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CHAPTER 31

EUROPEAN TRADITIONS IN INDIA AND INDONESIA

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¹'Friendly reader and new missionary', thus Manoel da Assumpçam² addressed his readership in 1743, 'I take it that you have come to Bengal with an Apostolic spirit and Apostolic charity, and with the ambition to convert the whole world to the law of JESUS Christ'. For the purpose of bringing 'lost sheep to the bosom of the Church' it was of great importance — so the Augustinian impressed in Portuguese upon his reader — to learn the Bengali language, 'com fundamento'. It was for this reason that Assumpçam had written this work, in which he explained 'the rules of the grammar' and provided a 'vocabulary in two parts, the first from Bengali to Portuguese, the second from

¹ I would like to express my thanks to Tensing Rodriguez and Christophe Vielle for sharing documentation. Reuben J. Pitts translated a first Dutch version of this text into English. This research was made possible through a research project allocated by the KU Leuven Research Council.

² Assumpçam, *Vocabulario em idioma Bengalla e Portuguez*, sig. §5r, 'Amigo leitor, e Missionario novo; como supponho que vens a Bengalla com espirito, e caridade Apostolica, e com zello de converter todo o mundo á Ley de JESUS Christo; e de trazer ao gremio da Igreja as ovelhas desgarradas do seu rebanho; e que para este sim dezejas aprender o Idioma Bengalla, com fundamento; aqui te offereço esta obra, em que acharas as regras da Grammatica deste Idioma; e hum Vocabulario em duas partes; a primeira de lingua [sic] Bengalla, e Portugueza; e a segunda de lingoa Portugueza; e Bengalla; em que acharas, senão todos ao menos a mayor parte dos Vocabulos de que uzaõ os naturais.'

Portuguese to Bengali'. He assured his reader that he would find in his work 'all, or any rate the greater part, of the words used by the natives'.

It is precisely this combination of grammar and dictionary which makes Assumpçam's work representative of the missionary linguistic works which were so abundantly produced in the early modern period. However, it ceases to be representative when one considers that the large majority of missionary wordlists, particularly those from India, were never published. Compared to grammars and religious texts translated into the native language, the place of printed wordlists, which were typically more voluminous, among the printed books of the missionaries was always relatively modest. But in comparison to New Spain, where five wordlists were published in the 16th century alone (see Chapter 28), the balance for India is very meagre indeed.

This lack of printed sources makes it very hard to study the missionary lexicographical output in India. For the early modern missionary lexicography of New Spain, one of the greatest difficulties, according to Thomas Smith-Stark, is 'that of having a clear idea of what was actually produced since the bibliography on the subject tends to be incomplete, confusing and full of errors and inconsistencies'.³ Smith-Stark's observation also holds true of India (and even more so). For instance, a number of older studies refer to a printed lexicographical work on Sinhala from 1759, of which S. G. Perera never managed to locate a copy.⁴ Conversely, it is likely that there are a number of archives and libraries in which currently unknown manuscripts await discovery. Furthermore, the preservation of a mere title is not always sufficient basis to determine the language the work in question describes. The Indo-European language Konkani, for instance, was referred to by terms such as *concana*, *concanica*, *brâmana-goana*, *goana*, *canarim*, and

³ Smith-Stark, 'Lexicography in New Spain', 21.

⁴ Perera, 'Some ancient grammars and dictionaries', 327.

canarina.⁵ However, the designations *canarim* and *canarina* were sometimes also used to refer to Kannada, a Dravidian language. In manuscript catalogues this inevitably leads to confusion, and often the issue can only be resolved by an inspection of the manuscript itself. Only a minority of the preserved manuscripts contain a preface or another kind of front matter. The digitization of the relevant source material is as yet in its infancy, while most modern facsimiles are very hard to obtain.⁶ Moreover, only a very small fraction of these wordlists have so far been studied in depth, the most thorough study being Gregory James' analysis of the first printed Tamil lexicon.⁷

The relationship between the missionary lexicographers and the people whose languages they documented was never simple. Their work provides important early documentation of some languages: for instance, as we shall see, the earliest records of colloquial Telugu are by missionaries.⁸ On the other hand, although the European impact on other cultures, from which the activity of the missionaries cannot be separated, was less destructive in South Asia than in the Americas, it may have contributed to the disappearance of a number of languages in this area as well.⁹ Furthermore, European agents, both missionaries and merchants, were primarily interested in the large, widely used languages, such as Malay, although the author of the first printed Malay wordlist was aware that 'there are many additional indigenous languages'.¹⁰

⁵ Fonseca, 'Fontes manuscritas e impressas', 233.

⁶ *Galáxia das línguas na época da expansão*, 142.

⁷ James, 'Aspects of the structure.'

⁸ Colas, 'Cultural encounter', 78.

⁹ Collins, 'Language death in Maluku: The impact of the VOC.'

¹⁰ Houtman, *Spraeck ende Woord-Boeck inde Maleysche ende Madagaskarsche Talen*, sig. ·2v, 'noch vele eygene inlantsche spraken zijn'.

Contact with European languages affected Indian languages and Indian ideas about language, introducing loanwords, influencing systems of spelling, affecting standardization, and bringing new perspectives on language.¹¹ European perspectives on language and culture were, conversely, influenced by existing native traditions: it is too reductionist to study all missionary activities exclusively in terms of the imposition of European power on indigenous populations.¹² Contacts between divergent scholarly traditions may, as we shall see, create a fertile ground for the emergence of novel ('hybrid') knowledge.¹³

The first part of this chapter offers a broad overview of South Asian missionary lexicographical output: the known wordlists, the languages they cover, the lexicographers and the orders to which they belonged. The second part turns to the way in which the missionaries used the native lexicographical traditions. The third examines some of the choices made by the compilers of wordlists in terms of content and form. The last considers the fate of these early modern dictionaries. The lexicography of Persian, which was the official language in the Mughal empire (see Chapters 17 and 18), remains in the background in this chapter, since it was, together with the Semitic languages, regarded as one of the *linguae orientales*, which were studied at European universities from the beginning of the 17th century as part of Biblical scholarship.¹⁴

¹¹ For spelling, see Chevillard, 'Challenge of bi-directional translation', 115; Gnanapragasam, 'Contributions of Fr. Beschi to Tamil', 349; for standardization, see James, *Colporuḷ*, 114; for new perspectives, see Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 26–7.

¹² See, e.g., Fountain, 'Transculturation, assimilation, and appropriation.'

¹³ Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*, 1–3; Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World*, 5–6; Trautmann, *Madras School of Orientalism*.

¹⁴ By contrast, as the orientalist August Pfeiffer remarked (*Critica sacra*, 447), languages like Japanese, Vietnamese, Kikongo, and Malay were of no theological value other than their use in the mission field.

OVERVIEW

Before the period of early modern interaction between Europe and South Asia, there had been some European settlement on the coasts of South India, which had not led to the making of wordlists, and the region of Indonesia had been reached by merchants from both the Middle East and China, a result of which had been the creation of a 15th-century Malay wordlist in Chinese characters.¹⁵ However, the establishment of a permanent settlement in Cochi by the Portuguese in 1500 heralded the beginning of the interaction under discussion here. On the western coast of India, Goa in particular became a crucial centre for the Portuguese, who also infiltrated coastal areas of Ceylon. The Dutch established smaller trade posts, spread along the entire Indian coastline. In the middle of the 17th century they would gain power primarily in Ceylon and in Indonesia. Dutch setbacks in India would make room for the British, who had established trade posts on the Indian East Coast, for instance at Madras in 1639, and would eventually annex all of India. Some forty years later the French settled south of Madras, in Pondicherry. Further south still, in Tranquebar, the Danish built a fortress. So, the missions which were established in India were undertaken by various orders and backed by various states. Many missionaries, predominantly Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits, in succession, were active under the wings of the Portuguese *Padroado Real*. But in addition the so-called Carnatic mission, initiated in 1695 by the French king Louis XIV, played a significant role in Pondicherry and Chandernagore. The Protestants were not inactive either: in Ceylon the Catholic religion was forbidden by Dutch law from the middle of the 17th century. From the beginning of the 18th century onwards, the Danes in Tranquebar

¹⁵ For early Europeans in India, see Filiozat, 'Deux cents ans d'indianisme', 87–9 ; for Middle Eastern and Chinese contact with Indonesia, see Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World*, 55–6; for the Malay wordlist, see Echols, 'Presidential address: Dictionaries and dictionary making', 14.

accommodated the first Lutheran mission ever, coordinated from the pietistic orphanage of August Hermann Francke in Halle.¹⁶ The intercontinental movement of persons in the early modern period depended to a considerable extent on oceans, seas and rivers: for this reason the heart of the Russian empire was a less feasible target for evangelistic or scientific field work than the coastlines of Brazil, the Philippines, or India.¹⁷ As a result, by far the larger portion of missionary dictionaries from India documented languages spoken in the coastal regions. Nonetheless the Jesuit Roberto di Nobili did establish a mission from Cochi in Madurai, much further inland, ‘where, as rumour had it, the local kings lived in a manner similar to ancient Mediterranean pagan despots, where learned men possessed a language as precise as Latin and where priests jealously preserved hidden sacred texts’.¹⁸ The case of Nobili shows that the missionaries gradually became aware that their success depended not only on mastery of local vernaculars but also on knowledge of the native cultures and languages of learning.

