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Pāṇinian Features of the Oldest Known Malayāḷam Description*

ÉMILIE AUSSANT

Introduction

The work presented here represents one of the first steps in a research program called “Grammaire sanskrite étendue/Extended Sanskrit Grammar” led by Jean-Luc Chevillard (CNRS, Paris), Vincenzo Vergiani (Cambridge University) and me. The aim is to study the way in which descriptive models elaborated for Sanskrit (the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini, as well as works of other grammatical schools) have been used to describe other languages, as for instance Tamil, Telugu, Malayāḷam, etc.

The oldest known grammatical observations from Kerala are found in a poetical treatise of the 14th century: the *Līlātilakam*. This text, composed of Sanskrit *sūtras*, describes—among other things—morphological and phonological characteristics of Maṇipravāḷam,¹ the mediaeval literary language of Kerala, which is defined as a mixture of the Keraḷabhāṣā and Sanskrit (hence the name *Maṇipravāḷam*: *maṇi* ‘rubies’ [Malayāḷam] and *pravāḷam* ‘coral’ [Sanskrit]).² The grammatical section of the *Līlātilakam*,

*I warmly thank Jean-Luc Chevillard for his useful comments and suggestions.

¹The term *maṇipravāḷam*—or rather *maṇippiravāḷam*—is defined in *kārikai* 182 of the *Vīracōḷiyam* (a grammar of Tamil of the 11th century):

ṭṭaiyē vaṭa eluttu eytil viraviyal [...] maṇippiravāḷam nal teyvac collin
[...].

“When Sanskrit letters are interspersed with Tamil, the style is known as a ‘mixture’ (*viraviyal*); when Sanskrit words are mixed with Tamil, the style is known as rubies and coral.” [trans. Monius (2001: 119)]

²The very first *sūtra* reads: *bhāṣāsaṃskṛtayōgō maṇipravāḷam* “*maṇipravāḷam* [is] a mixture of *bhāṣā* and Sanskrit.” Maṇipravāḷam compositions are mainly hymns to Gods, royal panegyrics and poems. By the time of the *Līlātilakam*, most of Maṇipravāḷam works were devoted to description and praise of heroines (this is, at least, what the examples quoted in the *Līlātilakam* tend to show).

because it reveals a Pāṇinian influence, merits special attention within the context of this research program.

1. Overview of the *Līlātilakam*

Nothing is known of the author of the *Līlātilakam*, nor of his life or the conditions under which he composed the treatise, except that he was a pandit versed in both the Sanskrit and Tamil traditions.³ It was in 1916 that the first complete edition of the Sanskrit *sūtras* with Malayāḷam translation of the Sanskrit commentary was produced by Attur Krishna Pisharoti.⁴ John Brough was to publish an edition of the Sanskrit text, as well as a part of the translation in 1947. His edition/translation is based on Pisharoti's.⁵ Four manuscripts should be accessible in India, probably copied from the same original.⁶

We do not know if the name *Līlātilakam*, which literally signifies 'Ornament of leisure', is the original title of the treatise and/or of the *Vṛtti*—it sounds more like the title of a commentary than anything else. The first *śilpa* ends with the following mention: *iti līlātilakē*⁷ *maṇipravāla-lakṣaṇaṃ prathama-śilpaṃ* and some scholars consider *maṇipravāla-lakṣaṇaṃ* ('definition of Maṇipravāḷam') to be the original title of the whole work.⁸

The *Līlātilakam* does not actually constitute a grammar of Maṇipravāḷam; it is a poetical manual intended for those composing in Maṇipravāḷam. But, insofar as a good composition necessarily requires correct morphology and syntax, the text provides some considerations concerning the functioning of the language.

The text and its *Vṛtti*—of the same authorship, according to some⁹—, both entirely in Sanskrit, take the form of a *śāstra* in aphoristic *sūtras*. The resort to this form of composition may probably be explained by the attempt to confer *śāstric* status on the work and the authority which proceeds from such status. It is well known that, by this time, Sanskrit still represents a descriptive apparatus or a discursive model of compositions for the most part (technical as well as literary).

³Gopala Pillai (1985: 23–31) reviews the different theses supported (and provides a summary of them [26]). According to him, the author of the *Līlātilakam* would have been a Nambutiri brahmin (29). See also Freeman 1998.

⁴See Gopala Pillai 1985: 5.

⁵Ezhuthacchan would provide an English translation of the first three chapters between 1964 and 1968. See Gopala Pillai 1985: 9.

⁶See Gopala Pillai 1985: 11–13.

