



Reading 17 th century Tamil-Portuguese dictionaries in the 21 st century: some practical steps

Jean-Luc Chevillard

► To cite this version:

Jean-Luc Chevillard. Reading 17 th century Tamil-Portuguese dictionaries in the 21 st century: some practical steps. 4th European Tamil Conference (), Sep 2019, Paris, France. halshs-04049379

HAL Id: halshs-04049379

<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-04049379>

Submitted on 30 Mar 2023

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



Distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution - NonCommercial - ShareAlike 4.0 International License

Reading 17th century Tamil-Portuguese dictionaries in the 21st century: some practical steps

Communication presented at the “4th European Tamil Conference”

நான்காவது ஐரோப்பியத் தமிழ் ஆய்வியல் மாநாடு
(Paris, 28-29 september 2019)

Jean-Luc Chevillard (CNRS, UMR7597, HTL)

<https://twitter.com/JLC1956>

<https://univ-paris-diderot.academia.edu/JeanLucChevillard>

1. Introduction
2. Expressing our gratitude to our predecessors
3. Towards another “Extinction Rebellion”
4. Material configuration of the VTCSP
5. Technical note on the folio discrepancies in the VTCSP
6. Learning Portuguese, for the sake of studying the history of Tamil lexicography
7. Initial voicing in Tamil, as perceived by 17th century Portuguese speakers
8. The hidden complexity of I, V and other letters
9. Further remarks and future perspectives
10. Bibliography

Reading 17th century Tamil-Portuguese dictionaries in the 21st century: some practical steps

[Version 3d (4581 words) (2019/09/24)]

Jean-Luc Chevillard (CNRS, HTL)

1. Introduction

At the onset, I would like to say how glad I am to be taking part in this 4th European Tamil Conference here in Paris. I know from my own experience of attending such previous conferences that this is a rare occasion for trying to find the proper wording in explaining to others some of my own attempts at exploring several sorts of “Tamil dictionaries”, some of them being monolingual, and some of them being bilingual (or trilingual). However, because time is limited and because clarity can only come from a focussed presentation, I shall not discuss here today the monolingual variety, except when evoking at some point the TST project and the fact that copies of several of the works which are referred to in Tamil as நிகண்டு are found in the collection of palm-leaf manuscripts preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) here in Paris. I shall therefore today limit myself to giving a very brief account of a task in which I have been engaged for the past 6 years, ever since I received, in september 2013, a second-hand copy of a book with a green cover, printed in 1966, which had on its **modern** title page the following indication:

ANTAÕ DE PROENÇA’S TAMIL-PORTUGUESE DICTIONARY A.D. 1679.

Prepared for publication by Xavier S. Thani Nayagam

Department of Indian Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, 1966

During those six years, and while doing many other things, I have been spending a lot of time with that green book, hereafter referred to as **VTCS** because of its original title page where we can read: *Vocabulario Tamulico Com a Significaçam Portuguesa*. More precisely, I have been transforming the text of that book into an XML file, the structure of which has progressively become more and more complex. The current result of my efforts contains today 115,269 XML tags (inside a 4.7 Mb text file), although I have only completed 53% of the task and am not yet certain what the final output of this task should be and when it will ultimately be ready. I view indeed today’s presentation, and the feedback which it can generate, as a means of clarifying my thoughts and of being as realistic as possible in my endeavour. I should add in this introductory section that I progressively realized, thanks to the help of several colleagues, both in their individual capacities and through some of the collective research projects which they have launched, that I could not make real efficient progress in my exploration of the 1966 facsimile book without exploring at the same time manuscript copies of that **“SAME”** TAMIL-PORTUGUESE DICTIONARY. I have carefully included here, in the printed version of this presentation, on both sides of the word “same”, those important typographical devices which are called “GUILLEMETS” in French and which should be understood here as SCARE QUOTES, because as I hope to make clear by a few examples, at the time when knowledge was transmitted between human beings by **manual** copying (i.e. copying by hand), it was almost never possible to have absolute identity between an original and its copy. And if I manage to convey **only one message** to the younger section of this audience, which consists of those who might some day write a Ph.D. thesis on a similar topic, it should be that **they must go and see with their own eyes** the things, the artefacts concerning which they read (or hear) some report. And this is also what happened to me, as I shall now explain. And luckily, thanks to the TST project and the BnF, some artefacts are indeed available, for young eyes to examine them, on the internet.

