The Dhivehi Language

A Descriptive and Historical Grammar

of Maldivian and Its Dialects

by

Sonja Fritz

Heidelberg

2001
Preface


I started my work on Dhivehi (Maldivian) in 1988 when I had the opportunity to make some tape recordings with native speakers during a private stay in the Maldives. Shortly after, when I became aware of the fact that there were almost no preliminary studies of a scientific character on the Maldivian language and literature and, particularly, no systematic linguistic studies at all, I started to collect material for an extensive grammatical description of the Dhivehi language. In 1992, I went to the Maldives again in order to continue my work with informants and to make official contact with the corresponding institutions in Māle, whom I asked to help me in planning my future field research. During my 1992 stay, my main informant was Mr. AHMED ABDULLA* from Fua’ Mulaku (Gnäviyani [Navian] Atoll) who was living in Māle at that time.

In the same year I applied for a special fellowship (Habilitanden-Stipendium) with the German National Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG), because without financial supply I could neither have managed the field work in the Maldives nor the following intensive studies which took all my time for four years. I am very grateful to DFG for supporting my work with a generous three years’ fellowship and for special support covering the expenses of a three months’ field trip to the Maldives (July-October 1993), together with a shorter stay in Colombo (Sri Lanka) where I was concerned with archive studies.

During my work, I became particularly interested in the southern Dhivehi dialects which are very different from the standard language. They were never used as a written language and they never served as an object of linguistic interest before. In this sphere, I am deeply indebted to Mr. HASSAN SAEED Campapalmağe, Hitadū, Aḍḍū (Seenu [Sīr] Atoll) who is highly respected as the most reliable authority on the southernmost dialect. For six weeks he was at my disposal for several hours every day. Thanks to his excellent knowledge of English and his indefatigable help I was able to get a profound knowledge of the grammatical categories of the Aḍḍū dialect within a comparatively short time and to collect approximately 2500 lexemes. HASSAN SAEED also organised a recording session with a professional storyteller, Mr. ALI MANIKUFAANU (Ali Manikuñ, also from Hitadū), whose vivid style of storytelling deeply impressed me. Furthermore, HASSAN SAEED accompanied me for a ten days’ research trip to Fua’ Mulaku Atoll in order to help me with the communication problems I expected visiting this atoll for the first time. Since my 1993 field research, he has always been ready to answer the questions I sent to him, and when I returned to the Maldives

* In the preface, (Arabic) personal names are not given in the scientific indological transliteration (as normally used in this book) but in a Latin transcription which is officially used in the Maldives themselves. In accordance with Maldivian tradition, I have additionally mentioned the “house names” (ge ‘house’) used as a kind of family names, as far as they have become known to me. The two official names, consisting of a first name and a father’s name, a first name and a surname, or even two first names, are very often ambiguous because of the high frequency of a restricted number of names and combinations of names that are met with. Some elder people use only their house names beside their first names, sometimes even affixing the latter ones.
in March 1999 in order to clear up some further problems, he helped me again. I would like to express my gratitude to him not only for his direct contribution to my research work — without which I could not have written this grammar in its present form — but also for introducing me to the peculiarities of daily and cultural life of the southern Maldives.

Concerning the dialect of Faa` Mulaku, I am particularly grateful to my informants Mr. ADNAN IBRAHIM, Mr. MUHAMMAD SAEED and Ms. AMINATH MUHAMMAD SAEED (Havittta), Mr. HASSAN SAEED (Sosan Villi), MRS. AMINATH SHEHENAZ and MRS. FATIMATH IBRAHIM DIDI (BoOSHURAGE), Mr. ABDULLAH AFEEF (Luxury), Mrs. Goldan Gëfu KADDÄDI and Mr. Diggâmâge MUHAMMAD MANIKUFAANU (Manikuftanu) for the fairy tales they told and for their contributions to my systematic collection of lexical and morphological data which were recorded on tape as well. For some tape recordings of the dialect of Huvadü which I could undertake in Addu and in Faa` Mulaku, I am indebted to Mr. MUHAMMAD SHAKEEL (Looking Glass, Tinadü, Gaafu Alifu [Gâf Alif] Atoll) and Mr. MUHAMMAD HASSAN (Morning Paris, Fares, Gaafu Dhaalu [Gâf Dâl] Atoll).

My studies on the standard language of Mâle were deeply stimulated by an intensive three weeks' cooperation with Mrs. HABIBA HUSSAIN HABIB, the director of the National Library in Mâle, who is also a writer. I am much obliged to her for introducing me into the "palace language" which was the colloquial and written medium of the nobility at the time of the sultans, an almost obsolete idiom she is one of the last native speakers of, and I am very grateful for the numerous tape recordings she allowed me to take. I also owe many thanks to Mr. MUHAMMAD WAHEED (Mâdulu) and Mr. ABDULLAH SAAIDIQ who, as professional writers, helped me with abundant information on the language of modern Dhivehi prose and who provided some tape recordings as well. I owe special thanks to the scholar Mr. HASSAN AHMED MANIKU (Mâle) who is one of the best authorities on history and culture of the (Northern) Maldives and who helped me with much scientific information. Last but not least, I have to thank Mr. MOHAMED WAHEED MANDHU (at that time Deputy Director of the National Centre for Linguistic and Historical Research) and Mr. ABDUL SAMEEU HASSAN (at that time Assistant Director of the National Centre) who in 1993 helped me to get access to the southern atolls and to receive special permits for research on inscriptions in the National Museum of Mâle and some graveyards.

It would go beyond the scope of this preface to personally express my gratitude to all those Maldivian people who helped me during my stays on the islands. Instead, I would like to express thanks to the Maldivians for their warm welcome and their helpfulness I experienced so many times!

For the scientific support I received in Colombo (Sri Lanka) in October 1993, I have to thank Prof. G.D. Wijayawardhana and Prof. J.B. Disanayaka (both from the Dept. of Sinhala, Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo), Dr. W. Thelma T.P. Gunawardane (Director of the National Museum), Mr. Kalasuri Wilfred M. Gunasekara (Library of the Royal Asiatic Society), Dr. Siran U. Deraniyagala (Director of the Archeological Survey Dept.) as well as the Director of the National Archive.

I am also very grateful to Mr. Sisira Jayasuriya (at that time Mâle/Colombo), who was my main informant for colloquial Sinhalese and who helped me with Sinhalese literature for many years.

I owe a special thank to Prof. Donald Rayfield (Queen Mary College, University of London) who under difficult circumstances procured a copy of H.C.P. Bell’s book “The
Maldive Islands. Monograph on the History, Archeology, and Epigraphy” (Colombo 1940) for me. Furthermore I am deeply indebted to him for proof-reading the complete English text of the present book.

I am also very grateful to Prof. Dr. Monika BOEHM-TETTELBACH (Dept. of Modern Indian Studies, South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg) who supported my studies on Dhivehi from the beginning and who was kind enough to present the German version of the present book as a habilitation thesis to the Faculty of Oriental and Classical Studies of the University of Heidelberg. Furthermore I would like to thank Prof. BOEHM-TETTELBACH very much for proof-reading the German text.

For a proof-reading of the German version, I owe many thanks also to PD Dr. Claus Peter ZOLLER (South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg) and to Prof. Dr. Chlodwig WERBA (Dept. of Indology, University of Vienna).

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Faculty of Oriental and Classical Studies of Heidelberg University for having accepted the German text of the present book as a habilitation thesis. I am particularly grateful to the late Prof. Dr. Hubert PETERSMANN who was the Dean of the faculty at that time.

The person I have to thank most of all, however, is my husband, Prof. Dr. Josi GIPPERT, a linguist himself (Chair of Comparative Linguistics, Frankfurt University), who was my constant companion during all my research stays in the Maldives. Without the inspiring suggestions he made and the ongoing discussions we had over all these years, this book could not have been written in its present form. This also holds true for his help with technical problems, concerning particularly hard- and software difficulties. Furthermore, my husband made his collection of Old Dhivehi inscriptions and manuscripts (collected in 1993) available to me which not only enlarged my knowledge of Old Dhivehi but enabled me to describe the historical development of different categories of this language. Furthermore, I would like to thank my husband for proof-reading both the German original and the English translation of this book several times and for preparing the layout and the indexes. I also have to thank my husband for encouraging me to translate the whole book into English and stimulating me in those moments when I was about to lose my strength and self-confidence.

Oberursel, 16 August 2001

Sonja Fritz
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<td>appr. approximately</td>
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<td>attr. attribute</td>
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<td>aux. auxiliary verb</td>
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<td>B.C. before Christ</td>
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<td>Beng. Bengali (Bāṅglā)</td>
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<td>BHS Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit</td>
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<td>bot. botanical</td>
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<td>caus. causative</td>
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<td>doub. double</td>
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<td>elem. element</td>
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<td>Engl. English</td>
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<td>fem. feminine</td>
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<td>Fr. French</td>
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<td>fut. future</td>
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<td>gen. genitive</td>
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<td>Germ. German</td>
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<td>Guj. Gujarati (Gujarāti)</td>
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<td>hon. honorific</td>
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<td>IA Indo-Aryan</td>
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<td>id. the same</td>
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<td>impv. imperative</td>
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<td>inact. inactive</td>
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<td>ipfv. imperfective</td>
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<td>IIA Insular Indo-Aryan</td>
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<td>JĀ Jaina Māhārāṣṭrī</td>
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<td>l.f. long form (participle)</td>
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<td>loc. locative</td>
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<td>M. Mālā standard language</td>
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<td>Mar. Marathi (Marāṭhī)</td>
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<td>Mās. masculine</td>
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<td>MBH. Mahābhārata</td>
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<td>MIA Middle Indo-Aryan</td>
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<td>mod. modern</td>
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<td>ms. manuscript</td>
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<td>n. noun</td>
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<td>Nep. Nepali (Nepāli)</td>
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<td>obj. object</td>
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<td>obl. oblique case</td>
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<td>obs. obsolete</td>
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<td>OIA Old Indo-Aryan</td>
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<td>Or. Oriya (Oriyā)</td>
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<td>part. participle</td>
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<td>Pers. Persian</td>
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<td>pers. personal</td>
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<td>pfv. perfective</td>
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<td>PIE Proto-Indo-European</td>
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<td>Prk. Prakrit</td>
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<td>p(ut). plural</td>
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<td>p.n. proper name</td>
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<td>pol. polite</td>
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<td>Pol. Polish</td>
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<td>poss. possessive</td>
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<td>postpos. postposition</td>
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<td>pred. predicate, predicative</td>
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<td>pres. present (tense)</td>
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<td>pron.adj. pronominal adjective</td>
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<td>recip. reciprocal</td>
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<td>red. reduplicated</td>
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<td>refl. reflexive</td>
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<td>repr. reprint</td>
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<td>resp. respectively</td>
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<td>rev. revised</td>
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<td>Russ. Russian</td>
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<td>RV. Rgveda</td>
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<td>sg. singular</td>
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<td>Si. Sindhi (Sindhi)</td>
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<td>subj. subject</td>
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<td>suff. suffix</td>
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<td>top. toponym</td>
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<td>trans. transitive</td>
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<td>Turk. Turkic</td>
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<td>vb.n. verbal noun</td>
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<td>viz. namely</td>
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<td>voc. vocational</td>
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<td>vol. volume</td>
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* For L1 etc., F1 etc., RA and other abbreviations referring to the Old and Modern Dhivehi texts that were used in the present book, cf. the Survey of historical documents contained in vol. II, p. 215 ff.
Bibliography


This table lists only those titles that are quoted in abbreviated form in the present book.


Introduction

0.1. Dhivehi, the official language of the Republic of Maldives, represents the southernmost Indo-Aryan language and even the southernmost Indo-European language, if we consider the historical distribution of the (earlier) Indo-European languages rather than the comparatively recent expansion of some colonial languages, such as English, French, Spanish or Portuguese. Together with the closely related Sinhalese, the Indo-Aryan language spoken by the major part of Sri Lanka’s population, Dhivehi establishes a special subgroup within the Modern Indo-Aryan languages which will hereafter be called “Insular Indo-Aryan” (IIA). This term, which is based on purely geographical facts, is legitimate insofar as the area where the two languages are spoken is confined to the respective insular states.

Because of a high degree of isolation from the Indo-Aryan linguistic area in the Subcontinent, the two insular languages are distinguished by many particular developments affecting different linguistic spheres. In order to understand all these peculiarities it is necessary to consider historical facts and developments, the cultural influences and the history of the languages. The preconditions that characterise the study of the two languages in question are essentially different from each other. While Sinhalese shows the longest continuous literary and historical tradition of all Modern Indo-Aryan languages, Dhivehi has only a very scanty written tradition. This is the reason why long periods in the history of the Maldives have remained almost unknown even today. Inevitably, these facts are also reflected in the history of scientific research into both languages. Without considering Sinhalese a well-founded investigation of Dhivehi is practically impossible. Therefore, this introduction begins with a short outline of the most important stages of the historical studies concerning the two languages.

