This book is a modest contribution to the study of the canons of interpretation (paribhāṣās) in the Pāṇinian system of grammar. The import and scope of application of the major paribhāṣās are critically examined in the following pages.

Grammar occupies a very significant place in the scheme of the Vedāṅgas which form indispensable part of the exegesis for vedic study. Pāṇini's Astadhyāyī represents a remarkable achievement in the sphere of grammatical scholarship as a branch of the Vedāṅga. It is a monumental work of well-executed design marked by superb brevity, logical propriety and scientific accuracy. Pāṇini has systematised the old traditions by the outstanding mastery of his skill and also contributed a large fund of the resources of his can. His work is really a magnum opus as a discipline of grammar for the great language of Sanskrit. Here we notice the direct formulations of a number of interpretative canons as well as constructive indications of a set of allied canons. Kātyāyana and Patañjali together with Kātyāyana at their head form the triumvirate of the rule of grammar, so to say. Kātyāyana in his vārttikās has provided an additional quota of canons to meet new contingencies while Patañjali in his reference to Paribhāṣā endeavours to trace the source of the so-called later canons to Pāṇini himself.

Whatever be the extent of respective contributions of these three teachers with regard to the grammatical canons of
interpretations, the object of my study will be devoted to the elucidations of the major paribhāsās as either adumbrated, supplemented, surmised or construed in the traditions of the trio of the sages of grammar as a whole. In this task I have collected, assorted, analysed and arranged the paribhāsās under different headings and discussed them in critical perspectives with traits of comparison with the traditions of the Prātisākhya, wherever possible.

The topic has been distributed in seven chapters as indicated below:

I. Introduction.

II. Interpretative canons in the major Prātisākhya works in comparison with the paribhāsās of Panini.

III. Rules of Panini designated as paribhāsā and rules similar to paribhāsā.

IV. Interpretative canons in the vārttikas.

V. Interpretative canons in the Mahābhāṣya.

VI. A discourse on interpretative canons in the light of the authorities, Vyādi, Purusottamadeva, Siradeva, Nilakṣṇa, Nāgasa and Bhoja.

VII. Conclusion.

I have utilised the published sources as far as possible and I am grateful to the scholars and critics in the field of study on Panini's grammar. I must make a special mention of Kielhorn, Goldstücker, Whitney, Gurupada Halder, K.C. Chatterjee, Suryakanta, K.V. Abhyanker, Yudhishthira Minamsaka & Charu Deva Shastri whose works have been immensely helpful to me.
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I am conscious of my limitations and how far I have
succeeded in the task is a matter which I leave entirely to the
discerning judgement of the illustrious scholars.

I crave mercy for my shortcomings and typographical
mistakes, if any.

Karunasindhu Das