2. Expressing our gratitude to our predecessors

We, in the humanities, never finds ourselves at what would be an absolute beginning, for a number of reasons. We all follow paths which have been trodden by others before us, to



Image C: A.C. Burnell (1840-1882)

whom we must be grateful for showing us the way. In the case of the Proença 1679 dictionary, my memory tells me that I first heard about it while reading, in the eighties, a review, by François Gros, which had appeared, *BEFEO*. This was a

1978, which had as

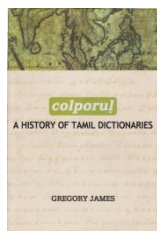


Image B: G. James (2000), Cre-A

in 1980, in a journal called review of a book, published in its title "*Tamil Dictionaries. A Bibliography*". The book had been written by A.



Image E: J. Vinson (1843-1926)

Dhamodharan (see Image A), who

2019/06/14,

has unfortunately left us recently, on

at the age of 84. However, it is only much



Image D: Xavier S. Thani Nayagam (1913-1980)

later, while starting to read the 2000 book by Gregory James, *Col-Poru! -- A History of Tamil Dictionaries*, (see Image B) as well as several of his articles, that I really started to understand the importance of Proença's dictionary and decided to acquire a copy of the facsimile published in 1966 by **Xavier S. Thani**

Nayagam (see Image D). Thanks to pointers given by Gregory

James, to whom we should be grateful for going to so many



Image A: A. Dhamodaran (1935-2019)

libraries around the world and reporting over their Tamil holdings, I could also

read some of Thani Nayagam's articles, as well as some articles written by an earlier Scholar, **Julien**

Vinson (see Image E), who played a role in the rediscovery of Proença's dictionary, and who was

also responsible for cataloguing many of the Tamil manuscripts preserved in the BnF (Paris) some of

which will be mentioned today. And I could also mention other scholars, who played a role in the

rediscovery of the VTCSP, such as **A.C. Burnell (see Image C)**, but this might become a very long

narrative, and I should now try to do what we call in French "**entrer le vif du sujet**".

3. Towards another "Extinction Rebellion"

Before that, however, I must very briefly touch upon another aspect of the present topic, for which I have provided here a slightly provocative (or contemporary) section heading. The EXTINCTION which is alluded to here in my title, and against which there should be an **organized revolt**, is of course the Extinction of **Linguistic** Knowledge (or the Loss of **Linguistic** Diversity), which is currently another very high risk for our planet. The point I want to make here is that it is not enough to have Proença's 1679 book on a shelf, and not enough to circulate extracts from it, but that a number of people should read it in its entirety, and devise a format which will make it more easily accessible, as a SEARCHABLE resource. And such a goal when it is reached, will be beneficial **(1)** to all those who are not native Tamil speakers and want, like me and many others before me, to have a command of that important language, in its several varieties. It will **also** be beneficial **(2)** to all those who are native speakers of contemporary Tamil, but want to have a better knowledge of the long and complex history of their mother tongue, and become more capable of accessing the historical (and multilingual) documentation pertaining to that history. And I should also add here, anticipating my conclusion, that when one really reads in detail the VTCSP, and examines what are the changes

between the successive versions (comparing the VTCSP with its forerunner MS, kept in Goa, and with copies which were later made, some of which are in the Paris BnF), one remembers that the notion of PROGRESS must be taken “with a grain of salt”, because “progress” can entail loss of original diversity, in the search for a standard. An interesting subsidiary task is to make a list of all the entries which did not make it into the MTL (Madras Tamil Lexicon) and to try to understand why.

4. Material configuration of the VTCSP

The first challenge, when opening the VTCSP is that it is not immediately obvious how to locate an arbitrarily chosen Tamil word. Practice is required and therefore my starting point will be a concise visual representation of the VTCSP structure, providing at a glance a skeleton of that 508 pages structure. It appears here as a succession of 255 rectangles in a 15 rows by 17 columns chart.

