

## BHİL DIALECTS AND KHANDEŚĪ.

The border country between Rajputana, Central India, the Central Provinces, and the Bombay Presidency is inhabited by many tribes known under various names, such as Bhils, Ahirs, and so forth.

Their home may be described as an irregularly shaped triangle, with the apex in the Aravalli Hills, and the base roughly corresponding to the south-eastern frontier of the district of Khandesh. The frontier line goes south-westwards from the Aravalli Range, including the south-eastern corner of Sirohi, and, farther to the south, including Mahikantha and the eastern portion of Rewakantha. The population of the Surat District and the Surat Agency, and of the Nawsari division of the Paroda State, is mostly Bhil, and we also find them in Thana and Jawhar, and even further south, in Ahmednagar. From the south of Dharampur, in the Surat Agency, the frontier of the Bhil-Ahīr country proper turns first eastward and then northward including the north-western strip of the district of Nasik. It then crosses Nasik, leaving the greater—southern—part of that district to Marāṭhī, follows the south-eastern frontier of Khandesh, includes a strip of the Melkapur *Taluka* of Buldana and the Burhanpur *Tahsīl* of Nimar. Thence it turns northwards to the Nerbudda. In Bhopawar, however, Nimāri is spoken in a large, circular, area to the west of the Nimar district. The frontier line then follows the Nerbudda towards the east, and then goes northwards to the Vindhya, where it turns westwards up to near the town of Indore, whence it runs in an irregular bow up to the Aravalli Hills, including the western portion of Jhabua and Ratlam, Banswara and the west of Partabgarh, Dungarpur and the hilly tracts of the Mewar State.

Outside of this territory we find Bhil tribes in various districts of Berar, and similar dialects are spoken by wandering tribes in the Punjab, the United Provinces, and even in the Midnapore district of Bengal. Ahirs are found all over Northern India, but it is only in Cutch that their dialect resembles that spoken by the various Bhil tribes and by the inhabitants of Khandesh.

The number of speakers of the various dialects will be given in detail in the following pages. We shall here only state the general results.

Number of speakers.

They are as follows:—

Bhil dialects . . . . .	2,689,109
Khāndēśī (and its sub-dialects). . . . .	1,253,066
TOTAL . . . . .	3,942,175

The dialects in question are mostly bounded towards the north and east by the various dialects of Rājasthānī, towards the south by Marāṭhī, and towards the west by Marāṭhī and Gujarātī.

Among the dialects spoken within the territory sketched above there is one, *viz.*,

Relation to other Indo-Aryan vernaculars. Khāndēśī, which has hitherto been classed as a form of Marāṭhī. The ensuing pages will, however, show, on the one side, that the so-called Bhil dialects gradually merge into the language of

Khandesh, on the other that Khāndēśī itself is not a Marāṭhī dialect. Several suffixes, it is true, are identical with those used in Marāṭhī. But most suffixes and the inner form of the language more closely agree with Gujarāṭī and Rājasthānī.

The northern and eastern dialects connect Gujarāṭī with Rājasthānī, while, in the west, there runs a continuous line of dialects southwards towards the broken Marāṭhī dialects of Thana. The influence of Marāṭhī increases as we go southwards, and these forms of speech are thus a link between that language and Gujarāṭī. This latter language is, however, everywhere the original base, and the gradual approaching the principles of Marāṭhī in structure and inflexional system seems to be due to a secondary development. It should, however, be remembered that the inner Indo-Aryan languages and those of the outer circle have, at an early date, met and influenced each other in Gujarat and the adjoining districts.

The relation existing between the dialects in question and other Indo-Aryan vernaculars will be defined in greater detail in the ensuing pages. In this place we must confine ourselves to some general remarks.

The short *a* has, in many dialects, the broad sound of *o* in 'hot.' Thus, *pōg* and *pag*,  
 Pronunciation. foot. The same is the case in Rājasthānī dialects and in  
 Kōṅkaṇī, but usually not in those dialects where the Marāṭhī  
 influence is strongest. *Ē* takes the place of *a* in Sirohi, and also, to some extent, in  
 Jhabua.

