

Sanskrit

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Course Outline

Day 1: Sanskrit in its Indo-Iranian context; Sanskrit and its position in South Asia

Day 2: Phonology – synchronic and diachronic

Day 3: Morphology

Day 3: Syntax

Sanskrit in its Indo-Iranian context

Indo-Iranian – Indo-Aryan, Iranian (Avestan, Old Persian), Nuristani



Indo-Iranian

- Closest-knit subgroup of Indo-European
 - Sound changes shared by Indo-Iranian ($*\check{e}/\check{a}/\check{o} > \check{a}$; palatalization)
- Earliest texts (Vedic and Avestan) nearly commutable

təm amavaṇtəm yazatəm
sūrəm dāmōhu səvištəm
miθrəm yazāi zaoθrābyō (Yt 10.6)

tám ámavantam yajatám
śúram dhāmasu śáviṣṭham
mitráṁ yajai hótrābhyah

‘Mithra, that strong mighty angel, most beneficent to all creatures, I will worship with oblations.’ (Transliteration and translation according to Jackson 1892)

‘I will worship with oblations that strong Mitra, to be worshiped, the hero, strongest in the abodes.’

- Avestan is closer than Old Persian to Vedic/Sanskrit, chronologically and geographically
 - Like Sanskrit, Avestan has a triple sibilant contrast (Skt. *ś ṣ s*, Av. *š̌, š̍, s*, later Av. also *š̍̌*)
 - There is also the split *asura/ahura* vs. *deva/daēva*

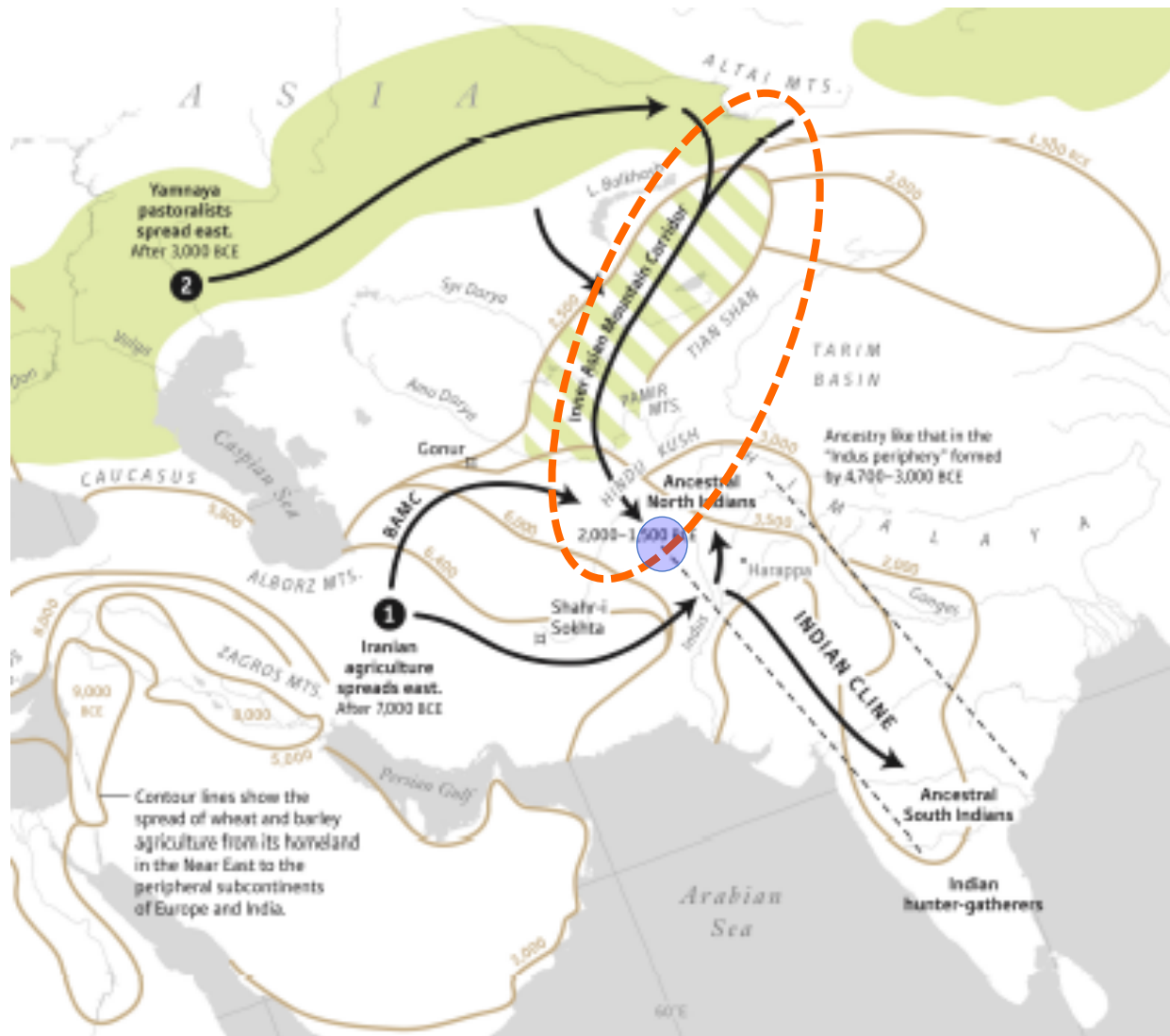
RV *deva* ~ *asura*

Later Vedic *deva* vs. *asura* ≈ anti-*deva*

Avest. *ahura* vs. *daēva* ≈ anti-*ahura*

Sanskrit and its position in South Asia

- The earliest attestation of Sanskrit
 - General view: Vedic (esp. Rig Vedic)
 - Conventional date: ca. 1500 BC $\pm$ a few centuries
 - Recent genomic evidence supports a migration into South Asia around 1700 BC