	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA
p.1	p.30	p.31	p.60	p.61	p.90	p.91	p.120	p.121	p.150	p.151	p.180	p.181	p.210	p.211	p.240	p.241
p.2	p.3	p.32	p.33	p.62	p.63	p.92	p.93	p.122	p.123	p.152	p.153	p.182	p.183	p.212	p.213	p.242
p.4	p.5	p.34	p.35	p.64	p.65	p.94	p.95	p.124	p.125	p.154	p.155	p.184	p.185	p.214	p.215	p.244
p.6	p.7	p.36	p.37	p.66	p.67	p.96	p.97	p.126	p.127	p.156	p.157	p.186	p.187	p.216	p.217	p.246
p.8	p.9	p.38	p.39	p.68	p.69	p.98	p.99	p.128	p.129	p.158	p.159	p.188	p.189	p.218	p.219	p.248
p.10	p.11	p.40	p.41	p.70	p.71	p.100	p.101	p.130	p.131	p.160	p.161	p.190	p.191	p.220	p.221	p.250
p.12	p.13	p.42	p.43	p.72	p.73	p.102	p.103	p.132	p.133	p.162	p.163	p.192	p.193	p.222	p.223	p.252
p.14	p.15	p.44	p.45	p.74	p.75	p.104	p.105	p.134	p.135	p.164	p.165	p.194	p.195	p.224	p.225	p.254
p.16	p.17	p.46	p.47	p.76	p.77	p.106	p.107	p.136	p.137	p.166	p.167	p.196	p.197	p.226	p.227	p.256
p.18	p.19	p.48	p.49	p.78	p.79	p.108	p.109	p.138	p.139	p.168	p.169	p.198	p.199	p.228	p.229	p.258
p.20	p.21	p.50	p.51	p.80	p.81	p.110	p.111	p.140	p.141	p.170	p.171	p.200	p.201	p.230	p.231	p.260
p.22	p.23	p.52	p.53	p.82	p.83	p.112	p.113	p.142	p.143	p.172	p.173	p.202	p.203	p.232	p.233	p.262
p.24	p.25	p.54	p.55	p.84	p.85	p.114	p.115	p.144	p.145	p.174	p.175	p.204	p.205	p.234	p.235	p.264
p.26	p.27	p.56	p.57	p.86	p.87	p.116	p.117	p.146	p.147	p.176	p.177	p.206	p.207	p.236	p.237	p.266
p.28	p.29	p.58	p.59	p.88	p.89	p.118	p.119	p.148	p.149	p.178	p.179	p.208	p.209	p.238	p.239	p.268

Figure 1: the VTCSP as a 17-columns-by-15-rows chart of double pages

AA	f.12	AA	f.28	II	f.44	MM	f.61
p.22	p.23	p.52	p.53	p.82	p.83	p.112	p.113
AA	f.13	AA	f.29	II	f.45	MM	f.62
p.24	p.25	p.54	p.55	p.84	p.85	p.114	p.115
AA	f.14	AB	f.30	II	f.46	MM	f.63
p.26	p.27	p.56	p.57	p.86	p.87	p.116	p.117
AA	f.15	BB	f.31	II	f.47	MM	f.64
p.28	p.29	p.58	p.59	p.88	p.89	p.118	p.119

Figure 2: Enlarged lower left corner of Figure 1

VV	f.209	VV	f.224	XX	f.229	XX	f.245
p.412	p.413	p.442	p.443	p.472	p.473	p.502	p.503
VV	f.210	VV	f.225	XX	f.230	XX	f.246
p.414	p.415	p.444	p.445	p.474	p.475	p.504	p.505
VV	f.211	VV	f.226	XX	f.231	XX	f.247
p.416	p.417	p.446	p.447	p.476	p.477	p.506	p.507
VV	f.212	VV	f.227	XX	f.232	XX	f.248
p.418	p.419	p.448	p.449	p.478	p.479	p.508	

Figure 3: Enlarged lower right corner of Figure 1

Each of the rectangles inside the 15 rows by 17 columns chart of Figure 1 represents a double page, combining a left page and a right page, as seen when a book is open. Additionally, inside each page, there are two columns, one on the left (L) and one on the right (R). The chart in Figure 1 must be perused (or “visited”) vertically, starting with column 1 and ending with column 17. The additional elements of information which are provided on the chart (see Figure 1 and Figure 2) are the “logical” page numbers and the “effectively present”, but **flawed** (see next section), folio numbers. As a specific example, the reader can have a look at Figure 4 (see below), which is the real counterpart of

the stylized miniature symbol

A	B
p.56	p.57

 found inside both Figure 1 and Figure 2 at the intersection of column 2 and of the penultimate row. Figure 4 contains a scanned image of double page 56-57, where the **faulty folio number f.30, printed in 1679**, is visible in the upper right corner and where the **logical page numbers, 56 and 57, manually added** by me in the digital image are visible in the lower left and lower right corners.