The palatals commonly become *s*-sounds, especially in the north. The same is the case in Gujarāṭī and Rājasthānī dialects, and we may also compare the pronunciation of *ch* and *j* as *ts* and *ds*, respectively, in Marāṭhī and in the Charōtārī dialects of Gujarāṭī.

*S* very commonly developes to a sound which is described as something between *h* and *s*. The real sound seems to be that of *ch* in 'loch.' This pronunciation is quite common everywhere in the eastern part of Gujarāt. As we go westwards and eastwards, this sound becomes an ordinary *h* as in some dialects of Gujarāṭī and Mālvī. In the south, on the other hand, an *s* usually remains. The letter *h* itself is very commonly dropped, as is also the case in Gujarāṭī and Rājasthānī dialects.

There is a strong tendency to substitute hard for soft mutes. This is especially the case with soft aspirates, and forms such as *kōḍō* or *khōḍō*, instead of *ghōḍō*, a horse, are quite common. There are also many instances of the hardening of unaspirated soft letters. Thus *lītō* and *līdō*, taken; *tāhī* and *ḍāhī*, a cow, and so on. The palatal *j* seems to be especially apt to be hardened, and is very often pronounced as an *s*. The emphatic particle *ch* in Khāndēśī is perhaps due to this tendency and is not identical with the Marāṭhī *ts*.

In many dialects a medial *r* is frequently elided, as in *kōi*, for *kari*, having done; *mōũ*, for *marũ*, I may die; *dūu*, for *dūr*, far; all of which are quoted from the Mawchī of Khandesh.<sup>1</sup>

These last two peculiarities,—the hardening of soft mutes, and the elision of medial *r*,—also occur in the languages of North-Western India (Sindhī, Lāhndā, and Piśācha), as well as in some dialects of Bengali (notably Rājbangśī), all of which belong to the Outer Band of Indo-Aryan Languages.

<sup>1</sup> See also pp. 69, 84, 105, 110, 119, and 159.

The inflexion of nouns is mainly the same as in Gujarāti. In the south we find some instances of the use of the Marāṭhī oblique form, not, however, as a regular feature. Khāndēśī has developed a separate oblique form of the plural ending in *ēs* or *s*. In Ahīrī we find a similar form ending in *ē*. An *s* is very often added to the base in many dialects; thus, *bā* and *bās*, a father. Similar forms are common in the Marāṭhī dialect of the Central and Northern Konkan.

Nouns.

Strong masculine bases form their plural in *ā* as in Gujarāti. In the dialects spoken in the southern part of Rewakantha, in Khāndēśī, and in the Bhīl dialects spoken between that district and the séa, however, we also find the Marāṭhī form ending in *ē*.

The case suffixes are the same as in Gujarāti. As in some Gujarāti dialects, the ablative suffix is usually inflected in the same way as the genitive suffix. In addition to the form *thō*, etc., it also occurs as *hō*, etc., compare Rājasthānī. The *n* of the suffix *nē* of the dative is often replaced by *l* especially in the south and west. It then also sometimes assumes the Marāṭhī form *lā*.

The suffixes of the genitive and the dative are usually *nō* and *nē*, respectively. There is also another pair of suffixes *hō* and *hē*, respectively. These suffixes are apparently confined to the west, from Sunth and southwards. We meet them again in the broken Marāṭhī dialects of the Northern Konkan.

The personal pronoun of the first person usually forms its nominative singular as in Gujarāti; thus, *hū*, I, with several slightly varying forms. We also find forms such as *mū* in the dialects which lead over to Mālvi, and in the south and west the Marāṭhī form *mī* gradually gains ascendancy.

Pronouns.

The present tense of the verb substantive is *chhū*, etc., in Gujarāti and Eastern Rājasthānī, and *hū*, etc., in Western Rājasthānī. The future tense is usually formed by adding an *s*-suffix in those dialects where 'I am' is *chhū*, and an *h*-suffix where the corresponding form is *hū*. Periphrastic future forms are used besides, an inflected *lō* being added in the east, and an indeclinable *lā* in the west. We also find a *gō*-suffix in Mālvi and some dialects of Mārwarī.