From: Vagheesh M. Narasimhan et al. 2018. Genomic formation of South and Central Asia. BioRxiv Preprint, 31 March 2018. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1101/292581>

- Problems:
 - Oral composition and transmission
 - No need to assume that Vedic textual tradition only started after migration to South Asia
 - “Mitanni”: Mid 2nd millennium BC (eastern Asia Minor)



- “Mitanni”: Mid 2nd millennium BC (eastern Asia Minor)
- (Proto-)Indo-Aryan names of rulers and gods in Hurrian-language documents (e.g. *Intara* : Ved. *Indra*)
- Kikkuli (horse trainer, ca. 1400 BC): numerals of Indo-Aryan origin (e.g. *panza* : Ved. *pañca* ‘5’, *aika* : Ved. *eka* ‘1’ vs. Av. *aēva*)
- But a case can be made for (Proto-)Indo-Iranian origin

Even *aika/eka* vs. Iran. *aiva-* can be resolved, since Vedic also has *eva* ‘only’, suggesting a PIr. variation *aika* ~ *aiva*, with later specializations in Indo-Aryan vs. Iranian`

- The earliest attestation of Sanskrit – Conclusions
 - An exact date for the start of Vedic/Sanskrit tradition cannot be determined
 - “Mitanni” is not part of that tradition
 - The convential date of 1500 BC ($\pm$ a few centuries) is close enough

Outline of a history of Sanskrit and Indo-Aryan I:

(Mansion 1931, Renou 1956, Wackernagel 1957: Einleitung)

The linguistic chronology

– Rig Veda	}		}	
– Atharva Veda				
– Other Vedic Saṃhitās (mantra portions)	}	Vedic		
– Brāhmaṇas			}	Sanskrit
– Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads	}			(Old IAr.)
– Post-Vedic: Classical Sanskrit and Epic Sanskrit (Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa)				
– Pali	}			
– Prakrit				Middle IAr.
– Apabhraṃśa	}			
– Bangla, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Romani, etc.				Modern IAr.

	Rig- Vedic	Atharva Vedic	Sāma Vedic	Yajur Vedic Black White
Samhitās (Early Vedic, ca. 1500 – 1000 BC)	RV	AV	(SV)	MS, TS VS
Brāhmaṇas (ca. 1000 – 700 BC)	AB, KB		JB	TB ŚB
Āraṇyakas/Early Upaniṣads; Sūtras (ca. 700-500 BC)	KU		ChU, JUB	BAU

Abbreviations

AB	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa	MS	Maitrāyaṇi Samhitā
AV	Atharva Veda	RV	Rig Veda Samhitā
BAU	Bṛhad-Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad	ŚB	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
ChU	Chāndogya Upaniṣad	SV	Sāma Veda
KB	Kauṣitaki Brāhmaṇa	TB	Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa
KU	Kauṣitaki (Brāhmaṇa) Upaniṣad	TS	Taittirīya Samhitā
JB	Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa	VS	Vājasaneyi Samhitā
JUB	Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa		

- Support: Linguistic change
 - Gradual throughout history of Sanskrit/Old Indo-Aryan (e.g. simplification of inflectional system (e.g. RV INS.PL *-ais* ~ *-ebhis* vs. later *-ais*; loss of accent system in Post-Vedic)
 - More radical changes between Old Indo-Aryan and Middle Indo-Aryan; e.g.

Sanskrit	Pali	later MIAr
<i>sapta</i> ‘7’	} <i>satta</i>	
<i>sakta</i> ‘able’		
<i>śapta</i> ‘(ac)cursed’		
<i>kr̥ta</i> ‘done; deed’	<i>kita/kaṭa</i>	<i>ki(y)a</i>
<i>sapta</i> ‘7’	<i>satta</i>	
<i>śapta</i> ‘(ac)cursed’	<i>satta</i>	
<i>teṣu</i> ‘among those’	<i>tesu</i>	

Outline of a history of Sanskrit and Indo-Aryan II

The social/textual chronology

– Textual history

	Rig-Vedic	Atharva Vedic	Sāma Vedic	Yajur Vedic Black White
Samhitās (Early Vedic, ca. 1500 – 1000 BC)	RV ↓ ←	AV ↓ ←	(SV) ←	MS, TS ↓ VS ↓
Brāhmaṇas (ca. 1000 – 700 BC)	AB, KB ←		JB ↓ ←	TB ↓ ŚB ↓
Āraṇyakas/Early Upaniṣads; Sūtras (ca. 700-500 BC)	KU ←		ChU, JUB ↓ ←	BAU ↓