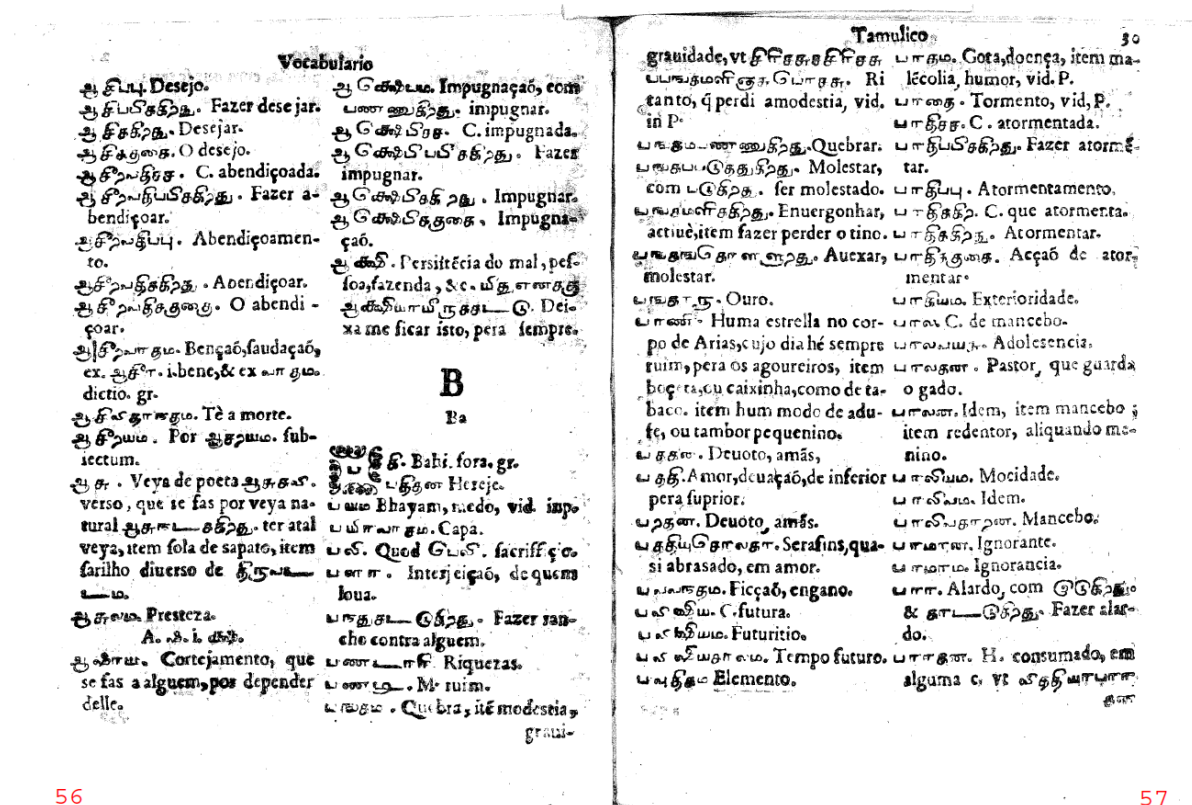


Figure 4: double page (pp. 56-57) in VTCSP with FAULTY folio number 30 (it should be 29!)

As can be seen in Figure 4, all the head-words for the 17 dictionary entries on the Left column,

ஆசு . Veya de poeta ஆசுசை.
verso, que se fas por vey a na-
tural ஆசுசைசை. ter atal
veya, item sola de sapato, item
sarilho diuerso de திருபு-
லம்.

Figure 6: Entry 56_L_m (ஆசு)

referred to as column 56_L, start with the Tamil letter ஆ, whereas all the words in the two columns of page 57, namely 57_L and 57_R, which each contain 14 entries, start with the Tamil

பல். Quod Deus. sacrificio.
பனா . Interjeição, de quem
loua.
பனதசுட்டுத்த . Fazer san-
cho contra alguem.
பனா டாஈ Riquezas.

Figure 5: Entries 56_R_k (புலி)
to 56_R_n (புணடாரி)

letter **𑀭**. As for column 56_R, it contains 6 entries starting with **𑀭** in its upper section and 10 entries starting with **𑀭** in its lower section. Both sections are separated by a capital B. Additionally, a closer look at all these words which start with letter **𑀭** reveals that they are for the most part words borrowed from Sanskrit and are pronounced with a voiced initial, like the word **𑀭𑀸𑀓**, head of the 5th entry below B, which is pronounced *bali*. That entry being the 11th inside column 56_R, I shall refer to it as entry 56_R_k, because k is the 11th letter. With the same logic, the 17 entries inside column 56_L will receive the labels 56_L_a to 56_L_o. That means that entry **𑀭𑀸𑀓** will be referred to as entry 56_L_m.

5. Technical note on the folio discrepancies in the VTCSP

In this short section, I intend to clarify some of my previous remarks, which may not have been clear enough, concerning the nature of the faults in the numbering of the folios of the VTCSP. We can start by remarking that no mistakes are found in the left-most column of Figure 1 and of Figure 2, if we overlook the fact that the folio numbers are missing on pages 7 and 9, where we should see the indications “4” and “5”, respectively, as a consequence of the fact that:

- (1) If the Nth sheet of paper inside a book is called “folio N”, its first side (called “recto”) is notionally a page with an odd number P which is $(2N - 1)$ and its second side (called “verso”) is a page with an even number, whose value is $2N$.¹

However, if we examine successively the elements contained in the second column of Figure 1, we can see that there is a jump from 20 to 22 in the folio numbering, when we move from odd page 39 to odd page 41. It would be tedious to give the detail of all such mistakes and I shall content myself with stating here that:

- (2) Inside the VTCSP printed in 1689, only 16 folios are reliably numbered, on a total of 254. Among the remaining folios, 39 are partly or fully unreadable and 199 are faulty, the maximum discrepancy between the visible folio number and the number which should have been printed being 8, as is the case for instance on page 471, which should bear folio number 236 but has in fact 228, on its upper right corner. This can be easily verified by examining the 1966 facsimile, or by going through Figure 1, which is based on it.

