

George Cardona and Dhanesh Jain (eds.), *The Indo-Aryan languages*, Routledge Language Family Series, vol. 2, London and New York: Routledge, 2003, pp. xix + 1061. ISBN 0-7007-1130-9, Cloth £165,00

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This book has been published in the *Routledge Language Family Series*, which has by now acquired the reputation of the most foundational descriptive encyclopaedia of linguistic families and groups. The volume under review is edited by George Cardona and Dhanesh Jain. The former (and, undoubtedly, the main) editor is one of the most authoritative experts on the Sanskrit and Ancient Indian linguistic tradition, going back to Pāṇini (around 600-500 B.C.); he is also known for his Gujarati reference grammar (1965). The main field of Dhanesh Jain's expertise is Hindi grammar.

The volume contains twenty three chapters. The first three chapters are general articles, which include "General introduction" (George Cardona and Dhanesh Jain), "Sociolinguistics of the Indo-Aryan languages" (Dhanesh Jain), and "Writing systems of the Indo-Aryan languages" (Richard Salomon). The other twenty chapters are descriptive sketches dealing with the main Indo-Aryan languages. There are three articles on ancient languages: Old Indo-Aryan, i.e. Sanskrit (George Cardona), and Middle Indo-Aryan: Aśokan Prakrit and Pāli (Thomas Oberlies) and Prākṛits and Apabhraṃśa (Vit Bubenik). The New Indo-Aryan chapters include Hindi (Michael C. Shapiro), Urdu (Ruth Laila Schmidt), Bangla, or Bengali (Probal Dasgupta), Asamiya (Assamese) (G. C. Goswami and Jyotiprakash Tamuli), Oriya (Tapas S. Ray), Maithili (Ramawatar Yadav), Magahi (Sheela Verma), Bhojpuri (Manindra K. Verma), Nepali (Theodore Riccardi), Panjabi (Christopher Shackle), Sindhi (Lachman M. Khubchandani), Gujarati (George Cardona and Babu Suthar), Marathi (Rajeshwari Pandharipande), Konkani (Rocky V. Miranda), Sinhala (James W. Gair), a survey of Dardic languages (Elena Bashir), and a separate chapter on the best known Dardic language, Kashmiri (Omkar N. Koul).

Since it is impossible to discuss in detail all the chapters and descriptive sketches of this voluminous (more than 1000 pages) work, I will concentrate on the general articles, as well as on the sketch of one major language, Sanskrit.

The "General introduction" conveniently summarizes information on the chronology of the Indo-Aryan languages and their historical development. One of the sub-sections deals,

according to its title, with “relations with other Indo-European languages”. In fact, it only discusses the relations with two other groups within Indo-Iranian, Iranian and Nuristani. The only mention of an Indo-European group outside Indo-Iranian appears in the following passage: “The most definitively established and accepted subgroup within Indo-European is Indo-Iranian, a subgroup adjacent to Slavic – with which it shares the retraction of *s* after *i u r* [...] and velars ...” (p. 20). There are two strange claims here, which, I am afraid, testify to a rather poor knowledge of the modern state of affairs of Indo-European comparative linguistics. First, the exact scenario of the splitting up of Proto-Indo-European is far from clear (for a survey, see, e.g., Beekes 1995: 30f.). The few undoubted larger subgroupings basically amount to Balto-Slavic, Indo-Iranian and a much more problematic (albeit quite traditional) Italo-Celtic. In spite of a few isoglosses shared by Indo-Iranian and Balto-Slavic (rather than just Slavic!), such as the above-mentioned development *s* > *š*, there are no good reasons to state that these two groups are indeed adjacent, thus positing some kind of (Balto-)Slavo-Indo-Iranian linguistic unity. Second, it is certainly not correct to claim that Indo-Iranian is a more “definitively established and accepted subgroup within Indo-European” than other subgroups, such as, for instance, Slavic, Germanic, Italic or Celtic.

Apart from the quite inaccurate formulations related to Indo-European comparative linguistics, another annoying shortcoming is the meager information about typological peculiarities of the Indo-Aryan languages and the South Asian linguistic area in general (accumulated under the heading “Modern views”). Next to a rather lengthy discussion of the contrast between retroflex and dental consonants (shared by Indo-Aryan and Dravidian), the authors only briefly notice the extensive use of absolutes (converbs). We find no mention of other important features of (New) Indo-Aryan, such as the multi-layer case paradigm or system of two (or even three) causatives (see, for instance, Masica 1976). An additional lacuna is the lack of references to some important studies on the typology of New Indo-Aryan languages, such as Zograf 1976, 1982.