For the period 1500–1800 we currently know of about 150 different early modern wordlists describing an Indian or Indonesian language.¹⁹ As the case of Assumpçam has already indicated, many of these wordlists were supplemented by a grammar or accompanying religious texts.²⁰ Only a fraction of these wordlists were published in printed form, and of those which remained in manuscript, around half are lost or unlocated. The extant manuscripts are for the most part in the keeping of Portuguese libraries (Lisbon, Braga, Evora, Coimbra), or in Rome, Paris, and London. In India, where Panaji (Goa) is the most important repository, it is likely that a number of interesting

¹⁶ Gross, Kumaradoss, and Liebau, *Halle and the Beginning of Protestant Christianity in India*.

¹⁷ See Naarden, ‘Witsen’s studies of Inner Eurasia.’

¹⁸ Županov, *Disputed Mission*, 3. See also Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 41.

¹⁹ For the project on which the following overview is based, see Van Hal, Peetermans, and Van Loon, ‘Towards a database of missionary linguistic sources.’

²⁰ Fonseca, ‘Historiographie linguistique portugaise’, 188.

archives, such as the Jesuit Archives of the Madurai Province, have yet to be made available.²¹ Some works which appear to have been lost may turn out to match one of the many anonymous works, which comprise fully one third of the corpus. The authorship of missionary grammars and lexicons is often hard to determine or ascertain, since many wordlists were not attributed to a certain author until later, and it is not always easy to judge how well-substantiated such attributions are.²² Furthermore, authorship is by definition a relative concept. Missionaries made eager use of the work of their predecessors, and as a rule conceived of their lexicographical labours as accumulative contributions to a higher, collective project, rather than as strictly delineated intellectual property.²³ Even so, in a number of cases it is known that conscious forms of plagiarism were involved: the conceited Calvinist pastor François Valentijn, for instance, ‘pirated’ the unpublished Malay dictionary of Georg Everhard Rumphius as part of ‘a most thorough plunder’ of the older man’s work.²⁴

Among the makers of non-anonymous wordlists the Jesuits emerge as the best represented order. The outstanding diligence of the Jesuits in learning languages and creating linguistic tools is often emphasised in the literature.²⁵ It must not be forgotten, however, that this order was in the first place a well-organised machine, which assured it of an inordinate degree of attention in modern historiography, while others remained underrepresented to the point of invisibility. In some recent publications, for instance,

²¹ For Panaji, see Fonseca, ‘Fontes manuscritas e impressas’; for difficulties of access, see Chevillard, ‘Challenge of bi-directional translation’, 114.

²² Fonseca, ‘Fontes manuscritas e impressas’, 91.

²³ Smith-Stark, ‘Lexicography in New Spain’, 30–1.

²⁴ For more or less wilful failure to acknowledge predecessors, see Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 308–9; for Valentijn and Rumphius, see Beekman, *Fugitive Dreams*, 62.

²⁵ Fonseca, *Historiografia linguística portuguesa e missionária*, 81; Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 213.

the voluminous intellectual activity of the Franciscans has been brought into the spotlight, although many of its products have been lost: we know of almost 15 wordlists of Indian languages made by the Franciscans and Capuchins, of which so far only a single Hindustani dictionary, that of François-Marie de Tours, has been located.²⁶ The order of the Carmelites was very important for South Indian lexicography as well. The lexicographical activity of the Lutherans, who were only active in Tranquebar, was also notable, as, from the second half of the 18th century onwards, was that of the British. In general, production increases exponentially over the centuries: a large majority of wordlists date from the 18th, and primarily the late 18th, century.

As in the Americas, early modern proto-colonists noticed that in Southern Asia a range of languages from different language families were spoken (principally Dravidian in the South, Indo-Aryan in the North and in Ceylon, Sino-Tibetan in Tibet, and Malayo-Polynesian in Indonesia). There were, however, three crucial differences. Firstly, the inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent shared a framework of religious belief and practice, and Sanskrit functioned as a common scholarly language. It took some time before the Europeans realized this, since the language of the Brahmans was referred to by different names depending on the location and recorded with different writing systems.²⁷ Secondly, in contrast to the Americas, literacy was well established in South Asia, although the intellectual culture could differ widely from place to place: in Bengal there was hardly a single book to be found, while in Tamil Nadu the poetic and literary tradition was of extreme importance.²⁸ The missionaries were not only confronted with unfamiliar writing systems and unfamiliar kinds of manuscript (notably palm leaves or *olai*), but also with unfamiliar traditions of lexicography (for these, see Chapters 4 and

²⁶ Fonseca, *Historiografia linguística portuguesa e missionária*, 97–8.

²⁷ Van Hal, 'Protestant pioneers in Sanskrit studies', 120–1.

²⁸ Khan, 'Early history of Bengali printing', 53; Chevillard, 'Challenge of bi-directional translation', 124.

7).²⁹ Thirdly, the presence in India of the followers of the Apostle Thomas, whom tradition alleged to have journeyed to India, meant that Christianity was well represented in South-West India even before the arrival of Europeans. This meant that Syriac, the liturgical language of these Christians, was yet another language for the missionaries to consider.

Which of the native languages in India — sometimes characterised by the missionaries as ‘Indian’, but also frequently as ‘exotic’ or ‘barbarian’, a term which, incidentally, did not always imply disparagement — became the most frequent object of lexicographical activity?³⁰ Tamil emerges as the best represented language in India, with more than a third of all preserved sources. Thanks to the work of Gregory James in particular, the early modern lexicography of Tamil has already been extensively documented.³¹ Although Tamil is spoken on the east coast of India and the first Portuguese fortresses were, as we have seen, established on the west coast, St Francis Xavier achieved a great missionary success when a group of Tamil-speaking Parava fishermen decided to make an appeal for Portuguese support after conflicts with local Muslim groups.³² Not all Tamil wordlists documented the same form of the language: like other languages in the region, such as Malayalam and Malay, this language not only displayed diatopical, but also diastratic differences. ‘The Tamil language’, as Costanzo Beschi would put it in the preface to his dictionary of Common Tamil in the 18th century,

²⁹ For the encounter of missionaries with palm-leaf manuscripts, see Colas, ‘Cultural encounter’, 73–4.

³⁰ For the characterizations of Indian languages, see Fonseca, *Historiografia lingüística portuguesa e missionária*, 80–1; Muru, ‘Shaping minds and cultures’, 207.

³¹ See especially James, *Colporuḷ*.

³² Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 31–2.

has a double dialect; the one is called *koduntamil* (common Tamil), the other *sentamil* (higher Tamil). They differ among themselves as much as Latin is different from, say Portuguese. Now although there are many common words in Latin and Portuguese, not on that account has anyone so far dreamt of giving in one vocabulary the words of these languages mixed up.³³

Apart from this well-known diglossic distinction, there were further differences dependent on caste and textual genre.³⁴ Early missionary studies of Tamil are lost; in 1679, the first extant dictionary of the language for missionary use, that of Antão de Proença, was published. Beschi (for whom see further below) created a number of dictionaries, widely circulated in manuscript form, of both high and spoken Tamil, in French, Latin and Portuguese. Of the non-Jesuit Tamil experts, the most prominent was Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, the first Lutheran missionary in Tranquebar.³⁵

Beside Tamil, the Indo-European Sinhalese was spoken on the heavily contested Ceylon (Sri Lanka). The main aim of the lexicographical production of the Calvinists in Ceylon seems to have been to provide a counter-offensive against its Catholic and Portuguese predecessors.³⁶ A letter of 1697 directed to the 'lords seventeen' of the VOC emphasised that Simon Cat had proven truly indispensable to Protestant missionary activity in Ceylon.³⁷ Cat's wordlist, recently published for the first time, may be the only extant Sinhalese wordlist of the Dutch period.³⁸ Some Portuguese cherished dreams of a Sri Lankan *reconquista*, and a small order — the so-called Congregation of the Oratory of the

³³ Quoted after Gnanapragasam, *Contributions of Fr. Beschi to Tamil*, 348.

