
[37] ***Declension and Description – The Way(s) of Sanskrit Grammarians***

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Sanskrit, a well-known member of the Indo-European family, is – among its other properties – a highly inflected language. It is also one of the very few languages of the world which has given birth to a long – and deeply elaborate – tradition of endogenous description (Vyākaraṇa), a tradition which is generally considered as starting in the 5th BC (with Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī) and ending in the 18th c. AD. This paper aims to study the different ways in which Sanskrit grammarians presented nominal declensions. It will rely on the following research questions: - did the Sanskrit grammarians follow the same presentation throughout the 23 centuries? - What form(s) did their presentation take (paradigms? other?)? - Did they classify the various kinds of declension? - On what criteria did they base their classification(s)? - Did they explain their procedure and, if any, their modifications to the tradition?