage uses Sanskrit plural forms to refer to her eyes and feet, where she should have used dual forms. However, this Prakritized usage of Sanskrit was possible because the category of dual had disappeared in Prakrits. So, a sort of Sanskritized Prakrit or a Prakritized Sanskrit usage had emerged at the popular level (see Houben 2018).

The *Mahābhāṣya* on Śivasūtra 2, (Kielhorn edn, Vol. I, p. 19) remarks: *aśaktyā kayā cit brāhmaṇyā ṛtakaḥ iti prayoktavye ṭtakaḥ iti prayuktam | tasya anukaraṇam | brāhmaṇī ṭtakaḥ iti āha | kumārī ṭtakaḥ iti āha iti* – “Due to lack of capacity, some Brahmin woman said *ṭtaka* instead of *ṛtaka*. Its imitation: The Brahmin woman said, ‘*ṭtaka*.’ The girl said, ‘*ṭtaka*.’” This simply suggests that even Brahmin women and girls in a region like Magadha replaced *r* in Sanskrit with *l*, a feature commonly seen in the Prakrit in this easterly region, cf. *rājā* appearing as *lājā* in Magadhan inscriptions of Aśoka.

The story of the sages named Yarvāṇastarvāṇaḥ in Patañjali’s *Mahābhāṣya* (Kielhorn edn, Vol. I, p. 11) is very instructive regarding the interaction between Sanskrit and Prakrit. These sages are so called because in their non-ritual use of language they used the Prakrit expressions *yarvāṇa* and *tarvāna* for the proper Sanskrit expressions *yad vā naḥ* and *tad vā naḥ*. However, Patañjali says that they used the proper Sanskrit expressions during the sacrificial ritual (*yājñe karmaṇi punar nāpabhāṣante*). Patañjali does not fault them and explains that the restriction on using proper Sanskrit applies only to the domain of ritual, and there is no such requirement outside of ritual (*yājñe karmaṇi sa niyamaḥ*). This hints at bilingualism among users/speakers of Sanskrit, who are living in a Prakrit speaking world. While they are assiduously trying to maintain grammatical Sanskrit in the domain of ritual, the use of Prakrit elsewhere cannot but affect their use and perception of Sanskrit. This also suggests the possibility that Sanskrit, beyond the realm of conservative ritual use, was probably even more affected by the Prakrits. This says something about the non-liturgical domains of Sanskrit being potentially more affected by the use of local Prakrits by the users of Sanskrit.

This sort of “interlanguage” use of Prakritized Sanskrit found in Patañjali is the precursor of the large-scale use of hybrid or approximative forms of Sanskrit in Buddhist and Jain traditions and in inscriptions. The origin of such intermediate varieties of Sanskrit is clearly not in the liturgical Sanskrit of the Vedas, but in the popular dialects that were not recorded during the period of the Vedas or Pāṇini but must have existed contemporaneously.

16. Conclusion

With such approaches, I suggest that a description of the development of Sanskrit as “From Liturgy to Literature” is rather too narrow and needs to be expanded. The provided evidence shows that the usage of Sanskrit had a much wider scope with multiple regional and social variations and different registers.

Only some of these were captured in the Vedic literature as it has come down to us, and in post-Pāṇinian time, again only the literary Sanskrit has come down to us. This hides the reality of the wider scope of the usage of Sanskrit, much of it in its orality. However, fortunately we now have sufficient scattered evidence still available that allows us to tease out the details of these multiple registers and domains of the usage of Sanskrit and thus we can get a much more realistic idea of the development and transmission of this language.

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