NATURE AND SCOPE OF VRITTIS*

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CHAPTER I

SECTION A: INTRODUCTORY

The Concept ‘Vṛtti’ Down the Ages

Language is one of the wonders of creation. Mankind was lucky to possess it as a priceless treasure. The number of languages and dialects spoken in the world is countless, yet the laws governing their origin and development are almost the same for all.

The origin of language is steeped in mystery which has baffled all attempts at solution. It is either God-given or man-made; God-given as orthodox tradition would say; but man-made as Man is still struggling to establish. In recent times however, much critical inquiry is brought to bear upon the question and many theories are put forth with little or no success. One may recapitulate the Bow-vow, the Ding-dong and other theories in this connection. Indian thinkers too have speculated on the subject.

However, language came into being. As mankind expanded and branched off to countries far and wide, language also grew and took shape differently on different soil. So families of languages came into being, each family and each branch widening and varying with time and clime.

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N.B.—Bibliography will be published in the last portion of the Thesis.

1 Devim vaçam ajanayanta devás tām viśvarūpah paśava vadanti—RV., VIII. 100–11.
   Anādinidhanā nityā vāg utṣṛṣṭa swayambhūvā—Śmṛti text quoted by Śankara under Vedānta-sūtra, 1. 3. 28.

2 "Language is the work of man; it was invented by man as a means of communicating his thoughts, when mere looks and gestures proved insufficient."—Max Müller, Science of Language, Vol. I, p. 31.

3 Compare the legend of the Māheśvarasūtras in the Aṣṭādhyāyī:
   Nṛttavasāne nāṣṭaśīrṣārjop namāda ghākkām navaparavāram |
   Uddharmāmo samakāałasiddhān etavimarṣe Śivasūtraśālām ||
   Compare again Yāska, “Kāka iti śahānukṛthi, etc.”—Nir., III. 18.
   That words are current from immemorial time (pravāhānti) has been noticed by the author of the Nyāya-vārtika under the Nyāya-sūtra, 2. 1. 69.
In the Rgveda, which is the oldest literary document of the world, we find language as a finished product, one that reveals long age of formation and development. In fact, the "discovery of Sanskrit," and particularly the literature of the Vedic Period, unravelled to the toiling philologists of the day many a vista of linguistic development in the whole history of mankind.

Rgveda is essentially a Book of Prayer addressed to a host of gods who were supposed to bring happiness and plenty to Man. Quite a voluminous collection; it must help us to visualise the life and thought of the people who made it or saw it. Praises and prayers of the RV. were meant to accompany, as a rule, a variety of sacrificial ritual in which oblations were offered to the gods of Heaven, Earth and Air through Fire. Now and then, the Vedic seer meditates and speculates on Nature's wonders, Man's aspirations and the various aspects of life on Earth.

About speech, which is God's special gift to mankind, indeed, certain references in the RV. and other Samhitas are illuminating.

According to the RV.:—"The gods produced the goddess VĀK; her do animals of every kind utter; may she VĀK, the all-gladdening cow yielding food and drink, come to us, worthily praised." According to Yāska, the animals meant those of articulate and inarticulate speech (vyaktavācasāvyaktavācasā). The importance of speech had been fully realised that the great Vedic seer Jamadagni declares:

"The divine cow, who herself utters speech and gives speech to others, who comes attended by every kind of utterance, who helps me for my worship of the gods,—it is only the fool who abandons her."

The Taittirīya Samhitā records a legend according to which Indra, associated with Vāyu, was responsible for the discrimination of articulate speech.

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5 RV., VIII. 100-11 (Tr. H. H. Wilson):
   The verse is repeated in many Brāhmaṇas and Sūtras.
6 Nīr., XI. 29. Durga clarifies:
   "Vyaṃtavāco manasyādayah avyaktavāco gavādayah—cf. SB., IV. 1. 3. 16.
7 RV., VIII. 101-16:
   Vāgavidam vācāmudrīrāyaṃ vīśvābhīrdhībhīrpatātīṣhamānam
   Devīm deśehaḥ paryeyuṣṭām gāmānāvṛtā marṭyā daḥbraçaṇāḥ
8 TS., VI. 4, 7, 3; cf. MS., IV. 5-8; cf. also the seer Supārṣa, son of Kaṇya, proclaiming that he saw how Indra and Varuṇa ' gave to the seers wisdom, power of song and fame'. "Indra-
   Varuṇa yad āśībhya maniṣām vāco nātiṃ śrutam adattam agra."—RG., VIII. 59. 6.
“Speech” is, in the Satapatha Brähmana, divided into four kinds,—that of men, of animals, of birds (vāyāmsī), and of small creeping things (kṣudram sarīspam). The speech of some musical instruments like Tūnāra, Vīna and Dundubhi, is mentioned, and in one Samhitā also that of the axle of a chariot. The speech of the Kurupāṇcālas was especially renowned, as well as that of the northern country, according to the Kaushitaki Brähmana, so that men went there to study the language. On the other hand, barbarians in speech were known, and were to be avoided.