– **MIAr. Features in the Rig Veda and in later Vedic**

vikāṭa ‘ugly’ : *vi-kṛ-ta* ‘made apart, disfigured’
kitava ‘gambler’ : **kṛ-ta-va-* ‘having the kṛta, the lucky throw’

maṇi ‘jewel’ vs. Av. *maⁱni*
cf. *manas-* ‘mind’ MIAr. *maṇa(s)-*

gr̥bh-ṇā-ti (RV) : *gr̥h-ṇā-ti* (later Vedic and Post-Vedic) ‘seizes’
dhā- ‘put’ : *hi-ta-* (RV+) ‘put PFV.PPL’
**jhu-ta-* : *hu-ta-* ‘offered PFV.PPL’

(All **jh* have changed to *h*; *jh* only found in onomatopoeia)
cf. *bhavati* ‘is’ MIAr. *hoti*

- Hence concern with linguistic “purity”

*imé yé nārvān ná parás cáranti
ná brāhmaṇāso ná sutékarāsaḥ
tá eté **vācam abhipádyā pāpáyā**
sirís tántram tanvate áprajajñayaḥ (RV 10.71.9)*

‘Those who here do not come close or far, non-brahmins, not acting in the Soma ritual, they **use speech in a bad way** and, ignorant (or useless), they spread the waters as their web.’

*te 'surā āttavacaso he lavo he lava iti vadantaḥ parābabhūvuḥ ||
tatrainām api vācam ūduḥ | upajijñāsyām sa mlecchas tasmān na
brāhmaṇo mlecched asuryā haiṣā vāg* (ŚB 3.2.1.23-24)

‘The Asuras, bereft of (pure) speech, saying *he lavo he lavaḥ* (instead of *he (a)rayo he (a)rayaḥ*), were defeated. At that point they spoke this very speech, (which is) unintelligible. **That is a barbarism. Therefore a brahmin should not barbarize,** (for) this speech is of the Asuras.’

- A consequence of linguistic purism – phonetics (prātiśākhyaś/śikṣāś and vyākaraṇa ‘grammar’)

*te 'surāḥ | te 'surā helayo helaya iti kurvantaḥ parābabhūvuḥ | tasmād
brāhmaṇena na mlecchitavai nāpabhāṣitavai | **mleccho ha vā eṣa yad
apaśabdaḥ | mlecchā mā bhūma + ity adhyeyaṁ vyākaraṇam***

‘The Asuras – The Asuras, saying *helayo helayaḥ*, were defeated.
Therefore a brahmin is not to barbarize, not to use ungrammatical
language. **Ungrammatical language is barbarism. So that we may
not be barbarians, (formal) grammar should be studied.**
(Mahābhāṣya on Pāṇini 1.1.1)

Conclusions:

- Sanskrit and (an early form of) Prakrit must have coexisted from the earliest times
- Their early relation may have been similar to “standard” and “vernacular”

- Later evidence for coexistence of Sanskrit and Middle Indo-Aryan – diglossia
 - Classical Sanskrit drama:
 - with a few exceptions, Sanskrit only for educated male protagonists
 - different forms of Prakrit for all others

From Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitram*

Sūtradhāra (the stage manager)

<i>purāṇam</i>	<i>ity</i>	<i>eva</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>sādhu</i>	<i>sarvaṁ</i>	
old.NOM.SG.N	QUOT	EMPH	NEG	good.NOM.SG.N	all.NOM.SG.N	
<i>na</i>	<i>ca+</i>	<i>api</i>	<i>kāvyaṁ</i>	<i>navam</i>	<i>ity</i>	<i>avadyam</i>
NEG	&	also	poem.NOM.SG.N	new	QUOT	imperfect.NOM.SG.N

‘Not everything is good because it is old, and neither is a poem imperfect because it is new.’

Vakulāvalikā (a servant)

Pkt. <i>halā komudie</i>	<i>kudo</i>	<i>de</i>	<i>iaṁ dhīradā</i>	
Skt. <i>sakhi kaumudike</i>	<i>kutas</i>	<i>ta</i>	<i>iyaṁ dhīratā</i>	
friend Kaumudika.VOC.SG.F	whence	your.CLIT	this wisdom.NOM.SG.F	
<i>jaṁ</i>	<i>samīveṇa</i>	<i>vi</i>	<i>maṁ</i>	<i>adikkamaṁdī</i>
<i>yat</i>	<i>samīpena+</i>	<i>api</i>	<i>mām</i>	<i>atikrāmantī</i>
that	toward	even	I.ACC.SG	approach.PRS.PPL.NOM.SG.F
<i>ido</i>	<i>diṭṭhiṁ</i>	<i>ṇa</i>	<i>desi</i>	
<i>ito</i>	<i>drṣṭiṁ</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>dadāsi</i>	
now	glance.ACC.SG.F	NEG	give.PRS.2SG	

‘Friend Kaumudikā, where does this wisdom of yours come from that you, even as you are approaching me, are not giving me a glance now?’