0.2. The foundation stone of the historical linguistic analysis of Sinhalese as well as of Dhivehi was laid by WILHELM GEIGER (1856-1943) whose comprehensive studies of Pali and Sinhalese are still to be taken seriously. In his 1937 article “The linguistic character of Sinhalese”, he definitively rejected all attempts to consider Sinhalese as one of the members of the Dravidian family of languages. Although the Danish linguist RASMUS RASK had classified Sinhalese as a language of the Sanskrit stock as early as 1821, he could not prevent others from trying to prove a relationship between Sinhalese and Tamil.

The material GEIGER used for his etymological, morphological and syntactical investigations was taken from the rich Sinhalese literature which he divided into four main periods: Sinhalese Prakrit (from the 2nd c. B.C. to the 3rd/4th c. A.D.; ancient Brāhmi inscriptions); Proto-Sinhalese (from the 4/5th c. to the 8th c.; later Brāhmi inscriptions); Medieval Sinhalese (from the 8th c. to the middle of the 13th c.; inscriptions and the most ancient documents of manuscript literature); the period from the middle of the 13th c. up to the present, called “Modern Sinhalese” by GEIGER, which actually has to be subdivided into Classical Sinhalese (from the 13th c. to the 17th c.), and Modern Sinhalese proper (from then on). The latter period comprises the contemporary literary and colloquial language.
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To a large extent, Sinhalese inscriptions have been collected and edited within the series *Epigraphia Zeylanica* (Archeological Survey of Ceylon) since 1904. In this connection, S. Paranavitana’s two volume edition of the “Sigiri Graffiti” which was published in 1956 is of special interest. Besides the text of the inscriptions of the rock of Sigirya it also contains a comprehensive descriptive grammar of Medieval Sinhalese and, furthermore, the most detailed paleographical description of Sinhalese that has ever been published.

0.2.1. However, the most important information on the earliest history of the Sinhalese people is not attested in the Sinhalese language but within two chronicles written in Pali: the *Dīpavaṃsa* (“Island Chronicle")² and the *Mahāvaṃsa* (“Great Chronicle”). The latter covers the time from 544 B.C. until 362 A.D.; it was continued under the name of Cūlavāṃsa (“Lesser Chronicle”) which was carried on until 1781.³ While the language of the *Dīpavaṃsa* is still inspired by the clerical tradition and, therefore, is characterised by a ponderous style, the *Mahāvaṃsa* which combines Buddhist tradition with a rich folklore can be called a work of poetic artisanship. The author, Mahānāma, lived at the end of the 5th c. I beginning of the 6th c.

It is often difficult to distinguish historical facts from pure myths and legends in both of these chronicles. Geiger whose investigations into the chronicles yielded numerous publications (cf. above), succeeded in filtering much information about historical events and material culture from these texts. The details would exceed the scope of the present study and only a few items are to be mentioned here. Thus, e.g., it is nowadays taken for granted that the first Indo-Aryan colonisation of Sri Lanka took place at about the 5th/4th c. B.C. by tribes coming from the north of the subcontinent; however, the question whether their “proto-homeland” was located in the northwest or in the northeast of India, has not yet been proved satisfactorily. Most of the toponyms mentioned in the chronicle can be interpreted in favour of both sides. Thus, ch. VI of the *Mahāvaṃsa* which relates the colonisation of the island, informs us that Sīhabāhu, the father of the legendary first Sinhalese king Vijaya, migrated from the land of the Vāṅgas where he had married a royal princess, to a region called Lāta; there he founded his residence Sīhapura. While Vāṅga obviously refers to Bengal, the name Lāta, in connection with the hypothesis about the home-land, can be understood in two senses.⁴ Sīhabāhu (“lion-arm”) is described as being the son of a lion and a princess; after he killed his father, he was called Sīhala. Vijaya’s successors accepted this name as their ethnonym.

Furthermore we can learn from the *Mahāvaṃsa* that the island was inhabited by an aboriginal tribe of an unknown race who can presumably be identified with the ancestors of

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⁴ Cf. the discussion and the bibliography about the different hypotheses given in de Silva (1979), 16 ff.
the present-day Vedda people. The Veddas who are neither a Dravidic nor an Indo-Aryan tribe, still live, to a small extent, as hunters and gatherers. The chronicle informs us about intensive contacts between the first Sinhalese settlers and the aborigines up to the point of marriage (Vijaya himself took a yakkhini as his wife), as well as about close relations with Dravidic tribes from South India.

Soon after the immigration of the Sinhalese to Sri Lanka manifold contacts with different regions of India started to develop. To a certain degree, these relations must have influenced the Sinhalese language. In particular it is likely that the contacts with Tamil which lasted for many centuries left considerable traces; however, so far these interferences have scarcely been investigated.

0.2.2. The language of the immigrants was a MIA dialect which essentially developed in the same way as the MIA vernaculars of the mainland. At the end of the MIA period, Sinhalese Prakrit had reached a typical Apabhramśa state which is called “Proto-Sinhalese”. The linguistic categories of Sinhalese achieved their modern form at the beginning of the 8th c., i.e. on the threshold of the stage which GEIGER called “medieval”.

0.3. The abundant early attestations of Sinhalese history have no comparable counterpart on the Maldivian side. The official historiography starts with the year 1153 A.D. which is considered to be the beginning of the conversion of the Maldives to Islam. From this time on a national chronicle was written in Arabic, the so-called Tāriḥ (“history”), the original manuscript of which was destroyed in 1752 during a firestorm in Māle. Apart from that, the periods of rulership of the sultans and sultanas, as well as a few important historical facts, were listed in a short chronicle written in Dhivehi, the so-called Rādavali, which means “chronicle of the kings”. At present, three manuscripts of the Rādavali have been found in Māle, but it can be taken for certain that originally there were more variants of the text.

0.3.1. With islamisation, the Maldives became an independent sultanate. They officially kept this status even during the colonial age under the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. While the Portuguese period (1558-73) was characterised by an enormous brutality, the relations with the Dutch were based on an initiative which was taken by the Maldives themselves; their only obligations consisted of an annual tribute which was paid from 1645 on. From 1754 until 1759, the Maldives voluntarily delivered themselves under the protection of the French who were asked for help against the permanent assaults of Malabar pirates. In 1796 together with Ceylon, the Maldives became a British colony; the only result of this

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2 In the 14th c. there were three de facto sultans; in the middle of the 18th c. a nominal sultana was on the Maldivian throne.
eldest son of the legendary Sinhalese king Sīhābāhu, prince-regent Vijaya, was of evil
conduct and became a robber; therefore, he was cast out by his father. Vijaya and his male
followers, as well as their wives and children, were provided with three ships. These ships put
to sea and landed on different islands. The island where the women landed was called
Mahilādīpaka (Pali lit. "woman-island"; mahilā- "woman" + dīpa- ← dvīpā- "island" +
suffix -ka).

Obviously, the Arabic name of the Maldives islands which was used in the Middle Ages by
several Arabic travellers and geographers, was derived from the Pali form Mahilādīpaka as
well. The first author who mentioned the Maldives is Yaqūt (1179-1229) who under the name
of al-dībāgāt refers to about one thousand islands, some of them inhabited, close by each
other in the middle of the Indian Ocean. The first extensive description of the Maldives
was given by the traveller Ibn Batūtā (1304-1377) who calls the islands ḡūbat al-mahāl.

It cannot be decided with certainty whether the toponym of the Maldives has to be
understood as "island(s) of the women" in the sense of the Pali chronicle. Probably the first
part of the word represents a linguistic phenomenon which is called a "popular etymology";
nevertheless, the derivation of the second part from OIA dvīpa- through MIA dīpa- "island"
is with no doubt correct.

0.4. If it is true that the toponym Mahilādīpaka refers to the Maldives, the report on a
simultaneous departure of three ships from the home country and their respective landing on
different islands, as given in the Mahāvamsa, deserves a special interest. On the one hand, the
question arises at what time the first migration of Indo-Aryans to the Maldives took place. On
the other hand, we may wonder whether the first immigrants came directly from mainland
India or via Sri Lanka. If the legend as told in the Mahāvamsa is not purely invented, it could
be taken as an indication that the first Indo-Aryan colonists who travelled to the Maldives
arrived there at the same time as those who, coming from India, settled in Sri Lanka. Furthermore,
this would imply that Dhivehi and Sinhalese are "sister languages" which developed
from a common Prakrit ancestor.

As to the questions concerning the immigration, there is no written tradition at all on the
Maldivian side so that we have to rely upon other information. In the given case, the explanatory
quality of historical-comparative linguistics is of special interest. With the help of the
exact methods of a historical linguistic comparison which, in a few auspicious cases, can be
completed by extralinguistic data, it is possible to gain at least a very fragmentary insight into
the early periods of Maldivian history which cannot be gained in any other way. An intensive
cooperation between philologists and archeologists will be indispensable for this task, but
until a short time ago, there were neither the necessary financial means nor a real interest in

Yaqūt ibn 'Abdallāh ar-Rūmī: Muğam al-buldān. 2nd vol., Bārut 1979, 495.

Voyages d'ibn Batūtā. Texte arabe, accompagné d'une traduction par C. Defremery et B.R. Sanguinet-

For the derivation of the word dīvehi meaning "Maldivian", lit. "island-inhabitant, islander" cf. 1.3.9.5
and 2.6.23.1.4. The spelling dhivehi with initial (dh) as used in the official transcription in the Maldives does
not reflect an aspirated consonant (for the general loss of aspirates cf. 1.3.1) but marks the dental stop /l/ as
against the retroflex /l/ spelled (/d/). Within this spelling system, the dental stops are generally marked by an
additional /k/.
saving the remnants of the pre-Islamic era on the Maldivian side. In the most recent past, however, the common and the official opinion has changed; nowadays, a strong interest in the non-Islamic period is arising.

Before they were converted to Islam, the Maldivians were Buddhists. Under the ground of many islands there are ruins of Buddhist temples which are still awaiting excavation. A few monuments that have already been uncovered — in most cases in a very unprofessional way13 — bear vivid testimony to this epoch of Maldivian history. As to the possibility of serious archeological investigations, no more time must be wasted because of the permanent erosion of the monuments which is caused by the equatorial climate. Until now, no written documents of the Buddhist period of the Maldives have been discovered. Thus, for lack of evidence, the pre-Islamic history of the Maldivian archipelago remains practically unknown.

0.5. As was mentioned above, the time following the conversion to Islam, at least with respect to the regnal years and the names of the sultans, is documented without interruption. There are also some older documents written in Dhivehi, but the limited number of the texts which have been preserved cannot compete in any way with the rich tradition of Sinhalese.

0.5.1. The early Dhivehi texts are written in a script named Dives akuru (“Maldivian script”), the oldest type of which is called Evéla akuru (lit. “script of that time”14). It is quite obvious that this syllabary must be related to the medieval Sinhalese script; like the latter, it must be classified as a subtype of a southern Brāhmī cursive. Among the oldest texts we find some inscriptions in Evéla akuru on three statues belonging to the National Museum in Māle (approximately from the 12th / 13th c., still unedited), as well as some decrees on copper-plates (lomāfámus) issued by the early Islamic rulers, the earliest ones dating from the late 12th c. Until now, eight copper-plate documents have come to light, each of them consisting of several (up to 50) plates; some of them are in a very bad condition, though, and practically undecipherable. The latest plates must be dated in the 14th c. Two of the lomāfámus, which are in a better state, have recently been edited by representatives of the “National Centre for Linguistic and Historical Research” in Māle in cooperation with members of the Department of Sinhala of the University of Colombo; in many respects, however, the quality of these editions does not satisfy scientific requirements.15

In form, the copper-plates are an imitation of palm leaves, which were the typical writing material of the whole region until recently. While the art of writing on palm leaves is still practised in Sri Lanka by a few professional calligraphers, it has been completely lost in the Maldives. There is good reason to believe that real palm leaves were used as a writing material in the Maldives in older times as well; the extremely humid and hot climate there...

13 Thor Heyerdahl’s expeditions and excavations, as attested particularly in his book “The Maldivian Mystery” (London 1986), do not meet any scientific requirements. To a large extent, his conclusions about the prehistory and the Buddhist period of the Maldives are pure illusion. — A special article on this subject is just being prepared by the author of this book.

14 Dem.pron. e “that”; vēla “time”; akuru “script”.

15 This is especially true for matters in historical linguistics. For further information cf. the material volume of this book, p. 215 f.
must have destroyed them in their entirety. Even the copper-plates show many traces of erosion.

