

A  
COMPARATIVE GRAMMAR

OF THE

DRAVIDIAN

OR

SOUTH-INDIAN FAMILY OF LANGUAGES.

BY

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the Gônd grammar has acquired a development peculiar to itself, perhaps in some degree through the influence of the highly inflected Sântâl, its Kôl neighbour to the northward.

(4.) THE KU.\* The Kond, Khond, or Ku language, undoubtedly a Drâvidian idiom, has generally been considered as identical with the Gônd. It was stated long ago by Captain Blunt in the *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii., on the authority of a native Jaghiredar, that the Gônds and Khunds are totally distinct races: notwithstanding this, I have not met with any account of their languages in which they have been regarded as different, though in truth their differences are numerous and essential. In many particulars the Ku accords more closely than the Gônd with the Tamil, the Telugu and the other Drâvidian tongues; in some things less so. For example:—

(1.) The Gônd forms its infinitive in ‘alle,’ or ‘ille;’ the Ku, like the Telugu, the Tamil, and the modern Canarese, forms its infinitive by suffixing ‘a,’ sometimes ‘va,’ or ‘pa.’ Thus, *to become*, is in Gônd ‘aiâlle;’ in Telugu, ‘kâ;’ in Canarese, ‘âgal,’ or ‘âga;’ in Tamil, ‘âga;’ in Ku, ‘âva.’

(2.) The Ku retains the simplicity of the conjugational system of the other Drâvidian dialects, in contradistinction to the elaborateness of the Gônd.

(3.) The Gônd forms its negatives by prefixing to the indicative aorist the separate negative particles “hille,” or “halle.” In this point the Ku differs from the Gônd, and agrees with the other dialects. Thus, *I do not*, is in Gônd ‘hille kion;’ in Tamil ‘æyyên;’ in Telugu ‘chêyanu;’ in Canarese ‘gêyenu,’ in Ku ‘giênu.’

In the following instances the Ku accords more closely with the Tamil and Canarese, though locally very remote, than with its nearer neighbour the Telugu.

(1.) The Telugu forms its plurals by the use of ‘lu’ alone, except in some of the oblique forms of the ‘rational’ demonstratives. The Ku, like the Tamil, makes a difference between the plurals of nouns which denote rational beings, and those of nouns of the inferior class. The Tamil suffix of the first class of plurals is ‘ar;’ of the second class ‘kal;’ the corresponding suffixes in Ku are ‘âru’ or ‘ru,’ and ‘kâ.’

(2.) The Telugu forms its masculine singular by means of the suffix ‘du:’ the Canarese and Tamil by ‘anu’ and ‘an.’ The Ku by means of the suffix ‘âñju’ or ‘ânyu.’ Thus, compare ‘vâdu,’ Telugu, *he*, with the Tamil ‘avan,’ Canarese ‘avann,’ Ku ‘avâñju.’

(3.) The Ku pronouns bear a closer resemblance to the Tamil and Canarese than to the Telugu and Gônd, as will appear from the following comparative view:—

	TELUGU.	GÔND.	TAMIL.	CANARESE.	KU.
I	nênu	anâ	yân (ancient)	ân (ancient)	ânu
we	mênu	amât	yâm (do.)	âm (do.)	ânu
thou	nîvu	ima	nî	nînu	înu
ye	mîru	imat	nîr	nîvu	îru
he, remote	vâdu	wor	avan	avanu	avâñju
he, proximate	vîdu	yer	ivan	ivanu	ivâñju

\* See a lucidly arranged grammar of this language prepared by Lingam Letchmajee, Deputy Translator to the Gaujam Agency, and published in Uriya characters in the *Calcutta Christian Observer* for May and June, 1853. I have not seen any notice in any scientific work or periodical of this valuable contribution to our knowledge of the Indian languages.

(d.) In the Dravidian languages contingency is expressed by the addition of a particle to any verbal tense, person or number. This subjunctive suffix is in Telugu 'êni' or 'ê;' in Canarese 're,' 'rû,' or 'âgyu.' One of the suffixes employed in the Tamil is 'kkâl,' which in the speech of the vulgar becomes 'kkâ;' and this very particle 'kkâ,' added, as in Tamil, to the preterite, is the suffix by which the Ku also forms conditional or contingent verbs: e.g., *If I do*, is in Telugu 'nênu châyudunêni;' in Canarese 'nânu gëyidare;' in colloquial Tamil this is 'nân cheydâkkâ;' in Ku also, (from the root 'gi,' *to do*), it is 'ânu gitekkâ.'

On the other hand, in the following particulars the Gônd agrees more closely with the Telugu than with the Tamil or Canarese.

(1.) It uses the neuter singular to denote the feminine singular.

(2.) The oblique cases or "inflexions" of the pronouns of the first and second persons, singular and plural, are identical with those of the Telugu.

(3.) The case terminations of the Ku are nearly in accordance with those of the Telugu.

(4.) The pronominal signs suffixed to the Ku verbs accord on the whole better with the Telugu than with any other dialect: e.g., in Tamil the second and third persons plural end differently, the one 'ir,' the other 'âr;' in Telugu they end alike—both generally in 'aru;' in Ku also both these persons end alike in 'eru.'

(5.) In Canarese all relative participles, including that of the negative verb, end in 'a;' in Tamil all relative participles, with the exception of that of the future, have the same ending: in Telugu the relative participle of the indefinite or aoristic tense ends in 'edi,' or 'eti;' and in the Ku also the relative past participle exhibits this ending. Thus, 'âna,' Tamil, *that became*; in Canarese, 'âda;' in Telugu (indefinite tense), 'ayyêti;' in Ku the same form is 'âti.'

The various particulars and illustrations which have now been mentioned prove the Ku to be totally distinct from the Gônd; and though it is allied to it, it is allied only in the same manner as to the other Dravidian languages. In some points this language differs from all the other dialects of the family; for example, it forms its past verbal participles not by means of the suffixes 'du,' 'i,' or 'si,' the only suffixes known in the other dialects, but by suffixing to the root 'â,' sometimes 'sâ' or 'jâ,' after the manner of some of the languages of Northern India. In the other dialects of this family the negative verb possesses only one tense, an aorist; the Ku, in addition to this negative aorist, has also a negative preterite,—a decided advantage over the other dialects. The Ku suffixes of the present verbal participles are also different from those which are found in the other Dravidian dialects. The formative suffix of the present verbal participle is in Telugu 'chu' or 'tu;' in the Canarese 'ta' or 'te;' in the Ku it is 'i' or 'pi.'

The four dialects referred to above—the Tuda, Kôta, Gônd and Ku—though rude and uncultivated, are undoubtedly to be regarded as distinctively and essentially Dravidian dialects, equally with the Tamil and Telugu. In addition to these, there are two uncultivated idioms of Central India, the Ūrâon and the Râjmahal, which contain so many Dravidian roots of primary importance that they may claim to be considered as originally members of the same family, though they contain also a large admixture of roots and forms belonging to the Kôl dialects. The Ūrâon is considered by Mr. Hodgson as a