“One division of speech referred to is that of the divine (daivī) and the human (mānuṣī), of which some specimens are given, such as Om, the divine counterpart of tathā and so forth. The Brahmin is said to know both; it seems best to regard the distinction not as between Sanskrit and Apabhramśa, as Śāyaṇa suggests, but as between the Sanskrit of the ritual and the hymns and that of ordinary life.

“Reference is also made to Āryan and to Brahmin speech, by which Sanskrit, as opposed to non-Āryan tongues, seems to be meant. The Vṛtyās are described as speaking the language of the initiated (dikṣita-vāk) though not themselves initiated (a-dikṣita), but as calling that which is easy to utter (a-durukta), difficult to utter. This may mean that the non-Brahminical Indians were advancing more rapidly than the Brāhminical tribes to Prākrit speech, especially if it is legitimate to connect the Vṛtyās with the barbarians in speech alluded to in the Satapatha Brähmana.”

The Gopatha Brähmana discussing the mystic significance of the word ‘Oum’ mentions many grammatical terms. Such and other references reveal that germs of later grammar were, to a little extent, scattered in Vedic literature.

Oum-kāram prṛṣhāmaḥ.  ‘Ko ḍhātuḥ?
Kaḥ pratyaṇaḥ? Kaḥ svaraḥ? Kim prātipadikam?
Kim nāma? Kim ākhyātām? Kim līṅgam?
Kim vaṇanām? Kā vibhaktiḥ? Kiṃ niruktam...?

GPB., 1. 23–24, p. 16.

Scientific study of speech was made incidentally. We see the later conception of the Vedāntins ‘Vṛttī’ here, which resembles, in a way, the theory of the modern psychologists that mind and matter are identical. This view is foreshadowed there alone. There is an interesting dialogue between speech and mind, each claiming superiority over the other. Brahma to

9 These interesting facts about VĀK is culled out from the Vedic texts reproduced from Macdonel and Keith’s Vedic Index of Names and Subjects, Vol. 2, pp. 279–80.
whom the quarrel was referred to gives a ruling that they are identical. The dialogue runs as follows:

"Prajāpati ayato manascaiva vaçaśca.

Vāk.— "Aham bhadra uditam manasça vai. Vak śāham bhadra udātte.

Manas.—Ahameva tvacāḥreynosmi. Na vai mayā ivam kin ca nāmābhigatam vyadasi. Sa yanmama tvanānukaraṇaṁavartmāṁ. Ahameva tvacāḥreynosmi iti.

Vāk.— Ahameva tvacāḥreynosmi. Yad vai ivam vetyaham tadvignāpayāṁyaham saṁjñāpayāmi iti.”

"Te prajāpatim prāśnameyatuḥ. Sa Prajāpatirmanasa evanuvāca. Mana eva tvacāḥreyo manaso vai ivam kṛtānukarānavaṁavartmāṁ. Śreyasovai prāpiyāṁ kṛtānukaronuvartmābhavati.”

SPB., 4. 1. 8–12.

Thus superiority of mind over speech was declared by Prajāpati, their chosen judge, and it was the cause for displeasure of speech with him. So she swore, as a sort of vengeance against Prajāpati, that she would never help the sacrificer in all rites connected with him. As such, offerings to Prajāpati are done silently as the following passage assures:

"Sa yadubhaya evāghārayati tasmādidad manasça vāk ca saṁānām eva sat nāneva śiroha vai yajñasyaitayor anyatara āghārayor mūlamanyatarāṁ.”

SPB., II. 5–8.

This idea of identity between Vāk (symbol) and its respective outside matter is developed by the later philosophers (Dārśanikās) like the Vedāntins, grammarians, etc.

**Ontological Study of Speech**

A lot of mysticism and myth is centred around ‘Vāk’. It is said to be eternal and useful in sacrifices.

"Oṃ mitryekāksaram Brahma"

"Punāno vaçaṁisyati”

RV., X. 30. 1.

Sound is eternal but often appears to be born.

"Viśvasya vaçaṁavidanmanāyoh punahpunarjayāmāna purāṇī samānam.”