The first lomafänu plates were discovered as late as 1922 during an expedition which was supervised by the British Archaeological Commissioner for Ceylon, H.C.P. BELL, who is also the author of the most instructive and complete survey on history, geography and ethnology of the Maldivian Islands which has ever been written and which, therefore, has not lost its importance until the present time. Furthermore, BELL collected the written documents of Dhivehi as far as they were available, and he even tried to analyse them with the active help of Maldivians. BELL himself had no knowledge of the Maldivian script and language.

0.5.2. Two comparatively extensive inscriptions in Dives akuru date from the middle of the 17th c. They are written on a wooden beam and a board and are now stored in the National Museum, Mâle. One of these inscriptions was provisionally published by BELL again (1940). Besides the inscriptive attestations, there are numerous manuscripts in Dives akuru written on paper (fakolu "leaf(piece)", i.e. "manuscript sheet") which date from the 16th up to the 18th c. Two of these texts were edited for the first time by BELL as well. One of the three Râdâvali manuscripts (cf. above) is also written in Dives akuru. Furthermore, there are approximately 20 epitaphs and memorial inscriptions in Dives akuru written on stone; most of them have not yet been edited (16th-18th c.). They are to be found in Mâle as well as in Midh and in Hitadû (Athâ-Atoll).

0.5.3. The written documents of the later period, to a larger extent consisting of decrees and official letters as well, are written in Têna, the right-to-left script which is still in use today. Têna obviously represents a mixed product of modified Dives akuru characters and Arabic elements. A curious phenomenon is the use of the Arabic digits for the first nine characters of the Maldivian alphabet. Typologically Têna is a mixture of a syllabary belonging to the southern Brâhmi type and an alphabetic script which strictly follows phonological criteria. It is not really known at what time this script emerged. It was used alongside Dives akuru for a longer period, until the latter was finally given up at the end of the 19th c. It is an interesting fact that in the south of the Maldives the old script was preserved much longer than in Mâle. Several documents from the 18th c. are already written in Têna (some of them have been published in Maldivian journals by members of the "National Centre" in Mâle; cf. above). Almost all of the numerous funeral and memorial stone inscriptions in Têna which date from the 18th up to the 20th c. (in Mâle, Fua’ Mulaku and in Gan, Hitadû and Midh, Athâ-Atoll) have not yet been edited. The most extended older text written in Têna is a complete manuscript of the Râdâvali which was published in Mâle in 1979. The oldest literary texts, in the proper sense of the word, that are available to us date from the end of the 19th c.

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1. Cf. the bibliography.
3. Cf. also in the material volume of this book.
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0.6. The small amount of linguistic studies (in a wider sense) that have been devoted to Dhivehi so far shows that there has been but little interest in this language. In most cases, Dhivehi is not even mentioned in general indological literature. Exceptions are R.L. Turner's "Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages" (1966, I/II), the new edition of G.A. Zografi's "Jazyki južnoj Azii" (1990) and C.P. Masica's survey "The Indo-Aryan Languages" (1991); the information about Dhivehi as given there does not exceed a few fragmentary notes, however. The amount of special literature having Dhivehi as its subject is very restricted as well. Only a few publications exist, some of them having a very popular character; their only value consists in the material they comprise. In most cases, studies of a more scientific character are not really informative either, and there are practically no works of reference.

0.6.1. Thus, the very first -- and still the only existing -- sketch of a Maldivian grammar which was published by W. Geiger at the beginning of the 20th century (1901-1902 and 1919), is very fragmentary. Geiger himself never had the opportunity to visit the Maldives; his contact with the language remained sporadic. When he was in Colombo in winter 1895-96, he had three short meetings with the Maldivian aristocrat and merchant A. Ehbram Didi Effendi who was the prime minister of the Maldivian Sultan and, at the same time, consul of the Ottoman Empire and who sojournd in Colombo at that time. The outcome of these meetings was a small vocabulary and some paradigms and sentences, which Geiger noted. Some time later, he was able to enlarge this very restricted material on the basis of an indirect correspondence with a native speaker of Arabic who had a certain knowledge of Dhivehi. As we should expect, the results of these hasty contacts were meagre and not free from mistakes. Because of his brilliant knowledge of the Sinhalese language, however, Geiger was able to publish at least a rudimentary grammatical sketch which has remained the only printed grammar of Dhivehi until now; its English version was reprinted in unchanged form in 1986 in Male. In the German original, the chapter on morphology comprises no more than 20 pages (35 pages in the English translation; the difference is mainly due to the printing fonts used, not by an enlargement of information).

0.6.2. Besides this, Geiger (1902) published a small etymological vocabulary of 435 words which has also remained the only publication of its kind so far. There exists no dictionary yet which could be used for reliable reference. The word list of the French seafarer Pyrard de Laval who sojourned in the Maldives in the 17th c. (Pyrrard/Gray 1878), as well as the vocabulary compiled by the British officers J. Wilson and W. Christopher in the 19th c. (Wilson/Christopher 1841) have a certain value for the solution of some problems concerning the historical phonology of Dhivehi, but beyond that their importance is marginal. Some modern glossaries which contain very incomplete collections of the colloquial vocabulary of the modern standard language (partly with mistakes) are of a restricted usability as well (Mite 1986; Shishido 1983; Disanayaka/Maniku 1990). Quite recently, a monolingual dictionary covering 16 volumes appeared in Male (NCLHR 1985-91; ca. 125 handwritten pages per vol.); it contains so many examples of inaccuracy, however, that its compilers

19 Cf. the list given in Fritz (1993), 15 ff. For further bibliographical information cf. the bibliography.
(members of the “National Centre for Historical and Linguistic Research”, Mâle) already begun thinking about a new edition before this project was finished.

0.6.3. Three articles by the Sinhalese philologist M.W.S. DE SILVA (1969, 1970a, 1970b) must be considered as the first efforts to investigate Dhivehi on the basis of modern linguistic methods. DE SILVA for the first time tried to elucidate and to explain the relationship between Dhivehi and Sinhalese. The same goal was aimed at by a team of Sinhalese and Maldivian authors who compiled an (unpublished) study finished in 1988 (HLSD 1988) which comprises a small collection of phonological, morphological, syntactical and lexical correspondences between Dhivehi and Sinhalese; the final conclusions about the genetic relation of the two languages, which are based on poor material and contain many mistakes, do not meet scientific criteria.

0.6.4. The increasing interest of the Maldivians in their own language, history and culture which can be observed nowadays manifests itself in the periodical Fattâra which contains articles about Maldivian history and literature, including literary products of contemporary Maldivian original writers as well as translated texts. In Fattâra we also find some articles about lexical and morphological questions concerning the Dhivehi language.

0.6.5. The philological studies of the Maldivian scholar HASSAN AHMED MANIKU deserve special interest. Most of his publications are dedicated to the cultural and linguistic heritage of the Maldives (MANIKU, 1988-1989). In more recent times, Dhivehi was the subject of an article on the expression of the passive voice and a provisional “Pre-Publication Draft” of a planned “Grammatical Sketch of Dhivehi” by B. CAIN (1995 / 1992) and two articles by the author of the present book (FRITZ 1989-1990 and 1993).

0.7. The question concerning the approximate time of the first Indo-Aryan migration to the Maldives, which is regarded as a substantial problem by many Maldivians, has yielded two contradictory theses which have to be discussed here.

0.7.1. Although GEIGER’s studies about Dhivehi represent the foundation stone of any scientific linguistic investigation into this language, the material he collected did not suffice to judge the “degree of relationship” of Dhivehi and Sinhalese. As to the presumptive period of the Indo-Aryan migration to the Maldives Islands, GEIGER’s basic assumption can be proved to be wrong. Relying himself on the prejudice that Dhivehi must be a dialectal offspring of Sinhalese, he concluded that the splitting time was not earlier than the 10th c. A.D. This, however, would imply a real exodus from Sri Lanka to the Maldives to have taken place in the middle ages. But there is no convincing reason why thousands of Sinhalese people should have given up their fertile home country in order to exchange it for the comparatively sterile Maldives Islands; the only imaginable motive for such an emigration could have been a war or an epidemic. However, whatever the reason of such a sudden and powerful colonisation of the Maldives might have been — the Sinhalese chronicle would certainly have mentioned it. But in fact there is not even a short note which could support GEIGER’s assumption. Ibn
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Battūta who in the 14th c. spent one year and a half in the Maldives working as a cadi, noted everything which seemed to be important to him; if the Maldives had been settled relatively recently, he would certainly have heard about that. And, last but not least, we should expect that the Maldivian chronicle, albeit giving more exact dates only from the year 1153 A.D., would have reported about such a sudden immigration at least in legendary form. Furthermore, the few Maldivian legends that refer to the pre-Islamic period do not contain any indications which speak in favour of a recent mass immigration. None of these extralinguistic arguments supports Geiger’s thesis, which, however, cannot be disproved by them either. Until there are serious archeological investigations that testify to an earlier settlement by Indo-Aryans, we have to look for other pieces of scientific evidence.

0.7.2. The Sinhalese philologist De Silva (1970b) published the hypothesis that the Maldives were colonised at the same time as Sri Lanka, by Indo-Aryan tribes who came from South India. According to De Silva, a first Indo-Aryan immigration, perhaps of a larger extent, could have taken place as early as the 5th or 4th c. B.C., the possibility of smaller migration waves during the following centuries, probably also from Sri Lanka, not withstanding. In this connection, the episode about the ship used by the women which lands on the island Mahilādīpaka, as reported in the Mahāvamsa, deserves a certain interest. It is not difficult to imagine that some of the ships that were on the way to Sri Lanka missed their original destination because of adverse winds or currents and thus landed on the Maldives. Comparable incidents are well known from the more recent past. Besides the attested cases of ships or boats from far away, driven off course, an enormous number of ships were destroyed by reefs surrounding the islands, which are hard to locate for navigators; many of these wrecks are still to be found around the Maldives. Over the last two-three centuries, several cases of crews who have had to stay in the Maldives after their vessels were broken are attested. Thus, the assumption that the first Indo-Aryan settlers might have reached the Maldives by accident, is not completely unfounded.

0.8. Jakob Grimm’s famous sentence according to which “our language is also our history” holds true for many nations and tribes. As to the special case of the Maldivians, the history of the language even represents the only possible basis for investigations into their prehistory. Both Geiger and De Silva built their respective migration theses on linguistic data. Geiger paid special attention to the common features of Sinhalese and Dhivehi, as far as they were known to him, while De Silva, without neglecting the importance of, looked particularly for features that distinguish the two languages. He tried to find divergences concerning the inherited categories as well as special developments in the field of areal typology. However, neither thesis is convincing in its present state; there being but a very small quantity of Dhivehi material at our disposal, neither Geiger’s nor De Silva’s thesis can be proved or disproved with certainty. Some facts, however, seem to speak in favour of the

22 Here, the question whether their original homeland was located in the northwest or in the northeast of the Subcontinent was left open by De Silva. In a later publication (1979) he considers the “Western hypothesis” as more probable.

assumption that Indo-Aryans might already have been present on the Maldivian islands for a certain period, perhaps even a long time before the 10th c. A.D. Neither Geiger nor De Silva were aware of the complicated dialectal situation that is to be found in the Maldives. If they had had the opportunity to investigate more than the standard language, which represents the dialect of Māle, and if they had been able to compare more than only some isolated elements of this particular idiom with Sinhalese, Geiger’s model would be less rigid and De Silva’s arguments more effective.

0.8.1. Despite some other errors and misleading conclusions, De Silva, when regarding the historical-phonological development of Dhivehi and Sinhalese, discovered two essential features that speak in favour of a very early dialectal separation of the two languages.21 The first feature concerned is the development of the OIA glide /yl/ which in initial position is preserved as /l/ in Sinhalese while it is represented by /d/- in the same position in Dhivehi without exception (e.g., Sinh. yanâva vs. Dhiv. (M.) danī “to go” ← OIA yâti “goes”). This sound law would be less decisive if the dialectal differentiation could not be traced back to the MIA period. The second important phonological divergence is not as archaic as the one just mentioned. It consists in the different development in Dhivehi and Sinhalese of the OIA and MIA affricates.25 All the other divergences (some of them great) between the phoneme systems of the two insular languages can be assigned to the modern Indo-Aryan epoch only; some of these, however, are already attested in the oldest Maldivian texts (12th c., cf. above). Considering phonological features only, the amount of material which I had the opportunity to study leaves us no doubt that Geiger’s thesis is wrong. His assumption that the first Indo-Aryan settlers of the Maldives came from Sri Lanka and arrived no earlier than the 10th c., can no longer be maintained. In morphology, as well, there are many significant differences between Old Dhivehi and the Sinhalese language of the late medieval period, i.e. the early form of Classical Sinhalese. It is quite improbable that the fundamental morphological differences which characterise some verbal categories might have developed within one or two centuries only, as Geiger’s temporal framework considering the assumed “splitting off” of Dhivehi would imply.26

0.8.2. A striking typological difference between Dhivehi and Sinhalese is met with in the structure of the numeral system. Until the most recent past, Dhivehi disposed of a complete duodecimal system which was still in use at the beginning of the 20th c. This system which was characterised by special lexical items based on calculating operations with duodecimal numbers, determined all weights and measures, as well. In contrast to that, there are no attestations of a particular duodecimal system in Sinhalese in any period of its well documented history. However, apart from the obviously dominating duodecimal system, decimal numbers have always existed in Dhivehi, attestations being found already in the old texts. In all dialects, the duodecimal numbers have been replaced by the decimal numbers the system of which shows many innovations as to the formation of the numerals. Some of the more

1 For details cf. 1.7.
2 Cf. 1.
3 Cf. Geiger (1919), 100: “In one word, Maldivian must have separated from Sinhalese at a time when the latter had already, in respect of sound, assumed the form which it has at present. And this, as I think I have proven, was about the year 900 A.D.”
archaic Maldivian decimal numbers obviously represent prakritis\textsuperscript{27} which are not attested in Sinhalese; they are of particular interest here.