Having a **reliable coordinate system** for navigating the logical tree of the huge XML file on which I have been working for the past six years is an absolute necessity, and this is the reason why, as explained in some earlier article, I have decided, at the beginning of this task, that I could not make use of the unreliable folio numbers, which are used by earlier authors,² but had to make use of the “logical” page numbers, which can simply be obtained by counting from 1 to 508. This is also the place where I should remark that not a single one of the earlier publications seems to state correctly the number of pages in VTCSP, as seen for instance on pp. 69-70 in Dhamodharan[1978], where it is stated that the VTCSP contains 20 pp. (for the introduction) and 247 folios (for the dictionary proper), whereas the exact number of folios is 254. All the authors who describe VTCSP take at face

¹ As an example, inside Figure 2, the recto of folio 14, alias f14r, is p.27 and its verso, alias f14v, is p.28.

² See for instance several folio references given in Thani Nayagam [1964].

value the inexact folio number 247 which appears (instead of the expected correct value 254) in the upper right corner of (logical) page 507 (see Figure 1).

6. Learning Portuguese, for the sake of studying the history of Tamil lexicography

After this preliminary technical survey of the VTCSP, seen as a collection of pages, or—in the original intention— as a collection of folios, and of our coordinate system, we now turn our attention to the individual entries, which appear inside each column, as seen earlier in Figure 4, Figure 5 and Figure 6. I shall now exhibit small fragments, extracted from the XML file which is my current transcription of the VTCSP. I take as a first example the entry 56_R_k, alias “பலி”, which was already discussed inside section 4, and which appears inside Figure 5. The XML transcription reads:

```
(3) <entry coordinates="56_R_k"> <lc_letter>k</lc_letter>
    <line_length>1</line_length> <entry_head>ப பலி</entry_head>
    <ALIAS_target>217_L_m</ALIAS_target> <CATEGORY>ALIAS</CATEGORY>
    <entry_body><u>Quod {{@ ப பலி}}</u>. facriffiçio.</entry_body> </entry>
```

As can be seen, the difference between what is inside the XML transcription, i.e. (3), and the corresponding content visible inside Figure 5 is the structuring. The entry “பலி” has become an XML “entry” element, which possesses an attribute whose name is “coordinates” and whose value is “56_R_k”. That “entry” element contains two children elements called “entry_head” and “entry_body”. Additional elements, such as “line_length”, “ALIAS_target” and “CATEGORY”, contain an additional interpretive layer, which is clearly separated from the base layer and which can be expanded indefinitely as new perspectives appear while the text of the VTCSP is progressively entered. Because this is a very short presentation, I limit myself to evoking a small number of features. The first thing which I wish to mention here has its starting point in the string which has been put here in bold-face and underlined, and which appears as “Quod பெலி” in the original text.³ That string indicate that பலி is to be considered a variant (or an “ALIAS”) for பெலி which is the head-word inside another entry and may have been considered as more standard. The elements called “ALIAS_target” provides us with the location of that other entry. The content of the element “ALIAS_target”, which is the value “217_L_m” indicates that that entry is the 13th element inside the Left column of page 217 (because “m” is the 13th lower-case letter). The transcription of that entry, if extracted from my current XML transcript of VTCSP, is as follows:

```
(4) <entry coordinates="217_L_m"> <lc_letter>m</lc_letter>
    <line_length>1</line_length> <entry_head>@ ப பலி</entry_head>
    <CATEGORY/> <entry_body>Sacrificio cruento.</entry_body> </entry>
```

³ For reasons which would be too long to explain here, all the கொம்பு signs found in the original text are represented by „@“ and all the இரட்டை கொம்பு signs are represented by “@@”. Additionally, “{{” and “}}” are used for delimiting terms which require a special type of indexing.

7. Initial voicing in Tamil, as perceived by 17th century Portuguese speakers

The readers examining item **(4)**, i.e. entry 217_L_m, may notice that we have moved from page 56 to a faraway section. A look at Figure 1 reveals that entry பெலி whose coordinates are expressed by 217_L_m is inside the large P section, which occupies almost three complete columns (from column 7 to column 9). Since it may not be easy to jump back and forth between the current page and Figure 1, I have provided below (See Figure 7) a more compact representation of the succession of 18 sections inside the VTCSP. In that figure, each section is represented by one of the following 18 letters A B C D E G I L M N O P Q R S T V X, and the height of that letter is roughly proportional to the square root of the number of entry items (provided below the letter) in the corresponding section.



