

Tamil Alveolars In Marathi Vocabulary

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Marathi is the language of the Maharashtra region which is bordering on the frontiers of the areas in which languages of the two important 'families', Indo-Aryan and Dravidian, have been current. The period of the currency of Marathi in the region has been assumed to be a millennium, if not somewhat more. It has a rich literary history and an extensive vocabulary which can be called considerable with reference to Indian languages.

What could be called the first modern dictionary of the language, edited by Molesworth, appeared in 1831, with 40,000 entries. The revised and enlarged second edition with 60,000 entries appeared in 1857. This edition carries 'Notes on the Constituent Elements' of the language by the Rev Dr. Wilson after whose name the University of Bombay established the 'Wilson Philological Lectures'. In the very opening paragraph of the Notes, Wilson states :

...it (the Marathi language) has two distinct lingual elements, the Scythian (or Turanian) and the Sanskrit, which are both easily recognized and distinguished by the philologist.

The Scythian element of the Marathi is obviously the more ancient of the two, as far as its present locality is concerned. It is still a good deal in use, especially among the lower orders of the people, and in the business of common life.

(1, xxii)

Later scholars appear to have rejected the view about existence of the 'scythian' element, by non-consideration and even a non-mention of it. Thus, while accepting that Marathi borrowed 'some phonemic peculiarities' from Dravidian (2,109) Tulpule writes: "From the Dravidian Languages, words came into Marathi in two ways. Some of them via Sanskrit-Prakrit and some in later times, namely during the rules of Calukyās and Rāṣṭra-kūṭas, straight from Kannada into Marathi.

(2, 101)

From Tamil, many words came into Marathi—but they came later, after the seventeenth century, and that too into the Tanjāvar Marathi. In the Yādava period, the loan of Tamil is nowhere to be seen. To this, the exceptions are the following two words:

cāṭā
pīṭā

cloth-seller
T. pillai'

(2,115)

Or as Jean Filliozat has remarked :

Marāthi has been sometimes in the past considered as drāvīda. That was wrong from the linguistic point of view, but, as Marāthi has developed in contact with neighbouring Telugu and Kannaḍa, it has been influenced, at least, in its vocabulary, by these Dravidian languages. (3, Foreword)

The following points emerge from these comments :

- Marathi does not belong to the Dravidian family.
- Dravidian words, if any, have come into Marathi from Kannada and Telugu but practically none from Tamil.
- These have come in during the period of the development of these languages, as distinct entities.

It was stated by Wilson (i, xxii) :

It (the Scythian element) claims almost all the words beginning with the cerebral letters, which, as initials were probably not originally in use in Sanskrit.

Wilson distinguished between the 'yet to be explored' Turanian source of Marathi words and the 'vocables of the Turanian languages in the South of India'. We may put to test his statement with reference to the South Indian languages. The cerebrals are not normally permitted in the initials of Tamil words and it can be seen from the DED that the word-stock of Telugu and Kannada with cerebral initials does not exceed about forty in each while Molesworth has had to devote 26 pages (1/35th part) of his Dictionary to them. Obviously the Marathi words cannot be correlated directly with those in the South Indian languages.

Scholars have taken resort in the *Desī* words for explaining the Marathi words not derivable from Sanskrit by obvious reconstructions. The *Desī Nāṃamālā* however dates from the 11th century, so that it is unlikely to give definitive evidence on the original source of those words. Further as Turpule comments (2,76):

Most scholars have demonstrated only the derivability from Sanskrit, of these so-called *Desī* words. In the etymological index of words appended to his treatise, Bloch has indicated nearly 350 words as 'Desī', yet he has also brought out their similarity of form with Sanskrit words.

It would appear that the I A origin posited for Marāthi and the lack of proximity of its area of currency with that of Tamil have stood in the way of the slightest assumption of connection between the two languages. On the other hand, a not inconsiderable stock of words in Marāthi have remained unexplained etymologically and a number of them have been sought in Sanskrit and other OIA and MIA languages.

We may leave aside the dispute about families. With regard to vocabulary, it appears from the Author's studies (4, 5, 6).