0.8.3. Regarding the lexical items that were borrowed from Sinhalese into Dhivehi, the Sinhalese language with its unbroken written tradition can be used as chronological parameter. Even though thorough investigations of Sinhalese loanwords in Dhivehi have not yet been undertaken, it is to be expected that the respective diachronical layers of Sinhalese loanwords in Dhivehi reflect different stages in the phonological development of Sinhalese; furthermore, depending on the time when the Sinhalese words were borrowed into Dhivehi, they will also reflect some of the particular sound changes that are exclusively characteristic for Dhivehi. Thus, it is possible that a systematical historical investigation into the Sinhalese loanwords will not only inform us about the intensity and the effectiveness of (bilingual) contacts in the course of time, but will perhaps even allow us to draw our conclusions concerning the chronology of the migrations from Sri Lanka to the Maldives.

0.8.4. Despite the more extensive research work that has been devoted to Dhivehi in recent times, and its results which also elucidate parts of the history of the language, it is still too early to decide with certainty whether Dhivehi and Sinhalese developed at about the same time from a common Prakrit ancestor which would allow to call them “sister languages” in the literal sense of the word, as proposed by DE SILVA. We cannot disprove the opposite assumption that Dhivehi might represent a “daughter language” of Sinhalese which split off from it in prehistorical time; it is clear, however, that this time must have been much earlier than GEIGER supposed.

0.9. The relationship between Dhivehi and Sinhalese is not only the most important objective when the history of the language is concerned, but also an indispensable means for judging the evolutionary background of certain dialectal phenomena occurring in Dhivehi. Within this framework it is necessary to regard the diglossia which characterises all levels of contemporary Sinhalese. The modern written language is interwoven with many influences from the earlier stages of the literary language, from poetry as well as from classical prose; furthermore, a permanent infiltration of loanwords (often in the function of mots savants) from Sanskrit, Pali and Classical Sinhalese can still be observed nowadays. Apart from that, from the point of view of morphology, syntax and stylistics as well, the modern written language is heterogeneous. This can be explained by the parallel use of different diachronical strata which causes the great variety of concomitant stylistic levels we find in the written language. In contrast to this, the colloquial language is characterised by manifold simplifications both in morphology and syntax as well as comparatively reduced stylistic means of expression. The highly developed diglossia we observe in Sinhalese is typical only for languages with a long and popular literary tradition. Thus, a language like Dhivehi with its relatively meagre literary resources is likely to exhibit a completely different picture. Concerning its vocabulary.

\textsuperscript{27} Within the given context the term “prakritism” is to be understood in the sense of a “loanword from a MIA language”. In Old Dhivehi prakritisms, in correspondence with sanskritisms, were used as mots savants (in the written language).
its grammatical categories and its stylistic possibilities, however, Dhivehi is not a “poor” language at all, given its abundant dialectal variation on the one hand and its rich tradition of oral folklore on the other hand. It is written poetry of any kind, however, which has developed only recently as a new literary category and which has remained confined to the standard language.

0.9.1. The speakers of Dhivehi are scattered all over a vast area, the geographical circumstances preventing them from being in very close contact with each other. This situation has resulted in a remarkable dialectal differentiation. The archipelago which consists of ca. 1200 islands, ca. 200 of them inhabited, covers a distance of 885 km from north to south. If we take Minicoy (Maliku) into account, an island now belonging to India which is situated at the northern end of the Maldivian archipelago where Dhivehi is spoken as well, the Maldives extend to a length of about 1000 km. The numerous subdialects are divided into two main groups: a northern and a southern one. The latter is restricted to the three southernmost atolls with the traditional names Huvadü, Fu‘ Mulaku and Addu. There are some considerable differences between the particular subdialects of the south. The dialectal divergences between North and South Dhivehi are of such a quality that northern Maldivians can hardly understand the southern dialects. The opposite is much easier since the Målé standard language has become widespread. The northern dialect group which extends from the Haddummai (Lâm) Atoll in the south up to Minicoy, is very homogeneous. The dialect of Målé is a typical representative of this group.

0.9.1.1. It has been observable during the last years that the active knowledge of the unwritten dialects is getting lost in favour of an increasing competence of the standard language. The fact that the standard language is used in education and administration all over the atolls is not the only reason for this development; the role played by the mass media, television and radio which broadcast from Målé all over the islands, is gaining more and more importance.

0.9.1.2. In many respects, the dialects of Dhivehi represent different diachronical stages in the development of the language. Especially in the field of morphology, the amount of archaic features steadily increases from north to south. Within the three southernmost atolls, the dialect of the Addu islands which form the southern tip of the whole Maldivian archipelago, is characterised by the highest degree of archaicism. Thus, the different classes of verb conjugation and nominal inflection are best preserved there, morphological simplifications and, as a consequence, irregularities increasing from atoll to atoll towards the north. From a strictly morphological point of view, the southern dialects which are still very rich in forms correspond more to Classical Sinhalese than to northern Dhivehi which has lost many forms and even complete morphological categories. On the other hand, the northern Maldivian dialects, including the colloquial standard language, can be compared with colloquial Sinhalese, the morphology of which has also undergone considerable reductions.

2 The modern official names are: Gãf-Allâf / Gãf-Dûl Atoll, Nâviyâni (Gurâviyâni) Atoll and Sîr Atoll.
0.9.1.3. As is to be expected, the dialects also show many differences in their vocabularies. In many cases different etyma are used for the same concept. But there are also divergences concerning whole systems. A very prominent example are the personal pronouns where, to a large extent, the northern and the southern dialects show different etyma.

0.9.1.4. In phonological development the interdialectal differences are less significant. As a rule, the vowel system of the standard language is more conservative than that of the southern dialects, while the latter show some archaic features in their consonant system which are not to be found in North Dhivehi (any longer). Some of the phonological divergences between the northern and the southern area can be regarded as archaic.

0.9.1.5. Comparative syntax does not reveal any systematical differences between the dialects. The most decisive point of Maldivian syntax consists in the question whether a sentence contains a finite verb or not. The basic clause structure depends on this predisposition. In comparison with the significance of this main rule, the other syntactical rules play a subordinate role only.

0.9.2. A special development of Dhivehi which is very peculiar from a typological point of view, is confined to the standard language. While the expression of the social status, on the one hand, and politeness, appreciation, despise, intimacy and respect for older people, on the other hand, is not unknown to the languages of the Subcontinent in general, the hierarchical system we find in the traditional language of Mâle is unique within the languages of South Asia for different reasons. The pure existence of three formally differentiated social degrees alone would not be surprising as such within the areal context. But, in contrast to the other Modern IA languages, the Maldivian language perfectly reflects the threefold system of social status which originally consisted of commoners (1st honorific degree), nobles (2nd degree) and the king and queen, nowadays replaced by the president and leaders of institutions (3rd degree). In standard Maldivian the expression of hierarchy is strictly organised and completely formalised, the social status being represented by the three honorific degrees as indicated. The language of Mâle is the only modern IA dialect where all personal pronouns, including the first person, are systematically distinguished according to the status of the respective person. Thus, all forms are inambiguously marked, which includes that the relation of the particular forms to the respective social level is straight-forward and unchangeable. It is neither possible to change the stylistic level in order to express more intimacy or distance, nor are there any special forms that refer to a hierarchy of age. The primary criterion of this system consists in differentiating status and nothing else: All kind of communication depends on the social rank, acquired by birth, of the speaker, the addressee and third persons referred to. Politeness is important but has no influence on the choice of the respective pronoun.

The expression of status is not restricted to the pronominal system, however. Thus, nouns are integrated into the hierarchical order by help of two special suffixes. Even the use of particles depends on the common status criteria. One of the most remarkable features consists.

27 Cp., e.g., the phonematic difference between *l̪ul̪* and *l̪ul̪* as preserved in the southern dialects as against the uniform *l̪ul̪* appearing in North Dhivehi; cf. 1.3.7.
28 Cp. M. *hi* vs. A.F. *hel* as described in 1.3.7.2.
in a very strict, hierarchically organised verbal system. Three verbal levels are expressed mainly by causative formations, partly also by lexical means.

The systematic use of the honorific levels has always been a special feature of the capital and its sphere of influence, where the differentiation of the three status classes was an omnipresent phenomenon. Nowadays the significance of the threefold social splitting is losing importance even here, though, which corresponds with a decreasing competence for the honorific system of the language. The sociolect of the sultan's palace ('palace language') which represents the most elevated level from the stylistical point of view, is almost forgotten now, because the courtly lifestyle has disappeared. In the southern Maldives where the society has always been more homogeneous, there are even no traces whatsoever of a comparable linguistic differentiation.  

0.10. The primary goal of the present grammar consists in a detailed comparative description of the morphology of the main dialects of Dhivehi. Furthermore, without a solid knowledge of the morphological relations it would be impossible to give a correct phonological description, because there are many morphonological processes that play an important role in Modern Dhivehi.

From the morphological point of view, the dialect of Addū is the most conservative one. It is of a special interest because of the high degree of regularity and transparency of its forms. A good knowledge of the morphological system of the Addū dialect helps to judge and to explain many of the (secondary) developments of the other dialects which seem to be irregular; this is especially true for modern northern Dhivehi which shows a comparatively reduced morphology. Furthermore, without the morphological background of the Addū dialect, it would be difficult to establish the syntactical function of the oblique case in the standard language, because this inherited case form has almost completely been lost there, while in the southern dialects it is preserved not only as a syntactical factor but, to a certain extent (especially in the pronominal system), also as a morphological unit. The dialect of Fua’Mulaku which essentially corresponds with that of Addū in the manifestation of the formal categories, at the same time shows many morphological peculiarities that are characteristic for northern Dhivehi. As a result of these overlaps, the dialect of Fua’Mulaku is less transparent from the formal point of view. With respect to morphology, the dialect of Huvadū is a more typical representative of southern Dhivehi. With regard to the phonology, however, there are some special developments that are characteristic for Huvadū alone.  

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1 The Maldivian honorific system will be the subject of a separate study which at present is under preparation. In it, the phenomenon will be treated within an enlarged areal context.
2 Depending on the (mainly temporal) circumstances of my research stay in 1993, I had to concentrate primarily on the two southernmost dialects as well as on the standard language. The material I could collect from Huvadū is relatively restricted and, as a consequence, my Huvadū database is much smaller than the other data collections. Therefore, the dialect of Huvadū plays only a small role within the framework of this book.
Phonology

1. The sound system

Except for some special developments, the sound system of Dhivehi can be regarded as typical for a South Indian language. Among the characteristics common to Modern Indo-Aryan languages, the Maldivian phonemic inventory shows an opposition of long and short vowels, of dental and retroflex consonants as well as of single and geminate consonants, furthermore diphthongs and nasalised vowels (the latter having a phonemic value only in the dialect of Fua‘ Mulaku, cf. below). There are three peculiar features that Dhivehi shares with Sinhalese, viz. the complete loss of the aspirated consonants, the emergence of prenasalised stops and, finally, considerable vowel changes as a consequence of umlaut-processes.

1.1. To illustrate these basic principles, a concise survey of the most important historical sound changes that are responsible for the phonological peculiarities of modern Dhivehi in comparison with its Sinhalese sister language is required.\textsuperscript{33} The essential changes occurred gradually, following an hierarchical order within the framework of a continuous process which affected and transformed considerable parts of the sound system.