⁷Not all the editions seem to have the word *līlātilake*; Brough's edition does.

⁸See Gopala Pillai 1985: 6–7.

⁹Gopala Pillai (1985: 32–38) reviews some contradictions between the *sūtras* and the *Vṛtti*.

The *Līlātilakam* consists of 151 *sūtras*—most of them followed by a *Vṛtti*—organized in eight chapters (*śilpa*):

- 1) *maṇipravāḷa-lakṣaṇam* (‘definition/description of Maṇipravāḷam’): definition and division into nine types
= eleven *sūtras*
- 2) *śarīra-nirūpaṇam* (‘examination of constituent elements’): nominal and verbal morphology
= twenty-five *sūtras* (2.1–2.5: words composing the *bhāṣā* (*deśī*, *saṃskṛtabhava*, *saṃskṛtarūpa*); 2.6: two varieties of *bhāṣā* (*apakṛṣṭā*, *utkṛṣṭā*); 2.7–2.8: sanskritized *bhāṣā*; 2.9–2.23: nominal endings (cases, genders, numbers); 2.24–2.25: expression of gender and number in verbs)
- 3) *sandhi-vivaraṇam* (‘description of junctions’): phonetics/phonology
= twenty-nine *sūtras* (3.1–3.6: vocalic junctions; 3.7–3.12: vocalic-consonantic junctions; 3.13–3.19: nasal junctions; 3.20–3.28: glide junctions; 3.29: list of phonetical operations which are to be known from usage)
- 4) *dōṣa-ālōcanam* (‘survey of faults’): faults of poetical composition
= twenty-seven *sūtras*
- 5) *guṇa-nirūpaṇam* (‘examination of qualities’): qualities of poetic composition
= five *sūtras*
- 6) *śabdālaṅkāra-vivecanam* (‘discussion of figures of speech’): figures of speech relative to the form of words
= nine *sūtras*
- 7) *arthālaṅkāra-vivaraṇam* (‘description of figures on meaning’): figures of speech relative to the meaning of words
= thirty *sūtras*
- 8) *rasa-prakaraṇam* (‘explanation of *rasa*’): discussion of *rasa*
= fifteen *sūtras*

What we may call the “grammatical section” is then restricted to the second and third chapters.

2. An example from the second *śilpa*

L 2.9 *arthaviśēṣē 'syāḥ parabhāgaviśēṣaḥ.*

“When there is a difference in meaning, there is a difference in the last part [of words] of the [*bhāṣā*].”

Vṛtti: samprati bhāṣāyā vibhaktiādyamśō nirūpyatē. arthaviśēṣaḥ prātipadikamātrādiḥ liṅgavacanē ca. asyāḥ bhāṣāyāḥ.

“Now, the part [of the word] of the *bhāṣā* which is the ending, etc.¹⁰ is considered. The difference in meaning consists in the group [of eight items] beginning with *prātipadikamātra* (i.e. the use of the mere nominal base, which characterizes the nominative case),¹¹ as well as in gender and number. *asyāḥ* [stands for] *bhāṣāyāḥ*.”

L 2.10 *sō 'ṣṭadhā tridhā dvidhā ca.*

“The [difference in the last part of words] is of eight kinds, of three kinds and of two kinds.”

Vṛtti: saḥ parabhāgaviśēṣaḥ. aṣṭadhā vibhaktayaḥ. tridhā liṅgaṃ. dvidhā vacanaṃ.

“*saḥ* [stands for] *parabhāgaviśēṣaḥ*. Endings are of eight kinds. Gender is of three kinds. Number is of two kinds.”

¹⁰The word ‘etc.’ (*-ādi*) means ‘*liṅga* and *vacana*’; the *parabhāga* (‘suffixes’) category is then divided into three sub-types of units: nominal endings (*vibhakti*), gender suffixes (*liṅga*) and number suffixes (*vacana*). Malayāḷam nominal morphology is mainly of the agglutinating type: one marker is used for the case, another marker is used for gender and another one is used for number. Examples: *ava-n-uṭe* (3rd sing. pers. base, masc., gen.) ‘his’, *ava-l-uṭe* (3rd sing. pers. base, fem., gen.) ‘her’, *ava-n-il* (3rd sing. pers. base, masc., loc.) ‘on/in him’, *ava-l-il* (3rd sing. pers. base, fem., loc.) ‘on/in her’.

