

The Challenge of bi-directional translation as experienced by the first European missionary grammarians and lexicographers of Tamil¹

Discovering the Lingua Tamulica (or Damulica)

In 1738, Constantius Joseph Beschi (1680-1746/1747), an Italian Jesuit Missionary who had been living in Tamil Nadu since 1700, had one of his grammars, which had already circulated as a MS from 1728 onwards, published in the form of a 176-page book by the printing press of the protestant missionaries of the Danish Mission in Tranquebar. On the detailed title page (see bibliography), the work published is announced as:

1. *Grammatica Latino-Tamulica, Ubi de Vulgari Tamulicæ Linguae Idiomate, கொடுந்தமிழ் [KOTUN-TAMIL] dicto, ad Ufum Missionariorum Soc. IESU.* (Beschi, 1738, Title page)

The careful distinction, inside this title, between *Vulgari Idiomate* “(Dealing with) the common dialect (ABLATIVE)” and *Tamulicæ Linguae* “of the Tamil language (GENITIVE)”, and the reference in Tamil script to a Tamil technical expression [for which I have given between brackets the transliteration *koṭun-tamil*] are visible traces of the fact that a long road had been trodden since the days when, two centuries earlier, the first Jesuits had attempted to master the complex linguistic universe of Tamil Nadu (A) by writing grammars and (B) by compiling dictionaries, among which the most ancient preserved, in these two categories (A and B), both of them in Portuguese, are a 16th-century manuscript *Arte da Lingua Malabar*, attributed to Henrique Henriques (1520-1600), and the VOCABVLARIO TAMVLICO. COM A SIGNIFICAÇAM

1. I express here my thanks to Eva Wilden, Émilie Aussant, Cristina Muru and Dominic Goodall for reading a preliminary version of this article and for making insightful suggestions.

PORTVGVEZA, by Antão de Proença (1625-1666), printed posthumously [as a book] in 1679. The fact that it was quite a challenge to master the language(s) of the Tamils can be gathered for instance from some humorous remarks made by Beschi at the beginning of the fourth chapter (*De Syntaxi*), of his 1738 book, where he declares:

2. *Sæpe, dicimus latina verba, non latinè; et sæpius europæam linguam loquimur tamulicis verbis. Hoc modo diu sermonem produxerat quidam, quando ingenue institit quædam vetula; quæ tam eleganter tuâ linguâ differis, dic, quæso, et nostrâ: erubuit ille, qui tamulicè se locutum credebat.* (Beschi, 1738, p. 80)

“We often utter Latin words, not as the Latins would have uttered them; and still oftener do we speak an European language in Tamul words. A man had drawn out his discourse in this way for a long time, when a certain old woman innocently requested: Tell us, I pray you, in our language, what you have so eloquently descanted on in your own: he was covered with confusion, for he fancied that he had been speaking as the Tamulians do.” (Mahon, 1848, p. 68)¹

After that, Beschi gives the example of an unidiomatic Tamil sentence which has the appearance of a translation of a passage from the Gospel, and where the individual words are Tamil words, but the meaning conveyed is contrary to the originally intended meaning. This is his initial justification for having a long² chapter on Syntax, which occupies pp. 80-146. I shall take this, however, in the context of my presentation, as a telling sign of the fact that the construction of a “bilingual space”, where two communities would be united by the presence of perfect bilingual speakers, was still very much a “work in progress”. Elsewhere, in the preface to the same book (p. 3), when explaining under which circumstances he was brought to compose his grammar, he declares that:

3. *Sæpe audiui vulgarem Linguae Tamulicæ Grammaticam criminantes: quasi plura desiderentur, et aliqua errore non careant. Attamen vel quasi suis viribus non crederent, vel novitatis injuriam timerent omnes, five etiam*

1. The English rendering of Beschi's words is taken from the second published translation of Beschi's (first) grammar. The translator (George William Mahon) mentions an earlier translation (by Christopher Henry Horst). See footnote in the Bibliography section.

2. This is certainly more than what we find in the 1716 grammar by the protestant missionary Ziegenbalg, where the syntax occupies the last 11 pages, out of a total of 128 pages for the grammar proper (which is preceded by a ten pages dedication). And an earlier text such as Henriques' *Arte da Lingua Malabar* also contains only a very short syntax section: in the critical edition by Vermeer [1982], it starts on p. 118, with the title “A construção desta lymgoa malauar:” (found on fol. 155v) and ends on p. 121, with the transcription of fol. 159v, which is the last one.

potioribus intenti levem hunc dedignarentur laborem: nemo adhuc manum operi admovere voluit. Et sanè tanta est novitas injuria, ut cuicumque licitum videatur, ingenium sicut vinum probantes, reprehendere, quidquid novum est; vel hoc ipso nomine, quòd nondum exprobandium maledictis induratum opus consenuerit. Ego tamen notam hanc facìle despiciam; dummodò brevem hanc lucubrationem meam, Antiquorum laboris reprehensionem nemo audeat criminari. (Beschi, 1738, p. 3)

“I have often heard persons finding fault with the common Grammar of the Tamul language; as if many things were wanting in it, and some faulty. Yet, as if they all, distrusted their own powers, or feared the offence of novelty, or even, intent on better things, disdained this light labor, no one has seemed willing hitherto to put his hand to this work. And doubtless so great is the offence of novelty, that it seems to be allowed to everyone to blame what is new, testing talent as they do wine; even under this very pretext, that a work not hardened by the detractions of reproof might grow obsolete. I however make very light of this mark: provided no one shall dare to accuse this short lucubration of mine, as a finding fault with the labor of my predecessors.” (Mahon, 1848, p. 1)