³⁴ Muru, 'Shaping minds and cultures', 206.

³⁵ Gnanapragasam, *Contributions of Fr. Beschi to Tamil*, 383–7.

³⁶ Palm, 'Account of the Dutch Church in Ceylon', 33–4.

³⁷ Peiris, 'Sinhalese Christian Literature', 20.

³⁸ Paranavitana, *Dutch Sinhala Dictionary*, 22–23.

Cross of Miracles, consisting of Brahmans who had converted to Catholicism — matched their words with deeds. These missionaries managed to keep their activities out of sight of the Dutch, because their ‘color, language, customs and temperament are similar to those of the people they deal with’.³⁹ The only preserved wordlist of this order appears to be Jacome Gonçalves’s *Vocabulario lusitano tamulico e chingalatico*. The majority of these authors had been raised in Goa, where Konkani was spoken. Many wordlists of this language were composed, of which only a minority have been preserved.⁴⁰ The number of extant Malayalam wordlists is higher, one of their leading compilers being Johann Ernst Hanxleden, who is still recalled in today’s Kerala as *Arnos Padiri* (‘Father Ernest’). None of his numerous dictionaries describing both common and Sanskritized Malayalam were published in the early modern period.⁴¹ A smaller number of Telugu wordlists, mainly the work of anonymous Jesuits, survive, now concentrated in Paris; they are the first records of colloquial Telugu, which had not been of interest to lexicographers in the learned native tradition.⁴² Wordlists of both Hindustani and Bengali were primarily made by the British from the second half of the 18th century onwards (see Chapter 18), although there were some notable precedents in Portuguese and Latin, among them the Bengali dictionary of Manoel da Assumpçam. None of the 18th-century missionary wordlists of Nepali, Tibetan, and Burmese seem to have been preserved.

In Indonesia, Malay was the most important *lingua franca*.⁴³ In comparison to the languages spoken in India, a veritable flood of printed wordlists for Malay is available to us, with a remarkable peak in the 18th century.⁴⁴ The driving force behind this

³⁹ Županov, ‘Goan Brahmans in the Land of Promise’, 178.

⁴⁰ Rivara, *Historical Essay on the Konkani Language*.

⁴¹ See Vielle, ‘Devotional Christianity and pre-Indology’; Vielle, ‘New manuscript’.

⁴² Colas and Colas-Chauhan, *Manuscripts telugu*; Colas, ‘Cultural encounter’, 75, 78.

⁴³ Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World*, 56.

⁴⁴ Echols, ‘Presidential address: Dictionaries and dictionary making’, 15.

production were the Dutch: the first printed Dutch–Malay dictionary (1603) came from the pen of Frederik de Houtman, who was not active as a missionary, but had learnt the language during a period of imprisonment. A bidirectional wordlist by Caspar Wiltens, which made its way to a Dutch printing press in 1623, was the basis for a large number of strongly augmented and improved editions throughout the 17th century. A Latin translation by David Haex appeared in 1631 from the presses, remarkably enough, of the recently founded Catholic *congregatio de propaganda fide* — a papal initiative that would often clash with the Portuguese *Padroado real*. At the beginning of the next century, Andries Lambert Loderus published a compilation of most of the wordlists mentioned previously (*Maleische Woord-Boek Sameling*, 1707–1708), in doing which he provided a striking illustration of just how efficient the circulation of lexicographical knowledge of Malay was. Meanwhile, in 1701, Thomas Bowrey had published the first bidirectional wordlist of English and Malay.⁴⁵ To this highly selective list should be added texts in which the listing of words was incidental to another purpose, such as encyclopaedically oriented works in which fauna and flora are catalogued, sometimes mentioning indigenous names, such as Hendrik van Rheedee’s botanical *Hortus Malabaricus* of 1678.⁴⁶

Although the Portuguese *Padroado real* was eventually forced to make way for other European powers, Portuguese retained, in comparison to other European languages, a crucial role in India. In various Asiatic trade posts, both Portuguese and Portuguese-based creoles were spoken, and most missionaries — whatever their original nationality — spoke the language very well.⁴⁷ From this perspective it is not surprising that Portuguese was the most prominent European language in the lexicographical output of

⁴⁵ Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World*, 63–5.

⁴⁶ See also the discussion of Rumphius in Leuker, ‘Knowledge Transfer and Cultural Appropriation.’

⁴⁷ Schouten, ‘Malay and Portuguese as contact languages’, 351–3; Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 210–11.

India until the English rule.⁴⁸ French missionaries usually used their own mother language. For Malay, and to a lesser extent Sinhalese, the metalanguage tended to be Dutch.

THE MISSIONARY TREATMENT OF INDIGENOUS LEXICOGRAPHICAL TRADITIONS

Most of the dictionaries referenced above are European in structure: semasiological, alphabetically ordered, interlingual. Their makers were introducing an entirely new tradition to India, contrasting with works such as the ancient onomasiologically oriented metrical dictionary of Sanskrit called *Amarakośa*, which enjoyed immense authority, and the dictionaries of Tamil written for the use of poets (for all of which see Chapter 7). Sanskrit–Tamil dictionaries did not exist, a consequence of the fact that no tradition of translation existed — only a tendency to assimilate.⁴⁹ *Amarokośa* was regarded with a degree of scorn by certain English scholars in the 19th century.⁵⁰ However, there were early missionaries who acquainted themselves with these native lexicographical traditions and treated them with respect.

This leads us to the topic of the controversies about Jesuit methods of accommodation. Throughout the early modern period, missionaries made energetic and often independent attempts to achieve a good knowledge of the ‘holy language’ of the Brahmans, as they were convinced that it was only through the conversion of the highest classes that it would be possible to convert the lower castes. There are various early modern testimonies that the Brahmans wished to keep this language from outsiders at all costs, although there may well have been differences depending on the period and the

⁴⁸ Fonseca, *Historiografia linguística portuguesa e missionária*; Assunção, ‘Portuguese missionary work’; Zwartjes, *Portuguese Missionary Grammars*, 271–302.

⁴⁹ Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 28.

⁵⁰ James, *Colporu*, 57–8.

location.⁵¹ Nobili's exposure to the Vedic hymns in Madurai strengthened his conviction that the divine monotheistic doctrine had already been revealed to the native Tamil population in the distant past. He believed that the best strategy to convert the Tamil population to the true faith was to straighten out their current, distorted faith from the inside. This required the missionary to achieve a deep intimacy with the native culture: Nobili did not only familiarise himself with the native texts — there are indications that he was familiar with the native lexicographical tradition — but also adopted the local mode of dress and became a vegetarian.⁵² The Jesuits did not only adopt strategies of this nature in India, but also in Japan and China. For many non-Jesuits these forms of accommodation went much too far, leading to a heated discussion on the desirability of accommodation strategies. The discussion related to India, which has until now been less well studied than its Chinese and Japanese counterparts, would go into history as the Malabar rites controversy.⁵³

An important later representative of the accommodation tendency was the Italian Jesuit Costanzo Beschi (for whom see also Chapter 7), who, as has just been mentioned, produced no fewer than four separate interlingual Tamil dictionaries, of which many manuscripts circulated in India. He completed his first dictionary in 1732, after about twenty years of work in the Madurai mission, a monolingual *Thesaurus linguae Tamulicae ad plenioram planioramque scriptorum Tamulensium intelligentiam ... quatuor in partes* ('Thesaurus of the Tamil language for a fuller explanation and understanding of the writings of the Tamils, arranged in four parts'), or — with a scholarly native appellation — *Caturakarāti* ('four-part dictionary').⁵⁴ Through his work Beschi aimed to

⁵¹ Van Hal, 'Protestant pioneers in Sanskrit studies', 112–13; Filliozat, 'Deux cents ans d'indianisme', 100. See also Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 224.

⁵² For Nobili and the native lexicographical tradition, see Županov, 'Aristocratic analogies', 128–9.