1.1.1. With the other modern Indo-Aryan languages Dhivehi shares the fundamental sound changes that mark the beginning of this epoch, the earliest characteristics of which can be traced back already to late Middle Indo-Aryan times. For instance, it shows no long vowels in inherited words which could be derived directly from corresponding Old Indo-Aryan long vowels.\textsuperscript{34} In general, the long vowels of the modern language have emerged as a secondary result of the contraction of two originally short vowels after the loss of intervocalic consonants during the Middle Indian period.\textsuperscript{35}

1.1.2. Old Dhivehi as handed down in its earliest written documents,\textsuperscript{36} the lomāfānum, had only open syllables. From the fact that there were no closed syllables, it follows that the prenasalised stops have to be considered as monophonemic (cf. 1.3.4); this coincides with the fact that they were never written as sequences of nasals + stops. The writing rule also implies that there were no consonant clusters in Old Dhivehi (cf. 1.3.8). In the language of those days, the contemporary (nominal and verbal) consonant stems (cf. 2.3.1.3) still ended in -ar, e.g. ratsa “island, land” (attested since L1 [f/2,1]; today M. [ra‘] (raʃ) or enk “one” (attested since L3 4/1.5; today M. [eʃ] (ek)), koʃu “having done, made” (attested since L1 [d/1,2]; today M. [koʃ] (koʃ)). The question whether the same rule applied to southern Dhivehi in ancient times as well, or whether we have to assume a dialectal differentiation

\textsuperscript{33} For a treatise of some general features of the historical phonology of Dhivehi, cf. FRITZ / GIPPERT (2000). 139-152.

\textsuperscript{34} Cf., e.g., MASICA (1991), 189. – For concrete Dhivehi examples cf. 1.2.1.

\textsuperscript{35} For examples cf. 1.2.1.3.

\textsuperscript{36} For the different types of documents cf. introduction, 0.5.1 and furthermore vol.ii. of the present book.
similar to that of nowadays,\textsuperscript{37} cannot be answered with certainty, because all linguistic
documents were written in the standard language.

1.1.3. The history of Dhivehi – as far as it is attested by written documents – shows that final
-\textit{u} in the position after voiceless consonants, nasīls and \textit{l} tended to be apoeocopated more and
more in the course of the centuries, while it was conserved after retroflex and voiced consonants.
As a result of this development, in modern Dhivehi only the consonants \textit{nl}, \textit{ls}, \textit{kdl}, \textit{lul}
and \textit{l}s \textleft\textit{hu} can be found in final position. While \textit{nl} in final position is articulated as a velar
\textit{g} in all dialects (e.g. \textit{mihun} \textit{mihir} “people”\textsuperscript{38}), the other four consonants mentioned are
subject to considerable phonetic changes which for the most part vary from dialect to dialect.
The only phoneme that is realised homogeneously is \textit{l}-\textit{k} which phonetically occurs as glottal
stop [ʔ] in the whole Dhivehi speaking area. In the southern dialects, final \textit{l}-\textit{ul} has been
changed phonetically to [ʔ] as well,\textsuperscript{39} while in the standard language \textit{l}-\textit{ul} is realised as glide
[y] forming a diphthong with the preceding vowel; for this development cp., e.g., the \textit{casus
rectus} M. \textit{foil} in comparison with A.F. \textit{foi} “book”.\textsuperscript{40} In the dialect of Aḍḍū as well as
the standard language, final \textit{l}-\textit{sl} is pronounced as [ʔ] too, while we have to state a com-
pletely different development for Fua’ Mulaku where the phoneme \textit{sl} is never met with in
word-final position. Obviously, there was no tendency in this dialect to omit the following
vowel which, however, underwent some qualitative changes; cf. F. \textit{raśo} “island, land” vs.
M.A. \textit{raśi} \textit{raśi} (≤ \textit{raṭuśi}, attested since L1 [f/2.1]).\textsuperscript{41} While final \textit{l}-\textit{sl} remained unchanged
in the standard language and in Aḍḍū, the dialect of Fua’ Mulaku shows an allomorhic change
of \textit{l}-\textit{sl} to [h] in the same position, followed by a weakly articulated vowel which echoes the
vowel of the preceding syllable; cp., e.g., F. \textit{maha} with M.A. \textit{mas} “fish”.\textsuperscript{42} The Fua’
Mulaku dialect is peculiar with respect to final \textit{ll} as well, for it is the only dialect where this
consonant has been preserved to this day in its original phonetic quality (cf. 1.2.1.6).

It follows from these observations that [ʔ] has no phonemic value of its own. It only serves as an allomorhic
variant of the final consonants M.A.F. \textit{l}-\textit{kl}, A.F. \textit{l}-\textit{ul} and M.A. \textit{l}-\textit{sl}. It is important to draw attention to the fact
that this phonological function of the glottal stop has to be regarded separately from a pure phonetic
phenomenon typical not only for Dhivehi and Sinhalese, viz. the automatic articulation of a glottal stop [ʔ]
following inevitably every vowel in word-final position, which is a widespread phenomenon throughout
the South Asian languages; cp., e.g., the adjective M. \textit{bodu}, F. \textit{boīda}, A. \textit{boīda} “big”, which is pronounced \textit{[bodu]},
\textit{[boīda]’} and \textit{[boīda]}, resp. This kind of glottal stop has neither phonological nor morphological significance.

1.1.4. The nasal \textit{m}, which by apocope of the final -\textit{u} came into absolute final position, was
changed into -\textit{n} [g], but it remained \textit{m} within the paradigm when it was not final. A tendency
of changing -\textit{m} \rightarrow -\textit{n} can be noticed already in the earliest documents. Alongside \textit{kanu} “fact,
deed” which is attested in this form from L1 (d/2,3) up to the Tāna-period, the same word
was written in parallel \textit{kan}, which can be found as early as L1 (d0/1,5) as well; cf. also \textit{bim}
“earth, soil, ground, land” (F3,14; F6,11) with its variant bin which is attested in fakolus in the compounds binhai “share, portion of land” (F6,11; F8,23) and bingañā “id.” (F4,3). There can be no doubt that the spelling with final -u does not reflect the actual pronunciation, at least in later times; these forms must be explained as results of historical spelling instead.

1.1.5. Besides the apocope of final -u we have to deal with a syncope of medial -u- and -a- which took place under the same phonological conditions. There is much evidence for this process being as old as the ancient documents. Cp. the name of the island Isdā which often occurs as isu-duvu since L1 (u2,4), as against the variant form isu-duvu appearing in L2 (7,2) and L3 (12/1,3) which already shows syncope;¹³ the sibilant s in isdā was preserved because it belongs to the very few consonants in Dhivehi that are not omitted in final position (cf. 1.1.3 above). Cf. also the ancient word for “officer”, lit. “the one having received a task (to do)" which is attested in many documents as kama-gatti (L2 6,2; L6 2,4; F5,39,43; cf. also the plural kamugatūn-āi “and officers" in L5 5/1,4 as well as the indef. plural forms kamugattakun in L1 s/1,1 and kamugatyakun in L2 37,5), as against syncopated kam-gatti (L4 f/1,7 and g/1,1; indef. plural kamgatyakun “officers" in L3 3/2,1).⁴² On the other hand, all consonants which after the loss of the originally word-final vowels could not appear in final position themselves yielded geminates in syncope environments.⁴³ Cp., e.g., the contemporary name of the southernmost atoll, Addalā, which has to be derived through an intermediate form at-duvu (L4 a/2,4), syncopated from *ata/atu-duvu, lit. “eight-island-(atoll)"; cf. also the name of the island Todālā which is attested as tōdāvu (L2 11,2,3; L3 10/2,3) from *tōtu-duvu, approximately “ford-island". Another consonant that could not enter final position is t as in batteriā “rice man, rice farmer" which is attested in its genitive form written bat-veriāge (L2 28,3). Finally, the same kind of syncope is also responsible for the geminates that characterise the regular formation of causatives (cf. 1.3.9.12).

1.2. The vowels

1.2.1. The vowel system of modern Dhivehi is strictly symmetrical. It consists of five vocalic qualities which show a phonemic differentiation of quantity: a – ā, i – ī, u – ū, e – ē, o – ō. As was mentioned above, there are no inherited words with long vowels that could be derived directly from the corresponding long vowels of Old Indo-Aryan. Geiger (1938, 14-15) shows that the same process is valid for Sinhalese as well where the inherited long vowels merged with the short ones not later than the Proto-Sinhalese period, i.e., the 5th c. A.D.; cp., e.g., Sinh. gama, stem gam- “village" vs. Pa., Pkt. gāma-, OIA grāma-;⁴⁶ Sinh. nil “blue, green, dark" vs. Pa. nīla-, OIA nīla-⁴⁷, Sinh. dum- “smoke, steem" vs. Pa., Pkt.

¹³ For Dhiv. dū → duvu “island" cf. 2.6.2.3.1.4.
¹⁴ For gatā, gati part.pret. of gannant, originally meaning “to get", but nowadays meaning only “to buy": for more detailed information on this verb cf. 3.11.4.3. – For kom(a) cf. 1.1.5.
¹⁵ For details cf. 1.3.9.
dhūma-, OIA dhūmā- etc. Cp. the equivalent words of Dhivehi, gamu “village” (L1 1/1.4 etc.; L2 6; 3; L3 5/2.2 and 11/1.2; L4 e/2.2 etc.; in Modern Dhivehi only preserved in the island name Gan49), F. nil “blue” (vs. M.A. nū ← *niū ← nīl50), M.A.F. dun, i.e. [dug] ldmu, “smoke, steam”.

There are several words in the basic vocabulary of Dhivehi which show medial long vowels in accordance with long vowels of their correspondents in OIA and MIA. These must without doubt be classified as samskritisms or prakritisms, resp. Cp. A.F. vēla “time” with OIA vēlā- “limit, boundary, time” (cf. Turner 1966, II, 702, no. 12115); M. uiddōlī, A.F. uiddōli “typical Maldivian wing hanging from the ceiling inside the house” from OIA hindola- “wing, swing cradle” vs. Sinh. idolu-va “pulaukun, sedan”, Hi. hindol(ā);51 M.A.F. jōli “a baglike seat or wing outside the house” with OIA *jholā- “bag” (cf. Turner 1966, I, 299, no. 5415); M. dōni, A.F. dōni “boat, ship (of the common Maldivian type)” with Pkt. dōni- “boat”, ← OIA droñī- “wooden trough” (MBh.), vs. Pa., Pkt. dōna- ← drōna- (cf. Turner 1966, I, 379, no. 6641).

1.2.1.1. Long vowels in initial position are extremely rare in Dhivehi. No verb begins with a long vowel, and almost all nouns that show a primary initial long vowel can be explained as samskritisms such as M.A.F. ādīta “Sunday” (OIA ādītyā- “son of Aditi, name of seven deities, esp. of the sun”; Turner 1966, I, 52, no. 1153), or loanwords that obviously have been borrowed more recently such as M.A.F. īvu “roof tile” (probably from Hi. ī “id.”,52 cf. Pkt. īṭagā-, īṭā-, OIA īṭakā-; Turner 1966, I, 72, no. 1600); M.A.F. āda “habit, norm, rule” ← Arab. ādar “id.”, or M. ādar “order” ← Engl. order etc.

Only a few Dhivehi words that belong to the inherited vocabulary have a long initial vowel, which in most cases can be explained by contractions. This is true, e.g. for the long ē- of the personal pronouns of the 3.ps.sg., ēti “it” and ēnā “he, she”, of the standard language which obviously developed by a merger of the demonstrative e “that” with a noun (ēti ← e+etī “that thing”, cf. 2.6.2.5.1.1; ēnā ← e+V(?)nā, cf. 2.6.2.5.3). — Other examples can be explained by assuming the loss of a consonant between vowels: cf. A. ā53 “rope, thread, cord” ← *(h)u(v)jū vs. Sinh. hulā, stem hulihā- “id.” ← Pkt. sāya-, Skt. sāta- “id.”,54 or M.A.F. īru ← *(h)u(v)jūr “pig” vs. Sinh. (h)ūrā, stem (h)ūr “id.” ← Pkt. sāura- ← OIA

49 Cf. Geiger (1941), 78, no. 1161; Turner (1966) I, 392, no. 6849.
50 Gan is the name of the southernmost island of the Aḍḍu-Atoll as well as the name of an island in Haddumunnil (= Lom-) Atoll. — For the change of final -m → -n cf. 1.1.4.
51 For the change of -l → -r cf. 1.2.1.6.
53 Although it might seem dubious that Dhivehi could have received direct loans from Hindi or Urdu, it is highly probable that the source of Dhiv. īvu has to be seen in Hi. ī. The retroflex /ḷ/ shows that the word has been borrowed only recently, because otherwise /ḷ/ would have changed to /ḷ/ in all dialects except Huvadu. As in many other cases, the word seems to have been imported together with the real e it denotes. Roof tiles and normal tiles were unknown in traditional Maldivian architecture and have come into a limited use very recently only; they were imported from India and Sri Lanka. The traditional building material was produced from plants (mostly from the coconut tree) and from coral stone. — Cp. also the common Sinh. word for “tile”, uḷu (e.g. uḷu kāḷaya “(roof) tile”) which cannot be the source of Dhiv. īvu; the etymology of uḷu is not clear, however, cf. Turner (1966), I, 77, no. 1681 and Geiger (1941), 29, no. 443.
54 Cf. also the case forms A. gen. re, dat. ēru-l-āṣ, abl. ēru-l-unl.
55 Cf. Geiger (1941), 193, no. 2915; cf. also Turner (1966) II, 781, no. 13561 s.v. OIA sāra- “id.”.
The vowels

For the initial long vowel of the presumably inherited numeral M.A.F. āhi "80" (cf. 2.5.1.4) there is no convincing explanation so far.