Verbs.

All these forms occur in the various Bhīl dialects. The *h*-form of the present tense of the verb substantive prevails in the dialects spoken in the Aravalli Hills, and neighbourhood, such as Mag'rī and Nyār; in the hilly tracts of the Mewar State, in Partabgarh, Ratlam, and Dhar. It is further the common form in the Bhīl dialects of Mahikantha, the Sunth State of Rewakantha; the Nōrī dialects of Ali Rajpur; the Māvchī dialect of Khandesh, and the various forms of Bhīli spoken in the Nausari Division of the Baroda State and neighbourhood, such as Rāñī, Chōdhri, Gāmṭī, Naik'dī. The Marāṭhī forms of the verb substantive begin to be used in the south, and are prevalent in most forms of Kōnkanī.

The future is formed by adding an *h*-suffix in most of these dialects. In the north, however, in Merwara, we find the Jaipurī future ending in *lō*, and in Ratlam, Partabgarh and Dhar we have the *gō*-future of Mālvi.

The *chh*-form of the verb substantive often replaces the initial *chh* with *s*. The *s*-form prevails in the Bhīl dialects of the Panch Mahals, Jhabua, Chhota Udaipur, and

Rajpipla, and the *chh*-form in the Lunawada and Baria States of Rewakantha; in Ali Rajpur, Barwani, and over the greater portion of Khandesh.

The future is formed by adding an *h*-suffix in the Panch Mahals, Jhabua, Chhota Udaipur, and Rajpipla. An *s*-suffix is adopted in Lunawada, Bharia, Khandesh, Ali Rajpur, and Bharwani, in the latter district the *gō*-suffix of Nimārī and Mālvī being used as well.

The present tense of finite verbs is commonly formed as in Gujarātī and Rājasthānī by adding the verb substantive to the old present. In the west and south there is, however, a tendency to substitute the present participle for the old present, first apparently in the plural, and then, afterwards, in the whole tense. Khāndēśī has remained in the intermediate stage, and has regularly forms such as *padas*, he falls; *pad<sup>o</sup>tas*, they fall. Further details will be found later on.

The past tense is usually formed as in Gujarātī. As in that language and in Eastern Hindī, a suffix *nō* or *ṇō* is used as well as the ordinary *yō*-suffix. *Lō* is often substituted for *nō*, just as *l* and *n* interchange in the suffix of the dative.

The *nc*-suffix is occasionally also used in the present tense. It is not certain whether it is identical with the *l*-suffix in Marāṭhī or not. It is also possible to think of a connexion of the *n*-suffix which forms relative participles in Telugu and other Dravidian languages. If *nō* is identical with Marāṭhī *lā*, its wide use in Bhilī must be accounted for by the use of the old *l*-suffix (Prakrit *illa*) at a period when it was still a pleonastic suffix without being limited to the past tense.

The future, the verbal noun, and the conjunctive participle, are formed as in Gujarātī. As we approach the Marāṭhī territory, however, the forms of that language begin to appear and gradually gain ascendancy.

The preceding remarks will have shown that the position assigned to the dialects in question is correct, and that they are in reality more closely related to Gujarātī and Rājasthānī than to any other Indo-Aryan vernacular. The same result may be derived from a comparison of the vocabulary. We are not, however, able to make any statement in this respect regarding Khāndēśī. As to the Bhil dialects, the Rev. Ch. Thompson has calculated that about 84 per cent. of the words found in the Bhil dialect of Mahikantha may be derived from Sanskrit and correspond to words used in Gujarātī. About 10 per cent. are of Persian descent, and the remaining six cannot as yet be traced.

We shall now proceed to consider the various dialects in detail, and first turn to the so-called Bhil dialects.

## BHĪLĪ OR BHILŌDĪ.

The Bhils are known under a bewildering variety of names. On account of their dark colour they are often called *Kālī paraj*, the black people. The only comprehensive name is, however, *Bhīl*, the Sanskrit *Bhilla*.<sup>1</sup> Ethnographically they are sometimes stated to be Dravidians, and sometimes to belong to the Muṇḍā stock. Accounts of the various tribes are found in the Census Reports and the District Gazetteers. In this place we have only to do with their language. Whatever their original speech may have been, there can be no doubt that, at the present day, they speak an Aryan dialect, closely related to Gujarātī and Rājasthānī.