⁵³ Županov, *Disputed Mission*, 3–5; Aranha, 'Vulgaris seu universalis', 333.

⁵⁴ James, *Colporu*, 111; see also Gnanapragasam, *Contributions of Fr. Beschi to Tamil*, 347–58.

improve the traditional *nikaṇṭu* dictionaries from the inside and to optimise them for a literary public. He did this by honouring the quadruple *nikaṇṭu* structure while implementing European principles such as full alphabetisation and the use of prose within this structure, and also by increasing the portion of ordinary vocabulary considerably; his work has rightly been called ‘monolingual but bicultural’.⁵⁵ Beschi’s influence on the Tamil intellectual landscape was lasting, particularly after the 18th century.

Beschi’s direct pietistic competitor, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, had two native dictionaries in his personal collection, the *Tivākaram* and the *Cūṭāmaṇi nikaṇṭu*. Thanks to his catalogue, accompanied by a commentary, which is unfortunately all that remains of Ziegenbalg’s extensive personal collection, we know that he wrongly assumed *Tivākaram* was written in prose. ‘This book’, he added, ‘is studied only by those who wish to become scholars, or who interact with scholars and wish to understand their language. The common Malabarians understand not a word of it, or at least very little’.⁵⁶ Ziegenbalg made good use of the *copia verborum* of these works in the composition of his own dictionary of literary Tamil and in his researches into the Hindu pantheon.⁵⁷ An 18th-century catalogue of the mission library at Tranquebar lists copies both of the *Amarakośa* and of the Tamil dictionary *Akarāti nikaṇṭu*.⁵⁸ A manuscript in the Vatican library bears the title *Vocabularium sanscreticum, seu linguae brachmanum dictum Namalingam*

⁵⁵ Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 59–60 (quotation at 60); James, *Colporuḷ*, 111–14.

⁵⁶ Ziegenbalg, *Bibliotheca Malabarica*, 50, ‘Dieses Buch lernen allein diejenigen, so da wollen Gelehrten werden, oder doch solche Leute seyn, die mit Gelehrten umgehen und ihre gelehrte Sprache verstehen wollen. Die gemeinen Malabaren verstehen kein Wort aus selbigen oder doch ganz wenig’.

⁵⁷ W. Sweetman in Ziegenbalg, *Bibliotheca Malabarica*, 11, 51; his interest in the Hindu pantheon resulted in a celebrated work: Ziegenbalg, *Genealogie*.

⁵⁸ W. Sweetman in Ziegenbalg, *Bibliotheca Malabarica*, 12–13 (and, for the catalogue, 25–6).

noesjasjanam ('Dictionary of Sanskrit or of the language of the Brahmans, entitled *Namalingam noesjasjanam*'), repeated at the end of the work, with the following clarification in Latin: '*Sjasjanam* means book, *Nama* is name, *Lingam* kind. For in this work the words are distinguished by class'. The work is anonymous, but since it belonged to the Dutchman Hadrianus Relandus it is reasonable to assume that he acquired it via his VOC connections. Both the anonymous redactor and Relandus are clearly impressed by the more than forty synonyms for 'sun' and more than twenty for 'moon'.⁵⁹

The Jesuits' interest in the native tradition was palpable as early as the 17th century. The Jesuit Heinrich Roth, stationed in North India, had the intention of composing a Sanskrit–Latin dictionary based on *Veñīdattas Pañcattattvaprakāśa*. The plan did not materialise, although his preparatory work was preserved and has now been published as a facsimile.⁶⁰ Roth was also the author of the oldest preserved western Sanskrit grammar, which contained many native elements too. His later Jesuit colleague Jean-Francois Pons mentioned that there were 'eighteen traditional dictionaries, composed with divergent methods'.⁶¹ Pons himself translated the *Amarakośa* into Latin — a work which he compared to the onomasiological *Indiculus universalis* by his countryman and confrere François-Antoine Pomey.⁶² Independently of Roth and Pons, their fellow Jesuit Ernst Hanxleden had made a transcript of the *Amarakośa*, which would later come into the

⁵⁹ Vatican City: Bibliotheca Apostolica, Ms. Vat. Ind. 8. '*Sjasjanam* est liber, *Nama* est nomen, *Lingam* genus. Nam in hoc libro distinguuntur singulae voces per genera sua' (f. 140); for the names of the sun, see f. 56-57, and for the moon, see ff. 50-51.

⁶⁰ The edition is *Sanskrit Grammar and Manuscripts of Father Heinrich Roth* (1988).

⁶¹ *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, 8. 40, 'Ils en ont dix-huit, faits sur différentes méthodes.'

⁶² For the translation, see Filliozat, 'Deux cents ans d'indianisme', 86; for Pomey's dictionary, see Chapter 14 and Yeo, *Encyclopaedic Visions*, 19–20; Pons wrote, in *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, 8. 40, 'Celui ... composé par Amarasimha, est rangé à peu près selon la méthode qu'a suivie l'auteur de *l'Indiculus Universalis*'.

possession of Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo, the 18th-century Carmelite who began an indological career in Rome after his own return from India. Based on this copy and two other transcripts, Paulinus published the first part of the *Amarakośa*, which treated of the words for heaven, in 1798. Paulinus did not fail to lay strong emphasis on the fundamental importance of the native Sanskrit tradition, next to its many inherent complexities.⁶³ However, he remained a voice in the wilderness: by his use of the grantha script, customary in the south, and by his blunt insults towards his English colleagues this pioneering work was disregarded, with the result that even a number of valuable textual variants and unknown verses were only recently noticed by Claus Vogel.⁶⁴

CHOICES OF CONTENT AND FORM IN THE COMPOSITION OF WORDLISTS

Lexicographers had the option to create word-oriented wordlists, with brief entries in the spirit of Nebrija, or extensive, encyclopaedic, world-oriented entries.⁶⁵ From the wordlists examined it is clear that the larger part by far limit themselves to presenting simple equivalents for each headword. Grammatical or encyclopaedic information tends to be entirely absent. It is striking that the proportion of nominals in a number of non-missionary wordlists is much greater than that of verbs. An example is the Sinhalese–English wordlist which was found in the legacy of the English captain Robert Knox, who had spent years imprisoned in Ceylon.⁶⁶ It seems that only a minority of dictionaries contain entries which pay attention to collocations or phraseological expressions. Ribeiro’s Konkani dictionary turns out to be extremely well-furnished in this regard, offering a large number of euphemistic expressions referring to death, such as *tachem ghoddvattem bhorlem* (‘his clock went full circle’), and other proverbs, such as *hantullnna*

⁶³ Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo, *Amarasinha*, v–xii.

⁶⁴ Vogel, *Anfänge des westlichen Studiums*.

⁶⁵ Smith-Stark, ‘Lexicography in New Spain’, 11–16.

⁶⁶ Ferguson, ‘Robert Knox’s Sinhalese vocabulary.’

sorso pao posruncho ('one should stretch the legs according to the bed', in other words 'one has to live within one's means').⁶⁷ The bidirectional Malay wordlist of Caspar Wiltens presents a separate list of 'manners of talking' at the end, containing expressions such as *matti de baccar* 'to be burnt alive'.⁶⁸ The Malayalam lexicon of Hanxleden also sometimes includes phrasemes as lemmas.⁶⁹ Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo distinguishes himself by the isolated publication of a hundred frequent sayings in Malayalam, which, he says, were used by pagans and Christians alike, so that even children uttered them all the time.⁷⁰

All the same, a number of extant wordlists do have a more encyclopaedic outlook. In this regard Gregory James has uncovered a fascinating dynamic in the publication of de Proença's Tamil dictionary in 1679. In the printed version one finds, under the lemma *Pañcākṣaram*, a technical term for a pentasyllabic mantra, the somewhat obscure Portuguese interpretation 'Five letters positioned in a particular pattern, which represent the human body, on which is based the whole science of the yogis'.⁷¹ Manuscript M-34 of the State Central Library in Panaji (Goa), however, contains a much more extensive entry, which was even furnished with a diagram, the first illustration in the history of

⁶⁷ Rodrigues, 'Glimpses of the Konkani language ... proverbs and idioms'.

⁶⁸ Wiltens, *Vocabularium*, sigs. R1r–R4r, 'Manieren van spreekken'; sig. R3v, '*matti de baccar*. levendich gebrant werden'.

⁶⁹ Guptan Nair, 'Introduction', 45.