The majority of Dravidian words in Marathi are from Tamil or its proto-form.

These have formed part of the speech in the Maharashtra region from prehistoric times.

As Wilson correctly put it, 'these words are in use, especially among the lower orders of the people and in the business of common life'. They are also essential elements of the vocabulary dealing with cults. They are discernible in the place-names all over Maharashtra.

These studies did not touch the phonological aspects in much detail. It is proposed to do so in respect of a class of phonemes which is perhaps special to the Marathi language. They are the compound consonants *rh lh* and *nh*.

The Values of *rh lh* and *nh* in Marathi

The values of these phonemes in Marathi can be best indicated by the following quotation at length from an article by the Late Mr. M.T. Patwardhan, a prominent poet-prosodian of Marathi : (7):

...These apparently compound consonants are *rh lh* and *vh*. They are not truly compound. As the second and fourth consonants in the five classes are the aspirate forms of the first and third respectively, exactly so, are *ṛh nh mh rh lh* and *vh*, the aspirate forms of *ṛ n m r l* and *v* respectively.

The aspirates, the second and the fourth consonants of the five classes would also have appeared to the eye as compounds only, if the script were to have a separate symbol for the aspirate. But they came to be considered as un-compounded and independent signs were created for them. Why should they have been considered as un-compounded? Surely, because the aspirate becomes absolutely one with the consonant. Just as the nasal sound in Marathi becomes one with the vowel so may be this aspirate becoming one with the consonant.

The aspirate sounds *ṅh nh mh rh lh vḥ* themselves do not exist in Sanskrit. So there are no independent signs for them. When they newly occurred in Marathi, these compound signs were created for them on a gross view of things. But they cannot stand out as compound consonants only from the circumstance that their signs appear to be compound. The first consonant of a compound gets partially joined in the preceding sound, which, if ending in a vowel, is rendered consonant-ending; this unexceptionable experience is not to be had in the case of *ṅh nh mh rh lh vḥ*. The first letter-syllable in the words *kaṅhera paṅhē varhāḍī valhē navhe* etc remains vowel-ending like the first letter-syllable in the words like *akhera bighe aghāḍī Vajhe Vaḍhe madhe* etc. There is no doubt that in these words these compound consonants are only apparently so.

...*hn hm hl* the compound consonants with initial *h* that are met with in Sanskrit words undergo alteration in sounds during their pronunciation in Marathi. And the first consonant in *nh mh lh* gets geminated for the sake of a forceful utterance. The writing (or count of prosodial measure) does not get altered on this count.

These observations bring out the uniqueness of *rh lh nh* as phonemes in Marathi. But they do not throw much light on their origins. As is to be expected, some of these compounds have been traced to various clusters in IA in its different stages. The following quotations afford an idea of the similarities and differences between the Marathi phonemes and the IA counterparts. It will be seen that conclusions based on IA do not provide us with a defined system applicable to these three, though they do have some relevance to the remaining compounds with the aspirate component.

(In the repertory of phonemes in OIA) it may be noted that *r rh* are allophones of *ḍ* and *ḍh* respectively when in intervocalic position as attested by the verbal tradition of the Rg Veda. (8,5)

If aspirated stops are considered as unit phonemes the aspirate *h* occurs as initial in clusters with nasals and semi-vowels (in OIA). (8,6)

In Pali and a few other MIA dialects allophones of the voiced retroflex simple and aspirate stops (*ḍ* & *ḍh*) occurs as *r* and *rh*, a characteristic which it appears to share with the verbal tradition of the Rg Veda. (8,7)

A new class of phonemes has been realised in MIA through assimilatory changes caused by a sibilant in combination with nasals and corresponding to the unit phoneme *ch* of OIA and MIA. These are *ṅh nh* and *mh* which by their nature in the non-initial positions as heavy share the same characteristic as OIA non-initial *ch* as a double consonant. Similarly *lh* is a new realisation in MIA. (8,8)

Correspondence of Marāṭhī *rh lh nh* with Tamīṛ *r l n*

We give below examples which will prove the correspondence of the Marāṭhī and Tamīṛ phonemes.