¹¹The use of the expression *prātipadikamātra* seems to echo a passage of the *Collatikāram* of the *Tolkāppiyam*. The commented *sūtra* is *avarruḷ // eluvāy vērrumai peyar tōṇru nilai ē* (*sūtra* 65 according to Cēṇāvaraiyar); the commentary reads: “What [we call] ‘situation where appears the name only’ is the situation where, without any association with case endings or the vocative mark, the name is not combined with something else.” [based on the French translation by Chevillard (1996: 144)]

L 2.11 *pēr, e, oṭu, kkū,*¹² *ninrū, nnū, il vīṭy aṣṭakaṃ.*¹³

“The group of eight [nominal endings is]: *pēr, e, oṭu, kkū, ninrū, nnū, il, vīṭi.*”¹⁴

Vṛtti: atra prathamāṣṭamāv arthau. anyē śabdāḥ. tatra prathamāḥ parabhāgaviśeṣō yathā—kaṇṭan, āna, maram. atra prātipadikamātram ēvārthaḥ. tad ēva pēr ity ucyatē. tasya nāmaśabdavācyatvāl. [...]

“Here, the first and the eighth [elements of the list] are meanings (i.e. they express the meaning of the first and the eighth endings, that is: ‘name’ for *pēr* and ‘call’ for *vīṭi*). The other [elements of the list] are forms (i.e. they are the endings themselves). The first difference in the last part of words (i.e. the first nominal ending) [is], for example: *kaṇṭan* (name of a man), *āna* (‘elephant’), *maram* (‘tree’).¹⁵ Here, the meaning [consists] precisely [in the one of] the nominal base only. This [first nominal ending] is called *pēr* (‘name’) because it has the property of being the meaning of the word ‘name’. [...]

L 2.12 *ṣaṣṭhaṃ samāsē vā lupyatē.*

“The sixth [ending] is optionally elided in a compound.”

Vṛtti: yathā—pulivāl, māntōl.

“For example: *puli-vāl* (‘tiger’s tail’), *mān-tōl* (‘deer’s skin’).”

L 2.13 *saptamaś ca.*

“The seventh [ending] also.”

¹²The letter *ū* is used to indicate a half-vowel—the shortest vocalic sound in Malayālam—which stays at the end of many words.

¹³In the edition by Iṅṅkuṅṅam Kuṅṅān Piḷḷa (1985), this is not a *sūtra* but part of the *Vṛtti*. I would like to take the opportunity to warmly thank Rich Freeman for having indicated to me some of the variants adopted in I. Kuṅṅān Piḷḷa’s edition, to which I had no access.

¹⁴Ezhuthachan (1975: 91) writes: “The first, i.e. *pēr* (noun), denotes the primary word with no suffix. The last word *vīṭi* (call) [...] denotes the vocative.” This way of naming cases follows a Tamil method. The *sūtra* 64 of the *Colatikāram* of the *Tolkāppiyam: avai-tām peyar ai oṭu ku in atu kaṇ vīṭi ~ ennum ūrra* states: “These [cases are]: the nominative (*peyar*), *ai, oṭu, ku, in, atu, kaṇ* and they have the vocative (*vīṭi*) as the end of their enumeration.” [based on the French translation by Chevillard (1996: 143)]

¹⁵There are two suffixes for the nominative case: *-m* and zero. The *-m* suffix is found in di- and poly-syllabic non-human nouns with bases in *-a*. Other nouns are used with a zero suffix.

Vṛtti: yathā—kaṭalāna, malayiñci.

“For example: *kaṭal-āna* (litt. ‘elephant of the sea’, ‘whale’), *malay-iñci* (‘mountain ginger’).”

L 2.14 *dvitīyam asamāsē vā.*

“The second [ending] is optionally [elided] when it is not in a compound.”

Vṛtti: yathā—māla kaṇḍu, mālayekkaṇḍu. puli konru, puliye-kkonru. acētanē tiraści cāyaṅ vikalpaḥ. anyatra na lupyatē. amātyane-kkaṇḍu.

“For example: *māla kaṇḍu* [and] *mālaye-kkaṇḍu* (‘he saw the garland’), *puli konru* [and] *puliye-kkonru* (‘he killed the tiger’). This is an option which concerns inanimate beings and animals. Elsewhere, there is no elision: *amātyane-kkaṇḍu* (‘he saw the minister’).”

L 2.15 *strīpunnapuṃsakam trikaṃ.*

“The three [genders are] feminine, masculine, neuter.”