Stating with certitude who the predecessors invoked by Beschi are, is not easy, and very few nowadays would be able to spontaneously provide even the beginning of an answer. Beschi’s work was so appreciated¹ by posterity that it somehow obliterated from collective memory almost everything that had preceded him, except perhaps the work of Ziegenbalg. Fortunately, things are changing, and thanks to the labour of pioneers, such as X. Thani Nayagam (1913-1980)² and others, who have identified in archives and libraries the MSS and the rare surviving copies of early printed books, and reprinted (and translated) some of them, we are now in a position to know more, provided of course that we can overcome the new linguistic barriers which have arisen, with the loss of the status of Latin as an international scientific language, a loss that transforms many sources into closed books. And the problem is not restricted to Latin sources, because fewer³ still can read the sources which exist in archaic

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1. The eleven titles under his name in the bibliography section should be a convincing measure of his success, although they show only the grammatical fraction of his work, and do not show him as a poet and as a lexicographer. See also Chevillard [1992], for more information on Beschi as a grammarian.
 2. We owe to him the discovery of the MS of Henriques grammar and of the only copy of Proença’s dictionary (which he reprinted in photographic reproduction, in 1966).
 3. Among the new pioneers, as far as early missionary Tamil Studies are concerned, I should mention here the names of Jeanne Hein (1919-2013), of Gregory James, of

Portuguese (or in Dutch)¹.

This has long been a concern of mine and my old desire one day to try to reduce some of my deficiencies in that domain was recently reawakened (and made into a resolve) by the fact that the text of the most ancient among those sources, the 16th-century *Arte da Lingua Malabar*, a MS comprising 159 folios, attributed to Henrique Henriques (1520-1600), available in print since 1982 thanks to a critical edition by Hans Vermeer, has recently become more easily accessible thanks to an English annotated translation by Jeanne Hein and V.S. Rajam (HOS-76, 2013)². Another text which has also been made more easily accessible is the 1716 GRAMMATICA DAMULICA by Bartholomæus Ziegenbalg (1682-1719), who arrived in India in 1706 and whose grammar has recently been translated into English by Daniel Jeyaraj (2010). In this context, one should also mention the importance of online digital libraries: I have, for instance, recently had access through such a resource to the 1739 OBSERVATIONES GRAMMATICAE written by Christoph Walther (1699-1741)³, and published by him as a supplement to Beschi's 1738 grammar. A number of important works however remain inaccessible, as can be understood when reading for instance Muru [2010a]. In what follows, I shall however concentrate on the works already available in printed form, limiting myself to very basic/elementary topics, such as the technical question of how best to faithfully represent their content (in

V.S. Rajam, of Daniel Jeyaraj and of Cristina Muru. See the bibliography for more precise references.

1. See however, in a parallel field, the 2008 magistral edition, translation and study, by Tej K. Bhatia and Kazuhiko Machida, of *The Oldest Grammar of Hindustāni*, written in 1698 (in Dutch) by Ketelaar. This work has been reviewed in HEL XXXII-2 (2010) by P. Rabault-Feuerhahn.
2. Hein & Rajam [2013], who have recently been reviewed by Muru [2014] in HEL 36-2, do not provide the Portuguese text of the 16th-century manuscript. Using their publication along with Vermeer's provides ideal conditions for accessing this important document.
3. Walther's 1739 book, which has 60 pages, is freely available on Google books (See bibliography), and I have now fully entered its (Latin) text, with the Tamil examples, in XML format. That does not mean however that I am yet capable of reading it fluently, although my intention is to translate it into English, with the help of some of my colleagues (who are themselves engaged in translating *le De Causis Linguae Latinae* of Scaliger into French). All this is a "work in progress", which is best conducted in the framework of a wider program, where Walther's text is compared with the Latin texts of Beschi [1738] and Ziegenbalg [1716], and with the earlier literature in Portuguese.

the brave new world of “digital humanities/philology”¹, or the linguistic question of understanding the missionary grammarians’ choice of citation form when presenting the lexemes they had collected during their “field work”, if we adopt the point of view that they were the ancestors/predecessors of modern descriptive linguists.

How can one faithfully represent ancient “Tamil data”?

The title of this section is deliberately ambiguous. We must indeed simultaneously deal with two types of difficulties. (A) One of them is that Tamil has traditionally been written with scripts which are unrelated with the Latin script, which the missionaries used as a first approximation. (B) The second one is that the contact between the missionaries and the Tamil-speaking world has had as a consequence a reform² of the manner in which Tamil is written, with the stated purpose of eliminating ambiguities inherent in the earlier system³. A simple example can be provided, by the comparison of (1) with (4), where the title of the 1843 reprint of Beschi’s 1738 book can be seen to subtly differ from the original title (both full titles are in the bibliography):

4. *Grammatica Latino-Tamulica, in qua de Vulgari Tamulicæ Linguae Idiomate கொடுத்தமிழ் [KOṬUNTAMIL] dicto fusius tractatur.* (Beschi, 1843, Title page)

The difference I am pointing to, between the 1738 and the 1843 books, is not the larger one visible in the Latin text (where “in qua” has replaced “ubi”), but it is the smaller one between the two Tamil script samples, “கொடுத்தமிழ்” and “கொடுத்தமிழ்”, which are both transliterated (by me) between brackets in the same manner by “KOṬUNTAMIL”, although a more strict transliteration system would have to allow the possibility of distinguishing between them. More precisely, the difference