Number of speakers.

Bhīlī has been reported from the following localities:—

	No. of speakers.
Mewar State . . . . .	101,500
Banswara and Kushalgarh . . . . .	136,700
Dungarpur . . . . .	67,000
Partabgarh . . . . .	26,000
Western Malwa Agency . . . . .	56,000
Bhopawar Agency . . . . .	440,500
Mahikantha . . . . .	10,200
The Dangs . . . . .	970
Nasik . . . . .	87,000
Ahmednagar . . . . .	1,000
Panch Mahals . . . . .	108,300
Rewakantha . . . . .	101,000
Khandesh . . . . .	55,000
Buldana . . . . .	575
Ellichpur . . . . .	252
Basim . . . . .	375
Nimar . . . . .	21,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,163,872</b>

To this total must be added the speakers of several minor dialects which have been honoured with separate names. The details will be found under the single dialects. The general facts are as follows:—

Name of dialect.	Where spoken.	No. of speakers.
Ahīrī . . . . .	Cutch . . . . .	30,500
Anārya (i.e. 'Non-Aryan') or Pahāḍī.	Rewakantha . . . . .	43,500
Bāōrī . . . . .	Punjab, Rajputana, and United Provinces .	43,000
Barīl . . . . .	Chhota Udaipur . . . . .	1,000
Chārapī . . . . .	Panch Mahals and Thana . . . . .	1,200
	Carried over .	119,200

<sup>1</sup> It is not impossible that *Bhilla* itself is really a Prakrit corruption of *Abhira*, which has been adopted again, in this form, by Sanskrit.

Name of dialect.	Where spoken.	No. of speakers.
	Brought forward	119,200
Chōdhari . . . . .	Surat and Nawsari . . . . .	121,258
Dēhāwali . . . . .	Khandesh . . . . .	45,000
Dhōḍiā . . . . .	Surat and Thana . . . . .	60,000
Ḍubli . . . . .	Thana and Jawhar . . . . .	14,050
Gāmṭi . . . . .	Surat and Nawsari . . . . .	48,715
Girāsia . . . . .	Marwar and Sirohi . . . . .	90,700
Hābūṛā . . . . .	United Provinces . . . . .	2,596
Kōṅkaṇi . . . . .	Nawsari, Surat, Surgana, Nasik, Khandesh.	232,613
Kōṭali . . . . .	Khandesh . . . . .	40,000
Magrā ki bōli . . . . .	Merwara . . . . .	44,500
Māwchi . . . . .	„ . . . . .	30,000
Nāhari or Bāglani . . . . .	Nasik and Surgana . . . . .	13,000
Nāikḍi . . . . .	Rewakantha, Panch Mahals, and Surat . . . . .	12,100
Panchāli . . . . .	Buldana . . . . .	560
Pārḍhi . . . . .	Berar and Chanda . . . . .	5,410
Pāwri . . . . .	Khandesh . . . . .	25,000
Ranāwat . . . . .	Nimar . . . . .	500
Rāni Bhil . . . . .	Nawsari . . . . .	87,540
Rāthvi . . . . .	Rewakantha . . . . .	8,000
Siyālgir . . . . .	Midnapore . . . . .	120
Wāgḍi . . . . .	Rajputana, Central India, and Bombay Presidency.	525,375
	TOTAL .	1,526,237

By adding these figures to those given above we arrive at the following grand total :—

Bhili . . . . .	1,163,872
Minor Dialects . . . . .	1,525,237
TOTAL .	<u>2,689,109</u>

The territory occupied by the Bhil tribes is a rather extensive one, and there are, as might be expected, differences of dialect in the different parts of the Bhil country. Towards the north and east the dialects of the Bhils gradually merge into the various forms of Rājasthānī. In the west and south the influence of Marāṭhī gradually increases. Thus the southern forms of Kōṅkaṇi are almost Marāṭhī and gradually merge into some broken dialects of

the Northern Konkan, such as Vār<sup>li</sup>, Phud<sup>gi</sup>, Sāmvedī, and Vād<sup>val</sup>, which have now become real Marāṭhī dialects, though their original base must have agreed with Bhilī. More towards the east the Bhil dialects gradually approach Khāndēśī, and at the Khandesh frontier, in Northern Nasik and in the Dangs, they are almost pure Khāndēśī.