⁷⁰ Paulinus, *Centum adagia malabarica*, 2, 'Adagia quae heic afferuntur in Malabarica inter gentiles et Christianos S. Thomae nuncupatos obtinent, eaque adeo omnibus sunt familiaria, ut etiam pueri ea semper in ore habeant'.

⁷¹ Proença, *Vocabulario Tamulico* (1966), fo. 102r, 'Sinco letras postas em certa figura, que arremeda[m] a o corpo humano, em que se fu[n]da toda a sie[n]cia dos jogues'.

Tamil lexicography.⁷² Ecclesiastical censorship would probably have prevented the appearance of such material in print.

In recent research, much attention has been given to the way missionaries rendered typically Christian concepts, such as trinity, baptism, and heaven, in the local languages. As Cristina Muru has noted, most of them ‘made an effort to find a form in the receptor language ... which could have had a similar referent in the source language, but with a different culturally oriented significance between the two’.⁷³ She provides the example of the concept ‘hell’, which, in the corpus of Tamil dictionaries and religious texts examined by her, is invariably represented by *naraka*, a Sanskrit word which refers to the ‘waiting room of the dead’: by no means the same thing. The missionaries appear to have trusted that the native population would eventually internalise the Christian meaning. A comparative approach might provide some further interesting insights. It is remarkable, for instance, that the same Sanskrit word *naraka* was chosen as the equivalent for *hell* in Hanxleden’s Malayalam wordlist (besides the alternative *durgati*, ‘misfortune’), Simon Cat’s Sinhala wordlist, and Assumpçam’s Bengali wordlist. Was the choice of this Sanskrit word from Bengal all the way down to Sri Lanka so self-evident, or could there have been mutual influence between the wordlist traditions of the various languages?

Taboo words or sexually suggestive words presented missionaries with a paradox. The indecent words that were included — apparently because the lexicographer decided that missionaries needed to be aware of their existence — were sometimes provided with a Latin translation, which seemed to suggest a greater distance than Portuguese.⁷⁴ In his Malayalam–Portuguese dictionary, Hanxleden translates the word *cuṇṇi* ‘penis’,

⁷² James, ‘Manuscript and printed versions’, 3–5; the diagram is also reproduced in James, *Colporuḷ*, 98.

⁷³ Muru, ‘Shaping minds and cultures’, 215.

⁷⁴ James, *Colporuḷ*, 97.

presumably cognate with the word *cuṇṇa* ‘elephant trunk’, which was not taken up in the dictionary, in what might be called semi-Latin, as ‘*membro viril turpiter*’ (‘male member, vulgar’). The previous lemma *cuṇṇān(pu)* may refer either to *chunam*, a kind of lime that is chewed with betel, or to coitus. The first signification is given in Portuguese, the second in Latin.⁷⁵ *Membro viril* occurs again as an entry in Hanxleden’s Portuguese–Malayalam dictionary, where it is followed by some seven possible Malayalam translations. Gregory James has shown how the ingenious de Proença solved the problem of certain taboo words by representing the headword partly in the Tamil alphabet and partly in the Latin alphabet, ‘presumably so as not to cause offence to any literate Tamil speakers who might see the page and/or to forestall any accusations of impropriety on the part of the missionaries’.⁷⁶ Jean-Luc Chevillard has demonstrated that Latin paraphrases such as ‘*membrum muliebre*’ (‘female genitalia’) in de Proença’s dictionary were often very general: the same paraphrase sometimes refers to breasts, sometimes to the genitalia, and sometimes to an embryo.⁷⁷

Let us now turn our attention to a number of more formal aspects of the missionary dictionary. In the creation of a wordlist of an Indian language with its own writing culture missionaries had various options: they could either adopt the Indian signs, or transliterate into the Roman alphabet, or both. An example of the last strategy is found in an anonymous Portuguese–Hindustani dictionary formerly in the collection of William Marsden: the Portuguese headword *Principal* is followed in the second column by the Hindi equivalent in roman characters (*Aval*), while the third column — clearly in a different hand — offers the *devanagari* form.⁷⁸ In the reverse order two 17th-century Malay–Dutch wordlists in the Vatican library first offer the Malay headword in Arabic

⁷⁵ Hanxleden, ‘Vocabolario malabarico lusitano’, fo. 63v, ‘copula viri cum faemina’.

⁷⁶ James, ‘Aspects of the structure’, 286–7.

⁷⁷ Chevillard, ‘Challenge of bi-directional translation’, 123.

⁷⁸ London: School of Oriental and African Studies, MS 11953.

script, followed by a transliteration into roman characters and finally a Dutch translation.⁷⁹ Wordlists entirely in roman characters called for less specialized resources in the printing-house, and were accessible to a wider European readership. By far the greater part of the wordlists were ordered by the alphabet used in Europe, including the head words represented in a native script: indeed, according to the online catalogue entry for an anonymous Malayalam–Portuguese wordlist at Harvard University, the Portuguese ordering of the Malayalam headwords is explicitly mentioned on the title page.⁸⁰ This was not an inevitable decision, given that the native Indian grammatical tradition adhered to its own, strictly phonetic ordering. In his Tamil dictionary, de Proença explicitly indicated that he would not honour this ordering, due to ‘the confusion and variety of letters, so outlandish and contrary to our pronunciation’: as this shows, the Indian languages were experienced differently from languages such as Hebrew and Arabic, for which the traditional order was always respected in wordlists.⁸¹

The importance of the lay-out of a dictionary should by no means be underestimated: Pierre Delsaerdt speaks in this regard of an efficient ‘machine à lire’.⁸² In the dictionary of Frederik de Houtman, the Dutch is printed in black-letter, the Malay in roman, and the Malagasy in italics. The three languages are clearly separated from each other in columns divided by rules. Much less structured is the later Kurdish dictionary by Maurizio Garzoni. For instance, the lemma *Vittoria* (‘victory’) reads as follows: ‘Vittoria, Ber, *vedi il verbo Vincere*’. The Italian and Kurdish are separated only by full stops and commas, and both languages are printed in roman type, with editorial text in italics. In some

⁷⁹ Vatican City: Bibliotheca Apostolica, Ms. Vat. Ind. 6 and Ms. Vat. Ind. 7.

⁸⁰ Cambridge, MA: Houghton Library of Harvard University, MS Port 12, ‘Ordem das letras conforme ao estilo portugues’.

⁸¹ Proença, *Vocabulario Tamulico* (1966), fo. [vi]v, ‘o embaraço, e uariedade de letras tam co[n]trarias, e barbaras a nossa pronuçia’; translation by James, ‘Aspects of the structure’, 276.

⁸² Delsaerdt, ‘Kennismachines van Cornelis Kiliaan’.

manuscripts in which more than two languages are presented, the columns are spread over facing pages, as in a Portuguese–High Malayalam–Latin dictionary by the extremely prolific Carmelite Stephanus a S.S. Petro et Paulo.⁸³

We have very little information about the making of these missionary wordlists beyond what can be inferred from the internal evidence of the finished texts.⁸⁴ Beschi was exceptional in that in some of his prefaces, he disclosed some details of how he proceeded.⁸⁵ As we have seen, however, the missionary wordlists usually lack prefaces. Further study of the correspondence of the missionaries may shed light on the question. So may comparison of wordlists (and grammars) and the translations of key religious texts, such as catechisms, which were made before them and were presumably a basis for them.⁸⁶ In terms of material organization and alphabetisation, we know that Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg had been working on *olai* before his death, which were copied onto paper thereafter.⁸⁷ One aspect of the procedure of the missionary lexicographers is certain: there can be no doubt that they were strongly dependent on local informants, despite the fact that this cooperation was rarely brought to the attention of the reader.⁸⁸ Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo himself mentions how the native scholar Francisco Teixeira helped him to get his hands on a copy of the *Amarakośa* in 1778 (we find the same name in a manuscript of the *Amarakośa* in the Vatican library in which the year

⁸³ Vatican City: Bibliotheca Apostolica, Ms. Vat. Ind. 16.

⁸⁴ James, *Colporuḷ*, 126; cf. Smith-Stark, 'Lexicography in New Spain', 27–33.

⁸⁵ Gnanapragasam, *Contributions of Fr. Beschi to Tamil*, 350.

⁸⁶ Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 293; Smith-Stark, 'Lexicography in New Spain', 32.

⁸⁷ Gnanapragasam, *Contributions of Fr. Beschi to Tamil*, 383.