RV., I. 92. 9.
The metaphysics of speech is the subject-matter of an entire hymn in the tenth Maṇḍala. The seer sings:

"That, O Brāhaspati, is the best part of speech which those giving a name to objects utter, that which was the best of those words and free from defect, (Saraswati) reveals it though secretly implanted, by means of affection." \(^{10}\)

"When the wise created speech through wisdom winnowing it as men winnow barley with a sieve, then friends know friendship; good fortune is placed upon their word." \(^{11}\)

"One man indeed seeing speech has not seen her; another hearing her has not heard her; but to another she delivers her person as a loving wife well-attired presents herself to her husband." \(^{12}\)

"They call one man firmly established in the friendship (of speech), they do not exclude him from (the society of) the powerful (in knowledge); another wanders with an illusion that is barren, bearing speech that is without fruit, without flowers." \(^{13}\)

"He who has abandoned the friend who knows the duty of a friend, in his speech there is not a particle (of sense), what he hears, amiss; for he knows not the path of righteousness." \(^{14}\)

We thus see the different explanations offered with regard to the production, function, mystic significance of speech and its bearing on sacrifices.

Distinction between different aspects of sound is also observed. The seven notes in sound; the different parts of its origin in vocal-mechanism and also the instrumental or musical notes, are referred to in Mait. Saṅh. (I. 11. 5, Cal. Ed.). Tattvīrīya Saṅhīta of the YV. also speaks of this.

"Vāg vai dēvebhyo apākṛmāt yajñāyatiṣṭhamānā savanaspatim prāviśat saisā vāgvanaspatisu vadati yā dundubhau yā tūnāve yā vīnāvām yaddikṣītadānām prayaṇchati."
From the above evidences it is clear how deep is the study of Vāk in the minds of the Vedic seers.

Having thus viewed all the scientific aspects of Vāk in general, they take up the question of speech in literature. They think of many types. The most important of them however, are the two types of speech, i.e., the literary (āryabhāṣā) and the popular dialect (vrātyabhāṣā). Pančavimśa-Brāhmaṇa also refers to this aspect \(^{15}\) (PVB, III. 2. 5). This shows that they were quite observant of linguistic varieties and difficulties.

_Aitareyāraṇyaka_ refers to two kinds of speech.

"Sa yo haitām daivīṃ viṇāṃ veda śṛtavadano bhavati bhūmiprāśya-
kīrtir bhavati yatra kvaca ĀRYAVAČO bhāsante VĀK RASAH."

_Ait. Ār.,_ III. 2. 5.

That standardised literary speech is further divided into four kinds:

"cātvāri vāk parimitā padāni tāni vidurbrāhmaṇā ye maniśināḥ |
guhā triṇi niḥitā neṅgayanti turiyam vāco manusyā vadanti ||

_RV.,_ I. 164. 45.

cf., _RV.,_ I. 167. 3 & VIII. 101. 1.

_AV.,_ VII. 44. 1.

The best type of poetry is compared to the sweetest drink and it excels the sweetness of the drink because it does not cease when we cease relishing it. But, on the other hand, it endures or persists to be relished. This is akin to the conception of _Rasa._

A distinction between an ordinary poetry and the best form of it is noticed many a time. Vedic seers pray for wisdom and depth in poetic intuition. They offer two excellent praises of fresh and fine composition.

Thus we see the philosophical exposition of speech given by the Vedic seers. They view poetry from the practical point of view in life. But its interpretation has been a difficulty at all times.

Pataṅjali takes liberty in interpreting and employing Vedic concepts in his own favour. That we see in the _RV._

"cātvāri śṛṅgā trayoasyapādāh dve śīrṣe sapta hastāso asya |
tridhā baddho viśabho roravūti mahādēvo martyāṇa viveṣa ||"

\(^{16}\) _Ait. Ar.,_ I. 5. 25; _Sāṅkāyana Brāhmaṇa, viii._ 9; _Pančavimśa-Brāhmaṇa, xvii._ 1-9.
There is a challenge from a Vedic seer:

"Ṛkṣandasāṁ yogamaveda dhīrāḥ ko dhīṣyāṁ prati vācuṁ papāda."

RV., X. 114. 9.

"Who is there who has understood the Vedas and the proper significance of every word there?"

If we are permitted to take the same liberty, it may not be wrong to extend the same reasoning and attribute to the following words the significances with which we are concerned. Example: 'gaṁvāri vāk parimitā padāni......(RV., I. 164. 45). Here four types of words might be referred to. So we can venture a conjecture and say that those four capacities may signify Abhidā, Lakṣaṇa, Tātparya and Vyāṇjana. It may be concluded that the Vedic Mind was,—indirectly conscious of the word-power (śabdaśakti) and those poetic seers reached freely to that consciousness. The following may be taken as evidences:

"Yadeśāmāno anyasya vācuṁ sāktasyeva vadati śikṣamānaṁ āviṣaḥ

RV., VII. 103. 5.