The Bhil dialects, therefore, form a continuous chain, between Rājasthānī, through Gujarātī and Khāndēśī, and Marāṭhī. In most cases, however, the Marāṭhī influence is only of a quite superficial kind, and the general character of the dialect remains Gujarātī. In Nimar, the Bhilī seems to have been more strongly influenced by Marāṭhī than elsewhere, the specimens forwarded from that district being written in a corrupt Marāṭhī, see below, p. 174. From Berar only one set of specimens has been received. It had been prepared in Basim and was written in a form of Gōṇḍī. The specimen will be dealt with in connexion with that latter form of speech. The reported number of speakers from Berar has, however, been added in the figures given above. It seems probable that the Gōṇḍī-speaking Bhils simply employ the language of their neighbours.

Specimens will be given in the following pages of the various Bhil dialects. They will be arranged according to principles which it will be necessary to point out in this place.

The best known among all Bhil dialects is that of Mahikantha. It is the main basis of the Rev. Ch. Thompson's Bhil grammar. Mahikantha is also a convenient starting point if we desire to follow the various ramifications of the Bhil dialects, and the form of Bhilī spoken there has accordingly been dealt with as Standard Bhilī.

It is closely related to Gujarātī. The present tense of the verb substantive, however, does not begin with *chh*, but with an *h*-sound which seems to correspond to the *ch* in 'loch.' The same sound is also the characteristic of the future tense.

To the north-east of Mahikantha lie the hilly tracts of the Mewar State where Bhilī is the principal language. The dialect is almost the same as in Mahikantha. There are, however, traces of the influence of the neighbouring Mārwarī. Thus the periphrastic future ending in *-gō* begins to occur in Kotra.

The influence of Mārwarī increases as we proceed northwards along the Aravalli hills, where we find the so-called Girāsīā or Nyār. Still farther to the north, in the southern portion of the Merwara State, we find the dialect Mag<sup>rī</sup> which is almost pure Mārwarī.

If we return to Mahikantha we can trace another series of dialects forming a link with Mālvi. They are spoken to the east of Mahikantha, in Dungarpur, Banswara, Partabgarh, Ratlam, and Dhar. The present tense of the verb substantive begins with an *h*, and the future is usually formed periphrastically by adding *-gō*. In Ratlam we also find the *chh* form of the present tense of the verb substantive which is common in the dialects to the west of the State.

We again return to Mahikantha. The Bhilī of the Sunth State of Rewakantha is almost identical with the dialect spoken in Mahikantha. Proceeding towards the east we find, in the eastern portion of the Panch Mahals, a dialect of Bhilī which may be considered as the central link in a chain connecting Nimārī in the east with Standard Gujarātī in the west. The present tense of the verb substantive begins with *s* while the characteristic element of the future is an *h*. The same is the case with the dialects spoken in Jhabua, and with the Bhil dialects of Chhota Udaipur and Rajpipla of the Rewakantha Agency. The Bhilī of the two last-mentioned districts, however, has so

many points of analogy with the dialects spoken farther south and gradually approaching Marāṭhī that they will be dealt with in connexion with them.

The Bhil dialects of Ali Rajpur and Barwani, on the other hand, will be dealt with in connexion with those spoken in the Panch Mahals and Jhabua. The present tense of the verb substantive here begins with *chh* and the future is formed by adding an *s*-suffix. In Barwani the Bhil dialects gradually merge into Nimāri, and we occasionally also find the periphrastic future formed by adding a *gā*. From Ali Rajpur we shall proceed westwards through a series of dialects which gradually merge into Standard Gujarāṭī. The present tense of the verb substantive begins with *chh* and the future is formed by adding an *s*. These dialects are spoken in Baria, the western portion of the Panch Mahals, and in Lunawara. The dialect spoken in the Halol taluka of the Panch Mahals and in Lunawara is called Naik<sup>a</sup>ḍī. This dialect is also spoken in Surat where it has come under the influence of Marāṭhī. All the various forms of Naik<sup>a</sup>ḍī will therefore be dealt with later on.