⁸⁸ Smith-Stark, 'Lexicography in New Spain', 31–32; Liebau, *die Indischen Mitarbeiter der Tranquebarmission*, 194; Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, xxxi, 287.

1765 is mentioned).⁸⁹ These invisible, subaltern voices did have an important impact on the contents and structure of dictionaries; the native scholars whose aid was solicited must not be dismissed as merely mechanical and passive ‘helplines’.⁹⁰

‘KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT’ AND THE FATE OF WORDLISTS

In 1556, Portuguese Jesuits founded a printing press in Goa, which could only print Roman letters. For the development of Tamil types they had to wait until the 1570s, which meant that the pioneering missionary grammarian Henrique Henriques could not immediately publish his work.⁹¹ As far as we know, the Portuguese printed no more than eight publications in Tamil, during two brief periods: from 1577 to 1586 they printed mainly in Cochin from types cast in India, and from 1677 to 1680 in Ambalacatta with types imported from Rome.⁹² Although only 19 books were printed in India in the 16th century, and only twice that number in the 17th century, in the 18th century production increased exponentially, with more than 1700 new books. In 1712, on the initiative of Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, a printing press was installed in Tranquebar. As a result of this, printing activity moved to the East Coast (the Danish Tranquebar, the English Madras, the French Pondicherry and the Dutch Colombo).⁹³ Since the Jesuits in India did not have access to a printing press in the 18th century, Beschi witnessed the appearance in print of only a single one of his numerous linguistic works in his lifetime, and that was from the press at Tranquebar, property of the Lutherans, with whom he was constantly

⁸⁹ Vogel, *Anfänge des westlichen Studiums*, 15–16; Vatican City: Bibliotheca Apostolica, MS Borg. Ind. 19.

⁹⁰ Županov, ‘Prosélytisme et pluralisme religieux’, 42; Liebau, *Cultural Encounters in India*, 6.

⁹¹ Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 33–4.

⁹² Shaw, ‘Copenhagen copy of Henriques’ *Flos Sanctorum*’, 39–40.

⁹³ Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 43–44.

on the warpath.⁹⁴ When he noticed that his Tamil grammar had been furnished with a ‘pedantic’ appendix by Christoph Theodosius Walther, he refused to allow his *caturakarāti* to be printed in Tranquebar as well.⁹⁵ Of the 368 works which made their way to the printing presses of Calcutta between 1778 and 1800 seven were lexicographical (three Persian, two Bengali, and two Hindustani), and eleven grammatical (most of the printed works were almanacs and government publications).⁹⁶ The fact that printed lexicographical publications would boom in the 19th century may easily be inferred from systematic biographies like that by J. T. Zenker.⁹⁷

Some historians have suggested that many missionary grammars and dictionaries failed to reach the press because the missionaries themselves regarded their works as unfinished products, or as continually in progress and thus intrinsically incomplete.⁹⁸ But some lexicographers did explicitly request the publication of the dictionaries they had made. In 1703 the French Capuchin François-Marie de Tours even undertook a mission to Rome, one of the goals of which was to ensure the publication of his Hindustani grammar and dictionary by the *congregatio de propaganda fide*.⁹⁹ His attempts proved to be in vain.

The case of de Proença’s dictionary illustrates how many obstacles a dictionary had to surmount before it could pass through the press. Every manuscript prepared by a member of the order had to be judged on no fewer than three separate levels. Although three older Jesuit fathers, all of them acquainted with Tamil, had declared that the work

⁹⁴ Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 49.

⁹⁵ Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 60.

⁹⁶ Shaw, *Printing in Calcutta to 1800*, 41; cf. Khan, ‘Early history of Bengali printing’, 51, 54.

⁹⁷ Zenker, *Bibliotheca orientalis. Manuel de bibliographie orientale*, 1861. See also Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 316–17.

⁹⁸ Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 220, 309–10. See also Guptan Nair, ‘Introduction’, 37.

⁹⁹ Aranha, ‘*Vulgaris seu universalis*’, 333–5.

was not in contradiction with the holy doctrine of the faith and provided positive advice, it had to wait more than a year for permission from the inquisition of Goa, which was known for its strictness and had for this reason taken extra advice from a secular priest. Even after this the inquisition insisted that the printed copy should be compared with the approved manuscript, to ensure that no extra information had found its way in: as we have seen, some manuscripts of the dictionary included material which was not in the approved printed version.¹⁰⁰ The bidirectional dictionary of Portuguese and Bengali by Manoel da Assumpçam moved through the approval process a little more rapidly: of the eight censures and licences among its prelims, the first is dated 6 December 1742, and the last, 5 November 1743.

Besides such ideological obstacles, the material difficulties with which early modern missionary printing projects were confronted (shortage of paper, no suitable types or worn types, no competent printers) should not be underestimated.¹⁰¹ It took more than fifty years before Ziegenbalg's initial project of composing a Tamil dictionary produced a printed edition (Johann Philipp Fabricius's bidirectional Tamil–English dictionary) in the last quarter of the 18th century.¹⁰² In the meantime, Ziegenbalg's successors had been encouraged to copy the dictionary, 'which at the same time gives them an exercise in the language'.¹⁰³ The dictionaries which were created against the background of the East Indian trade companies, such as the VOC and the East India Company, might enjoy financial backing.¹⁰⁴ But all our information suggests that the VOC directors never gave instructions to finance linguistic studies or publish linguistic works, even though

¹⁰⁰ James, 'Aspects of the structure', 277, 290–5.

¹⁰¹ Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 35–36; 40. See also Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 294.

¹⁰² James, *Colporul*, 157.

¹⁰³ Quoted after Gnanapragasam, *Contributions of Fr. Beschi to Tamil*, 388.

¹⁰⁴ Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World*, 59.

fellowships were sometimes allocated for botanical studies.¹⁰⁵ It is well-known that Nicolaas Witsen, one of the VOC directors but also a linguistic enthusiast, complained about the general lack of ‘scholarly curiosity in India’ — ‘No Sir, it is only money and no knowledge which our people are after, which is regrettable’ — and about the lack of interest in Herbert de Jager’s (now partly destroyed) linguistic legacy in particular.¹⁰⁶

And when a dictionary was finally printed, its successful distribution was far from assured. Only a single copy of the dictionary is known today, and lies in the Vatican library, although Maria do Céu Fonseca mentions the existence of a copy in the national library of Lisbon.¹⁰⁷ Balthasar da Costa’s Portuguese–Tamil dictionary was supposedly printed on the same press as de Proença’s, but no copy is known to be extant.¹⁰⁸ And it is said of John Fergusson’s *A dictionary of the Hindostan language* of 1773 that almost no copies have been preserved, due to the fact that the edition was destroyed, almost in its entirety, in a shipwreck.¹⁰⁹

Obviously, the transmission of manuscripts was even more precarious. A number of librarians in Europe, such as the Abbé Bignon in Paris and Mathurin Veyssière de la Croze in Berlin, played a crucial role in their preservation.¹¹⁰ Some missionaries were

¹⁰⁵ Den Besten, ‘Badly harvested field’, 267; Baas, ‘De VOC in Flora’s lusthoven’, 200.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted Pytlowany and Van Hal, ‘Merchants, scholars, and languages’, 23 n 4, ‘Wat vraegt Uwe Ed. na de geleerde curieusheynt van Indiën? Neen Heer, het is alleen gelt en geen wetenschap die onse luyden soeken aldaer, ’t gunt is te beklagen’, translated Huigen, ‘Introduction’, 8 (see also Rietbergen, ‘Wie verre reizen doet’, 164); for De Jager’s legacy, see Peters, *De wijze koopman*, 229–30.

¹⁰⁷ Fonseca, *Historiografia linguística portuguesa e missionária*, 338.

¹⁰⁸ James, *Colporul*, 96.

¹⁰⁹ Zenker, *Bibliotheca orientalis*, 1. 234.