1. Mastering those sources, by translating them (this concerns some grammars), or by making them into databases (this concerns some dictionaries), is a project on which I am working (alone and with others) in the framework of a program (or of a programmatic collective soul-searching) hinted at by such “Research Interests” (in the parlance of academia.edu) as “Extended Latin grammar”, “Extended Sanskrit Grammar”. This article should be considered as part of my preliminary exploration.
2. For a discussion of the (innovative) writing/spelling conventions proposed by early missionaries, see Muru [2010b], p.62, pp. 194-196 and pp. 203-204. The solution which prevailed (as a writing/spelling reform) is usually associated with the name of Beschi, although he was not the first one to try to solve the problem of ambiguity.
3. For more details, see Chevillard [2008: 26-32].

lies in the presence or absence of a dot on top of the 4th and the 7th symbol, which are ந (or ன) and ட (or ட̣). That dot, which is called “*pulli*” in Tamil, is the explicit sign of the absence of an inherent “a”, because, in the modern conventions for writing (already visible in the 19th-century sample), we have:

5. ந = na; ன = n; ட = la; ட̣ = l.

However, in the 16th- to 18th-century documents, the *pulli* is normally not used (although its theoretical existence is acknowledged by traditional Tamil grammarians¹), and it is only through the context that users will know whether ந has to be read as “na” or as “n” (and similarly for other consonants). It must however be noted that the spelling conventions found in the 1738 book are already the “modern” result of a script reform, as can be seen if we compare the two different spellings given for the same word in the 1716 *Grammatica Damulica* (by Ziegenbalg) and the 1738 *Grammatica Latino-Tamulica* (by Beschi).

6a. ஆனென Fui vel factus sum (Ziegenbalg [1716], p.85, line 26)

6a. ஆனேன (Beschi [1738], p.58, line 7)

Item 6b almost corresponds to the modern spelling, which would be ஆனேன் (with a *pulli* on the last sign) and for which a standard transliteration would be “ānēn̄”. A modern Tamil reader identifies three groups in the modern spelling, which are:

7. ஆ = “ā”; என = “nē”; ன̄ = “n̄”

For a modern Tamil reader, the sequence என (taken from 6a) can be read in only one way, as “ne” (with a short vowel) but for Ziegenbalg’s 1716 reader (and also for the 16th- and 17th-century readers), the sequence என was ambiguous, with two possible readings, “nē” and “n̄ē”, depending on the context, because the glyph found in என had not yet been invented, this invention being traditionally attributed to Beschi, who indeed writes, on p. 8:

8. Addo excogitaffe me alium & faciliorem modum distinguendi *e* & *o* longa à brevibus: fcilicet cum utrique inferviat littera ஞ, *combu* dicta; fi hæc simplici forma scribatur, erit *e* breve & *o* breve: fi autem inflectetur in partem superiorem, vt infrà dicam de *i* longo, sic ே, *e* et *o* erunt longa. Sic ெய, *meṃ*, breve: at ேய, *mēy*, longum. Sic ெய, *pōy*, breve, at ேய, *pōy*, longum. Qui modus pluribus fatis placuit, et sequi non sunt dedignati. (Beschi, op.cit. p.8).

1. See Chevillard [2008: 29-36].

“I also state that I have devised another and easier way of distinguishing $\bar{e}$ and $\bar{o}$ long from $\acute{e}$ and $\acute{o}$ short: viz., when the letter $\mathcal{Q}$, called *combu* serves for both, if this is written in its simple form it will be $\acute{e}$ short and $\acute{o}$ short : but if it be turned in into the upper part, as I shall mention below of $\bar{i}$ long, in this way $\mathcal{Q}$, it will be $\bar{e}$ and $\bar{o}$ long. Thus $\mathcal{Q}\mathcal{M}\mathcal{Y}$, $m\acute{e}y$ short: but $\mathcal{Q}\mathcal{M}\mathcal{Y}$, $m\bar{e}y$, long. Thus $\mathcal{Q}\mathcal{P}\mathcal{Y}$, $p\acute{o}y$, short, but $\mathcal{Q}\mathcal{P}\mathcal{Y}$, $p\bar{o}y$, long. Which plan has been approved by many persons who have not disdained to follow it.” (Mahon, 1848, p. 7)

This citation, in which we are introduced to the notation for the vowels “o” and “ō”, which were also not distinguished in the writing system preceding Beschi’s reform, is also the occasion to point at one more difficulty in the Tamil script of that time, caused by the fact that the sign “π” had too many functions, which were:

1. Indicating the presence of a long “ā” (as in $\mathcal{K}\pi$ “kā”);
2. Being the distinguishing mark between the combination of a consonant with “e” and the combination of a consonant with “o” ($\mathcal{Q}\mathcal{K}$ was “ke” or “kē”, whereas $\mathcal{Q}\mathcal{K}\pi$ was “ko” or “kō”);
3. Being the sign for the “r” consonant, either alone, or combined with the inherent vowel “a” as in “ra”.

The consequence of the reforms started by Beschi¹ was that, in the following century (and this has been continued in the modern period), the syllable “ra” came to be noted as “ṛ”, whereas an isolated “r” was written down as “ṝ”. However, if we want to faithfully reproduce the ambiguities contained in all the ancient documents, we cannot of course use the modern system, because that eliminates a great number of possible readings, whereas the nature of ancient texts is such that they often contain rare terms, which only experts will be able to identify².

Translating Portuguese *crer* and Latin *credere* into Tamil

Although the use of the Tamil script, in its archaic form, is fraught with difficulties, the strategy used in the earliest period, and seen in the 16th-century *Arte da Lingua Malabar* (henceforth ALM), by Henriques, is even more perilous. This will be clear if we examine examples extracted from it, such as (9) and (10), where I combine the mixed Portuguese-

1. They are explained in his 1738 grammar (on page 7) but I do not have the space to reproduce his statements here.
2. I have discussed a possible strategy for the encoding of the ambiguous writing system found in Tamil palm-leaf MSS in Chevillard [2003]. All this is of course well-known to some (who are familiar with Tamil MSS, and inscriptions), but is certainly a serious difficulty for others.