1.2.1.2. A special group among the words with initial long vowel is constituted by certain nominal i-stems in Aḍḍu and, to a much higher degree, in Fua’ Mulaku. There, the paradigmatic loss of the stem-final -i led to a transformation of the phonetic scope of the nouns in question. In most cases the characteristic trait of this process is the lengthening and subsequent accentuation of the root vowel. In the dialect of Aḍḍu, this morphonological process can be noted only sporadically, being restricted, besides a few exceptions, to single oblique case forms and to the definite and indefinite form only. In Fua’ Mulaku, however, it has spread throughout whole paradigms, resulting in the emergence of some nouns with initial long vowel. Cf. the nom. A. ali “ash” beginning with short a- as against the gen. A. āle with secondary lengthening of the initial vowel; in the Fua’ Mulaku equivalent of the word, this vowel spread, by analogy, not only to the nom. āli but to the whole paradigm (dat. alaha, abl. instr. alen); cf. furthermore F. thi “lobster” vs. M.A. thi. — The secondary lengthening of the root vowel is also attested in many i-stems with word-initial consonant, cf. A. nom.sg.def. mehā mehe-i-al “the fly”, fesā fesi-i-al “the box”, gen. fese fesi-el as well as F. nom.sg. mehi “fly”, fesi “box”, fis “small island, sandbank” (vs. A. nom. fis) etc.

1.2.1.3. Long vowels that appear in medial as well as final position in modern Dhivehi have mostly come about as a result of contraction of two (identical or different) short vowels. These vocative contractions must have occurred after intervocalic consonants of the MIA period had been lost. Cp., e.g., M.F. rā, A. (d)arā “fermented juice of the liquid taken from the palm-blossom, palm-wine, toddy” (Sinh. rā ← raha ← Pkt. rasa-, OIA rúsa- “sup or juice of plants; taste, flavour”); M. kis “saw”, F. kiha ← nom.def. *kis-ā through MIA kakaca- from Skt. cratera- “id.” (cf. the still uncontracted correspondent in the secondary i-stem A. kiñhi ← *kiñs-; for more details cf. 2.3.2.8.1.3); M. biru, A.F. biri “deaf”, Sinh. biri / bethri ← Pkt. bahira- ← OIA badhirā. “id.”; M.A. bēs, F. bēhe “medicine, medicament, drug” (← *bees ← behaja ← *besaja) corresponding to the Sinh. plural stem behet (with the final consonant being unvoiced) with beheta as a regular nom.sg. (besides nom.sg. beheeda, of the original stem behed- ← *besaja ← Pkt. bhesaja- “id.” ← OIA bhatasaja). The final long vowels and diphthongs of most of the nouns that constitute the group of “root nouns” in Dhivehi can also be traced back to vowel contraction which must already have taken place in an early period in this case: cp., e.g., A.F. ge (M. ge) “house” ← MIA geha- ← OIA gehā-; M. fai, A.F. fā “foot, leg” ← Pkt. pā(y)a- ← OIA páda- etc.

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1.2.1.4. A few examples of the dialects of Aḍḍū and Fua’ Mulaku show the tendency towards vowel contraction even today. Cp., e.g., A. nēdaru vs. M.F. niaduru “pomeio”; F. mēre vs. A. miara, M. miara “shark”, or F. lēnī, A. lēnāi vs. M. liāni “write”. The medial long vowel of indefinite infinitives which are used in negated sentences (cf. 5.5.4), have obviously developed in the recent past by contraction of two short vowels as well, after the -n- of the infinitive ending had been lost. Cp., e.g., the infinitives M. kuran “to do” and hadan “to make, build, create” with their indefinite forms kurāka’ and hadāka’ which most probably have to be derived from *kuran-ak-aś and hadan-ak-aś, resp.

1.2.1.5. In the case of some isolated words the final long vowel can be explained by assuming a merger of an originally short final vowel with the definite suffix, -ā; cp., e.g., A.F. kokkō (vs. M. kokko) “younger brother / sister” from *kokko-ā; A. bēbē (vs. M.F. bēbe) “elder brother” from *bēbe-ā (cf. 2.3.1.4).

1.2.1.6. In the standard language, the final long vowel appearing in the direct case of some nouns is conditioned by the loss of final -i which is characteristic for northern Dhivehi. In the remaining forms of the words concerned, ill was preserved wherever it was in medial position. In the standard language, the loss of final -i did not lead directly to a long vowel, however. Rather, we are dealing with a continuous process here, as the development of M. -el into -eo (but not -ē) shows. The abovementioned tendency is still more evident in the dialect of Aḍḍū where -l cannot occur in final position either. Here, final -l was vocalised both after a and e, leading to diphthongisation (-al → -au and -el → -eo). In the position after u and o, however, the merger of -l yields the corresponding long vowel (-ul → -ū and -ol → -ō), while the change from -il to -ū presupposes an intermediate *-iu. As opposed to this, the dialect of Fua’ Mulaku has conserved final -l even phonetically, as the following examples illustrate: /mall/ “flower, blossom” → M. mū, A. māu, but F. māl; /gal/ “stone, rock” → M. gā, A. gāu, but F. gāl; /lall/ “new” → M. ā, A. a, but F. al; /boll/ “hole” → M. bā, A. bāu, but F. bāl; /boll/ “head” → M.A. bō, but F. bōl; /koll/ “inner side of the cheek” → M.A. kō, but F. kōl; /loll/ “eye” → M.A. lō, but F. lōl; /mall/ “root” → M.A. mū, but F. mūl; /hil/ “blue” → M.A. nū ← *nū, but F. nīl; /lvei/ “every kind of creeper” → M. veo, A. veu, but F. vel; /lvei/ “oil” → M. teo, A. teu, but F. tel etc.

In the words M. hā, A. hau, F. haul “cock” and M. vā, A. vau, F. vaul “flying fox”, however, the final long vowel of the standard forms cannot be the result of a secondarily

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64 Cf. Sinh. liyamara “it.” (GEIGER 1941, 151, no. 2255).

65 It was only after the apocope of -u (cf. 1.1.3.), when closed syllables reappeared in Dhivehi, that ill could become a final consonant; e.g. mal ← *malu “flower”, bol ← *bulu “head” etc.

66 For examples cf. 1.2.2.3.

67 This phonetic change is not restricted to Modern IA languages; a comparable vocalisation of final -i is to be found in other languages as well, such as in South Slavonic: “Vokalische Sprachen weisen die Tendenz auf, Konsonanten zu vokalisieren. Am augenfälligsten geschieht dies im Serbokroatisch, wo silbenschließendes -i zu -u wird und wo altes sonantisches ü zu u wurde. Ebenso werden auch im Slowenischen, z.B. in der Aussprache von Ljubljana, die Endungen ‘Vokal plus i’ und -ev zu einem vokalischem u.” (A.V. ISAČENKO, Versuch einer Typologie der slavischen Sprachen, in: Linguistica Slovaca 1/2, 1939/40, 64-76.)
vocalised -l alone, as the vocalism of the corresponding Fua’ Mulaku forms haul and vaul show (not ‘hal, val). Here, the diphthong is based on a contraction (← *savulu / *savula; cf. Sinh. sāvul-ā “jungle cock, gallus lafayeti” which (with unexplained umlaut) has to be derived from OIA capala- “trembling, fickle” through Pkt. cavala-; cf. TURNER 1966, I, 253, no. 4672 and, for Sinh. vavul-ā “flying fox”, II, 675, no. 11584).

1.2.1.7. The vernacular of Fua’ Mulaku is the only Maldivian dialect that has phonemic nasal vowels. These vowels occur only in a very restricted area of the originally eight different local idioms which nowadays have merged together more and more. At present only some elderly persons speaking the subdialect in question still have the necessary competence for the inherited nasal vowels which – because of the increasing influence of the standard language – has been lost by younger people in the recent past.

An example of an inherited long nasalised vowel is provided by F. bāśni “eggplant”. īql here reflects the nasal consonant of OIA bhanṭāki- (TURNER 1966, II, 533, no. 9369). The reason for the lengthening of the root vowel (cp. M.A. baśni, Sinh. baṭu with short a) has to be seen in the morphophonological rule of i-stems which was mentioned above (cf. 1.2.1.2 and 2.3.2.8.1.4.2; cp. also Beng. bhaṭā). — A similar example is F. kāśi “thorn” vs. M.A. kaśi, Sinh. kāvu-va “id.” which corresponds to bāśni in its whole paradigm; it has to be derived from OIA kāntaka- “id.” (cp. Pkt. kaṇṭaa-; TURNER 1966, I, 133, no. 2668).

In the following examples, the nasal vowel is conditioned by a root-final nasal consonant: ānn “worm, caterpillar” vs. A. ānni, M. ānni; Sinh. pānu-va (← OIA prāṇaka- “living being, animal, worm”); F. bānn “bark” with nasal ā vs. A. bauni (the word has no equivalent outside the southernmost dialects). — The same condition applies to the final nasal vowel appearing in the present participle of numerous verbs which can be traced back to an original -n-. Examples are the a-stem F. nidā “sleeping” vs. A.M. nidā ← *nidana (but cf. the lengthened form nidāni where -n is preserved) or the e-stem F. rekē “avoiding, escaping” ← *rekena (long form rekeni “id.”).

There are many examples of nasal vowels whose occurrence is not easy to explain, neither on phonological nor on phonetic grounds. This is true, e.g., for F. kuddā “child” (← kudi-ā, sg.def., cf. 2.3.2.8.1.4.3); F. mūda- “ring, jewellery” (Sinh. muddu- “finger-ring”); Pkt. muddā-, OIA muddrā- “seal, signet-ring”; or F. bāzu “eagle, falcon” (← Pers. bāz “falcon, (gos-) hawk”). In the case of F. fāḥq “five” (M.A. fās), F. hā, hā “yes” (M.A. ḥā), F. ḥā “no” (besides M. ṇān, A.F. ṇān), F. fāḥ “if” (cf. A. fēhē) and F. mādaḥq adv. “tomorrow” (cf. M. mādama, A. mādama), we realise that the nasal vowel is preceded by h which might be responsible for a secondary nasalisation. — There are also verbal forms with nasal vowels that cannot be explained from a linguistic point of view, for example the ending of the absolutive of the e-stems which alternates between -i and -i, cf. the variant forms tenǐ and teni (abs. of temeni “get wet”).

— Cf. TURNER (1966) II, 501, no. 8929; GEIGER (1941), 93, no. 1383.
— For the terminology cf. 3.9.
— For the implied formation rules cf. 3.9.1.
— It remains possible that the nasal vowel of F. fāḥq “five” represents a direct reflex of that in OIA pānca (cf. 2.5.1.1).
— For details cf. 3.10.2.
The nasal vowel phonemes of Fua' Mulaku must be clearly distinguished from the common Maldivian trend to pronounce short or long vowels in a nasalised way when they precede the nasal consonant n; e.g., mihun “people” pronounced as [mihun]. Besides this, some speakers show a general tendency to a slightly nasalised pronunciation of vowels, irrespective of their phonological surrounding. Both these articulations represent purely phonetic phenomena, they have no bearing on the phonological system of the language.

1.2.2. In contrast to Sinhalese, Modern Dhivehi possesses true diphthongs which because of their apparently ambiguous character need a detailed examination. Basically, we have to distinguish phonemic diphthongs from numerous kinds of diphthongisations that represent the phonetic realisation (i.e. the pronunciation) of certain phonological structures but cannot be interpreted as diphthongs according to phonological rules.

1.2.2.1. The occurrence of phonemic diphthongs is restricted. There are only a few words which show an identical diphthong throughout the whole Dhivehi speaking area, with the diphthong remaining unchanged throughout the paradigm. Leaving aside obvious loanwords such as M.A.F. sai “tea” this is true for examples like M.A.F. māmū “honey” M.A.F. vai “wind”, M.A.F. gai “body” or M.A.F. oī “sea current”, the diphthongs of which are the result of a vowel contraction of former disyllabic units.