The dialect of the Ahirs in Cutch, on the other hand, is closely related to Gujarāṭī, and will be dealt with in this connexion. It, however, also agrees with Marāṭhī in several points, and we shall therefore proceed from Ahiri to a series of dialects which runs down from Rewakantha and gradually approaches Marāṭhī and Khāndēśī

We shall begin these with the dialects spoken in Chhota Udaipur and Rajpipla of the Rewakantha Agency. They agree with the Bhilī of the eastern Panch Mahals in the formation of the present tense of the verb substantive and of the future. The former begins with *chh* and the suffix of the future is *h* or *ī*.

In those dialects we meet with a new feature.

The usual present tense in Gujarāṭī and Rājasthānī is formed by adding the verb substantive to the conjunctive present. Thus, Gujarāṭī *hū karū chhū*, I do. In Marāṭhī the same tense is formed from the present participle. Thus, *mī karitō*, I do. The forms used in Khāndēśī agree with Gujarāṭī in the singular and with Marāṭhī in the plural. Thus, *karas*, he does ; *kar<sup>a</sup>tas*, they do.

The northern Bhil dialects mainly agree with Gujarāṭī and Rājasthānī. In Chhota Udaipur, on the other hand, the Khāndēśī and Marāṭhī forms begin to appear. Thus, *chhū*, I am ; *chhē* and *chhatāh*, they are. Compare also forms such as *jāt<sup>a</sup>lu chhē*, thou goest.

Pāw<sup>a</sup>rī, a dialect spoken in the north of Khandesh, will be dealt with between the Bhilī of Chhota Udaipur and that spoken in Rajpipla. It is closely related to the Barēl dialect of Chhota Udaipur, and leads, on the other hand, over to Khāndēśī.

In Rajpipla we begin to find the Marāṭhī present of the verb substantive, *āhē*. That form is more closely related to *hē* than to *chhē*. *Hē*, is, and the *h*-suffix of the future tense prevail in the southern dialects of Naik<sup>a</sup>ḍī, and the various forms of that speech will therefore be dealt with after the Bhilī of Rajpipla.

The *h*-form of the present tense and the corresponding *h*-future also prevail in Māw<sup>a</sup>chī, spoken in the eastern part of Khandesh, and in the Nōri dialect of Ali Rajpur.

The same is the case with the various Bhil dialects spoken in the Nawsari Division of the Baroda State and neighbouring districts, such as Rāṇī, Chōdhri. Gāṃṭī, and Dhōḍiā. Rāṇī may be considered as the link connecting the southern forms of Bhilī with Pāw<sup>a</sup>rī and the dialects of Chhota Udaipur and Rajpipla. It shares the



ablative suffix *dēkh* with Pāw<sup>ri</sup>. Both dialects begin to use the Marāṭhī form of the plural of strong masculine bases, as is also the case in Rajpipla and Khandesh. The possessive pronouns are *mā*, my; *tā*, thy, as in Rajpipla, Māw<sup>chi</sup>, and other connected dialects. The plural, and sometimes also the singular, of the present tense is formed from the present participle, and so forth.

The other Bhil dialects of Nawsari have still more traces of the influence of Marāṭhī, and the various forms of the so-called Kōnkaṇī gradually merge into the broken Marāṭhī dialects of Thana.

In Nasik, Kōnkaṇī merges into several Bhil dialects which are almost identical with Khāndēsi.

Before proceeding to deal with that form of speech we shall have to consider some dialects which have been more or less influenced from various sources.

In the first place the Bhili of Nimar. That dialect has been largely influenced by the Marāṭhī of the Central Provinces, though it preserves sufficient traces of its different origin.