Figure 7: the 18 sections in VTCSP (in proportional size representation)

We can thus state more clearly that item ப்லி, on page 56, is a member of the very small B section, which has only 114 members, whereas item பெலி, on page 217, is a member of the very large P section, which is the second largest section, and which contains 2129 items. In a similar manner, we can also see clearly on Figure 7 how very small sections D and G are, when compared with the corresponding T and Q section. The explanation is of course to be found in the fact that most Tamil words starting with ப், த் or க் are pronounced with an UNVOICED initial, which will be transcribed as P, T or Q by a Portuguese speaker, with a few exceptional cases, where the Portuguese speaker will use B, D or G for writing down what is heard. I summarize below, in Table 1, the two possible treatments for ப், த் and க் in the VTCSP.

Tamil initial consonants in VTCSP	Perceived as unvoiced	Perceived as voiced
ப் (2243 items)	P (2129 items)	B (114 items)
த் (1590 items)	T (1522 items)	D (168 items)
க் (2321 items)	Q (2251 items)	G (70 items)

Table 1: Voiced and Unvoiced (distribution for ப், த் and க்)

8. The hidden complexity of I, V and other letters

I have started by presenting simple cases, namely those cases where a Latin letter is in simple correspondence with a single Tamil letter, even though as we have remarked the reciprocal is not true. I shall now examine more complex cases, some of which would in fact require extensive

explanations, because of the differences between 17th century orthography and the modern orthography. Before examining them however, I shall provide my reader with a second frieze (see Figure 8), which is the analogue of Figure 7, but where we now examine the frequency of the initial Tamil letters which are found in the 16209 entries of the VTCSP. The frieze is as follows:



Figure 8: the 29 subsections in VTCSP (in proportional size representation)

Because the correspondance between Figure 7 and Figure 8 is certainly not immediately visible to someone who sees those two friezes for the first time, I shall now make explicit by means of a chart (see Table 2) the correspondance between the 18 sections and the 29 subsections. It is as follows:

A	அ (1382 items), ஆ (366 items)
B	ப (114 items)
C	ச (25 items)
D	த (168 items)
E	எ (408 items)
G	க (70 items)
I/Y/J	இ (552 items), ஈ (62 items), ய (59 items), ச (108 items)
L	ல (103 items)
M	ம (1274 items)
N	ந (871 items), ஓ (17 items)
O	ஓ (271 items)
P	ப (2129 items)
Q	க (2251 items)
R	ர (180 items), ட (22 items)
S	ச (214 items), ஸ் (54 items)
T	த (1522 items)
U/V	உ (596 items), ஊ (89 items), வ (1435 items)
X	ச (1844 items), ஷ (2 items), கூஷ (21 items)
TOTAL	16209 items

Table 2: Correspondence between Figure 7 and Figure 8

When examining Chart 2, the reader must remember that the Latin alphabet has not always been what it is now. In an earlier period, U and V used to be the same letter, for which the Capital form was “V” and the lowercase form was “u”. The VTCSP, printed in 1689 represent a time when “v” has been distinguished from “u”, but “U” is not yet distinguished from “V”. But in an earlier manuscript, preserved in Goa (see Figure 9), which seems to be the source for the VTCSP, “u” is still used where we would expect “v”. And I must add to those observations that both “j” and “I” were not initially distinguished from “i” and “l” and that, similarly, the use of “y” was not what it is now. But we must hurry towards the end of this brief presentation and I shall leave the readers meditating on those points and devise their own strategies, or read available literature,⁴ in case they would like explore similar sources and locate Tamil words in them.

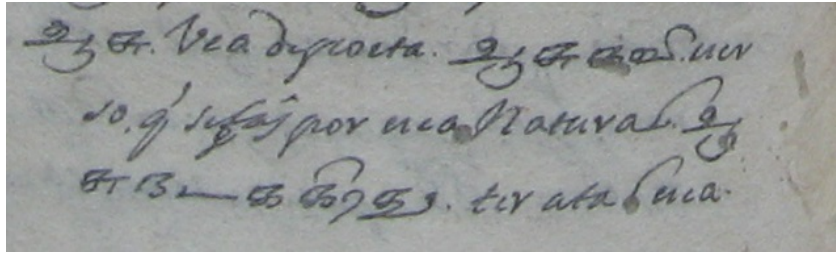


Figure 9: Equivalent in a GOA MS of the content of figure 6

9. Further remarks and future perspectives

Although I have in fact barely touched upon the subject at hand, I must now try to summarize and to give a few pointers towards elements which have been hinted at in the introductory section. It seems to me that the TWO most important questions are:

- How does this text relate to us, today in 2019, in Paris? or in Europe? or on this planet?
- What can be done TODAY (in a wide acceptance of this word) concerning the network of interrelated text in which the VTCSP is a node?