Tamil text found in Vermeer with the English translation contained in Hein and Rajam:

9. **crer** ē deus he cousa muito booā, *tambiranai vichuuadiquiradu meta alazi* (Vermeer, p.37, l. 15-17)
 “To believe in God is a very good thing” (Hein & Rajam, p.87)
10. **crer** nos pagodes he tamto como **crer** nos demonios, *pagauodiei vichuuadiquiradu pæ vichuuadiquira mathiram* (Vermeer, p.37, l. 17-19)
 “To believe in idols is as much as to believe in demons” (Hein & Rajam, p.87)

These examples remind us of course of the fact that the primary goal of missionaries was conversion to Christianity¹, but they are also the occasion for us to wonder/meditate on the nature of the language which they were “discovering” (or possibly “creating/forging”, by coining new words for it). The word in boldface, *vichuuadiquiradu*², which is common to both (9) and (10) is also given in Tamil script in the vicinity of those two examples, on the same folio (44r) of the ALM manuscript. The occurrence is:

11. வி ச ச வ தி க கி ற து [Vi Ca Cu Va Ti Ka Ki Ra Tu = Vi C_ Cu Va Ti K_ Ki Ra Tu]³

In the modern writing system, with ambiguities removed, the “same” word should be written விச்சுவதிக்கிறது [viccuvatikkiratu], although we shall see that the situation is in fact more complex, for several reasons.

A first remark concerning that lexeme is that it certainly is the most frequent word in the whole the ALM, as can be seen when consulting the Index of the Vermeer [1982] edition, where one hundred different forms of that word are listed, on six pages (pp. 149-154)⁴, of which the initial part and the final part are given as follows, including also *vichuuadiquiradu*, which comes in 15th position:

12. 1. vichuuadi-quiren “eu creo” [I believe], 2. quirene “eu que creo” [I who believe], 3. quirenaguil, 4. quirenachi, 5. quirenauadu, 15. **quiradu** “o

1. Four centuries later, a measure of their success lies in the fact that 2.5% of the Indian population is Christian, and that the percentage rises to 5.4% in Tamil Nadu (according to Wikipedia). See however my remarks in the final section, on the “bidirectional” nature of cultural exchanges (and of conversion).
2. Hein & Rajam [2013: 87] modernize the Portuguese transcription in “vichuadiquiradu”.
3. The notation between brackets is an attempt at presenting simultaneously the ambiguous notation and the disambiguation performed by a reader who is familiar with the word read.
4. In the 2013 English translation (Hein & Rajam), the references given in the index occupy three quarters of p. 318 and the totality of p. 319.

crer” [believing] ..., 97. quil “se crer” [if I believe], 98. quilum “se quiser crer” [If I should like to believe], 99. cavithal “se nō crer” [if I do not believe], 100. caillæ “nō cri etc.” [I did not believe etc.]

A second remark is that inside the Proença 1679 dictionary, the items given for “crer” (to believe) are slightly different phonetically, although I shall soon explain why we should regard those items as representing the same lexeme. The entries are as follows:

- 13a. 447Rm¹: விசுவசிககிறது. Crer
- 13b. 447Ro: விசுவசிப்பு. Crença
- 13c. 447Rp: விசுவசிககுதை. O crer

To those entries, we can add as a companion, anticipating a possible discussion², the entry:

- 13d. 447Rn: விசுவசிப்பிககிறது. Fazer crer.

In transliterated modern spelling, those words would be: *vicuvacik-kiratu* (13a), *vicuvacippu* (13b), *vicuvacikkukai* (13c) and *vicuvacippikkiratu* (13d), and we see immediately that (13a) has a lot of resemblance with item (11) *viccuvatikkiratu*, already seen in the ALM, but that they are not completely identical. The reason why the missionaries did not agree between themselves on the manner in which that word should be written lies in the fact that it does not belong to the ordinary Tamil vocabulary, but has been adapted, for rendering a fundamental Christian notion, from a Sanskrit root (or rather from a group of words: *vi-śvas*, *vi-śvāsa*) containing some consonants, namely the cluster “śv” and the intervocalic “s”, which do not have an “exact” Tamil equivalent. In this situation, the “s” can be approximated, either by “c” (solution chosen by Proença) or by “t” (solution chosen in the ALM). As for the cluster “śv”, it has been approximated either by “cuv” (in Proença) or by “ccuv” (in the ALM). The variety of possibilities is further illustrated by the fact that Ziegenbalg has still another spelling for that lexeme, with a long “vā”, in his 1716 *Grammatica Damulica*, which contains hundreds of occurrences illustrating its paradigm. See the following four examples (taken from p.72), which illustrate the category *Infinitivus Substantivus*³:

1. The coordinate system used here will be explained later.
2. In the ALM, the corresponding entry is item 56 in the index (p.151): -piquiren “faço crer” [I make believe]. It should however be stated here that many of the causatives listed by Proença seem very unnatural.
3. The English translation by Daniel Jeyaraj is on pp. 102-103. He renders *Infinitivus Substantivus* by “Infinite Substantive”, which seems a little strange. His translations for the 4 items are given in each entry.