L 2.21 *ekānēkaṃ dvikaṃ.*

“The two [numbers are] singular [and] plural.”¹⁶

3. Pāṇinian features of the *Līlātilakam*

The influence of *Vyākaraṇa*, and more precisely, of Pāṇini, on the *Līlātilakam*, is evident at two levels: 1) at the metalinguistic level, that is to say, at the level of the organization of rules and of the technical terminology; 2) at the linguistic level, that is to say, at the level of the described facts of language.

3.1. Typology of borrowings

I have tried to establish a typology of borrowings by the *Līlātilakam* from the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, which are observed in the second and third chapters of the former. This includes the given borrowing, its localization in the *Līlātilakam*,

¹⁶In the *Tolkappiyam*, the category of words denoting human beings is divided into three *pāls*: *āṇpāl* (word denoting a male), *peṇpāl* (word denoting a female) and *palarpāl* (word denoting more than one male or female). The category of words denoting objects other than human beings is divided into two *pāls*: *onranpāl* (word denoting one object other than a human being) and *palavinpāl* (word denoting more than one object other than a human being). See Subrahmanya Sastri 1997: 107–108.

its level (metalinguistic or linguistic) and its modality, that is to say, whether it is indicated as a borrowing or not.

	borrowing	localization	level	modality of the borrowing
1	<i>sUBanta—tiÑanta</i> 'term ending in a nominal ending'—'term ending in a verbal ending'	V <i>ad</i> 2.7	M ¹⁷	NI ¹⁸
2	A 7.1.1 <i>yuvōr anākāv iti</i> ¹⁹	V <i>ad</i> 2.7	L ²⁰	NI (<i>iti</i>)
3	<i>prātipadika</i> 'nominal base'	V <i>ad</i> 2.9 and 2.11	M	NI
4	<i>karman</i> 'object'	V <i>ad</i> 2.11	M	NI
5	A 2.3.5 <i>kālādhvāntasamṃyōgādikam</i> ²¹	V <i>ad</i> 2.11	L	NI (- <i>ādikam</i>)

¹⁷M stands for 'metalinguistic level'.

¹⁸NI stands for 'not indicated'.

¹⁹Close to the canonical form of the rule. The context of the quotation is the following: in the Kēraḷabhāṣā, the distinction between alveolar and dental nasals is relevant (though not represented in the writing system), in contrast to the Pāṇdyabhāṣā (where it is represented in the writing system but no longer pronounced by this time) and Sanskrit (where it is not represented in the writing system and of course not pronounced since it is irrelevant). To show that alveolar and dental nasals are mere allophones in Sanskrit, the author quotes the rule A 7.1.1. According to him, the *n* in *anākau* is alveolar; if this alveolar nasal were really different from the dental one, these two phonemes would not have a similar allophone *ṇ* as in *kaṇa*, *haṇa*, etc. Therefore, alveolar and dental nasals in Sanskrit are mere allophones and not phonemes.

²⁰L stands for 'linguistic level'.

²¹The canonical form of the rule is A 2.3.5 *kālādhvanor atyantasaṃyoge* "[The second ending is used with words denoting] time or distance to express total connection." The context of the borrowing is the following: in the edition presently used, the rule L 2.11 provides the list of the nominal endings. The *Vṛtti* describes them successively, on the formal and the semantic levels. It is when the semantic value of the second ending (-*e*) is under consideration that the *Vṛtti* quotes the rule A 2.3.5. *Vṛtti ad* L 2.11: *atra punar 'e' ity asya nirvarttyavikāryapṛāpyātmakaṃ karmārthaḥ. na tu kālādhvāntasamṃyōgādikaṃ.*

6	<i>kāndanōkkinōṭu utsukam iti</i> (form which would be generated by A 2.3.44) ²²	V ad 2.11	L	NI
7	<i>kādannu kōpikkinritu kānda ityādi</i> (form which would be generated by A 1.4.37) ²³	V ad 2.11	L	NI
8	<i>avaṅgalnīnṛṣṭi payarri</i> (<i>ityādi</i>) (form which would be generated by A 1.4.29) ²⁴	V ad 2.11	L	NI
9	<i>puliyiṅgalnīnṛṣṭi pēṭiccu ityādi</i> (form which would be generated by A 1.4.25) ²⁵	V ad 2.11	L	NI

²²The context of the quotation is the following: the *Vṛtti* deals with the third ending (*-oṭu/-ōṭu*). Several examples are given, as well as a counterexample *kāndanōkkinōṭu utsukam* (‘one is eager for the glance of his beloved’), which would be generated if the rule A 2.3.44 *prasitotsukābhyāṃ tṛtīyā ca*, which states that the third ending is also used after a nominal base co-occurring with *prasita* and *utsuka*, were applied. But *kāndanōkkinōṭu utsukam* is not considered as correct in the Kēraḷabhāṣā.