Here the words, sākt, vadati, śikṣamānaḥ are significant. They refer to the croaking of frogs which is compared with the shouting of a teacher with his boys. The initiation of language to children may be taken to be hinted at by this example. A RK. in RV., VIII. 101. 16 contains the word ‘viśvābhiḥ dhīrōbhiiḥ’ (many ideas). What are those many meanings? When a reference is made to the twist in speech as we find in AV. (III. 102. 2), what is the possible twist that speech can have? Such references to many meanings and a resort to the secondary sense (figurative) is evidently a reference to the possibility of many meanings and a recourse to Lakṣaṇa, a secondary sense. Richness of suggestion and depth of thought in the Rg-vedic poetry needs no reiteration. Bhavabhūti goes to the extent of attributing mystic significance in the words of our ancient sages. Though John Dewy differs from us we need not shirk from attributing such magic powers to words in general. This mystic and occult power in words is not appreciated by some of the Western thinkers. But we see, eye to eye, how there is such an efficiency in chants and psalms. To call it superstitious is a hypercritical attitude. However the foregoing facts make the point on hand

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16 Anyo anyasmat vacu vadanti esa sadhviganam vah sammanaskromi—AV., III. 102. 2.
17 Laukikādām hi sādhānām artham vāganupārātite
Rśīnām punarādhyānām vacuṁ artha amudhāvatī—Uttararāmaśārīta, Act I, Prologue.
18 "It is hardly surprising that savages attach a magic efficacy to words."

How We Think, by John Dewy, Ch. XIII.
very clear. Our belief in and an approach to the Vedic study, as already argued, encourages us to hold our point and say that we see germs of śabdaśakti quite discernible in the Vedic literature.

To sum up, we can say that the Vedic literature affords ample scope for an enquiry into the power of words already conceived and constructed throughout the Samhitās.

Word and Its Value in Post-Upaniṣadic Literature

Literary investigation, in a sense, commenced throughout the post-Upaniṣadic Period. It is not out of place to say that there may be, by that time, an end of the creative theological and liturgical speculations. This kind of decline has a corresponding development in phonetic speculation. In fact, speculation of a scientific nature characterised the age. A big gap was, perhaps, responsible for this development. Any how the characteristic tone of the Vedic literature is changed and the spirit of the age diverted. The attention was bestowed on stabilizing the form (śabda of the Vedas) (Vedapurusa which went by the name Šabdabrahman).

The first four of the vedāṅgas are aiming at purity and chasteness of the physical aspect of a word, especially of the Vedic language. This kind of direct attempt to fix the formal aspect of their literary heritage was made by people like Śākalya, Śaunaka, Yāska, Śākapūni and others. Thereby they envisage the phonetic aspect of words, which led them to investigate laws of interpretation also. Nirukta, as Dr. Sarup describes, is “the oldest Indian treatise on etymology, philosophy and semantics”. Rajwade thinks that it is also theological in character. The present study is concerned only with the semasiological utility of Nirukta and other similar texts. We shall see what light they throw in this direction.

No direct reference to the four Vṛttis (Abhidhā, Lakṣaṇa, Tātparya and Dhvani) is discernible till we come from Yāska to Patañjali (500 B.C. to 100 B.C.). There are, at any rate, the following sure indications. Yāska refers to figurative usage “sthāṇuryam bhārahārah. . . . . .” This is beyond doubt a genuine case of Lakṣaṇa. Prepositions are supposed to affect original meanings. Similar instances are clear in Nirukta.

19 This refers to the irreversibility of the verbal aspect of the Vedas or the “śabdaparivṛttyasahatva”.

20 This stress on śabda, probably led the post-Vedic people to think of Veda in terms of Śabdaprathāna and Prabhavyanmita.

21 For details see AIOC, Vol. I, “Commentators on Rgveda,” Article by Dr. C. K. Raja.

22 “Uççavaça padārthāh bhavantītī gāryyoh”
“Tadya eṣa padārthāh prāhurime nāmakhyātayorvikaranam”—Niruktā, p. 20.
Nature and Scope of Vṛtti

One cannot ignore an Upaniṣadic statement, in one of the oldest Upaniṣads.

"Vācārambhāṇam viṅgūr nāmāṅheyaṃ iti trīṇi rupāṇi ityeyamaṃ satyam."

Chāndogya Up., 6.4.1 and 2.3.4.

cf. Brhadāraṇyaka Up., 3.2.3.

This foreshadows the four-fold śabdaśakti of Patañjali, viz., jāti, guna, kriya and yaḍṛgha. Yāska already appreciates the comprehensive and minute character of the word in preference to gestures for the purpose of worldly contact: "vyāptimattvāt tu śabdasya anīyastvaśca śabdena saññākaraṇam vyawahārāttham lōke."—(Nirukta, 1, p. 2).

"Words are used to designate objects with regard to everyday affairs in the world, on account of their comprehensiveness and minuteness."—(Tr. Sarup).