14a.	விசுவாசிக்கிறது	Crederē	“the believing”
14b.	விசுவாசித்தது	Credisse	“having believed”
14c.	விசுவாசிப்பது	Crediturum esse	“to be believing”
14d.	விசுவாசியாதது	Non credere	“having not believed”

A modern transliteration would be *vicuvācikkiratu* (14a), *vicuvācittatu* (14b), *vicuvācippatu* (14c) and *vicuvāciyātatu*. Interestingly, this “Christian” lexeme is not at all prominent in Beschi’s 1738 grammar¹, and it is possible that he partly had in mind such a display of slightly outlandish vocabulary when he was telling the anecdote reproduced in (2).

Organization of Proença’s dictionary (APTPD)

I shall now make a more detailed presentation of Antão de Proença’s Tamil-Portuguese Dictionary (henceforth APTPD). That dictionary, printed in two columns on 508 pages, is said to contain 16 546 entries². The system which has been used for referring to the entries in APTPD in the modern literature³ consists in indicating the folio number (followed by “r” or “v”). This is however problematic because there are many irregularities in the printing of the folio numbers, some of them being unreadable, others appearing identically several times and still others being missing. Besides, the average number of items per column is 16, which makes it desirable to have a more precise system, which would allow one to build a lexical data base, for the purpose of finding out precisely (A) how many lexemes are contained in APTPD, (B) how much overlap there is between APTPD and the vocabulary found in the missionary grammars, (C) how APTPD is related with the Indigenous Thesauri (such as the *Pinkalam*, etc.) and (D) how APTPD is related with the dictionaries which came after it. All these questions are currently very difficult (or impossible) to answer because (1) APTPD has Tamil items as main entries but those words are ordered according to the Portuguese alphabetical order on the basis of the pronunciation⁴, which makes it a complex operation to determine whether

1. I have not managed to find a single occurrence in all the pages which I have explored, although it is of course possible that some may have escaped my attention.
2. This count is given inside the 1966 introduction, by Thani Nayagam, found inside the 1966 *facsimile* “reprint”. However, my own calculation, based on a detailed count, column by column, which I have recently made while exploring the dictionary, is that there are 16210 entries. I may of course be wrong.
3. See for instance Gregory James [2009].
4. See the justifications given by Proença, on pp. 14-19 in the English translation of the Preface which precedes the *facsimile* reproduction inside the 1966 publica-

an entry is found in APTPD; (2) the entries are not dictionary entries in the modern sense, because, very frequently, several forms of what we would consider as the same lexeme are given their own entry¹.

For those reasons, a new coordinate system has been devised by me and will be used here for referring to the entries mentioned here. As an example, the item விசுவசிககிறது “Crer”, which has been mentioned in (13a), is given the reference 447Rm² in that system.

Grammatical (and other) features inside Proença’s dictionary³

One of my goals being to obtain a clearer perspective on the development of grammatical knowledge among the missionary grammarians, I have started to collect, partly at random, while mapping

tion. His explanations start with the statement: “[...] while writing everything in Tamil characters I follow the order of the corresponding letters of the Portuguese alphabet [...]”.

1. As an exemple, see the following group, found on page 384 (Right column): (384Rk) உச்சரிததல [uccarittal] “Pronunciação”; (384Rl) உச்சரிபபு [uccarippu] Idem; (384Rm) உச்சரிப்பிககிறது [uccarippikkiratu] “Fazer pronunciar”; (384Rn) உச்சரிககிறது [uccarikkiratu] “Pronunciar”; (384Ro) உச்சரிககுதை [uccarikkukai] “O pronunciar”.
2. This reference (i.e. 447Rm) means that the item is the mth (i.e. 13th) item in the right (=R) column of page 447. The system which I use for referring to items (and which is proposed by me here for the first time) is based on three components: 1. the page number (from 1 to 508); 2. the column (L, for “left”, or R, for “right”); 3. the rank inside the column (indicated by a lower case letter: “a” for the first item which starts in the column, “b” for the second one, etc.). The page numbers are not identical to the (often faulty/contradictory and/or unreadable) folio numbers which appear on approximately 250 of the odd pages. They have been given by actual count on the basis of the books printed by Thani Nayagam in 1966, page 1 being the page on which we have as first entry “அ ப. Coufa baldada”. (referred to as entry 1La), page 2 being the page having as first entry “அ ப கீ ந தி. Infamia” (referred to as entry 2La), etc.
3. This section should probably be skipped by the readers of that article who are not actively interested in Tamil technical literature (or in the “Extended Sanskrit Grammar” or in the “Extended Latin Grammar” research interests). It stands here as a raw fragment extracted *verbatim* from a “Rapport d’étape” in a “work in progress”, which has not yet reached maturity. It has been included here in order to provide a clearer view of the difficulties encountered when exploring this source (Proença’s dictionary) which is difficult of access. For that reason, no English translation is provided for the 16th-century Portuguese sequences, because it is not possible to translate them fully satisfactorily at this stage, although this will be the case in the final “data base” on Proença’s dictionary which I am currently planning to prepare, in collaboration with my colleague Cristina Muru (University of Tuscia, Viterbo, Italy).

the APTPD coordinate system, items referring to technical knowledge in several fields, one of them being grammatical description. During that preliminary exploration, the following items, which throw light on its nature, were discovered inside the APTPD. The (very incomplete) list runs thus:

- 16a. **Sanskrit terms:** (44Rc) அசஷ்¹ம [akṣaram ← akṣara] “Letra, character”; (384Rk) உச்சரிததல [uccarittal; from skt. uc-car] “Pronunciação”; (276Rb) கவி [kavi] “verso”; (79Ra) கி²ந்தகறன [kirantakarāṇ ← grānthakara?] “Compositor do liuro.”; (79Rj) கீர்வ³ணம் [kīrvāṇam] “A lingoa grandonica” (cf. MTL946 : kīrvāṇam [gīr-vāṇa]); (450Re) சபதச³{ஸ்தர}ம [captacāstram ← śabdaśāstra] “Gramatica”; (474Rj) ச³ததி³ம. Quod ச³{ஸ்தர}ம; (243Ri) பெ³{ஸ்த}கம் [postaka ← pustaka] “Liuro”; (474Re) ச³{ஸ்தர}ம [cāstram ← śāstra] “Sciencia, aliquando agouro”; (65Rf) துவிபப³ஷி [tuvippāṣi ← dvibhāṣi] “Topās, interprete. Homē que fabe falar duas linguas”; (158Lm) ந³மம் [nāmam ← nāma] “Nome”; (215Rj) ப³ஷை. [pāṣai ← bhāṣā] “Lingoa, que se fale”; (246Ls) புலிங்கம் [puliṅkam ← pumliṅga] “Genero Masculino”; (250Rb) பூதக³ல [pūtakālam ← bhūta kāla] “Tempo preterito”; (107Lb) லிங்கம் [liṅkam ← liṅga] “Sexo, ou genero”; (106Ro) லிபி [lipi] “letra, carecter”; (107La) லிபிககிறது [lipikkiratu] “Escreuer”; (415Ra) ... வறதம்³ன க³லம் [vartamāna kālam ← vartamāna kāla] “Tempo presente”; (447Lq) விசெஷியம் [viceṣyam ← viśeṣya] “Sogeito do predicado”; (436Lq) விய³ககிய³ணம் [viyākkīyāṇam ← vyākhyāna] “Comento”;
- 16b. **Tamil linguistic terms:** (387La) உயிரெளுத்து [uyireluttu → uyireluttu] “Ra uogal”; (393Rp) உ³கக [urakka] “Em uox alta. Item firmamente.”; (393Rm) உ³பபு. [urappu] “Pronuncia aspirada, ** leua letra h”; (393Rn) உ³பபுகிறது. [urappukiratu]³ “Pronunciar aspirado, ut supra”; (393Ro) உ³பபுகை [urappukai] “O tal pronunciar”; (69Rb) எழுதின [eḷutiṇa] C. escrita, ou pintada; (256Rj) கலவி [kalvi] “Sciencia”; (300Rk) கெ³மபு [kompu] “... item entre os caracteres eſta figura. ௨.”; (246Lp) புலவன [pulavan] “poeta”; (216Ra) பெச்சு [pēccu] “Palaura”; (241Rb) பெ³ருள [poruḷ] “Ente, cousa: item ſignificaçāo da palaura”; (135Ri) மொழி [moḷi] “..., item palaura”; (135Rk) மொழிகிறது [moḷikiratu] “Falar”;
- 16c. **Linguistic notations:** (72Rb) : எப்பம் [eppam]. “Arroto, com இடுகிறது [iṭukiratu]. Arroto.” (302Rj) கெ³ருசுகிறது [koṇcukiratu] “Falar cō

1. In conformity with the position which I have defended earlier, that ambiguity must be preserved while reproducing ancient documents, the symbol “#” is used here for representing the ambiguous Tamil sign “π” which is used 1. For long ā; 2. For distinguishing e/-ē from o/ō; 3. For writing “r” and “ra”.
2. The braces are used here as a virtual delimiters for what should be a “conjunct” symbol, with vertical arrangement, but could not be represented here *verbatim*.
3. Concerning this technical term, see Chevillard [2011].

os meninos por brinco pronunciando as palauras cõ elles”; (302Rk) கெ#ஞசுகை. [koñcukai] “O tal falar”; (299Lo) கெ#ளளுகிறது. [this entry explains the use of an auxiliary for a reflexive construction using such terms as “gerundio” and “significação imanente”]; (352Ld) த#ம [tām] “Elle mesmo, honorífico”;

- 16d. **Topics pertaining to literature:** (180Ln) ஒப்ப#ரி [oppāri]; (281Rm) க#ப்பு [kāppu] “... poesia ... introdução da poesia ...”; (460Rf) சங்கப்பலகை [caṅkappalakai] “Taboa larga é que se assentaõ muitas pessoas juntas”; (364Ri) திருவ#சகம [tiruvācakam] “Huma casta de uerço”; (364Rf) திருவ#யமெ#ளி [tiruvāymoḷi → tiruvāymoḷi]; (217Rm) பெணம# [peṇṇir] “Molher, honorifice, hè palaura de uerso”;
- 16e. **Ideophones¹:** (287Lb) கெயெனகிறது [kēyenkiratu] “Dar uaya.”; (292Lj): சிம#வெனகிறது [cimāvenkiratu] “Boquejar ...”; (361Rh) திககென [tikkena]; (366Li) திடுககென [tiṭukkenna]; (164Ln) நெறுநெறெனகிறது [nerunerēnkiratu] “Rangar”; (136Rd) மெ#றுமெ#றெனகிறது [morumorenkiratu]. “Remusgar”;
- 16f. **Taboo terms (mostly explained in Latin)²:** (8Re) அலகுல, (178Rm), (178Rn), (178Ro), (178Rp), (178Rq), (189Rn) பல{ஸதரி}, (234Rl) பிண்டம, (237Ro) பீசம, (308Ra) குயம, (320Re) கூதி, (383Rm) உப{ஸத}ம, (390Ri) ஊமபுகிறது, (482Lq) சிதி, (486Ro) சிரி. Quod சிதி, (490Lk) சிசினம, (500Li) சுண்ணி, (501Lf) சுக்கிலம.