²³The context of the quotation is the following: the *Vṛtti* deals with the fourth ending (*-kkū/-nnū*). Several examples are given, as well as a counterexample *kādannu kōpikkinritu kānda* (‘the lady is angry with the lover’), which would be generated if the rule A 1.4.37 *krudhadruherṣyāsūyārthānāṃ yaṃ prati kopāḥ* were applied. This rule provides that the technical term *sampradāna* denotes the person towards whom anger is felt in relation with verbal roots having the meaning of ‘feel anger’ (*krudh-*), ‘injure’ (*druh-*), ‘not tolerate’ (*ṛṣy-*), ‘find fault with’ (*asūy-*). But *kādannu kōpikkinritu kānda* is not considered as correct in the Kēraḷabhāṣā.

²⁴The context of the quotation is the following: the *Vṛtti* deals with the fifth ending (*-nīnṛṣṭi*). Several examples are given, as well as a counterexample *avaṅgalnīnṛṣṭi payarri* (‘studied from him’), which would be generated if the rule A 1.4.29 *ākhyātopayoge*, which states that the technical term *apādāna* denotes a reciter when instruction is intended, were applied. But *avaṅgalnīnṛṣṭi payarri* is not considered as correct in the Kēraḷabhāṣā.

²⁵The context is the same as in the previous case. The *Vṛtti* deals with the fifth ending and gives another counterexample *puliyiṅgalnīnṛṣṭi pēṭiccu* (‘got afraid of the tiger’), which would be generated if the rule A 1.4.25 *bhūtrārthānāṃ bhayahetuḥ*, which provides that the technical term *apādāna* denotes a cause of fear in relation with [verbal roots] having the meaning of ‘fear’ or ‘protection’, were applied. But *puliyiṅgalnīnṛṣṭi pēṭiccu* is not considered as correct in the Kēraḷabhāṣā.

10	<i>kāṇkekku pōyi (ityādi)</i> (form which would be generated by A 2.3.38) ²⁶	V ad 2.11	L	NI
11	<i>maraññalute māvu ninru ityādi</i> (form which would be generated by A 2.3.41) ²⁷	V ad 2.11	L	NI
12	<i>udikkinra ādityanil pīrannān ityādi</i> (form which would be generated by A 2.3.37) ²⁸	V ad 2.11	L	NI
13	<i>vā</i> ‘or rather, preferably’ ²⁹	2.12 <i>et passim</i>	L	NI
14	<i>maṇḍūkapluti</i> process	2.16–18–19–23	M	NI
15	<i>aT</i> /a/	2.19	M	NI
16	<i>aC</i> ‘vowels’	3.1	M	NI
17	<i>haL</i> ‘consonants’	V ad 3.1	M	NI

²⁶The context of the quotation is the following: the *Vṛtti* deals with the sixth ending (*-nnū/-kkū, -ute/iṭe/ete*). Several examples are given, as well as a counterexample *kāṇkekku pōyi* (‘he went away without caring for the onlookers’), which would be generated if the rule A 2.3.38 *ṣaṣṭhī cānādare* were applied. This rule provides that the sixth ending is also used after a nominal base to express the meaning of ‘notwithstanding’. But *kāṇkekku pōyi* is not considered as correct in the Kēraḷabhāṣā.

²⁷The context is the same as in the previous case. The *Vṛtti* deals with the sixth ending and gives another counterexample *maraññalute māvu ninru* (‘a mango tree is the best among trees’), which would be generated if the rule A 2.3.41 *yataś ca nīrdhāraṇam* were applied. The rule provides that the seventh as well as the sixth endings are used after a nominal base denoting something from which something else is set apart. But *maraññalute māvu ninru* is not considered as correct in the Kēraḷabhāṣā.

²⁸The context of the quotation is the following: the *Vṛtti* deals with the seventh ending (*-il*). Several examples are given, as well as a counterexample *udikkinra ādityanil pīrannān* (‘he was born when the sun was rising’), which would be generated if the rule A 2.3.37 *yasya ca bhāvena bhāvalakṣaṇam* were applied. This rule states that the seventh ending is used after a nominal base denoting an action which serves to characterize another action. But *udikkinra ādityanil pīrannān* is not considered as correct in the Kēraḷabhāṣā.

²⁹*na vā* ‘or rather not’ is used in the *Vṛtti ad L 3.7*.