- Epic/Classical Sanskrit and Pāli/later MIAr. coexist, with Pāli e.g. used by one form of Buddhism, Literary Prakrit for certain genres of literature, and Sanskrit for other genres incl. varieties of Buddhism
- Sanskrit continues to be used as a spoken language into the (early) modern period, where it coexists with Modern Indo-Aryan, as well as Modern Dravidian
- Even now there are some speakers of Sanskrit (Sanskritists, historians, etc., who went through Sanskrit-medium education)
- Sanskrit outlasts (almost) all of its MIAr. quasi-descendants

Vedic phonetics and Sanskrit grammatical tradition

Vedic phonetics (Prātiśākhya and, later, Śikṣā)

- Segmental phonetics/phonology without “benefit” of writing (Lowe 2020)
- Difference between voiced and voiceless (*ghoṣavat* : *aghoṣa*) recognized as *vivṛta* ‘open’ vs. *saṁvṛta* ‘closed/narrowed’
- Difference between voiceless aspiration and “voiced”, i.e. breathy aspiration recognized as *śvāsa* vs. *śvāsa-nāda*- (intermediate between voiceless and voiced)
- One Prātiśākhya even characterizes *ṛ* as [ʳ^a], similar to its Avestan counterpart *ərə* (Others hint at such a pronunciation ...)

– “Varṇasamāmnaya”

a ā	i ī	u ū	ṛ ṝ	ḷ
	e ai	o au		
k	kh	g	gh	ṅ
c	ch	j	jh	ñ
ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṇ
t	th	d	dh	n
p	ph	b	bh	m
y	r	l	v	
ś	ṣ	s		
h				

Underlying organization

velar/glottal	palatal	retroflex/ postdental	dental	labial
a ā	i ī	ṛ ṝ	ḷ	u ū
	e ai			o au
k kh g gh ṇ	c ch j jh ñ	ṭ ṭh ḍ ḍh ṇ	t th d dh n	p ph b bh m
	y	r	l	v
	ś	ṣ	s	
h				

- The varṇasamṇāmnaya serves as a template for organizing the letters of the Brāhmī writing system (once it is introduced, around the 4th c BC) and its descendents, the indigenous regional scripts

					
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū
					
e	ai	o			
					
ka	kha	ga	gha	ña	
					
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña	
					
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa	
					
ta	tha	da	dha	na	
					
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma	
					
ya	ra	la	ḷa	va	
					
śa	ṣa	sa	ha		

				
ka	ki	ku	ke	ko
				
kā	kī	kū	kai	kau

अ	आ	इ	ई	उ	ऊ
a	ā	i	ī	u	ū
ए	ऐ	ओ	औ		
e	ai	o	au		
ऋ	ॠ	ऌ	(ॡ)		
ṛ	ṛī	ḷ	(ḷī)		
क	ख	ग	घ	ङ	
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa	
च	छ	ज	झ	ञ	
ca	cha	ja	jha	ña	
ट	ठ	ड	ढ	ण	
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa	
त	थ	द	ध	न	
ta	tha	da	dha	na	
य	र	ल	व		
ya	ra	la	va		
श	ष	स			
śa	ṣa	sa			
ह					
ha					

क	का	कि	की	कु	कू
ka	kā	ki	kī	ku	kū
के	कै	को	कौ	...	
ke	kai	ko	kau		
क्	(क्त, क्प, etc.)				
k	(kta, kpa, etc.)				

Vyākaraṇa

- Most important: Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī (ca. 4th c BC)
 - A generative account of Sanskrit as spoken at his time (and in his area), called *bhāṣā*, vs. less thorough coverage of Vedic, called *chandas*
 - Entire phonology, just about all of morphology, aspects of syntax
 - A non-transformational generative account of the relation between “active” (karṭṛvācya), “passive” (karmavācya), and “impersonal passive” of intransitives (bhāvavācya)
 - The grammar is composed in highly condensed *sūtras* (aphorisms)
 - There must have been an autocommentary
 - We now rely on later commentaries, especially Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*

- The grammar operates in an oral medium, with special use of segments or segment combinations as grammatical markers

iko yaṇ aci

ik-aḥ yaṇ-Ø ac-i

ik-GEN **yaṇ**-NOM **ac**-LOC

‘**ik** (i.e. *i* ... *r*) → **yaṇ** (*y* ... *r*) / ____ **ac** (*a* ... *au*)’

i.e. $\begin{Bmatrix} i \\ u \\ r \end{Bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{Bmatrix} y \\ v \\ r \end{Bmatrix} / \text{____ } V$

Source for abbreviations (Pratyāhāra Sūtras)

a i u Ṛ

ṛ ḷ K

e o Ñ

ai au C

h y v r Ṭ

l Ṣ

ñ m ṇ ṅ n M

jh bh Ñ

gh ḍh dh Ṣ

j b g ḍ d Ś

kh ph ch ṭh th c ṭ t V

k p Y

ś ṣ s R

h L

a i u N
r ! K
e o Ñ
ai au C
h y v r T
l N
ñ m ñ n n M
jh bh Ñ
gh đh dh S
j b g đ d S
kh ph ch th th c t t V
k p Y
ś s S R
h L

a i u N
r ! K
e o Ñ
ai au C
h y v r T
l N
ñ m ñ n n M
jh bh Ñ
gh đh dh S
j b g đ d S
kh ph ch th th c t t V
k p Y
ś s S R
h L

a i u N
r ! K
e o Ñ
ai au C
h y v r T
l N
ñ m ñ n n M
jh bh Ñ
gh đh dh S
j b g đ d S
kh ph ch th th c t t V
k p Y
ś s S R
h L