"Laksana" has played an important part in the development of all languages. The English word 'board' has got a dozen or more senses all of which are traceable to its primary meaning, viz., a piece of timber sawed thin and of considerable length and breadth compared with the thickness. No one would think of deriving 'board' in different ways in order to bring out its different senses. 'Ahi' which means a serpent may have been used of the black cloud by Laksana a cloud is a big dragon which Indra kills.

Rājwade, Intrdn., p. 37.

Brhaddevata

Before studying Patañjali, the champion of Śabdaśakti, it is meet to consider the claim of Śaunaka's Brhaddevata in the history of 'Semantic discipline'. This is a kind of index to the deities that are invoked in the Rgveda. But it is not so prosaic as that. It is interspersed with about forty legends bearing on the life of the Vedic Period. The book provides some grammatical and allied information in the first and second chapters, information which could be important in the history of the development of grammatical and exegetical systems. Everywhere in Vedic literature we find the minimum division of 'Vāk' into three classes.

For details in variety of speech, see "Vāk before Bhartṛhari" by Mādhava Krishna Sarma, P.O., Vol. 8 (1–2), April–June 1943, pp. 21–36. The three divisions of (i) Paśyani, (ii) Madhyamā and (iii) Vaikhari and the mystic characteristics of Nāda and Bindu especially with reference to Oṃkāra may be seen in Upaniṣads like Nādabindu, Dhyānabindu, Hamsa, etc. —cf. BRD., II. St. 73.
Like Yāska, his predecessor, Śaunaka also attributes to prepositions the power of altering meanings of words with which they are associated.

"Uccāvaçeṣuṇærthesu nipātāḥ samudāhriyati"

—BRD., II. St. 61.

With regard to the semantic aspect of 'Vāk' Śaunaka throws fresh light.

"Pradhānam arthāh, sābdo hi tadgaṇāyatta igyate
| tasmāt nānānvayopāyāḥ sābdān arthavaśam nayati||

BRD., II, St. 101.

He discusses about the unit of speech. Is it a word or group of words? Philologists and psychologists hold a sentence as the unit of speech. Grammarians admit both. This controversy finds a clear solution at the hands of Śaunaka. Of course, he upholds a word as the unit irrespective of its length which according to him is superfluous.

"Arthat padam svābhidheyam padāt vākyārthaniprayah |
padasanghātajam vākyam varṇasanghātajam padam||
Arthat prakaraṇāt lingāt awṣityāt deśakālatah |
mantresvarthavivekah syāt itaresvītiṣa sthitih ||
iti nānānvayopayaiḥ nairukteyo yateta saḥ.||

BRD., II. 128. 9, p. 55. Cal. Ed.

In the above Kārikā śaunaka brings out the significances of terms like Abhidheya, Prakaraṇa, Nānānvayopāya. He uses the term guṇa which means secondary sense in BRD., II. 101. They are clear indications to show that Śaunaka is fully aware of the concept Vṛtti and its varieties. The term Nānānvaya is very significant.

Pāṇini and Patañjali

The position certainly improves by the time one goes to a close study of Pāṇini and Patañjali. The floating concepts of Vṛtti, as we have already seen, were codified and consolidated as it were. Under Bhairikyādi and Kathādi (4. 4. 102) Pāṇini refers to the word Vṛtti. Under Pāṇini's aphorism (4. 1. 45)* mention is made as “saktih śastre”. He intends

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24 Grammarians believe in the five-fold capacity of a word or its case endings. Technically they are called “ekam, dvīkam, trīkam, ċatuśkam, pautsamakam”. Bhattoji and Kondabhattra make this point clear in their works, i.e., Vāyikaramasiddhāntakārika and Vai-Bhidāsaṃgāra.

25 cf. Alankārikas' conception of "Samyogādi" for purpose of deriving 'Suggestion'.

26 Pāṇini forms several groups of words and calls them as a Gaṇa. Words in such Gaṇa are not in the purview of grammatical principles, but gain currency by convention.

27 Details about this are found in the succeeding chapters.

* See Aṣṭādhyāyi, p. 79, Ed. S. Chandraśekhara Śāstrigal, Madras.
thereby the use of the word *sakti* in ‘Śāstra’. Though it is doubted there is direct reference to *śabdaśakti* in his *Aphorisms*, I. 2. 58. “Svarūpānāṃ ekaṣeṣa ekavidhiktau” and in another Aphorism “Jātyākhyāyaṁ ekasmin bhuvanacanamanantarasyām”. Patañjali commenting on the latter says, “Ubbhayatha hyācyareṇa sūtrāṇi paṭhitānti, kritipadārtham matvā jātyākhyāyaṁ....... ityucyate, dravyam padārtham matvā sarūpa....... ityekaṣeṣa aرابhya ye.”—vide MBH., I. 1. 1, p. 17, of Vol. I, Bombay Ed.