1.2.2.2. As a rule, phonemic au- and ai-diphthongs occur only in the southern dialects, however. In northern Dhivehi, the corresponding vowel is long monophthongic ā in both cases. Typical examples are F. haal, A. haal “cock” and F. vāl, A. vāl “flying fox” (M. equivalents hā and vā, cf. 1.2.1.6), the diphthong of which is based on a contraction of *au-, but also A.F. kāisi vs. M. kāsi “ripe coconut” (for cooking) and A.F. naisi vs. M. nāsi “coconut shell”. The diphthongs of these remain unchanged throughout the whole paradigm (cf. gen. A.F. haule, vaule; kāise, nāise). From an etymological point of view, however, the two latter examples cannot be judged in the same way as the divergent root vowels of the corresponding Huvadū-forms kauți “coconut” and noți “coconut shell” show.

1.2.2.3. The diphthong au as occurring in words of the type A. mau “flower, blossom” or gau “stone, rock” (vs. F. mal, gal and M. mā, gā; cf. 1.2.1.6) is of another origin than the homophone diphthong in the examples mentioned above. In the actual cases, au appears as the result of a vocalisation of a word-final -t; consequently it is nothing but a phonetic variant of -al in final position. It is important to note that -al is stable in the paradigm of the words

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34 Cf. e.g., the short notice in MASICA (1991), 116.
35 Cf. 2.3.1.5.
36 māmūi is most probably a compound consisting of (M.) mā “flower, blossom” and an independent word
37 mūi ~ Sinh. mū (stem) “honey” (cf. Geiger 1941, 135, no. 2012.).
38 For the etymology cf. 2.3.1.5.
39 For the etymology cf. 2.3.1.5.
40 The etymology of this word is unknown.
41 The etymology of this word is not easy to establish; cf. Turner (1961), I, 406, no. 7075 s.v. nārikēla-
42 “coconut palm and fruit” — In HLSL (1988), 31, M. nāsi is identified with a Sinh. word nātu “shell” whose
43 connection with Sinh. nātu-va “stalk of a leaf or fruit, petiole, pedicle” (cf. CLOUGH 1892, 273; SS 12, 1985,
44 5881) remains unclear.
in question (cf. gen. A.F. mali, gali). Examples like M. veo, A.F. veu lvell “every kind of creeper” and M. teo, A.F. teu lvell “oil” can be considered in the same way (cf. also 1.2.1.6).

1.2.2.4. In the standard language, word-final (phonemic) sequences of vowel + t/ are treated in the same manner: they are realised as (phonetic) i-diphthongs. In contrast to this, final l-t/ is articulated as a glottal stop [ʔ] throughout the southern dialects. Cp., e.g., M. dail vs. A.F. da’ ldat “tooth”, M. aii vs. A.F. a’ lat “hand, arm”, M. nakai vs. A.F. naka’ lnakal “lunar constellation”, M. fai vs. A.F. fa’ lfat “leaf”, M. foi vs. A.F. fo’ lfof “book”, M. goi, A.F. go’ lgof “way, manner”. This process also affects Arabic loanwords ending in -at; cp., e.g., M. naslhat “advise” ← Arab. naslhat “id.”. In medial position -t- remains unchanged in all these cases, e.g. gen.sg. M. fotuge, A. foté, dat. M.A. fot’ fotasl.

1.2.2.5. In the standard language there is an increasing tendency to pronounce the diphthong lai as a monophthongised lengthened vowel [īa]. As mentioned in HLSD, 11, this [ī] is further developing into [ē] in the northernmost atolls so that we find, e.g., [sē] and [fēvān] instead of M. [sāl] (A.F. sot “tea” and M. fāvūn) (A.F. faivūn) “shoe, sandal”. These cases must be distinguished from the development of original ai-diphthongs into M. -ā as in the locative suffix M. -gai (cf. 2.3.2.13) or in the formative of the “absolutive 1”, M. -fai (cf. 3.11.4.1 and 3.11.4.4), which are realised almost always as [gā] and [fā] today (cf. 1.2.4.3.).

1.2.3. Umlaut phenomena

In the prehistory of Dhivehi, the back vowels a, o and u of the first root syllable were changed into the front vowels e ← ā, e and i, when one of the following syllables contained the front vowel i or the glide y. These “umlaut” processes followed the same principles in Dhivehi as they did in Sinhalese (cf. GEIGER 1938, 13 ff.), although they were less effective in the Maldivian language. On the other hand, an interdialcatal comparison of Dhivehi shows that in the southernmost vernaculars there are more examples with umlaut than in the standard language.

1.2.3.1. The umlauting of a into e is the most frequent one. It is highly probable though not provable that the process went through an intermediate ā as in Sinhalese where we find ā still today. Cp., e.g., M.A. meh “then” (Sinh. dān “now”; Pa. (i)dāni, Skt. ṭānōm); M.A. meh “fly” (Sinh. māsi-ṃaṭi- “id.”; Pkt. maccīha-, OIA māṣikā- f. “fly, bee”); M. veo, A.F. veu /vev/ “watertank, artificial pool” (Sinh. vāv- “id.”; Pkt. vōvī-, OIA vōpi- “id.”); M. veo, A.F. veu lvell “every kind of creeper” (Sinh. vāl- “id.”; Pa., Pkt., Skt. vail- “id.”); M.A. fen “water” (Sinh. pān “id.”; Pa. pānīya-, OIA pānīya- “id.”); M. rē, A.F. rei “night” (Sinh. rē-, Pkt. rāī- ← rāti- vs. Pa. ratti-; OIA rāti-

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52 Neither Dives akara nor Tana provide a grapheme for the sound [ā].
53 Cf. GEIGER (1941), 74, no. 1085.
54 Cf. TURNER (1966), II. 554, no. 9696.
55 Cf. TURNER (1966) II. 672, no. 11529; GEIGER (1941), 162, no. 2415.
56 Cf. TURNER (1966), II. 666, no. 11429.
“id.”^68; M. medu, A.F. mede “mid(dle), centre” (Sinh. māda “id.”; Pa., Pkt. majha-, OIA mādhya- “id.”^69).

In contrast to Sinhalese, Dhivehi shows a comparatively large number of words containing a root vowel a which was not changed by umlaut under the given condition. Cp., e.g., maṣi “loam, clay” vs. Sinh. māṭi- (Pkt. māṭiyā-, Pa. māṭikā-, Skt. mṛṭikā- “earth, clay”^70) or M.A.F. fim “(coconut) treacle” vs. Sinh. pānī/pāṇi “treacle, molasses, honey” (Pa., Skt. phāṇita- “inspissated juice of sugarcane and other plants”, Pkt. phāṇiya- “treacle, molasses”^71).

1.2.3.1.1. From a morphonological point of view the a/e-umlaut plays an important role in verbal paradigms as well, viz. with a-stem verbs that have a as their root vowel. On the one hand, the a of the present stem opposes itself to e in the preterite stem; cp. present stems like M.A.F. bala- “look (at)”, jaha- “beat” and faṣa- “start, begin (to do something)” with their corresponding preterite stems M.A.F. beli-, jehi- and fesi-. The preterite participle of the a-stem verbs, identical in its form with the preterite stem, is formed with the suffix -i which through intermediate *-i goes back to OIA -ita; this suffix vowel i causes umlaut regularly.^72

The second morphonological function of the umlaut becomes apparent in the derivation of intransitive, inactive e-stem verbs from transitive and/or active a-stems with a as their root vowel. Here, both the a of the root and the stem marker are changed by umlaut; cf. faṣaṇī trans. “to start, begin (something)” vs. feṣenī intr. “to begin”, jahanī trans. “to beat” vs. jeheṇī intr. “to fall, hit”, the causative vaṭṭanī trans. “to let fall (something or somebody)” vs. vettenī intr. “to fall, be dropped”, faṭanī “to swim (actively, willingly)” vs. the inactive fetenī “to sink, drown (by floating)” etc.

1.2.3.2. There are only a few words that show umlaut-change of u to i throughout the Dhivehi speaking area. In comparison with Sinhalese, Dhivehi provides much fewer examples for this kind of umlaut. One of them is M.A.F. bin lbūn “earth, soil, ground” = Sinh. bim ← Pkt. bhūmi-, Pa. bhūmi-, OIA bhūmi-.^73 As a rule, u-umlaut is more widespread in the southern-most vernaculars, the corresponding words in northern Dhivehi having preserved u as their root vowel, which must be regarded as a conservative trait. Cp., e.g., M. muṣi vs. A.F. muṣī “fist” and the Sinh. stem mūtī “id.” ← Pa. matti-, OIA μωστί- “id.”;^74 M. kuli vs. A.F. kili “pond with fresh water”, and M. dūni vs. A.F. dīni “bird”.

1.2.3.2.1. There is but one available verb showing this type of u-umlaut, viz. M. divani as opposed to A.F. divani “to run” (with i in all forms). Here, too, the u of the root has remained unchanged in the standard language. The same holds true for Sinhalese which has

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^68 Cf. TURNER (1966), II, 619, no. 10702; cf. also 2.3.1.5.
^69 Cf. TURNER (1966), II, 563, no. 9804.
^70 Cf. TURNER (1966), II, 594, no. 10286.
^71 Cf. TURNER (1966) II, 510, no. 9070; GEIGER (1941), 103, no. 1523. – For the binary opposition of 郾 and 郾 in southern Dhivehi cf. 1.3.7.1.
^72 Cf. the table of a-verbs in 3.1.4.1.; for the derivation of the preterite participle cf. 3.9.2.1.
^73 Cf. TURNER (1966), II, 545, no. 9557.
preserved the back vowel u in the present stem duva-, while the preterite stem was changed by umlaut into divu- (← *divī). 95

1.2.3.3. Concerning the umlauting of o into e, Dhivehi does not show many examples either. Cp. M. lē “blood” vs. A.F. lei with a diphthong and Sinh. lē 96 (Pkt. lohiya- “red”, OIA lōhiya- “read, reddish substance, blood”). — In the case of M. dōnī, A.F. dōnī “boat, ship” vs. Sinh. deña “boat, canoe” the umlauting seems to have been omitted; but the Maldivian word rather represents a prakritism. 97 — Obviously there is not even one verb showing an umlaut-change of o into e (cf. 3.9.2.1).

1.2.4. A comparison of the Maldivian vernaculars reveals some more vocalic alternations which can only partially be regarded as regular. This holds true for the following variations:


1.2.4.2. in some cases southern Dhiv. e corresponds to M. u as a root vowel. Here, too, we observe that it is followed by a: M. nura – A.F. nera “grey hair”; M. durana – A.F. derana “ring made from rope”; M. huras – A.F. heras “across, horizontal”; M. furālu – A.F. ferāda “roof”.

1.2.4.3. A triadic correspondence of root vowels which occurs regularly is that of M. ā – F. ai – A. ei. It is represented in the pronominal adjective M. hà, F. hai, A. hei “all” and, as a second component, also in the demonstrative adverb M. ehā, F. ehai, A. ehei “so” and in the interrogative pronoun M. kihā, F. kihai, A. kihei “how” (cf. 2.6.7.4.3). Some further examples are M. velā, F. velai, A. velei “green water turtle”; M. pelā, F. pelai, A. kelei “sandal wood”; M. gurā, F. gurai, A. gurei “parrot”; M. furā, F. furai, A. furei “full” and probably the ending of the “absolutive l”, M. -fā, F. -fē ← *-fai, A. -fei. 98 In the given threefold correspondence, the diphthongs that occur in the southernmost dialects must represent an older pronunciation.

1.2.4.4. There are numerous examples that illustrate the correspondence of M. o – A. e, F. elē 99 Cp., e.g., M. atolu – A.F. atele “atoll”; M. toli – A. teli, F. tēli “bean”; M. goṇdi – A. goṇdi, F. gēṇdi “chair”; M. odi – A.F. vedē “type of (Maldivian) ship”; M. dolī –

95 For the etymology of this verb cf. GEIGER (1941), 79, no. 1175 and TURNER (1966) I, 284, no. 5168 s.v. *pitiya “hastens”.
96 For the uncontracted variant lehe “blood” cf. GEIGER (1938), 86. For the etymology cf. TURNER (1966) II, 650, no. 11165.
97 For details cf. 1.2.1 above.
98 For details cf. 1.2.2.3 above.
99 The long vowel ĕ of some nominal i-stems is caused by paradigmatic circumstances; cf. 2.3.2.8.1.4.2.
Phonology

A.F. deght “front part of the chin”; M. kōlu – A.F. kede “piece; end”; M. o’/ošši ← *ottu – A. ēsá, F. ešé “seed, nut, kernel”; M. fonu – A.F. fenä “foam, surf”; M. honthiru – A.F. heynhiri “Saturday”; M. honu – A. hena, F. hene “thunderbolt”; M. ošonnan – A. veshonni, F. veshonna “lie (down).” All these examples share a phonological peculiarity in that A. e and F. elë are followed by a retroflex (or former retroflex) consonant. As the early documents of Dhivehi show, the e-vocalism of the southern vernaculars represents an older stage of development as opposed to the o of the standard language. Since the 14th century the language of Māle has witnessed a systematic change of lef into lof, where lef was followed by a single retroflex consonant. Thus, e.g., atel “atoll” is documented with e during the whole lomafamu-period since L1 (s/1,1), while in later times it was almost exclusively written in the form atolu (e.g. F1,2,4; F4,3; F5,15,16,39; F13,5; F10,9,16; IDMMM 3,6). Another example is kelu “end” (L3 6/1,2,3,4) vs. modern M. kolu. This word occurs in the name of the atoll Kohumadulu, which is already attested in the form of the locative kelumadule in L1 (v2,1-2). On the other hand, the final -e of A.F. atel and other examples has to be considered as a secondary development. While final -u was preserved in northern Maldivian, it was obviously adapted (across the retroflex consonant) to the e of the penultimate syllable in the southern dialects.