From translation to bi-directional translation

We are now reaching the last section of this presentation, and I shall try to summarize some of the perspectives which open up when we mentally try to retrace the tasks accomplished by our missionary linguists during the early centuries of their presence on the soil of Tamil Nadu. They started with the goal of describing a language, but they discovered that they had to describe much more than a language and this is why Beschi ended up composing not one single grammar but four of them, three in Latin (about Common Tamil and Poetical Tamil), and one in Tamil (about the

1. Concerning ideophones in Tamil, see Chevillard [2004].
2. I include this brief enumeration in order to complement the remarks made by Gregory James[2009] concerning the strategies used in dealing with taboo terms. See notably his reproduction of a page, which is for him folio 93v (and p. 178 in my notation), where a high density of taboo terms such as “fornicator” (which is 178Rm in my notation) are found. The Latin glosses are not necessarily very helpful for identifying the body parts involved, because among the items explained as “*membrum muliebre*”, one refers to the breasts (308Ra), one seems to refer to the embryo (234Rl), whereas others seem to refer to the female sex (8Re, 320Re); additionally, the precise meaning of (383Rm) remains slightly unclear (being apparently the Sanskrit word *upastha*).

Tamil Poetical tradition), for which the title is தொன்னூல் விளக்கம் [*Tomūl Viḷakkam*] “The Light on/from ancient treatises”. To those four grammars must be added several dictionaries, some of them multilingual, from Western languages towards Tamil, but one monolingual, also in Tamil about Poetical Tamil, which is called சதுரகராதி [*Caturakarāti*] “Quadruple dictionary”. As Beschi realized, as had other missionaries before him¹, Poetical Tamil (and Poetry) had a tremendous symbolic importance in Tamil society, and he could never be taken seriously unless he mastered it. One of the predecessors of Beschi, Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656), had gone deeply into Sanskrit studies and had somehow tried to become a “Christian Brahmin”, but it seems that Beschi chose instead to become a Tamil poet. Now we find in the preface to Proença’s dictionary traces of debates explaining the choices made in the compilation of the lexicographical material and also the methods followed. It is notable that the argumentation refers, somewhat dismissively, to an earlier compilation, prepared by another early missionary, Ignacio Bruno (1576-1659). In the 1966 English translation (by Edgar C. Knowlton Jr. and Xavier S. Thani Nayagam) of Proença’s (Portuguese) preface, we can read the following clear presentation of priorities:

17. I shall leave out also poetic words (of which the vocabulary of Fr. Ignacio Bruno is full) because they are useless for practical purposes or for prose, and the Tamil poets have their own vocabularies for them, in which those who are interested and might wish to compose verses may find them. But I include many Sanskritic words, both for the sake of those who read the books of Fr. Robert (Nobili) in which they are numerous, and also because they commonly occur in the ordinary conversation of the Brahmins, whose language is more elevated, and whom Tamilians, who consider themselves learned and wish to speak seriously and with care, try to imitate. (Proença, 1966, p. 13).

I should say more about the success of Beschi’s *Caturakarāti*, and the manner in which it was innovative, while being at the same time rooted in the Tamil poetical tradition², but I must hasten to my conclusion, and I shall for that quote again Beschi, making use this time of extracts from the preface to his second grammar, dated “*Idibus septembris 1730*”³, where

1. Cf. supra, inside the extracts from APTPD, the incidental remark on (217Rm) பெணை# [peṇṭir] “Molher, honorifice, hē palaura de uerso”. See also the 2012 book *Bibliotheca Malabarica*, where Will Sweetman, with R. Ilakkuvan, tries to reconstruct the exact content of the lost library of Ziegenbalg, which is known only through its catalogue.
2. Gregory James (2000: 109-114) has some interesting remarks.
3. The preface to the 1st Grammar is dated “4. Kal. Jan. 1728”, although it was printed

he explains the importance, from the point of view of missionary work, of the study of poetry (which is inseparable from a study of the “superior dialect” of Tamil):

- 18a. *Cum anno elapso vulgaris tamulice linguae Grammaticam apostolico vestro desiderio famulatum praestiturus obtulerim, brevi me nonnulla de elegantiori hujus linguae dialecto daturum promiseram [...].* [Beschi, 1917 (ms. 1730), p. x]

“When I last year presented you with a grammar of the common dialect of the Tamil language, with the view of aiding your labours as ministers of the gospel, I promised that I would shortly say something respecting the superior dialect.” (Babington, 1822, p. vii)

- 18b. *Hæc satis ardua fore non diffiteor; sed suum labori stipendium non deerit. Ex indigenis ipsis vix aliquot jam invenies qui hanc linguam perfecte calleant; qui prima ejus rudimenta attigerit suspicantur ceteri, et si qui ex reconditis eorum voluminibus in medium proferas, pendent ab ore omnes. Si vero quæ ipsi vix a longe attingere potuerunt exterum hominem exhaustisse viderint, quibus laudibus non extollent! Facile magistrum audient quem doctissimum admirantur. Quæ omnia cum in Divinæ Legis gloriam redundare atque ad proximorum salute viam sternere certum sit, vel ex his pro vestro singulari animorum zelo, ad hujus elegantioris linguae studium spretis omnibus difficultatibus excitandos non dubito.* [Beschi, 1917 (ms. 1730), p. x-xi]

“That the study will be one of considerable difficulty, I do not pretend to deny; but the labour will not want its reward. Among the natives themselves, very few can now be found who are masters of the higher dialect. He among them who is acquainted even with its rudiments, is regarded with respect; but should he quote their abstruse works, he is listened to with fixed admiration; what praise, then, would they not bestow on a foreigner whom they should find deeply versed in a science which they themselves consider scarcely attainable? They will readily attend to the teaching of one whose learning is the object of their admiration. And as this may evidently lead to the honor of religion, and promote the salvation of those about us, I am satisfied that this consideration alone, operating on zeal like yours, will suffice to excite you to the study of this dialect, notwithstanding the difficulties that attend it.” (Babington, 1822, pp. vii-viii)

