

The Range of *Bhāṣā*

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It is a great pleasure to welcome the first issue of a new journal dedicated to the study of South Asian languages in the broadest sense possible.

During the 20th century the earlier combination of textual studies (philology), investigation of indigenous grammatical traditions, and what may be called ‘pure linguistics’ has increasingly become severed. True, practicing historical-comparative linguists continue to do a fair amount of philological work on the texts from which they draw their data, and many of them go beyond, in terms of detailed textual studies. Some also still study the ancient grammarians, either in their own right or in terms of what insights they may offer for general linguistic studies. But academic institutions and journals tend to separate linguistics from philology, and the study of ancient grammatical traditions tends to fall between the chairs.

It is gratifying, therefore, that *Bhāṣā* भाषा aims to bring philology, linguistics, and the study of Indian grammatical traditions together, under one roof. The fact that it does so in an open-access format adds further reasons for appreciation and gratitude.

In fact, the contributions to this first issue already manifest much of the intended breadth of the Journal, ranging from ‘purely’ linguistic investigations on South Asian negation and predicative possessives in Hindi, to a study of sarcasm in Kashmiri, to the ideology underlying the Sanskrit revival movement and speakers’ declarations in the Indian Census, to – last, but by no means least – a ‘purely’ philological investigation on the Pāli *Milindapañha* and its Chinese counterparts.

It is to be hoped that future issues continue in this broad direction and further increase the breadth by addressing issues in all of the languages and language families of South Asia, whether linguistic, philological, or focused on the different grammatical traditions.

The Editor-in-Chief, Professor Andrea Drocchio and his home institution, the Department of Asian and North African Studies of Ca' Foscari University of Venice, deserve our deep gratitude for having embarked on this ambitious voyage.

वाक्शास्त्रे शब्दशास्त्रे च भाषाशास्त्रे तथैव च ।
पत्रिकेयं प्रकाशित्री जीवेत शरदः शतम् ॥