18	<i>saṃjñā</i> 'technical term'	V <i>ad</i> 3.1	M	NI
19	A 1.1.66 <i>tasminn iti nirddiṣṭe pūrvasya</i> (<i>ityādi</i>) ³⁰	V <i>ad</i> 3.1	M	I ³¹ <i>saṅkēta-</i> <i>vyavahārah</i> <i>pāṇinīyavat</i> ³²
20	A 1.1.67 <i>tasmād ity uttarasya ityādi</i>	V <i>ad</i> 3.1	M	I <i>saṅkēta-</i> <i>vyavahārah</i> <i>pāṇinīyavat</i>
21	<i>anuvṛtti</i> process	3.4–5 <i>et</i> <i>passim</i> ³³	M	NI
22	substitution process <i>x</i> (gen. case)— <i>y</i> (nom. case) ³⁴	3.14 <i>et</i> <i>passim</i>	L	NI

3.2. Comments

Concerning the metalinguistic level, we may say the following.

First, the technical terminology includes a significative number of “Pāṇinian basics” like *sUBanta* ‘term ending in a nominal ending’ and *tiNanta* ‘term ending in a verbal ending’,³⁵ *karman* (‘object’), *aC* (‘vowels’) and *haL* (‘consonants’) and the notion of *saṃjñā* (‘technical term’).

Secondly, one typical Pāṇinian way of describing linguistic facts is also used: substitution (in the phonetic/phonology section).³⁶

I call these elements “Pāṇinian basics” because they are not used in

³⁰The context of the quotation is the following: the third chapter is devoted to *sandhis*. *Sūtras* start *in media res* and it is the *Vṛtti* which explains the conventions and organization of the chapter.

³¹I stands for ‘indicated’.

³²The full sentence is as follows: *acam, halam ityādīsaṃjñāvyavahārah ‘tasminn iti nirddiṣṭe pūrvasya, tasmād ity uttarasya’ ityādīsaṅkētavyavahārah pāṇinīyavad iha draṣṭavyah* ‘The use of technical terms such as *aC* and *haL*, [as well as] the use of conventions such as *tasminn iti nirddiṣṭe pūrvasya* [and] *tasmād ity uttarasya*, as in the Pāṇinian grammar, is observed here.’

³³The *Vṛtti* often gives the element(s) to be supplied (*x ity adhikārāt, x ity anuṣajyatē/anuṣaṅgaḥ, x iti prastāvāt sidhyati, x iti varttatē*, etc.).

³⁴The rule is: *ṇas tasya ṭaḥ* ‘After *ṇ*, *ṭ* is substituted for *t*.’

³⁵The author of the *Vīracōliyam* also used these two terms. Later grammairians (from the 13th century onwards) sometimes use *nāman* in place of Tamil *peyar*. See Subrahmanya Sastri 1997: 104–106

³⁶It is important to note that the technical terminology in the *Līlātilakam* is more *Vyākaraṇic* than strictly Pāṇinian (e.g. *akṣara, apaśabda, udāharāṇa, oṣṭhyatva, karmasādhana, kriyā, deśi, nāman, prakṛti, rūḍhā, liṅga, vacana, x-kāra*, etc.), though this does not appear in the table above.

works of other grammatical schools such as, for instance, some *Śikṣās* and *Prātiśākhya*s, the *Kātantra*, the *Mugdhabodha*, the *Tolkāppiyam*, the *Śabdamaṇidarpaṇa*, the *Kalāpasūtra*, the grammar of Kaccāyana, etc.; these works, according to some scholars,³⁷ would pertain to an “Aindra school”—but I know that the question is controversial and I do not intend to discuss it here. The use of these “Pāṇinian basics” in the *Līlātilakam* (*sūtras* and *Vṛtti*) seems to imply a strong affinity for the Pāṇinian treatise and—maybe even more—for the language it describes and normalizes. We find indeed most of these “Pāṇinian basics”³⁸ in contexts where Sanskrit is clearly in the mind of the author. I will come back to the relation between Sanskrit and Maṇipravālam in a moment.

Thirdly, the functioning of the rules is clearly based on the Pāṇinian model (except for the generative pattern, which is absent from the *Līlātilakam*): we find the *anuvṛtti* process, the *maṇḍūkapluti* process and the metalinguistic use of cases (cf. A 1.1.66–67).