- 18c. *Cum vero quæ hoc idiomate scribere Tamulenses fere omnia metro ligata sint, ne indecorum conseatis, quæso; si vos ad profanos poetas adducere et ad poeseos stadium advocare præsumo.* [Beschi, 1917 (ms. 1730), p. xi]

“But since almost all the Tamil works in this dialect are in verse, I trust you will not deem it improper, if I venture to draw your attention to heathen poets, and to the study of poetry.” (Babington, 1822, pp. viii)

10 years later, in 1738. That was however quite fast, if we compare the 1st grammar with the 2nd grammar, which was printed only in 1917 (although its translation had been available in print since 1822).

That the arguments put forward in 1730 by Beschi were convincing will be immediately clear to one who opens a book printed in 1865 by John Murdoch [1819-1904]. That book, which incidentally contains on p. xl the English translation of the passages I have just cited, and which has more than 400 pages, is a *Classified Catalogue of Tamil Printed Books, with Introductory notices*, compiled by John Murdoch and printed by The Christian Vernacular Education Society. One could, half-jokingly, state that Christian missionaries started their work with the purpose of converting the inhabitants of Tamil Nadu to Christianity, but what happened was that Christianity itself was converted to Tamil. In the beginning, the missionaries translated Christian prayers and Christian devout stories¹, but the most famous among them, such as Beschi and G.U. Pope (1820-1908), who have their statues in Tamil Nadu, are nowadays remembered mainly for their translations and their adaptations of important Tamil works, such as the *Kuraḷ* (transl. into Latin by Beschi and into English by Pope) or the *Tiruvācakam* (transl. into English by Pope).

I have used the term “bidirectional translation” in the title of this section (and of this article), in order to emphasize that, if we compare the grammars composed by Beschi with those composed by his predecessors, and also with the technical vocabulary embedded inside Proença's dictionary, as evidenced for instance in (16a), what is so useful is the fact that he translates back into Latin the Tamil indigenous technical vocabulary, because he had made a deep study of the Tamil technical literature². I do not have the possibility to say more about this here, but this article is, I hope, a step in the beginning of a new collective program, which is currently being planned, that will produce tools³ to

1. An example is *Flos Sanctorum*, which tells the life of saints and was translated into Tamil in the 16th century by Henriques (The original is dated 1586; a new edition was made available in 1967 by Irācamāṇikkam).
2. Tamil Nadu possesses an indigenous grammatical Tradition which was centered on the characterization of the language used in ancient Tamil poetry, the beginnings of which seem to be traceable to the first half of the first millennium of the common era, although the treatises which are its embodiment did not appear in the universe of printed books before the 19th century, having earlier circulated as palm leaf MSS. For a short presentation of some features of the indigenous Tamil tradition, see for instance Chevillard [2013]. For a chronological bird-eye's view, see Chevillard [2014].
3. One such tool might be a Latin Dictionary of the Terminology of Early Descriptive Linguistics (LDTEDL), which was first evoked as a palindromic DLTLD (Dictionnaire Latin de la Terminologie de la Linguistique Descriptive) in some of my exchanges with my colleague Bernard Colombat (University Paris-Diderot).

allow future descriptive linguists to read the ancient first descriptions of many languages, descriptions that are for the time being mostly closed books for them.

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1. I have not seen this book. My statement is based on Mahon [1848, p. vi].

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1. I have not seen this book. Google Books asserts that it is dated 1806, has 192 pages and was printed by the Vepery Mission Press. However, this contradicts what we find in the preface by Mahon [1848] to his own translation of Beschi [1738] and what we find in Murdoch [1865 :xxxv], who mentions an edition “printed at Madras in 1831 by the Christian Knowledge Society”. Mahon seems to say that Horst’s translation was published posthumously, but was unsatisfactory, which is why he decided to make a completely new translation. Mahon may however have been imperfectly informed: he wrote that Beschi’s grammar had first been printed in 1739 (which is rather the date of the printing of Walther’s *Observationes*), had at his disposal the 1813 printing (and an old ms. version) and did not know whether Horst had died in 1809 or 1810.

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LA TRADUCTION DANS L'HISTOIRE DES IDÉES LINGUISTIQUES

REPRÉSENTATIONS ET PRATIQUES

Sous la direction d'ÉMILIE AUSSANT

Préface de SYLVAIN AUROUX

GEUTHNER

Pourquoi, comment et dans quel contexte le transfert d'une langue à l'autre a-t-il été appréhendé par les théoriciens du langage (des tout premiers grammairiens, philosophes, exégètes, lexicographes, poètes... aux linguistes contemporains) et comment l'ont-ils, éventuellement, eux-mêmes pratiqué au cours de l'histoire ?

Les articles réunis dans cet ouvrage donnent, dans une perspective à la fois épistémologique et transculturelle, un aperçu des représentations (vocabulaire utilisé pour désigner l'activité de « traduction », existence de typologies ou de théories de la traduction, problèmes rencontrés, etc.) et des pratiques (type de textes traduits, acteurs, lieux, objectifs, etc.) de la traduction que les théoriciens du langage d'aires culturelles diverses ont pu élaborer.

Avec les contributions de Sylvie Archambault, Émilie Aussant, Jean-Luc Chevillard, Christoph Harbsmeier, Aimée Lahaussois, Frédéric Lambert, Jacqueline Léon, Francine Mazière, Valérie Raby, Bruno Rochette, Valelia Muni Toke et Eva Wilden.

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