¹¹⁰ Filliozat, ‘Deux cents ans d’indianisme’, 106; Van Hal, ‘Protestant pioneers in Sanskrit studies’, 104–10.

puzzled by the European interest in their work — some works published by the *propaganda fide*, although not written for a scholarly readership, were swiftly reviewed in 18th-century magazines — of what use, they wondered, could dictionaries of a wholly exotic language be to European scholars?¹¹¹ Other missionaries did eagerly respond to this demand. Between 1729 and 1735, French Jesuits operating in India transmitted more than 150 manuscript volumes to the Royal Library, thus creating the backbone of the Library's Indian collection.¹¹² The Jesuits and the *congregatio de propaganda fide* accelerated the import of linguistic tools of Indian languages: by the end of the 16th century, two generals of the Society of Jesus decided that dictionaries and grammars should be sent to Rome from India to allow future missionaries to prepare themselves optimally for their task.¹¹³

In India it transpired that European paper did not do well in the warmth and the heat; worse still, Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg's personal library was not only consumed by insects, but sometimes even served as fuel for the fire.¹¹⁴ The research library of the Discalced Carmelite Order in Verapoly may have been destroyed in a flood.¹¹⁵ But water and fire did not only cause destruction in India. The Lisbon earthquake of 1755 not only resulted in the loss of life of thousands, but also destroyed many archives and libraries in their entirety.¹¹⁶ A large-scale project was on-going at the time, with the aim of archiving the knowledge which had been accumulated in the colonies and putting it to writing. It is

¹¹¹ For the puzzlement, see, for example, Filliozat, 'Deux cents ans d'indianisme', 106; for the reviews, see Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 296.

¹¹² Colas, 'Cultural encounter', 69; Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 303–8.

¹¹³ Županov, 'Language and culture of the Jesuit 'early modernity' in India', 89.

¹¹⁴ W. Sweetman in Ziegenbalg, *Bibliotheca Malabarica*, 21.

¹¹⁵ Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, xxx. See also Thankappan Nair, 'Father Hanxleden — Pioneer Indologist', 51.

¹¹⁶ Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, xxiii.

in this light that the *Bibliotheca Lusitana* (1741–1759) should be understood: these four volumes aim to provide an overview of the varied cultural and scientific work which had been done by the Portuguese, including an overview of the grammars and dictionaries composed by Portuguese missionaries. Many of the titles mentioned here were lost in one fell swoop in the earthquake.

But natural disasters were not the only reason for the loss of much of the early modern knowledge related to Indian languages which the Europeans had accumulated. We have already seen that some of the agents in knowledge management were less efficient than the Jesuits, including the Franciscans and the officials of the VOC.¹¹⁷ Even the Jesuits failed to systematise their philological knowledge.¹¹⁸ For Europeans, the many borders within the Indian subcontinent were permeable to agents of various orders, religious denominations and nationalities. Hence, the fruits of scholarship became very nomadic, and consequently vulnerable. For as soon as the lexicographic work of a Catholic missionary fell into the hands of an outsider — whether he belonged to a different Catholic order or was a Dutch or British merchant — the danger of appropriation and oblivion was real.¹¹⁹ One modern author describes lexicographical manuscripts as ‘sometimes in a condition of criminal neglect’.¹²⁰ Manuscripts of ‘outsiders’ were, for instance, not always registered in archival catalogues of certain missionary orders.¹²¹

It was mainly Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo who saw the urgency of recording the Indological achievements of his Catholic predecessors. Publications of his are our only

¹¹⁷ Indeed, the VOC might positively suppress knowledge: see Pytlowany and Van Hal, ‘Merchants, scholars, and languages’, 26–7.

¹¹⁸ Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 308; see also Županov, ‘Compromise: India’, 367.

¹¹⁹ Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, xxxii–xxxiv; 291.

¹²⁰ Rodrigues, ‘Glimpses of the Konkani language ... religious concepts and rituals’, 19.

¹²¹ See for an example Van Hal, ‘*Grammatica Grandonica* Retrieved.’

source for some of our knowledge of, in particular, south Indian missionary lexicography.¹²² His substantial bibliographical survey ‘Bibliotheca Indica’ (1803), with much lexicographical detail, remains unpublished.¹²³

Paulinus’s bibliographical diligence may well have been a result of his anxiety about the activities of the British in Calcutta, whom he frequently criticised in his writings. Xavier and Županov in particular argue that many successful 19th-century English orientalists made surreptitious use of the products of early modern Catholic — and to a lesser extent also Protestant — orientalism. The 20th-century historiography of 19th-century British orientalism is increasingly criticized: it is being claimed that historiographers have too often focused unduly on British agents alone, without asking what their sources were, and even that the exclusive attention given to William Jones in the 20th century is an indication of British arrogance.¹²⁴ How can we test this claim? Was the existence of Assumpçam’s Bengali dictionary of 1743 more or less consciously erased from early histories on scholarly activity in Bengal, or was the work overlooked simply because it was hard to come by?¹²⁵ The presence of considerable, but relatively ignored, collections of early modern documents of Catholic missionary origin, including lexicographical works, in British archives and libraries, indicates that the British certainly had access to a large amount of material (some of which has been dispersed, so that for instance a 17th-

¹²² See the discussions of his work in Županov, ‘Orientalist museum’, and Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*.

¹²³ For it, and other unpublished works by Paulinus, see Jauk-Pinhak, ‘Some notes on the pioneer Indologist Filip Vesdin’, 137 n 37; an edition is in preparation.

¹²⁴ Rietbergen, *Europa’s India*; see also Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 206.

¹²⁵ Cf. Xavier and Županov, *Catholic Orientalism*, 316–17.

century Konkani–Portuguese manuscript wordlist, now in Lisbon, was bought in London in the 20th century).¹²⁶

A number of 19th-century Indological lexicographers explicitly indicate that they consulted and used early modern manuscripts. The most famous 19th-century Malayalam scholar, Hermann Gundert, made eager use of the missionary dictionaries which he found in Verapoly.¹²⁷ The lexicographical works of the Jesuit Louis Noël de Bourzès, missionary in Madurai from 1710 to 1735, were used by 19th-century French lexicographers.¹²⁸ The late publication of Beschi's *Caturakarāti* in 1824 had wide-ranging results and influenced many Tamil scholars.¹²⁹ A number of lexicographical works which were published in Europe seem to have enjoyed a more limited circulation. Immanuel Kant gave lectures on 'Physische Geographie' in Königsberg for forty years, into which he integrated new insights from geography, chemistry and biology every year. In his discussion of the Kurds he refers to Garzoni, 'who has been living there for 18 years', and had written 'a small book on this country in the Kurdish language, which will remain the most up-to-date from this region for a long time'.¹³⁰ The less than accurate description of Garzoni's work prompts one to doubt if Kant ever saw it.

CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

¹²⁶ Xavier and Županov, 289, 325–6; *Vocabulario da lingoa Canarina* (1973), unpaginated introduction, section 1.

¹²⁷ Guptan Nair, 'Introduction', 39.

¹²⁸ Filliozat, 'Deux cents ans d'indianisme', 108.

¹²⁹ Blackburn, *Print, Folklore, and Nationalism*, 60.

¹³⁰ Kant, *Physische Geographie*, 2.1, 166, 'Garzoni, ein römischer Missionair, der sich dort 18 Jahre aufgehalten hat, hat ein Werkchen von diesem Lande in der Kürgerdischen Sprache geschrieben, welches wohl noch lange das Neueste aus dieser Gegend enthalten wird'.

The early modern European lexicography of the Indian languages was in the first place instrumental. The missionaries wanted to save indigenous souls through knowledge of their language, while the trade companies saw a chance to increase their profits. In an encomium at the end of De Houtman's lexicon the poet expresses his explicit hope that 'through this beautiful language, profits will increase considerably'.¹³¹ Merchants had more access to interpreters and translators than missionaries did. However, in relying on interpreters the merchants ran the risk of being cheated by these intermediaries. This was why the commanders of the VOC of Fort Golconda decided that they should have sufficient mastery of Telugu to be able to express short messages themselves and to assess the work of the translators.¹³² Nevertheless the lexicographical activity carried in the context of the VOC seems to have been limited to Calvinistic pastors, whose missionary activities have been underestimated.¹³³ The primarily instrumental nature of missionary language study did not prevent the most talented missionaries, at times against the fundraisers' will, from developing an authentic interest in indigenous cultures and rites, which proved in its turn to be instrumental and helpful in converting souls. Tellingly, some of the most gifted lexicographers, such as Beschi, Hanxleden, and Gonçalves, produced poetry in the indigenous languages.¹³⁴

One can wonder to what extent the missionaries' lexicographical activity contributed to the general 19th-century Indomania, which led to the creation of numerous chairs in Indology and (Indo-European) linguistics.¹³⁵ The connection between the two seems to have been relatively restricted. In the first place, the letters of these missionaries were

¹³¹ In Houtman, *Spraeck ende Woord-Boeck inde Maleysche ende Madagaskarsche Talen*, [223], 'door dees schoone Tael, 'tprofijt seer sal vermeeren'.