- In **morphosyntax** there is no notion of “subject”
 - Instead there is a system of *kāra*kas ($\approx$ abstract case) and *vibhakti*s ($\approx$ surface case) plus a system of abstract verb marking (“LA-*kāra*s”)
 - Most important *kāra*kas: *karṭṛ* ($\approx$ agent) and *karman* ($\approx$ patient)
 - LA-*kāra*s of verbs are **marked** for *karṭṛ* or *karman*/*bhāva*
 - *Vibhakti* rules add case markers for *karṭṛ*, *karman* (etc.)
 - *karṭṛ* is realized as instrumental, **unless marked on the verb**
 - *karman* is realized as accusative, **unless marked on the verb**
 - nominative is a kind of default case
 - LA-*kāra* rules assign verb morphology

- a. *asi* *vrkṣa* *chid*
 axe.**KARTR** tree.KARMAN cut.LA.**KARTR**
vibhakti rules ----- ACCUSATIVE
default NOMINATIVE
LA-kāra rules *chi-na-d-ti*
asir vrkṣam chinatti
 ‘The axe cuts the tree.’
- b. *asi* *vrkṣa* *chid*
 axe.KARTR tree.**KARMAN** cut.LA.**KARMAN**
vibhakti rules INSTRUMENTAL -----
default NOMINATIVE
LA-kāra rules *chid-ya-te*
asinā vrkṣaś chidyate
 ‘The tree is cut by the axe.’

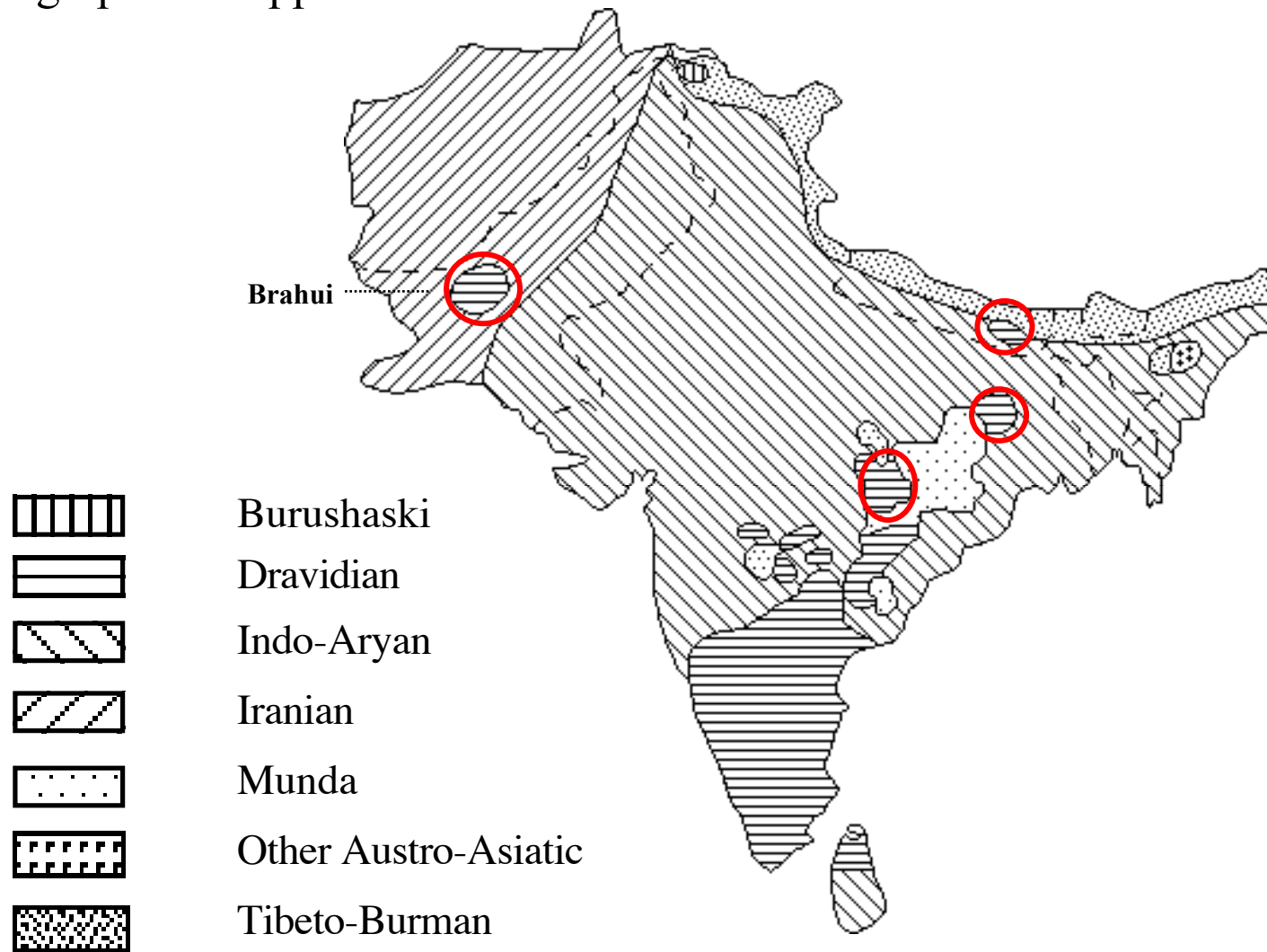
- Pāṇini’s grammar not only lacks the notion “subject”, it also has no overt definition or concept of “sentence”, but it can be argued that he operates with an implicit notion of a domain that comes close to “sentence”