The general introduction is followed by a survey of the sociolinguistic situation both in Ancient (Mediaeval) and Modern India. This section also deals with such topics as language planning and ethnography of speaking. The latter includes the means of expression of ‘respect’ (or, using a more common term, the category of honorificity). Unfortunately, the discussion is limited to the material available from Hindi. It would be in order to mention complex systems of distinctions between speech registers attested in other Indo-Aryan languages. In particular, one of the richest systems is that found in Maldivian, or Divehi, which consistently distinguishes between forms of the second and third honorific degrees (see, e.g., Fritz 2002: 171 et passim).

Chapter 3 is a comprehensive and very well written survey of writing systems used in Indo-Aryan languages, presenting a clear picture of their development, starting with the oldest attested form of Indian script, Brāhmī, through its later varieties up to the numerous modern writing systems.

The next 20 chapters offer grammatical sketches of individual languages, starting with Sanskrit. Sanskrit undoubtedly occupies the central position among Indic languages and has played an important role in the development of linguistics in general. After 200 years of European scholarship, it still remains in the focus of scholarly attention. Accordingly, preparing a sketch of Sanskrit grammar for such an encyclopaedic edition should be considered a very responsible task. On the one hand, this should be a brief but comprehensive survey of the main results of research in Sanskrit grammar. On the other hand, such a sketch should serve as a good introduction into the Sanskrit linguistics for non-Sanskritists and non-Indologists. This is, unfortunately, not the case. The main feeling that arises after reading Cardona's sketch is one of perplexity.

To begin with, the title of the chapter does not correspond to its contents. It should rather be called "Sanskrit according to Pāṇini". Both the grammatical system presented in Cardona's sketch and the way of its presentation reproduce, in many respects, what we find in the treatises of the Ancient Indian grammarians, Pāṇini (around 600–500 B.C.) and its followers. This is certainly a very infelicitous choice for a standard handbook which is supposed to be accessible for all linguists, not only for Sanskritists.

First of all, the descriptive system developed and used by Pāṇini – albeit one of the greatest achievements of the linguistic thought – is very different from that adopted in modern linguistics. There are quite a large number of features of Cardona's sketch that were inherited from Pāṇini's grammar, which appear to be quite strange in the context of a modern linguistic description. For instance, the finite verbal paradigms are given in the form of lists starting with the 3rd person singular form and ending with the 1st person plural form – as is common in the Indian tradition. Thus, the paradigm of the verb *bhū* 'become' is as follows: *bhava-ti -taḥ -nti, -si -thaḥ -tha, bhavā-mi -vaḥ -maḥ* (p. 125) – instead of the much more common tabular form:

	singular	dual	plural
1	<i>bhavā-mi</i>	<i>bhavā-vaḥ</i>	<i>bhavā-maḥ</i>
2	<i>bhava-si</i>	<i>bhava-thaḥ</i>	<i>bhava-tha</i>
3	<i>bhava-ti</i>	<i>bhava-taḥ</i>	<i>bhava-nti</i>

Although such a 'linear' paradigm contains the same information as its tabular equivalent, it is certainly much more difficult to read for 99.9% of linguists, including even most Sanskritists.

Another instance of following the traditional Indian notation rather than that adopted in the modern linguistics is accent marking (explained by Cardona on p. 108). The author decided to introduce the traditional Indian system (used in the Devanāgarī script), adopted in most (but not all) Vedic texts/schools, including the Ṛgveda, Atharvaveda, and Taittirīya. This system is peculiar in marking the musical accents (itches) accompanying the principal accent (high pitch; in the Sanskrit terminology, *udātta*), but leaving the principal accent itself unmarked. Specifically, the low pitch (*anudātta*), which precedes the main accent, is indicated by a

horizontal stroke beneath the syllable, while the middle pitch (*svārīta*), which follows the main accent, is indicated by a vertical stroke above the syllable. Cardona introduces this system into the Latin transcription, using the underlining for *anudātta* and *gravis* accent for *svārīta* – contra the tradition adopted in all European grammars, dictionaries and text editions which use Latin transliterations. Thus, for instance, instead of the usual *yajñāsya* (genitive singular of *yajñá-* ‘sacrifice’), *agním* (accusative singular of *agní-* ‘fire’) and *té* ‘these’, we read *yajñasyà*, *agnim* and *te*. Furthermore, when quoting examples from Vedic texts which use systems of accent marking that are different from that adopted in the Ṛgveda, Cardona cannot help introducing these systems into the transliteration. One such system is found in the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa, which marks the syllable preceding the *svārīta* with a horizontal stroke beneath the letter. Accordingly, in a quotation from this text (p. 131), we read *sā*, *rātrim*, *tān* instead of the usual *sá*, *rātrim*, *tán*. Reading such a notation (or, rather, notations) will certainly become a nightmare for non-Sanskritists. And despite being somewhat more comprehensible for Sanskritists, it will, with all probability, cause irritation for all readers.