Concerning the linguistic level, we may observe the following: among the nine Pāṇinian rules—dealing with linguistic facts—to which the *Vṛtti* refers in the grammatical section, seven (cf. rows six to twelve) are indirectly quoted. Let us take just one example. The rule L 2.11 gives the eight nominal endings; the *Vṛtti* describes each of them successively at the formal and semantic levels. Let us look at the description of the third ending:

Vṛtti ad L 2.11: tṛtīyō yathā—avanoṭu, avaroṭu, nampiyōṭu, marattoṭu. atrāpi kāndanōkkinōṭu utsukam ityādi na bhavati.

“The third [ending], for example: *avanoṭu* (‘with him’), *avaroṭu* (‘with them’), *nampiyōṭu* (‘with [a] Nampi’), *marattoṭu* (‘with [a] tree’). Here also, there is no [expression] like *kāndanōkkinōṭu utsukam* (‘one is eager for the glance of his beloved’).”

The expression *kāndanōkkinōṭu utsukam* would be generated if the Pāṇinian rule A 2.3.44 *prasitotsukābhyāṇ tṛtīyā ca*, which provides that the third ending is also used after a nominal base co-occurring with *prasita* and *utsuka*, were applied. What does this mean? It seems to imply that the *Līlātilakam*—or, at least, the *Vṛtti* on its grammatical section—was composed with the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* in mind or before the eyes. When one reads again the first three chapters of the *Līlātilakam* with this in mind, one observes that the manual presupposes a perfect knowledge of Sanskrit³⁹ as well as of its grammatical and literary culture. I have already emphasized that Sanskrit was a descriptive apparatus or a discursive model for Maṇipravālam,

³⁷See Burnell 1991.

³⁸Exceptions are: *aC*, *aT*, *haL* and *vā*. They are used in every kind of context.

³⁹More than that: knowledge of Sanskrit is a prerequisite insofar as the manual is composed in Sanskrit.

but its role does not stop here. Three other reasons explain its more or less manifest omnipresence.

3.2.1. First reason: Sanskrit is one of the two linguistic components of Maṇipravāḷam, the second being the *bhāṣā*. Insofar as Sanskrit is “substantively installed *in* the composition of the language itself,”⁴⁰ the shadow of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is justified right away. However, it is not really as such, i.e. as one of the linguistic components, that Sanskrit is the most present in the *Līlātilakam* for, obviously, it does not need to be described—Pāṇini had already done this, magisterially. What is—partially—taught in the grammatical section of the *Līlātilakam* concerns exclusively the second linguistic component of Maṇipravāḷam, that is to say, the Kēraḷite regional language. As Freeman relevantly remarks (1998: 45): “*bhāṣā* could refer generally to any spoken language.”⁴¹ Guidelines are therefore needed for the Kēraḷabhāṣā, not for Sanskrit. The latter is none the less present, but as the well-known component which is already in the mind of Maṇipravāḷam authors. I quote a few instances illustrating this constant though discreet presence:

- 1) *Vṛtti ad* L 2.7 reads: “Here, in the *bhāṣā*, there are four phonemes which do not exist in Sanskrit: *nr̥ū*, *rr̥ū*, *r̥ū* et *l̥ū*.”
- 2) *Vṛtti ad* L 3.1 reads: “This sandhi concerns the *bhāṣā*. It is not [a sandhi] of Sanskrit, etc. [...].”
- 3) *Vṛtti ad* L 3.2 reads: “It is said: only the *a* which has the meaning of the word *tad* and the *i* which has the meaning of *idam*.”

3.2.2. Second reason: Sanskrit often overwhelms the Kēraḷabhāṣā. The first three chapters of the *Līlātilakam* provide a good overview of the characteristics of the Kēraḷabhāṣā, which make this different not only from other Dravidian languages such as the Pāṇḍyabhāṣā, but also, I would say, above all, from Sanskrit. For the domain of the Sanskrit component and the domain of the *bhāṣā* component are not clearly delimited. Very frequently, indeed, in early texts of Maṇipravāḷam, *bhāṣā* words are used as if they were Sanskrit words, that is to say, with Sanskrit endings.⁴²

⁴⁰Freeman 1998: 45.

⁴¹Freeman adds (1998: 46): “Indeed, as the text progresses, this assertion for the distinctive autonomy of Kēraḷa-bhāṣā, directly against the Tamil spoken in the adjoining kingdoms, becomes increasingly marked.”