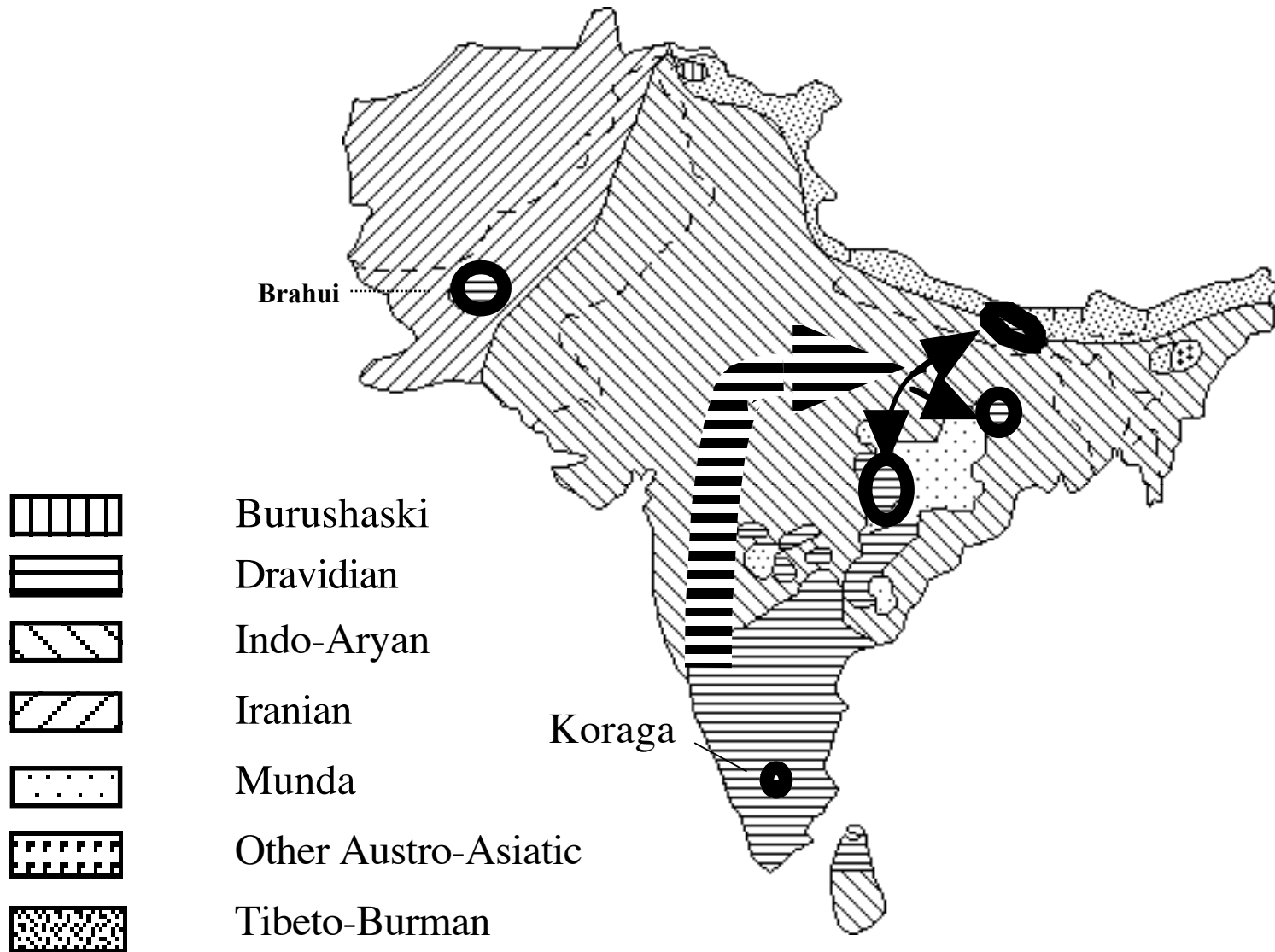
Sanskrit/Indo-Aryan and Dravidian (and the issue of convergence)

(Emeneau 1956, 1980, Kuiper 1967 vs. Hock 1975, 2015b)

- Similarities between Vedic Sanskrit and Dravidian
 - “Retroflexion”, i.e. contrast dental : retroflex (e.g. Skt. *pāta* ‘flight’ : *pāṭa* ‘portion’)
 - SOV word order (e.g. *devadattaḥ kaṭam karoti* ‘D. makes a mat’)
 - Use of converbs (e.g. *tatra gatvā devadattaḥ kaṭam karoti* ‘having gone there, Devadatta makes a mat’)
 - Use of quotative markers (e.g. *devadattaḥ kaṭakāra iti kathyate* ‘Devadatta is called “mat-maker”’)
- Features said to be inherited in Dravidian, but innovations in Sanskrit/Indo-Aryan
- Innovations due to Dravidian substrate influence
- Since innovations are found in Rig Veda, contact must have been prehistoric

- Geographical support





- Other problems –
 - Sanskrit SOV inherited from Proto-Indo-European
 - Alternative accounts possible for the other features

– Consider “retroflexion”