In these examples, the scheme of transliteration of the DED has been adopted consistently for both the languages.

The semi-vowels *r l r* (*r l r* in Caldwell's notation) are considered the exclusive property of the Dravidian languages (9,146). It may, therefore, appear highly irregular to equate Tamīṛ *r* with the Marāṭhī phoneme occurring in a word such as *bṛa*: baby. However the generally uncertain pronunciation of *r* even in Tamil country (9,146) and this author's observation of the correspondences have suggested the adoption of this equation. This also helps in avoiding the confusion between *l* in Tamīṛ and *l* as is adopted for IA languages.

In Marāṭhī words, *l* and *r* are quite often and both regularly as well as irregularly substituted for each other in speech as well as writing. For example, *Dnyānesvarī*, the 13th century Marathi epic commentary on the Gita is available in manuscripts totally devoid of the letter *r* as well as those which employ *r* even in the Sanskrit verses of the Gita as in *asito devaro vyasaḥ*. On the other hand natives of Koṅkan quite normally employ *l* in place of literary Marathi *r*. This mix-up in the Marathi words needs to be borne in mind while comparing them with the Tamil cognates.

Bloch has pointed out (3,175-77) that in Marathi,

Outside the aspiration and the continuants, metathesis seems to be altogether rare

...a certain number of cases regarding the shifting of aspiration are anterior in Marathi

Inside the polysyllables, the tendency of aspiration to be grouped with a preceding occlusive has been noted several times...

These cases of metathesis by shifting of aspiration will be found a plenty in the examples.

The distinction between Tamil *n* and *ṇ* is not very well defined. From the examples, it will be seen that the Marathi correspondence for Tamil *ṇ* is either *n* or *nh*; the *n* again becoming *ṇ* in some cases, in the literary language.

Tamil—Marathi Cognates

For the examples given here, the DED (Nos. initially) and Molesworth (page nos. finally) have been followed for meanings. For convenience of typing the final *anusvāra* in Marathi words (now eliminated in writing) is indicated by the dot on top of the ending vowel (ā ē etc). As all the correspondences proposed are totally new, the accepted IA etymologies have not been generally given and for many they are not available either. The proposed correspondences are generally 'obvious' and do not call for detailed derivations.

252	a a alhē (Dnyanesvari 16.28)	to measure measure, a meaning which fits in better than the one 'lavakara, quickly' given in the Govt. Ed.	
253	a av-a āvu halavaṇē, hālaviṇē	to mingle, stir to move or stir, shake	899
263	a al haraṇa	black sand found on the seashore in poetry, sand Fine pebbles or gravel	888
342	a hāl	servant, labourer a fixed engagement	899
347	āṇu hāra hārohāra	way, method line or row in one continuous row	898
472	īṇu hiraḍḍi	gums a gum	901
473	iṇ viṇē	to bear, bring forth to bear, bring forth The word is often pronounced <i>ine yene</i> in rural areas; past tense <i>yili</i> .	758
608			
609			
610	uṇu hurahura	to suffer much, to pass in one's mind grief, regret, sorrow uneasy longing	906
583	u lam ulhasa	a sea fish Name of the creek-river near Bombay (proposed Etym)	
728	e lu e heṇasāṇḍa	ignore, disregard, ridicule cry down, disparage slighting, disregarding, disrespecting	909