Another sequel of Cardona’s adherence to the Indian tradition is still more annoying. Everything (or almost everything) which is not taught by Pāṇini remains outside his description. This results in a number of gaps in the content in the cases where European science has achieved considerable progress in the study of Sanskrit (Vedic) grammar. Thus, in section 3.1.3.2.3b, dealing with the root aorist, we read that “[t]here is also a third singular form, with *-i*, specific to passive and intransitive forms [note that this is quite an infelicitous, tautological formulation. – LK]. Thus, *akāri* ‘was made or done, has been made or done’ is a passive aorist of *kṛ*” (p. 128). Unfortunately, there is no mention of the fact that in the language of the Ṛgveda, the paradigm of the passive aorist also includes the 3rd plural form in *-ran/-ram*, cf. *śj* ‘set free, emit’: 3sg. *ásarji* ‘(he/she/it) was set free’, 3pl. *ásjgran / ásjgram* ‘(they) were set free’ (for a monographic description of this formation, see Kümmel 1996). We find no mention of, nor references to, this and several other important modern studies on the Vedic verb and noun, such as Kümmel’s study on the Indo-Iranian perfect, Gotō’s monograph on Vedic class I presents and his materials for a study of the Old Indian verb, etc. Instead, the bibliography abounds in unnecessary references to the editions of Vedic texts and studies on the Old Indian grammatical tradition.

Another example which, I am afraid, betrays both Cardona’s carelessness and lack of interest for what has taken place in modern Sanskrit and Vedic linguistics is the following passage from “General introduction” (since it deals with Sanskrit forms and constructions, it was certainly written by Cardona, not by his co-author, Dhanesh Jain): “present-imperfect passives, which in earliest Indo-Aryan could have merely passive endings with a verb base (e.g., *stave* ‘is praised’), came to have *-ya-* obligatorily (*stūyate* ‘is praised’), although the third singular passive aorist type *akāri* ‘has been made’ still has only a base followed by a passive affix ...” (p. 11). First of all, *stave* is not a “present-imperfect passive”. In the modern scholarship this form is called ‘stative’. Its origin and genesis remains the subject of debate, but its synchronic status has been well-studied (see especially Kümmel 1996 and Gotō 1997).

Like the passive aorist, it has a defective paradigm including the 3rd person singular in *-e* and 3rd person plural in *-re*. After the Ṛgveda, the stative practically disappears. Within the verbal system, the stative does not belong to the sub-system of present (although it can express the present meaning); rather, it is adjacent to that of perfect; note that its endings are identical with those of 3sg. and 3pl. middle perfects. Accordingly, *-e* cannot be called a “passive ending”; it is the 3sg. middle perfect ending shared with the stative.

There are also some other features of Cardona’s sketch that are unnecessary and inappropriate in a modern grammatical description. Thus, there was certainly no need to accompany English linguistic terms with their Sanskrit equivalents – for instance, in the table of Devanāgarī symbols on p. 156 (consonants = *vyañjanāni*, stops = *sparsāḥ*, velar = *jihvāmūlīya*, etc.). Including bracketed grammatical information into translations, instead of standard interlinear morphemic glossing, as in most other chapters, proves to be very inconvenient for the reader. Thus, Ṛgveda 1.1.1ab *agnīm īle puróhitaṁ yajñásya devām ṛtvijam* is rendered as ‘I praise (invoke) (*īle*¹ [1st. sg. pres. mid.]) Agni (*agnim* [acc. sg. m.]), the god (*devam*) set at the fore (*purah-hitam*) as the priest (*rtvijam*) of the rite (*yajñasya*).’ (p. 121). Cardona’s glossing shows numerous inaccuracies, being inconsistent and incomplete in many respects. To name but a few: the gloss [acc. sg.] should accompany all accusatives, not only *agnim*; the gender information [m.] is unnecessary (and may even confuse a non-Sanskritist), since gender is an inflectional category only with adjectives and some pronouns, not with substantives; there is no uniformity in grammatical abbreviations: we come across “perf.” and “pfct.” (= perfect), “imp.” and “imper.” (= imperative), “3rd sg” and “3sg.” (= 3rd person singular), etc.