Having derived the necessary concepts from all the eminent predecessors, Patañjali has concluded that the power of words in the primary sense is four-fold “Catuṣṭayī śabdānāṃ pravṛttiḥ”.27 Thus the position of *Vṛtti* has improved.

Patañjali is like a beacon light helping us in preparing a critical estimate of the *Vṛtti*. With unsurpassed perspicuity in style he reveals, for the first time, much information hidden in the cryptic sūtra literature. He introduces to us Pāṇini and Vararuci28 and also their consciousness of the concept *Vṛtti*. Direct and undubious is the exposition of anything by Patañjali; a characteristic feature of only a few writers. “Atha kah śabdaḥ, dravyam, guṇah, krivā-ākṛtih.…….nāma sa”29—“What is meant by a word—Is it an object, or attribute, or action?—It is the genus indeed,” etc. Thus step by step we gain grounds in Patañjali.

**Historical Evolution of the Concept Vṛtti Concluded**

Antecedents and their foreshadowings of the concept of *Vṛtti* are examined in the early exegetical works. The inception of the concept directly goes to Patañjali. The history of *Vṛtti* is like the history of electricity. It is there throughout. But latent. It became patent by about the beginning of the Christian era.30

Yāska refers to the term *Vṛtti*.31 He has used it in the sense of some basis for conveying a meaning when there is doubt about it. Skandasvāmin and Mahēśwara explain it as follows:

“Vartate tatra śabda iti vṛttih. artha ucyate ....... yatra sa śabdārthoṣṭi tayorarthhayoh yatsāmāṇyam tena tatra pravṛttiriti pratyate.”32

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27 MBH., I. 1. 1, p. 4.
28 MBH., St. I. 1. 1, p. 4.
29 MBH., St. I. 1. 1, p. 4.
30 Strictly speaking, it cannot and even need not be pinned down to a definite period. Though Shakespeare spoke of security as ‘the common enemy of mankind’, research speaks of security as the common friend. For the sake of that security we have to ruminate the material already chewed.
31 MBH., St. I. 1. 1, p. 4.
32 MBH., St. I. 1. 1, p. 4.
Durgācārya comments:

"Vṛttisāmānyena guṇakriyāsāmānyena."

Devarājadhvarin describes:

"Vṛttisāmānyena....arthaprādhānyena anādṛtya svarasamkārau pariksēta. tatastadbhidhānam buddhāv kenaśidarthavṛttisāmānyena kriyāgūṇa sāmānyena ityarthah."

Rājwade translates the word Vṛtti as a verbal or nominal stem. On a similar occasion Durga interprets Vṛtti in the sense of relationship of a word with its meaning. Saunaka too uses Vṛtti in the same sense. Coming to Patañjali there is no beating about the bush. He actually catches the bird.

"Kā punarvṛttih" as an answer to this he gives two meanings: (i) śāstra pravṛtti and (ii) padārthābhidhānam. Accounting for the variation of meanings in accordance with the will of the speaker Vararuci says:

"Siddham tvavasthitā varṇā vaktusciravacanaṁ vṛttayo viśiṣyante."

Vārtika, No. 547, p. 453. MBH., Vol. II.

Thus, through all the stages, we discern the evolution of the concept Vṛtti. This was the stage when the concept was gaining currency gradually.

Now what is the meaning of the word ‘Vṛtti’. Subsequently Patañjali himself defines the word ‘Vṛtti’.

"Vṛttih padānam arthābhidhānam."

It is a capacity of words by virtue of which they convey meaning in language. Another reference to ‘Vṛtti’, a concept, that lends inspiration to Vāmanā’s Concept of Vṛtti is found in Patañjali.

To sum up we can say that all the concepts that cling to the word Vṛtti in poetics have found their foreshadowings in Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya—a work of encyclopaedic character.

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33 Ibid., Bombay Ed., 2. 1. 1. 57.
34 Devarājajavān, Introduction to Nir., Dr. Sarup, pp. 10, 17, Oxford Univ. Press.
35 Visayavatyaḥ bahuśamānyavyatyaḥ sabdānām artheśu vṛttayaḥ bhavanti nānābhāvena artheśu avasthitāḥ pravṛttiḥ iti
36 "Sāmānyavacanāḥ sābdāh viṣeṣe sthāpitāḥ kvaicit Palāyane yathāvṛtti komumaryā itiṣyate"
BRD., II. 111. p. 54.
40 "Abhāyāsārihe dhētām vṛttih...." MBH., p. 453.
SECTION B: DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT '\textit{Vṛtti}'