Regarding the first question, I believe I have given my own answer in what precedes, directly or indirectly.⁵ I had hoped to be capable of showing more efficiently that the VTCSP preserves some precious pieces of information concerning many facets of the Tamil-speaking world (தமிழ் கூறும் நல்லுலகம்), including the variety of its dialectal variation, but because the art of summarizing is a difficult art, I have only had the time to present a single pair (பலி vs. பெலி) whereas I already have in fact information concerning many similar pairs.⁶

Regarding the second question, the only thing which I can reasonably try to do is to show how the VTCSP is both similar to and different from other available texts. One of these texts, preserved in GOA (and discussed in Gregory James[20017]), has been briefly alluded to when I took

⁴ I have already written at length on that question. See Chevillard[2017], available online.

⁵ See for instance Section 3: “Towards another ‘Extinction Rebellion’”.

⁶ Stated in a technical way, I currently have an “ALIAS_target” element in 313 of the 8633 entries which I have entered so far (out of a postulated total of 16209 entries, which might of course need to be revised). I am however keenly aware of the fact that this is very far from being complete.

it as example and extracted Figure 9 from it.⁷ Another one, which is known as Indien 221, is preserved in the “Bibliothèque nationale de France” (alias BnF) in Paris. The readers can see for themselves in Figure 10 (below) an extract from the top of page 22 inside Indien 221. That extract contains the entry ஆசு, already shown in Figure 6 and in Figure 9,

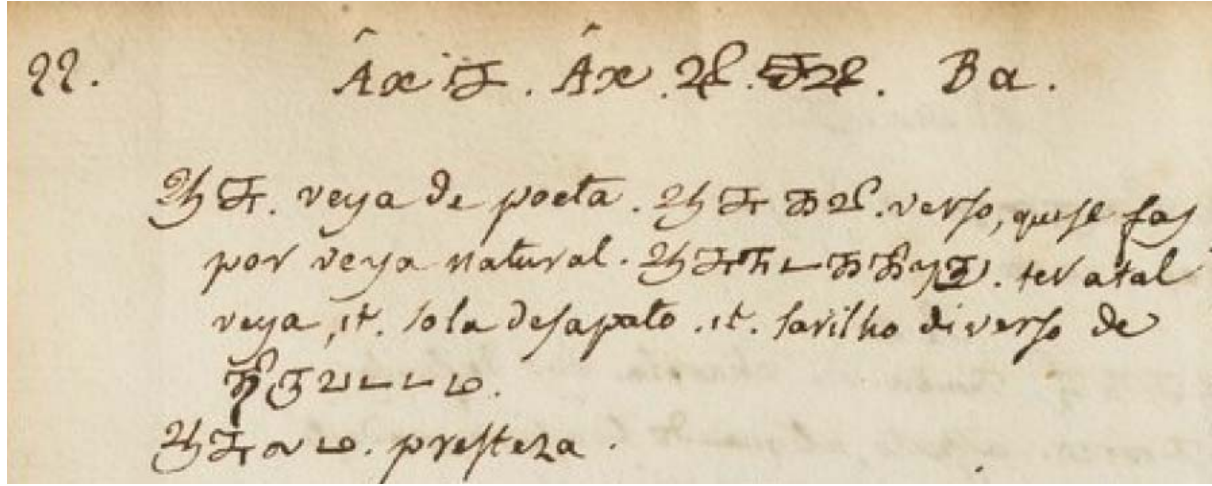


Figure 10: an extract from page 22 in Indien 221 (BnF)

As already said in the introduction, this MS, along with other manuscripts, has been digitized by the BnF, thanks to a financing provided by some ongoing research project, one of them being the ERC project NETamil (under the leadership of Eva Wilden), and one being a recently started ANR-DFG project, called TST (under the joint leadership of Eva Wilden and Emmanuel Francis).

As a final word, I would like to say that it should be a mark of my success in making this presentation if, after listening to me, some young people go and explore the original BnF MSS. You should not simply believe me. **You have to see with your own eyes!** Simply go to the URL reproduced below, and kindly READ. படித்து அருளுங்கள்!