I am afraid, I have to end my discussion of Cardona’s description of Sanskrit grammar at this point. The above criticism does not of course imply a low academic level of the writing in the chapter. Quite on the contrary, it is rich in information and demonstrates the author’s enormous erudition in the field of Ancient Indian linguistics. The main problem is that it does not fit the genre of a Routledge descriptive volume. Rather, it might be appropriate in a handbook of ancient grammatical traditions.

Cardona’s sketch is followed by two excellent surveys of Middle Indo-Aryan languages, written by two leading experts in that field. Thomas Oberlies’ chapter covers the early Middle Indo-Aryan period, which includes Aśokan Prakrit and Pāli. Vit Bubenik’s article deals with the later Middle Indo-Aryan, Prākṛits and Apabhraṁśa. Both chapters conveniently summarize the information about the linguistic features of this period.

Instead of discussing these and the following 17 chapters, which deal with New Indo-Aryan languages (most of which are also quite informative and clearly written), I will add a few comments regarding the general editing of the volume. Unfortunately, little has been done for a general unification of the structure of chapters and their adjustment to each other. The

¹ I normalize the transcription thus; in this and some other passages the retroflex *!* is printed as *!* – yet another Cardona’s inaccuracy in notation.

“General index”, which we find on pp. 953-975, is rather poor (it mostly contains language names and some general terms). There are detailed subject indexes for individual languages (under the general heading “Language index”, pp. 976-1055) but no cumulative subject index – which may considerably hamper the access of general linguists and typologists to the material presented in the volume. Thus, the linguist interested in Indo-Aryan ergativity will find (using the “Language index”) a few remarks on ergative markers and constructions in Hindi (p. 268) and Urdu (p. 289f., 297), but no mention of ergativity in the index for Asamiya, or Assamese. In fact, however, the authors of the chapter on Asamiya, G. C. Goswami and Jyotiprakash Tamuli, posit two endings of the nominative case, *-e* and *-∅* (p. 419), and then describe the use of these endings as follows: “The nominative subject occurs in transitive sentences. It is overtly marked by the nominative case in transitive sentences, and unmarked in intransitive ones” (p. 432); “[o]bjects take the accusative case *-(v)k* when the referent is a human noun. Otherwise they are not formally marked” (p. 433). Cf. the following examples (p. 432):

- | | | | |
|--------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| (1) a. | <i>ram-e</i>
Ram- <u>ERG</u>
'Ram read the book.' | <i>kitap-khən-∅</i>
book-DEF- <u>NOM/ABS</u> | <i>pərhi-il-e</i>
read-PAST-3 |
| b. | <i>ram-∅</i>
Ram- <u>NOM/ABS</u>
'Ram slept.' | <i>xu-l-e</i>
sleep-PAST-3 | |

The underlined glosses are mine; the other glosses reproduce those given by the authors. Apparently, the two forms claimed by the authors as belonging to the nominative case, *ram-e* and *ram*, represent in fact two different cases, ergative and absolutive/nominative. In such situations we expect that the editors would have introduced the necessary corrections into the text of the individual chapters. Unfortunately, one of the major editorial tasks – locating and removing terminological discrepancies where possible – was not fulfilled here.

To conclude the discussion of the general content of the volume, I would further like to mention a major gap in its content, to wit, the lack of a grammatical sketch of the Maldivian language, or Divehi (Dhivehi), closely related to Sinhala. The turn of the century was marked by a rapid increase in publications on Maldivian. During the last few years, we have obtained two grammars (Cain & Gair 2000 and Fritz 2002) and a dictionary (Reynolds 2003) of this language. Quite regrettably, one of the official Indo-Aryan languages (i.e. used as the official language of a country, the Republic of Maldives), has not deserved a separate chapter in the volume.

In spite of a number of shortcomings and lacunae in some chapters, the importance and indisputable value of the volume under review cannot, of course, be diminished. The survey conveniently summarizes the relevant literature and can serve as a useful guide to modern

studies on Indo-Aryan languages. Linguists and indologists will find in this handbook rich material and a bibliography that are indispensable for their studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am much indebted to Robert Ryan for valuable remarks and comments on an earlier draft of this review.

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