854	oḷi	fire, brightness	
	hoṛi	the pile of wood kindled at the Festival	912
987	kaṇṭājam	pack-saddle of Marathi kaṇṭhāḷi	
1185	kaṇai	to sound, below, neigh	
	kanhaṇe	to moan or groan	133
1186	kaṅṛu (i)	to be scorched, become sore (as feet by walking)	
	kanhāranē	to sprain or strain, to set aching (the body)	133
1262	kārai	pungent substance which causes irritation of the throat	
	khāra	brine or acetous liquor for pickling	203
1527	kuṛaṅku	thigh	
	kulhā, kulā	buttock	175
1537	kuṛu (-tt-)	to become short	
	khuraṭa	stunted or dwarfish	211
1995	caḷḷu, caḷḷai	trouble, annoyance	
	chaga	tormenting, harassing, confounded with <i>chala</i>	299
2122	cillaṛai	things scattered here and there, change, sundries	
	cilhāra, cilhera	non-descript petty or minor expenses	
		Canerese word signifying small	286
1788	koḷ	to seize, receive, contain	
	koḷ	holding, taking	
	khoraṃbā	detained, delayed or stopped state	217
1796	koṛi	to nip off husks of grains	
		pick up food from here and there	
	khoraṇē	to poke or stir, to scoop or dig out	
1806	koṇ	fear. Te <i>koṅku</i> to be timid or shy.	
	khōṅgi	sitting with the head between the knees and the breast	217
2372	nāṅam	unguents for the body. perfumed oil for bathing	
3014	nāṅ	sense of shame	
	nahāṅa	ablution (esp. after inunction) the first appearing of the menses	453
		usually derived from Skt. <i>snāna</i>	
3117	neṛi	to press firmly with hand	
	nyahāraṇē	to make smooth, even, equal, level	478
2612	tāṅatu	that which is one's own	
	tānhā	sucking-a baby or any young one	375
		(proposed etym.) usually derived from Skt <i>stanya</i> see next one also.	

2612	tānīcci tānhā	woman separated from her husband suckling - a woman or female animal	375
2604	tāji thalipīṭha	to season and flavour curry etc. with spices fried in ghee and oil flour of parched grain soaked with ghee or oil and spiced, smeared over the inner sides of the pot and baked or heated	396
2605	tāju thāra	to bear, suffer, tolerate sense of heat, weariness and numbness	396
2762	tuḷaṅku	to move away from side to side, shake	
2767	tuḷḷu thulathulita thalathalita	quiver that shakes tremulously	395
2771	tuḷu-tuḷuv-enal thurathuraviṅṅē	restlessness, state of being always in motion to bristle up hair etc	397
3049	nīrai nirhā	excellence, splendour absolutely, fully (Dnyanesvari 17.155)	
3303	paḷapaḷa pharapharaṅē	to glitter, shine to be lucrative (business) or flourishing (one's affairs)	550
3311	paṛi parhyā, parhā	flow out quickly a streamlet, rivulet, brook	
3447	piliṅgi (u) phīḷa	roar as an elephant elephant. usually derived from Arabic and Persian. Proposed here on the basis that the elephant is not native to the land of those lang- uages, but is so to the land of Tamil and Marathi	
3550	puḷḷi phuḷi	mark, dot, speak a figure made by the blistering nut, asterisk etc.	556
3725	poḷi phoḷaṅṅē	chisel, split (as a stone) to break, cleave, rive, split, to dissever by blows	559
		(r = ḍ) from Skt <i>sphoṭati</i> (3,368)	

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3727	poḷḷu phoḍa	to blister, swell boil, blister, blain of Bengali <i>pholan</i> : swelling (3,368)	558
4349	vaḷai valha	to become crooked an oar. of 4350 (Ma) <i>vallam</i> canoe	736
4532	vellāṭṭi velhāṛa	maidservant, concubine a wife, mistress or other beloved woman	772
4537	veru avhera	hate, dislike, renounce, detest disrespect, disregard, slight	52

Words relating to cults may now be given. Some of them have been dealt in detail in (6). As these cults are current in rural areas for ages, their antiquity can be taken for granted.

448	iṛaivi	Pārvati	
439	iṛai Hirabāi	worship a village goddess	
3725	poḷ, poḷḷai Boḷhāi	hole a village goddess (icons have carved-out holes)	
TL 2718	piṛaṅku phirangāi	shine, glitter, he exulted a village goddess	
TL 3116	maḷḷaṅ Malhāra	commander, military chief Khaṇḍobā, commander of the Devas	
3958	māl maḷayan mahāṛa	to die offerings to the dead shradh performed to the manes	TL- 638

Some examples of Tamil cognates with *r*, *l*, *ḷ*, *n* given below show how the distinctions of Tamil *r*, *ṛ*, *l*, *ḷ*, *r* and *n*, *ṇ* are maintained in derived Marathi words. These are close to the words with *r* | *n* occurring in the above list.