¹³² Van Dam, *Beschryvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, 2. 2, 164.

¹³³ Meuwese, 'Language, literacy, and education', 107.

¹³⁴ James, *Colporul*, 106; Guptan Nair, 'Introduction', 38.

¹³⁵ See, for example, Rabault-Feuerhahn, *Archives of Origins*.

much more accessible to European scholars than the lexicographical works, of which the circulation, as we have seen, remained very limited. In the second place, the similarities between the European languages and Sanskrit do not appear to have greatly surprised all early modern missionaries, since one of the prevailing interpretations of the Babel story indicated that all the world's languages did preserve a few elements of the *lingua Adamica*, which was often equated with Hebrew. As a rule, no attention was given to linguistic kinship in the major wordlists. Some of the missionaries' letters, however, comprised small comparative wordlists, in which, for instance, Tamil was traced back to Hebrew.¹³⁶ Walther's pietist colleague Benjamin Schultze (1689–1760) made a comparative wordlist of more than 10 Indian languages, which was published in the middle of the 18th century.¹³⁷

Digital editions of missionary lexicographic undertakings, at least two of which are currently underway, will allow us to examine in a more systematic vein the connections between missionary wordlists of one single Indian language, between missionary wordlists of different Indian languages, and between the contents of missionary grammars, dictionaries, and religious texts in general.¹³⁸

Primary sources

¹³⁶ For instance a letter of 1725 from C. T. Walther to J. W. Zierold, now Halle: Franckesche Stiftungen, AFSt/M 1 B 2 : 28.

¹³⁷ [Schultze and Fritz], *Orientalisch- und Occidentalisches Sprachmeister*, between 212 and 213; Abel, *Symphona symphona* is an unacknowledged reprint.

¹³⁸ For Tamil, see Chevillard, 'Challenge of bi-directional translation', 126–7; Heinz Werner Wessler is supervising the research project 'Hindi Lexicography and the Cosmopolitan in the Encounter between Europe and India around 1700'.

Abel, I. *Symphona symphona sive undecim linguarum orientalium discors exhibita concordia tamulicae, videlicet granthamicae, telugicae, samscrutamicae, marathicae, balabandicae, canaricae, hindostanicae, cuncanicae, gutzaratizae et peguanicae* (Copenhagen: Hallagerus, 1782).

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Languages

BENGALI (Bangla). *Indo-Aryan* language spoken by a very large population in Bangladesh and India; the earliest extant literary texts are from before the 12th century AD. A bidirectional dictionary with PORTUGUESE by Manoel da Assumpçam was published in 1743.

HINDUSTANI. *Indo-Aryan* language spoken natively and as a *lingua franca* by a very large population in northern India and Pakistan; the official forms are Modern Standard Hindi (written in the Devanagari script) and Modern Standard Urdu (written in Arabic script).

KANNADA. *Dravidian* language spoken in southern India; there are texts from the first millennium AD, and texts from before 1500 explain old Kannada words and SANSKRIT words.

KONKANI. *Indo-Aryan* language spoken in south-western India; there are records from before the 16th century, and a dictionary with PORTUGUESE was compiled by Diogo Ribeiro in 1626.

Kurdish. Group of *Iranian* languages spoken in several countries in western Asia; the literary tradition begins around the 15th century AD; there is an ITALIAN–Kurdish dictionary by M. Garzoni (1787).

MALAY. *Malayo-Polynesian* language very widely spoken by native speakers and as a *lingua franca* in Malaysia, Indonesia, and elsewhere; inscriptions in a variety of the Grantha script go back to the 7th century AD, and the Devanagari script was used for official purposes from the 7th to the 14th century, succeeded by Arabic script. A wordlist in Chinese characters probably dates from the 15th century; an ITALIAN–Malay wordlist was compiled by Antonio Pigafetta around 1521, and a DUTCH–Malay dictionary by F. de Houtman was printed in 1603, these being in the roman alphabet, which is now widely used in Malaysia and Indonesia.

MALAYALAM. *Dravidian* language spoken in southern India, and written in a script which evolved from the Grantha script; a literary tradition had begun by the 14th century AD, and there were a number of missionary wordlists.

SINHALESE. *Indo-Aryan* language spoken in Sri Lanka, with a long tradition of literacy; a bidirectional dictionary with DUTCH was compiled by Simon Cat (d. 1704).

TELUGU. *Dravidian* language widely spoken in southern India, with a long literary tradition (the first inscriptions date from the mid-1st millennium AD); missionary wordlists are the earliest records of the colloquial language.

Lexicographers

Assumpçam (Assumpção), Manoel da (from Évora, Portugal ; first half of the 18th cent.) : Augustinian missionary in India ; compiler of a Bengali grammar and bidirectional wordlist of Bengali and Portuguese (1743).

Bowrey, Thomas (d. in or near Wapping, Middlesex [now in London] 1703): merchant; compiler of the first dictionary of English and Malay.

Cat (Kat, Cath), Simon (from Zaandam, Netherlands; d. Ceylon [now Sri Lanka] 1704): preacher and Bible translator; compiler of a bidirectional dictionary of Dutch and Sinhalese.

Garzoni, Maurizio (from Turin; 1734–1804): Dominican missionary in the region of Mosul in the Ottoman Empire; the Italian–Kurdish wordlist in his *Grammatica e vocabolario della lingua Kurda* is the first of Kurdish and a European language.

Gonçalves, Jacome (Goa [now in India] 1676 – Bolawatta, Ceylon [now Sri Lanka] 1742): Oratorian missionary in Ceylon and author of Christian texts in Sinhalese and Tamil; compiler of a Portuguese–Tamil–Sinhalese dictionary.

Hanxleden, Johann Ernst (Arnos Padiri) (Ostercappeln, Bishopric of Osnabrück [now in Germany] 1681 – Pazhuvil, Kerala [now in India] 1732): Jesuit missionary in India, poet in Malayalam, and Sanskritist; he compiled a Malayalam dictionary, and made a transcript

of the *Amarakośa* of Amarasimha (qv) which would be a basis for the partial publication of the *Amarakośa* by Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo (qv).

Houtman, Frederik de (Gouda, Habsburg Netherlands 1571 – Alkmaar, Netherlands 1627): explorer and astronomer; compiler of the first printed Malay dictionary.

Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo (Johann Philipp Wesdin) (Hof am Leithaberge, Austria 1746 – Rome 1806): Carmelite missionary in India and orientalist; editor of a printed edition of the first part of the *Amarakośa* of Amarasimha (qv).

Pons, Jean-François (diocese of Rodez, France 1698 – Chandernagore, Mughal Empire [now Chandannagar, India] 1752): Jesuit missionary in India; he translated the *Amarakośa* of Amarasimha (qv) into Latin.

Roth, Heinrich (Dillingen, Bishopric of Augsburg [now in Germany] 1620 – Agra, Maratha Empire [now in India] 1668): Jesuit missionary in India and author of the earliest extant grammar of Sanskrit by a European; his work towards a Sanskrit–Latin dictionary (which was never realized) makes him the first European lexicographer of Sanskrit.

Rumphius, Georg Everhard (Wölfersheim, Holy Roman Empire [now in Germany] – Ambon, Dutch East Indies [now in Indonesia] 1702): merchant and naturalist; compiler of an unfinished Malay dictionary.

Schultze, Benjamin (Sonnenburg, Duchy of Prussia [now Słońsk, Poland] 1689 – Halle (Saale), Kingdom of Prussia [now in Germany] 1760): Lutheran missionary (Dänisch-Hallesche Mission) in India; compiler of a comparative wordlist of a number of the languages of India.

Stephanus a S.S. Petro et Paulo (perhaps from the Venetian Republic; 1692–1766×1767): Carmelite missionary in India; compiler of a Portuguese–High Malayalam–Latin dictionary.

Tours, François-Marie de (d. 1709): Capuchin missionary in India; compiler of an unpublished French–Hindustani dictionary.

Wiltens, Caspar (Antwerp, Spanish Netherlands 1584 – Ambon, Dutch East Indies [now in Indonesia] 1619): preacher; compiler of a bidirectional wordlist of Dutch and Malay.

Ziegenbalg, Bartholomäus (Pulsnitz, Electorate of Saxony [now in Germany] 1682 – Tranquebar [now Tharangambadi, India] 1719): Lutheran missionary (Dänisch-Hallesche Mission) in India and Bible translator; compiler of a Tamil dictionary.