Then we shall have to deal with Bhil dialects spoken by some vagrant tribes, *viz.*, Bāori, Habūṛā, Pār<sup>dhi</sup>, and Siyālgiri.

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It should be borne in mind that the Bhils are not of Aryan origin, and that they have, accordingly, adopted a foreign tongue. We cannot under such circumstances expect the same consistency as in the case of the genuine Aryan vernaculars, and as a matter of fact we often meet with a state of affairs that reminds us of the mixed character of the language of other aboriginal tribes, which have, in the course of time, adopted the speech of their Aryan neighbours.

Non-Aryan element.

The Bhils have sometimes been considered as originally a Dravidian race, and sometimes as belonging to the Muṇḍā stock. We are not as yet in a position to settle the question.

The various Bhil dialects contain several words which do not appear to be of Aryan origin. Some of them seem to be Muṇḍā; thus, *tāhi*, a cow; *bōdō*, back. Compare Muṇḍārī *tāhi*, to milk a cow; Khariā *bōd*, back.

In other cases there is apparently a certain connexion between Bhili and Dravidian. Compare *talpā*, head; *tōlā*, a cow; *ākh<sup>lō</sup>*, a bull; with Tamil *talei*, head; Gōṇḍī *tāli*, a cow; Kanarese *ākalu*, a cow, and so forth.

It would not, however, be safe to base any conclusion on such stray instances of correspondence. We have not, as yet, sufficient insight into the relationship between the vocabularies of the Dravidian and Muṇḍā families. There can be no doubt that both have several words in common, especially in those districts where the two families meet. We are not, however, justified in concluding from such facts that these forms of speech are derived from the same base. It seems much more probable that they are both to some extent mixed languages, representing the dialects of the different races which have, in the course of time, invaded India. Each new race to some extent absorbed the old inhabitants, whose language left its mark in the grammar and vocabulary of the new invaders.

We must, therefore, leave the question about the origin of the non-Aryan element in Bhilī vocabulary open until further investigations have thrown more light upon the relationship of the different linguistic families of India.

There are, on the other hand, a few points in Bhilī grammar which apparently show some connexion with Dravidian forms of speech. They are not, however, numerous and quite insufficient to prove a closer connexion. The principal ones are as follows.

Soft aspirated letters are commonly hardened. Thus, *khōrō*, a horse; *phāi*, a brother. A similar hardening of unaspirated soft letters occurs in some Bhil dialects. See below. This state of affairs can perhaps be compared with the hardening of initial soft consonants in Dravidian. Compare, for example, Telugu *kāramu*, Sanskrit *gharma*, heat.

The neuter gender is sometimes used to denote female beings, just as is the case in Telugu, Gōṇḍī, etc. Thus, *bairū*, a wife; *bairā*, wives. The same is also the case in the Marāṭhī dialects of the coast where Dravidian influence is probable.

In this connexion we may also note the fact that the pronoun *hā*, this, has the same form for the feminine and neuter singular, just as is the case with the demonstrative pronouns in Telugu. The pronoun *du*, this, can further be compared with Tamil *a-du*, that, *i-du*, this, and similar forms in other Dravidian languages.

Finally, we may note the suffix *n* of the past tense. It is, of course, quite possible that this suffix is identical with the Aryan *l* in Marāṭhī and other languages. On the other hand, it can also be compared with the Dravidian suffix *n*. Compare Tamil *ōḍu-nēn*, I ran. The Dravidian *n*-suffix has, in other dialects, a very wide use, and this fact can perhaps be adduced in order to explain the occurrence of the *n*-suffix in Bhilī in other tenses than the past. The Aryan *l*-suffix is, however, also used outside the past tense and was originally a common derivative suffix.

It would not be safe to urge such points. They are not of sufficient importance to furnish a conclusive proof. We should, however, remember that the Bhils belong to Western India where we might reasonably expect to find remnants of the old Dravidian population, and such strong grammatical characteristics as have just been mentioned make the supposition the more plausible that the Bhils have once spoken a Dravidian dialect. It is even possible that their original language was a Muṇḍā form of speech, which was in its turn superseded by a Dravidian tongue.

# LINGUISTIC SURVEY OF INDIA

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