⁴²L 2.7 reads: *sandarbhē saṃskṛtīkṛtā ca* “And, in compositions, it (i.e., the *bhāṣā*) is sanskritized.” On this point, Andronov (1996: 61) notes: “There are

Let us consider a few examples:

1) *koṅkayā* ‘by the breast’

koṅka is taken as a Sanskrit base ending in the third ending *-ā*.⁴³

2) *ūṇ-urakkau* ‘food and sleep’

The Sanskrit dual ending *-au* is added to the compound though the dual does not exist in the Kēraḷabhāṣā.⁴⁴

3) *pōkkām cakrē* ‘I have sent’

The Sanskrit form of the periphrastic perfect, which does not exist in the Kēraḷabhāṣā, is added here to the root *pōkk-*.⁴⁵

The description of nominal endings—we saw the example of the third ending—perfectly illustrates this continuous intrusion of Sanskrit which has to be kept within limits.

3.2.3. Third reason: By this time, Sanskrit was very often considered as the source of all languages, and this is explicitly stated in the *Līlātilakam*:

Vṛtti ad L 2.4: saṃskṛtam anādi. anyad ādimat. tasya saṃskṛtāt prabhavaḥ syāt.

“Sanskrit is beginningless. Other [languages] have a beginning. Their source is Sanskrit.”⁴⁶

3.2.4. For all these reasons, Pāṇinian features of the *Līlātilakam*—features which represent the guarantee of the purest form of Sanskrit—are clear evidence. As shown above, 1) Sanskrit plays a model role at discursive, literary and grammatical description levels; 2) Sanskrit is one of the two linguistic components of Keralite Maṇipravāḷam; 3) in Keralite Maṇipravāḷam compositions, *bhāṣā*’s words are very frequently sanskritized; and 4) Sanskrit is considered as the source of all languages, including the Kēraḷabhāṣā.

cases in early texts when nouns of the Dravidian stock take Sanskrit desinences [...],” and (131): “In early texts Ma. verbs of the Dravidian stock can also take the Sanskrit grammatical forms [...].” Concerning compounding and sandhi, we find the following combinations: Kēraḷabhāṣā word + Kēraḷabhāṣā word = Kēraḷabhāṣā rules; Sanskrit word + Sanskrit word = Sanskrit rules; Kēraḷabhāṣā word + vernacularized Sanskrit word = Kēraḷabhāṣā rules; Kēraḷabhāṣā word + pure Sanskrit word = Sanskrit rules. See Ramaswami Aiyar 1944: 79.

⁴³Non-sanskritized form: *koṅkayāl*.

⁴⁴Non-sanskritized form: *ūṇurakkamār* (with the suffix of plural).

⁴⁵Non-sanskritized form: *pōttēn* (verbal base with the past tense suffix and the suffix of the first person of singular).

⁴⁶L 2.4 introduces *saṃskṛtabhavas*, that is to say, *tadbhavas*, *bhāṣā*’s words which are derived from Sanskrit. The *Vṛtti* starts with the remark quoted.

4. *Līlātilakam* and Prakrit grammars

A final remark before concluding. Several characteristics of the *Līlātilakam* remind us of Prakrit grammars: 1) the use of Sanskrit as a metalanguage, 2) the aim of the work: a manual intended for those who, knowing Sanskrit, want to compose in a linguistic variety different from it, 3) the grammatical description dealing exclusively with morphology and phonology/phonetics, 4) the omnipresent shadow of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*: the same number of chapters, similarities in the technique of description, etc. But there are also two major differences: 1) Prakrit grammars are real grammars in the sense that they describe constituent elements and operations they are submitted to; the *Līlātilakam* is, above all, a poetical manual, only two chapters out of eight deal with grammatical description; 2) rules of the grammatical section of the *Līlātilakam* are not formulated on the model ‘instead of *a*, one says *b*’ which characterizes rules of Prakrit grammars, probably because the *bhāṣā* component is not considered to be derivable from Sanskrit—though it is said that Sanskrit is the source of all languages. In the *Līlātilakam*, indeed, Sanskrit and *bhāṣā* are in a relationship of combination, not of derivation.⁴⁷

Concluding remarks

To conclude very briefly, I would say that Keralite Maṇipravāḷam strongly incorporates Sanskrit influence. Because it is a hyper-sanskritized variety, and because of the reasons mentioned above, the appropriateness of the Sanskrit descriptive model was undoubtedly perceived in the Keralite grammatical tradition more strongly than in any other.

This high hybridization of the regional language with Sanskrit was probably authorized, regulated and claimed as part of the struggle against the hegemony of the Pāṇḍya literary tradition.⁴⁸

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A: *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. See Katre.

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⁴⁷Or of substitution. See Kahrs 1992: 229–234.

⁴⁸See Freeman 1998: 41.

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