– Sanskrit retroflex stops from retroflex sibilant + dental stop

**piṣ-ta-* ‘ground’ > *piṣ-ṭa*

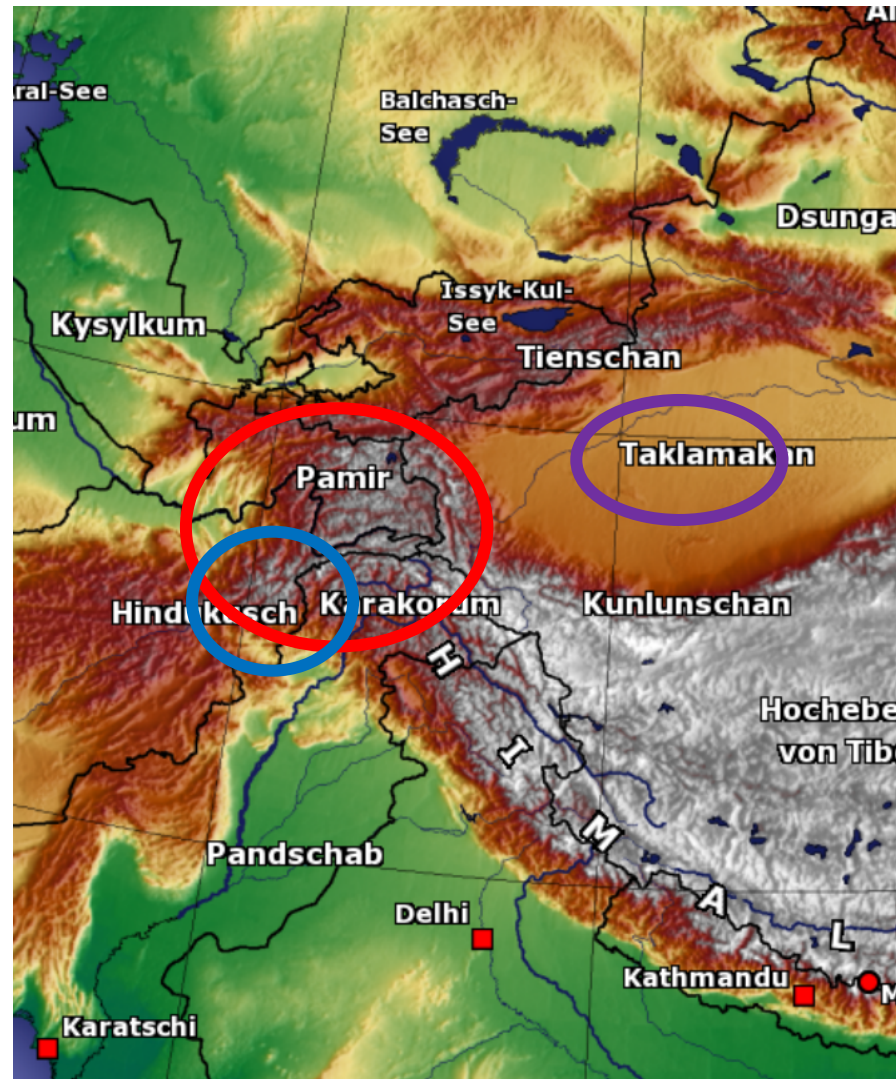
**niṣ-da-* ‘nest, abode’ > **niṣṭa* > *nīṭa*

– Retroflex sibilants arose from earlier “palatal” *ṣ* when PIr. *č* changed to IAr. palatal *ś* (contrast maintenance, “dispersion theory”)

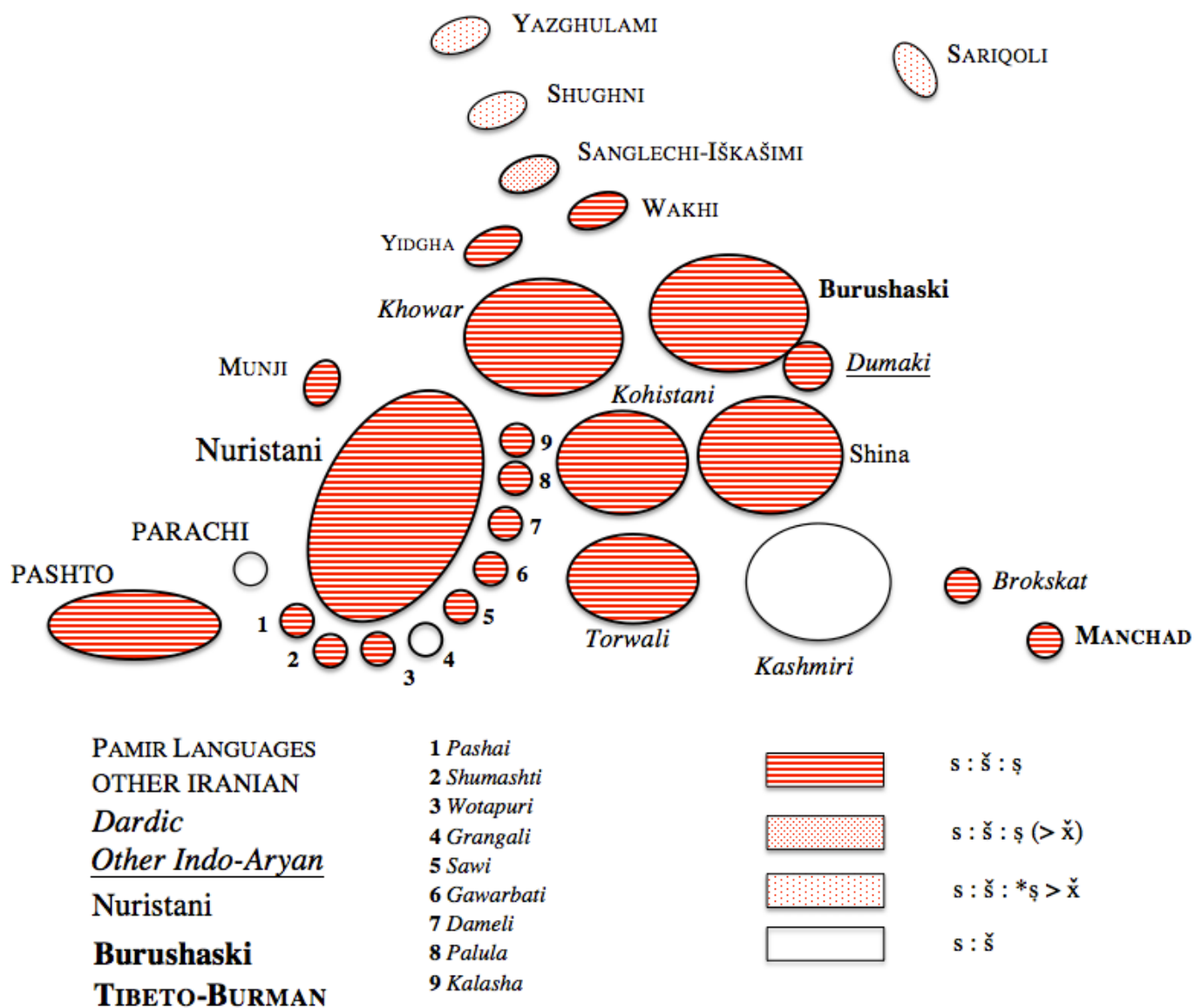
– Retroflex sibilants are a feature also of Avestan