<https://archivesetmanuscrits.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cc103757b>

10. Bibliography

- Burnell, Arthur Coke, 1878, *Elements of South-Indian Paleography, from the fourth to the seventeenth century A.D.* Second enlarged and improved edition. London. Trübner and Co.⁸
- Burnell, Arthur Coke, 1880, *A tentative list of books and some mss. relating to the History of the Portuguese in India proper*, Mangalore, Printed at the Basel mission press.
- Chevillard, Jean-Luc, 2015, “The challenge of bi-directional translation as experienced by the first European missionary grammarians and lexicographers of Tamil”, pp. 107-126, in Aussant, Émilie (ed.), *La Traduction dans l'Histoire des Idées Linguistiques*, Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris

⁷ I wish here to express my thanks to my colleague Cristina Muru (University of Viterbo, Italy), who shared with me her precious pictures of that MS.

⁸ VTCSP is discussed on p. 44, fn. 1.

- Chevillard, Jean-Luc, 2017, "How Tamil was described once again: towards an XML-encoding of the Grammatici Tamulici", pp. 103-127, in *Histoire Epistémologie Langage* (ISSN 0750-8069), Vol. 39/2, SHESL/EDP Sciences, Paris.
- Deokar, L., & Chevillard, J-L. 2019: "Ancient India". In J. Considine (Ed.), *The Cambridge World History of Lexicography* (pp. 67-83). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Deokar, L., & Chevillard, J-L. 2019: "India and Tibet, c. 500–c. 1750". In J. Considine (Ed.), *The Cambridge World History of Lexicography* (pp. 130-158). Cambridge: Cambridge University
- Dhamodharan, A., 1978, *Tamil Dictionaries. A Bibliography*, Beiträge Zur Südasiensforschung Südasiens-Institut Universität Heidelberg, Band 50, Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden, Germany.
- Gros, François, 1980, Review of Dhamodaran[1978], in *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 67, 346-58, Paris.
- James, Gregory, 2000, *Colporul, A History of Tamil Dictionaries*, Cre-A, Chennai, India.
- James, Gregory, 2007, The manuscript and printed versions of Antão de Proença's Vocabulario tamulico (1679), no:kku, 1.
- James, Gregory, 2009, "Aspects of the structure of entries in the earliest missionary dictionary of Tamil", pp. 273-301, in Zwartjes, O. and Arzápalo, R. & T. Smith-Stark, T. (Eds). Amsterdam.
- Muru, Cristina, 2010, *Glimpses of the Tamil language*, The Papyrus, Tamil Nadu, India.
- Thani Nayagam, Xavier S. , 1964, "Antaõ de Proença's Tamil-Portuguese Dictionary, 1679. An Introduction", pp. 117-134, in *Tamil Culture*, 11.
- Thani Nayagam, Xavier S. , 1966, *Antaõ de Proença's Tamil-Portuguese Dictionary, A.D. 1679*. facsimile edition. Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya.
- Vinson (RLPC), Julien, 1910, "Le Premier Vocabulaire Tamoul Imprimé", pp. 74-82., in *Revue de Linguistique et de Philologie Comparée*, Tome Quarante-troisième, Chalon-Sur-Saone, France.

நான்காவது ஐரோப்பியத் தமிழ் ஆய்வியல் மாநாடு

Quatrième Colloque tamoul européen
Fourth European Tamil Conference



காலம் : செப்டம்பர் 20, ஞாயிறு 20. - 10. மணி-20 மணி
இடம் : 20, Esplanade Nathalie Sarraute (Rue Pajole) 75018 Paris

ஆய்வியல் பொருண்மைகள்:

இன்பத்தமிழும் இலங்கையரும்

தமிழ் அகராதியியலின் பரிணாமம் மற்றும் பரிமாணம்

பங்கலக்கழகத் துணைவேந்தர்கள், வெள்ளைக்காரத்தமிழறிஞர்கள், மொழியியலாளர்கள் மற்றும் கலைஞர்களும் பங்கேற்று, தமிழியல் ஆராய்ச்சியை உங்களுடன் பகிர்ந்துகொள்ளும் இலங்கைப் பங்கலக்கழகங்கள், 4 இந்தியப் பங்கலக்கழகங்கள், TRTயும், பன்னாட்டு உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனத் தன் இணைப்பு நடத்தும் தமிழ்மொழி மாநாடு.

உடனடி உதவிகள்: ச.சத்தியானந்தன் S.A.D.S.M.A.M.Phil.Ph.D.
பன்னாட்டு உயர்கல்வி நிறுவனம்- அன்னாமலைப் பங்கலக்கழகம்.
தமிழ்நாடு, சென்னை இலங்கையிலும் விருந்தினர் sachchithanantham@gmail.com
70, rue Philippe de Girard 75018 Paris. தொலைபேசி : 06 52 66 30 01.

ஆராய்ச்சித் தமிழ் பருக ! அனைவரும் வருக !