184	aravam aravāra	rareness in <i>aruvāre anna</i> — 'rare food' Dnyānesvari 18.141 or in ' <i>aruvāru kalasa</i> = rare pinnacle' Dnyānes- vari 18.1760	
206	alaṭṭu allaḍa	tease, be boisterous inexperienced, untrained, unsubdued	46,35

240	arukai aruki	pathetic sentiment 'behuvā aruki...salagi = intimacy with great pathetic sentiment Dny. 9.7
313	ar ārāya nā	to become full, be satisfied is not satisfied Dny. 12.208
340	āri ārē	circle, ring cavity (ring-bund) round the foot of a tree (for receiving waterings) usually from Skt <i>ālavāla</i> 79
439	oli olaviṇē	to wash as clothes to wet or moisten cf Bloch; <i>ol</i> = humidity pkt. <i>olla—ulla—</i> Skt. <i>udra</i> — aquatic animal 121
850	oruku ora	to be arranged in regular order a row or line
1239	kāl-vāy kālavā	irrigation channel irrigation channel
1253	kār kārā	blackness black
1482	kuru kurūpa	blister, sore <i>kuruppu</i> -pimple a bump or sore in the foot or hand 175
1501	kuluṅku kulungā	to be shaken, agitated, quake with fear Epithet of a dog of a small and bushy bred cf. Marāṭhi Vyutpattikosa: Pers. <i>kulaṅga</i> = a large fowl
1592	kār gūra	thick gruel juice of the sugar-cane inspissated by boiling coarse or raw sugar. usu. from Skt. <i>guḍa</i> 242

This list can be continued through all classes of phonemes. It should suffice to demonstrate the close resemblance of Tamil words with the Marathi synonyms whether reconstructions from Sanskrit have been proposed or not.

It is clear that the correspondence of *r ! n* with *rh lh nh* is firmly established as between Tamil and Marathi.

Correspondence in IA

The correspondence of Tamil alveolars with aspirates in Marathi appears to be testified in OIA also. From the list of borrowings from Dravidian into

Sanskrit, given by Burrow (11, 380-86) the following examples show the aspirating influence of the Dr. or Tamil alveolar:

koḷ	kulattha	Dolichos uniflorus	Marathi	kuritha
kaḷam	khala	threshing floor		
kaḷ		to steal		
	khala	a rogue		
makaḷ	mahilā	woman		

In the same list occur the two words *ulūkhala* and *heramba*. Their etymologies suggested by Burrow can be improved on the basis of the reasoning in this Paper. According to Burrow,

579, 580	ulakkai	end, ruin, pestle
Skt.	ulūkhala	mortar
699	erumai	female buffalo
Skt.	heramba	buffalo

The aspirates in both are better explained by alveolars in the Tamil cognates suggested below. Besides, the meanings correspond better through them.

600	uḷ	inside, interior of a place
477	ukaḷu	leap, frisk, jump over
	ulūkhala	an 'interior' in which the pestle jumps
777	āḷu	bull, male of certain animals
	heramba	bull of buffalo (not she-buffalo). It is almost a rule that e in Skt is represented by ē in Tamil.

On the other hand, we have from DED

1181	kaṇa	to be heavy, stout, abundant etc. Influenced by Skt. <i>ghana</i>
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which shows that the correspondence works in the other direction also.

Lastly, even though the normal compounds in Sanskrit occur with antecedent *h* (*hr hl hn*), intervocalic *rh* (from *dh*) is at least parallel to the compounds with postpositioned *h* (*rh lh nh*).

The proposed correspondence between Tamil and Marathi need not be considered unusual or untenable.

The Situation in Tamil

Widely divergent opinions have been expressed by Tamil Scholars on the phonetic values, the organs of generation and the methods of pronuncia-

tion of the individual phones $r | n$. As an offshoot, the schemes of transliteration also vary with the scholars. The interchange of sounds of these phones with others like $r t, l r, n n$ has been brought out by Sethu Pillai (10-II, 16-21). In these circumstances and also because we are dealing with a situation way back in the past, it is best to refer to the Tolkāppiyam. It appears to give internal evidence to support at least the uniqueness of the group $r | n$.