– In both Sanskrit and Avestan there is a TRIPLE contrast *ś* : *ṣ* : *s*

– This contrast is widespread in a large transition zone between South Asia and Central Asia, down to the present day, but also including Middle Indo-Aryan (Gāndhārī), Middle East Iranian (Saka), and Tocharian



The northwestern transition area between South Asia and Central Asia
 (Modern area in **red**, Early Middle Indo-Aryan in **blue**, Middle Iranian Saka and Tocharian in **purple**)



Approximate distribution of sibilant contrasts in the modern Northwest (š = ś)

- The trigger for Sanskrit retroflexion, thus, must have originated in an area for which there is no evidence of Dravidian speakers, before Indo-Aryan speakers entered the peninsular mainland of South Asia
- Retroflex stops may have developed later

- Early Dravidian has a triple stop contrast $\text{ṭ} : \underline{\text{ṭ}} : t$ (vs. Skt. $\text{ṭ} : t$)

- This contrast looks like an innovation, too

Tam. *kal* ‘stone’ + *tūn* ‘pillar’ : *kattūn* ‘stone pillar’
kaḷ ‘booze’ + *tantān* ‘gave’ : *kattantān* ‘gave booze’

i.e. $\underline{\text{lt}} > \underline{\text{lt}} > \underline{\text{tt}}$
 $\underline{\text{lt}} > \underline{\text{lt}} > \underline{\text{tt}}$

kāl ‘air, wind’ : *katu* ‘air, wind’ (< **kal*-*tu*)
urul ‘to roll (itr.)’ : *urutu* ‘to roll (tr.)’ (< **urul*-*tu*)

- Possibility that Dravidian and Indo-Aryan had convergent developments, involving assimilations between dental stops and preceding retroflex (and alveolar) continuants

	ORIGINAL FORM	ASSIMILATION	FINAL OUTCOME
<u>DRAVIDIAN</u>			
ALVEOLAR	* <u>l</u> t	> <u>l</u> t	> <u>t</u> (<u>t</u>)
	* <u>r</u> t	> <u>r</u> t	> <u>t</u> (<u>t</u>)
RETROFLEX	* <u>ḷ</u> t	> <u>ḷ</u> t	> <u>t</u> (<u>t</u>)
	* <u>ṛ</u> t	> <u>ṛ</u> t	> <u>t</u> (<u>t</u>)
<u>INDO-ARYAN/SANSKRIT</u>			
RETROFLEX	*ṣt	> ṣt	> ṣt
	•zḍ(h)	> zḍ(h)	> ḍ(h) (with comp. length)

- Rather than unidirectional substratum influence of Dravidian on Sanskrit/Indo-Aryan, there may have been a bidirectional convergence
- Bidirectional interaction is common in observable South Asian languages
- Bidirectional language contact developments are found even between modern local South Asian languages and English

INDIAN-LANGUAGE INFLUENCE ON INDIAN ENGLISH

Hindi

Indian English

British English

*āp ā rahe haiṁ, **na**?*
phemko

*you are coming, **isn't it**?*
throw

*you are coming, **aren't you**?*
*throw **it to me***

ENGLISH INFLUENCE ON HINDI PASSIVE SYNTAX

Traditional Hindi	<i>mujh se yah kāṁ nahīm kiyā jātā hai</i> 'I can't get the work done' * <i>'The work isn't getting done by me'</i>
Innovative Hindi	<i>mujh se yah kāṁ nahīm kiyā jātā hai</i> 'I can't get the work done' √ <i>'The work isn't getting done by me'</i>
English	<i>The work isn't getting done by me</i>