\textit{Historical Study of 'Vṛtti' from Yāska to Patañjali}

An attempt has hitherto been made to appreciate a few aspects of the concept 'vṛtti'. It is propounded not only by our ancient grammarians but also by the other scholastic philosophers (the ancient Dārśanakārās). As a necessary corollary to all speculations, the property and function of words have drawn the attention of many a thinker. As the problem was set afoot by the grammarians it was reviewed and amplified by the philosophers from time to time in a variety of ways. Whether they held the word or a sentence as the unit in \textit{Śabdaśakti}, is not the issue on hand. For example—the Mimāṃsakās, the Naiyāyikās, the Vedāntins of the theistic school, have all held high only two functions of words, \textit{i.e.}, \textit{Abhidhā} and \textit{Lakṣāṇā}. To them, \textit{Tātparya} is a layer of \textit{Lakṣāṇā}. \textit{Vyañjana} is an antidote. The sphota theory, on the basis of which is developed the theory of Suggestion, is an old fabric in the Indian psychological tapestry around which a lot of schism prevailed in bygone days. The name \textit{Tātparya} is of a late origin. It is primarily a function of consolidation of ideas. Bhārtrihari among the scientists and Bhāmaha among the Alankārikas, codified all these floating theories for future guidance.

Jaimini refers to \textit{Abhidhā} and \textit{Lakṣāṇā} in unequivocal terms. Referring to names gained on grounds of analogy he says that it is a case of \textit{Lakṣāṇā} and not that of \textit{Śakti}, \textit{i.e.}, \textit{Abhidhā}.

'\textit{Tadāśaktīśānurūpāvatvā}'

\textit{JS.}, 1. 3. 28.

'\textit{Anurūpohi gavyādiḥ gośabdasya}’ says Śabara in his \textit{Bhāṣya} on the said aphorism. Jaimini refers to the same idea in another aphorism.

'\textit{Gunādavipratiśedhāḥ}’

\textit{JS.}, 1. 2. 47.

"A resort to the secondary sense based on similar characteristics is not prevented." Śabarāsāṃvī comments on this as follows:

"\textit{Aditiḥ dyānriti gaṇa eṣa śabdaḥ.}"
On account of the expression being figuration there would be no contradiction.”

TV., Dr. Jha, p. 98 (Eng. Tr.).

Naiyāyikās.—Similar instances of the two ‘vrta’ need no more amplification. An exposition of Abhidhā and Lakṣāṇā according to the Vedāntins and particularly the Naiyāyikās is taken up in connection with the ‘Bhākta-vāda’ in the penultimate chapter. Apart from his reference to the three-fold division of the function:—Abhidhā, 45 he refers to Lakṣāṇā in his Nyāya-sūtras. 46 Words like gaṇa, upaçara, amukhyavrta, upalakṣana, etc., are synonyms. All of them refer to Lakṣāṇā,—the secondary function. Perhaps their unsophisticated schismatic attitude or a love of logical accuracy does not permit them to accept Dhvani which they resent tooth and nail.

‘Vṛtti’—A Variety of Its Interpretation

Stressing the chief characteristics of Samskṛt as mainly an inflexional language, one of the earliest grammarians (Śakaṭāyana) has rightly remarked that all names are derived from roots:

‘Nāmānyākhyātajāni’

Nearly thirty meanings have gathered round this word Vṛtti. ‘Vṛtti’ 47 all derived from the root ‘vrta’, ‘to occupy’. In this context only a few meanings, other than those given in different lexicons and modern dictionaries are noted.

Bharata and His ‘Vṛtti’ and ‘Prvṛtti’ 48

Bharata, a mythical personage even to this day, speaks of four vṛttis and prvṛtis. 49 He says these four vṛttis or physical moods of an actor during dramatic representation constitute the entire drama. His four prvṛtis refer, according to Abhinava, probably to style. 50 ‘Rasocitaśabda-sandarbhā’—‘collocation of letters,’ i.e., style ‘in conformity with the

44 Dr. Jha in his Tr. to TV. (p. 303) thinks that this is a reference to the case of corruption of words that creeps into language. Nāgēśa also refers to the same idea in his VSM., p. 84 (Benares Ed.).

45 “Vyaktvākṛtyātayastu padārthāḥ”—Gowtama, NS., II. 2. 67. p. 213 (Bombay Ed.).


47 Dictionaries of Different Languages.

48 Bharata Nātyaśāstra (Bombay Ed.).

49 “Bhārata sāvatā caiva kauśikyārābharti taḥ | Čataśro vrtyayohyētē yāsu nātyayin pratiṣṭhitam ||”—BNS., VI. 25.

50 “Avamī dāksināyā ca tathācaitvānādihāmāgadhi | Pāṇḍalamādhyanā ceti vigneyāstu pravṛttayaḥ”
sentiment on hand'). It is the style that helps or hinders 'Rasapratīti'. "Styles" says Dr. Raghavan, "are the free choices of popular taste". The geographical names in the Kārika of Bharata suggest the taste and styles of peoples of those territories. The same styles have come down to this day with their very names. At the hands of Vyāmana and Dandin they receive a transformation when they get into the mould of Rīti and guṇa.