Tol (12) divides consonant sounds into three groups, hard, soft and medial, of six letters each they are:

k o ṭ t p r

ā n̄ ṅ n m ṇ

y r l v r l

According to cūtra 25.

The single consonants ā n̄ ṅ n m ṇ are followed by their *respective stops*. This means that a vertical grouping, at least for the 'hard' and 'soft' consonants is explicitly approved by the *Tol*. Thus r and n form a group. The remaining five groups are the same as of Sanskrit sans the sonants and aspirates of surds and sonants.

Of the third or medial group, $y r | w$ are the same as in Sanskrit. If we follow the mutual correspondence further, can we match Tamil r and l respectively with Skt $ṅ$ and h ? ($ṣ$ for s' $ṣ$ and Skt r is left out as it is $ḍ$ only). The phonology of the first four, $y r | v$, either as given in *Tol*. or as can be tested by pronunciation, would not militate much against such a suggestion. Of course, such matching is only for the convenience of explanation. If this is plausible, the group $r | n | l$ turns out to be the group of incipient aspirate compounds. It can be postulated that a certain section of the people did pronounce them with an expressed aspiration, which has been preserved and/or metathesised in Marathi.

Conclusion

This study indicates the likely correspondence between the special phonemes of Tamil and the aspirate compounds of Marathi and the possibility that this correspondence existed between Dravidian and Indo-Aryan which, as Dr Katre has said, 'have been occupying some part of our country during our long history which, under favourable conditions, can be traced back to at least 4000 years, and cross-fertilising each other' (13, 32). As he has pointed out, 'Dialects follow an undefined mode of exercising their

choice between archeforms' (13, 55) and 'Although all NIA languages are related to each other,...it is not necessary that they should all have a shared vocabulary' (13, 36). The Tamil-Marathi connection brought out here cannot therefore be thought improbable.

Konkani 'shares certain common phonological and morphological features with the western and mid-central representatives of NIA' (13, 22). Brahmi 'has undergone, Iranian and Indo-Aryan influences, chiefly in the vocabulary, so profound that for a long time the Dravidian relationship of Brahui could not be demonstrated' (14, xxviii). These are standing examples of how the present area of currency of a language can be separated by vast distance, from the region of a related language. So, the Tamil-Marathi relationship cannot be inconceivable.

Of late, there is a growing realisation that the concept of Indian as a linguistic area provides a better key to the understanding of linguistic inter-relations than the one of language families. This realisation is born out of linguistic studies. Ever since the birth of the new science of language, history in India has been reconstructed from the languages. As a result, some linguistic problems have not been solved historically. Thus, while on the subject of Dravidian loans in Sanskrit, Burrow writes:

The main influence of Dravidian on Indo-Aryan was concentrated ... between the late Vedic period and the formation of the classical language. This is significant from the point of view of the locality where the influence took place. It is not possible that at this period such influence could have been exercised by the Dravidian languages of the South... They are separated by great distances geographically and by anything upto a millenium or over... in time.

In settling this problem, we must apply history—and even more, pre-history—to the linguistic material. Of the classical trinity affecting language, *Loka* (Society) has been conspicuously absent in the linguistic studies. This element, reflected in the culture of India, is mainly contained in the myths and worships common to the speakers of both families of languages. Pre-history can be reconstructed from them. The base of study of myths has usually been restricted to the particular linguistic spheres. The application of linguistic interaction in exploring them yields highly interesting results, pushing back the period of interaction to 3000 B.C (15) or bringing out the existence of Tamil speech in prehistoric Maharashtra (6). The difficulty of *Desa* and *Kala* (Time and Space) in considering the mutual influence of Indo-Aryan and Dravidian pointed out by Burrow can be overcome by considering

Maharashtra as the locality where the influence took place and Marathi as the language which contains in frozen and as yet unexplored form, the pehistoric remains of their inter-action.

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