THE Vṛtti OF THE VEDĀNTINS

The 'vṛtti' of the Vedāntins is of the nature of light moving through the senses of sight, hearing, etc., and reaching the object in the material world. It is interesting to note that these Advaitins also have thought of identity between mind and matter, a theory that is getting top-ranking importance with the modern psychologists, like Prof. C. Spearman and others. Upaniṣads, the inexhaustible storehouses of all streams of philosophy, the repositories of Indian philosophic reflections, are the main stay for such concepts. Borrowing from them, as well as from latter treatises, Dharma-rājadhārin, an erudite scholar and philosopher, has codified all the tenets of Advaita in his 'Vedānta-pārībhāṣa'. Though of a late origin (17 A.D.) it is one of the recognised manuals of Advaita. There we see a clear exposition of the word 'vṛtti' in the vedantic sense.

"Tatra (pramātrādiṣṭaṁyamadhye) yathā taṣṭaṁkodakam chidrāṁnirgatyam kulyātmānā kedārām praviśya tadvadeva śaṭvaṁkoṇādyākāram bhavati, tatha taṁjasamantāḥkaranamapi caṅkṣurādīdvāra nirgatyā ghatādi viṣayadesamgatyā ghatādi viṣayakāreṇa pariṇāmāte sa eva pariṇāmāmo vṛttirityuṣyate"

V. P. Pratyakṣa, p. 13, Adyar Ed.

'h ere, just as the water of a tank, going out of the sluice, and entering fields through channels, comes to have, even like those (fields), a quadrangular or other figure, similarly, the internal organ too, which is of the nature of sight, hearing, etc., and reaching to the locality of contents like pot, is modified in the form of contents like pot. This same modification is called a psychosis (vṛtti).'</n
'Tr.' S. S. S. Sastry.

A psychologist would certainly appreciate the terms 'sa eva pariṇāmathe' because the term 'pariṇāmāte' is in conformity with their hypothesis (i.e., 'that mind and matter is one.')

For details see the "History of the Concept Vṛtti", vide Some Concepts of Alankāra Śāstra, by Dr. V. Raghavan, pp. 182-93.

51 Instead of 'modification' that has a tinge of gradual change, better it is taken as a transformation as a substitute to 'modification'.
The comprehensibility of the etymological significance of the term ‘vr̥tti’ has tempted one and all thinkers to forge it in such a way as to serve their own purposes. The more one explores, the more would be its field of application, despite ordinary meanings like livelihood, conduct, commentary, rotation, nature, chapter, etc. But the credit to have had the implication of the term in the present sense, i.e., the power or function of words, goes entirely to Patañjali. Nageśa also refers to this point in his VSM. Patañjali in his Bhāṣya under Pāṇini’s aphorism ‘Samarthah padavidhiḥ’ makes the point absolutely clear.

“54 Padārthabhādhitānam vr̥ttir̥tyāhuh”


‘vr̥tti’ is that (function or capacity) by virtue of which the meaning of words is attained. Kāiyata, a worthy commentator on Patañjali’s Mahābhāṣya makes the meaning of the word clear—

“Padasya śabdasya yath arthah tasya abhidhānam śabdāntareṇa yatram, sā vr̥ttir̥tyāṇyaya”


It is significant to note that Patañjali also uses ‘ahuh’, i.e., in the third person. May be, he also is owing his indebtedness to his predecessors, like Śākatāyana or Yāska and so on.

Amongst the grammarians, the word ‘vr̥tti’ is also used in the sense of ‘compound’. They have ‘kṛt, taddhita, samāsa, ekaśeṣa, sanādyanta’ as their five vr̥ttis or principles of compounding words under various circumstances. Each of the five vr̥ttis has got its own significance. So, in a sense, this may also be taken as a case of vākyavr̥tti.

It is not the intention of the present writer to attempt an exhaustive survey of various interpretations of the term vr̥tti. Apart from many other meanings in which the term is in vogue, a humble attempt is made to have a few side-tracts. In the course of our investigation, it is attempted to embark upon the FIRM HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TERM. In Patañjali we get direct reference to the term and that is the historical source of the term ‘vr̥tti’. That being done, it is better to take up an examination of the different phases of vr̥tti, viz., Abhidhā, Laksāṇa, Tātparya and above all Dhvani, the peerless pride of the Alankārikās.

(To be continued)

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52 In Sārasvatī Vyākaraṇa, vr̥tti is used in the sense of chapter.
54 ‘Parāsya’ is also taken as a reading. But the given reading is preferable.