1.2.4.5. For the correspondence of M. u and A.F. e in non-final position cf. 1.3.7.2. For details on the regular dialectal differences concerning the final vowels in the direct case of consonant stems (M. -u, F. -o, A. -a etc.) cf. the table and the examples given in 2.3.1.3.4.1.

1.3. The consonants

The consonant system Dhivehi inherited from Old and Middle Indo-Aryan corresponds in most points with that of Sinhalese. For the phonological development of the consonant phonemes, it will therefore be sufficient to refer to Geiger’s comprehensive historical description of the Sinhalese consonants (1938, 39 ff.). The present treatise will focus in the combinatorial processes and special developments of the Maldivian consonant system which are important for a general outline of Dhivehi phonology as well as morphonological relations. In this context, developments that are common exclusively to the “Insular Indo-Aryan” languages as well as phonological tendencies that are confined to Dhivehi deserve a particular interest.

1.3.1. The change of the inherited aspirates into their non-aspirated counterparts can be regarded as a regular process already of the time of Sinhalese Prakrit (from 2nd century B.C. until 4/5th century A.D.); “BIKU stands for bhikku. SAGA for sangha ... TERA for theru, DAMA for dhamma ...” (Geiger 1938, 40ff). According to Masica (1991), 205, this development resulted from Tamil influence, the Tamil consonant system having no aspirates at all. Cf. also Caldwell (1875), 130: “Tamil makes no use whatever of aspirates, and has not borrowed any of the aspirated consonants of Sanskrit, nor even the isolated aspirate h.” Geiger (ib.) presumes

For the correspondence M. lili – A.F. lli cf. 1.3.7.2.

For detailed information on this verb cf. 3.9.2.2.3.

Cf. modern Sinhalese bik 1. “community of bhikkhus”; 2. “mendicant, bhikkhu” (Geiger 1941, 121, no. 1808), saitga “multitude, assembly; the community of bhikkhus” (ib. 171, no. 2565), tera “aged monk, senior monk” (ib. 67, no. 973), dama “law, doctrine; the Buddhist sacred scriptures” (ib. 70, no. 1026).
that "... even Sinhalese Prakrit did not possess any aspirated consonant." If the loss of the aspirates actually took place in such an early period, it remains doubtful, however, whether the linguistic contact between Sinhalese and Tamil could have lasted long enough before in order to provoke such an extensive change. It is possible that already in early Sinhalese Prakrit there was a tendency towards deaspiration which then was reinforced by the influence of the Tamil sound system.

1.3.2. The table below gives a general view of the consonant phonemes of contemporary Dhivehi. Loan phonemes which constitute an integral part of the Maldivian consonant system have been included as well.103

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>consonants</th>
<th>labial</th>
<th>labiodental</th>
<th>dental</th>
<th>alveolar</th>
<th>retroflex</th>
<th>palatal</th>
<th>velar</th>
<th>laryngeal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>voiceless stops</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>t</td>
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<tr>
<td>voiced stops</td>
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<tr>
<td>prenasalised stops</td>
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<tr>
<td>voiceless affricates</td>
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<td>voiced affricates</td>
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<td>nasals</td>
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<tr>
<td>vibrants</td>
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<td>r</td>
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<tr>
<td>laterals</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>voiceless spirants</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>voiced spirants</td>
<td>z</td>
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<td>glides</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1.3.3. Except for the prenasalised stops (cf. below), the consonant inventory of Dhivehi is exactly reflected by the modern Tāna script;108 cf. the following table which represents the traditional "alphabetic" order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tāna</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>transcribed</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tāna</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transcribed</td>
<td>h</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>j</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>l</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>n</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tāna</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transcribed</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>ə</td>
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<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
<td>ə</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Phonemes that occur only in Arabic loanwords are written by educated people in accordance with the original spelling. Their pronunciation, however, may be quite distinct from the original sound. The corresponding graphemes will be shown in a special table (cf. 1.3.10.4.).
2 As an independent phoneme, /h/ exists only in the southermost dialects of Dhivehi; cf. 1.3.10.
3 /t/ is phonemic in loanwords only; cf. 1.3.7.
5 The character for retroflex /t/ has become obsolete in standard Dhivehi; it occurs in older Tāna texts. Nowadays it is used by a few writers (poets) who speak a southern dialect as their mother tongue.
The vocalisation marks which were taken from the Arabic script are superscribed or subscribed to the basic consonant characters:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tāna</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>transcribed</td>
<td>tā</td>
<td>tā</td>
<td>tī</td>
<td>tī</td>
<td>tu</td>
<td>tū</td>
<td>te</td>
<td>tē</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3.4. Within the phonological framework of the Indo-Aryan languages and the Indic languages in general, the prenasalised stops represent a very particular phenomenon of the two Insular languages, Dhivehi and Sinhalese, only. The articulation of the four phonemes in question, ḥḥḷḥ, ḡḏḏ, ṛḍṛ and ṛḷḷ, is marked by a considerable shortness in contrast to the pronunciation of the corresponding consonant clusters, -mb-, -nd- etc. In the modern Sinhalese script the prenasalised stops are represented by special aksaras. Within Sinhalese, the nasal component of the prenasalised plosives has been noted since medieval times, while it was still unmarked in the older Brāhmi inscriptions (cf. GEISER 1938, 68). We find a quite different situation in written Dhivehi. Dives akuru never developed any means of writing the prenasalised stops, and Tāna has no particular characters for that purpose either. In modern times, however, three different ways to solve the problem have been applied. The most popular one follows the tradition by leaving the nasalisation unmarked and writing only the plosive element; cp., e.g., M. [kurũba] written as (kuruba) “young drinking coconut”, M. [uṇḍagā] (uṇḍagā) “difficult”; M. [iṅguru] (iṅguru) “ginger”; M. [gaṇḍu] (gaṇḍu) “piece, thing”. – For a certain period, the nasal component was expressed by the so-called “empty niṁ” (niṁ nīṁ), i.e. an ⟨n⟩ letter remaining without any vocalisation marks or sukkaṁ, the marker of unvocalised consonants. – Only exceptionally, the prenasalised stops are written as a sequence of full nasal + plosive, but this way of writing is normally regarded as a mistake. However, even now there are no absolute orthographical rules for the correct writing of the prenasalised stops.

Two arguments speak in favour of a monophonematic character of the prenasalised stops, at least in the contemporary language. Support for a monophonematic interpretation of the prenasalised stops is given by the early documents as well. The oldest written specimens of Dhivehi, the lāmāfāma inscriptions, show that the language had only open syllables in older times, consonant clusters being systematically excluded. A good example is M. [gaṇḍu] “piece, thing”, written {gaṇḍu} “piece (of land)” in L2 (9,4 etc.), L3 (4/1,2 and 6/1,5), L4 (c/2,1 etc. which means that it has to be analysed as ga-ṇḍu, an analysis ‘gaṇḍu being impossible because of the given syllable structure. Another example is the syntagm ⟨kuburu idama⟩ (L2 28,4) “living in the bushes” which, according to modern usage, must represent a syllable sequent ku-ỉbu-rau i-ỉdu-na. – Further evidence for the phonemic status of the prenasalised stops can be gained from minimal pairs. Some modern Dhivehi verb roots ending on a prenasalised plosive do not form the causative with the suffix -va, but by “lengthen-

106 Cf. MASICA (1991), 105: “... the prenasalised stops of Sinhalese ... are apparently confined to that language in NIA (although I should add that I have been unable to find any good account of Maldivian phonology).”
107 Cf. the table in 1.3.3.
108 For details cf. 3.2.1.1.
The consonants

ing” n into n, which results in phonemic oppositions of the type -nd- vs. -nd- etc.\textsuperscript{111} Cp., e.g., the transitive verb *aṅka\textsuperscript{112} “to burn” and its verbal noun *aṅka with the causative andaṇ “to (let) burn” and its verbal noun, andaṇ. Another example is the intransitive verb eṅgaṇī “to know, understand”; its verbal noun eṅgaṇi forms a minimal pair with the verbal noun eṅgan belonging to the causative anglais “to inform, let know”. If we consider GEIGER’s derivation of parallel cases in Sinhalese (1938, 71), we may well conclude, however, that the causative formation of the Maldivian verbs in question can be traced back to an underlying suffix -va- as well: thus, angi “to let know” has to be derived through the intermediate forms *aṅkaṅaṅi ← *aṅk-va-ṇī ← *aṅga-va-ṇī from an obsolete a-stem verb *aṅgaṇi with the transitive-active meaning “to understand, recognise (something)” as corresponding to the inactive eṅgaṇi “to know, understand”.

GEIGER (1938, 67-71) who interprets the Sinhalese prenasalised stops as a sequence of “half nasals” + consonants, provides some etymologies in order to show that the prenasalised plosives always reflect an old nasal which, on the other hand, was not necessarily combined with a plosive. An example for this assumption is Sinh. (= M.A.F.) kaṁbura “(black)smith” which, through an intermediate form like Pkt., Pa. kambura-, goes back to OIA karmāra- “id.”\textsuperscript{113} Such cases seem to be exceptional, though; cp. the counterexamples Sinh. (= A.) aṁba, M. aṁba, F. aṁbo “mango” with Pkt., Pa. ambā- (but OIA āmā “mango”, fruit and tree);\textsuperscript{114} Sinh. aṁbi “wife, mother”, M.A. aṁbi, F. aṁbo “wife” with Pkt., Pa. ambā- ← OIA ambā- “mother”;\textsuperscript{115} Sinh. (= M.) iṅguru, A.F. iṅgiri “ginger” with Pa. śīṅgvera, OIA śīṅgvera- “id.”;\textsuperscript{116} Sinh. haṁda/saṁda, M. haṁda, A. haṁda, F. haṁdo “moon” with Pa. candā-, OIA candā- “moon, moonlight”\textsuperscript{117} etc.

Dhivehi shows some examples of dialectal variation in the distribution of prenasalised stops in contrast to normal plosives in the same words. In some of these cases it is hard to decide whether an inherited nasal was lost within a certain dialectal area or whether we are dealing with the result of a spontaneous prenasalisation here. Sometimes, both variants appear side by side even within the same dialect. Cp. M. aṅkuḷā vs. A.F. udā “difficult”\textsuperscript{2}; M. kuruṇha vs. A.F. kurubha “young drinking coconut”; F. feṅdada vs. A. feṅda “big green locust”. Usually the southern vernaculars show a stronger tendency towards the plain stops. An exception to this rule is M. bodu vs. A. boḷda, F. boṇḍo “big, large”.

Contemporary Dhivehi has many words which show spontaneous prenasalisation. Foreign words such as sūngireṇa (← Engl. cigarette) with prenasalised g (as against the variant sīga-ṇen) are good examples for the strength of this tendency.

Sinhalese has a few variants of this kind as well; cf. siḍu vs. siṅdu “ocean, river” (← OIA sīndu- “river, inundation, ocean”\textsuperscript{118}) or maṇgα- vs. maṅgα “happiness, good fortune, festival” (← OIA maṅgala- “auspicious \textsuperscript{119}”.

\textsuperscript{111} This must not be confused with the paradigmatic change of -nd/-nn- occurring in the a-stem class of verbs. cf. 3.2.2.
\textsuperscript{112} For the etymology of this verb cf. 3.2.2.2.
\textsuperscript{113} Cf. GEIGER (1941), 37, no. 547 and TURNER (1966) I, 147, no. 2898.
\textsuperscript{114} Cf. GEIGER (1941), 9, no. 133; TURNER (1966) I, 57, no. 1268.
\textsuperscript{115} Cf. GEIGER (1941), 9, no. 131 and TURNER (1966) I, 25, no. 574.
\textsuperscript{116} Cf. GEIGER (1941), 20, no. 306; TURNER (1966) II, 730, no. 12588.
\textsuperscript{117} Cf. GEIGER (1941), 188, no. 2849 and TURNER (1966) I, 252, no. 4661.
\textsuperscript{118} Cf. GEIGER (1941), 179, no. 2699; TURNER (1966) II, 774, no. 13415.
\textsuperscript{119} Cf. GEIGER (1941), 126, no. 1875; TURNER (1966) II, 555, no. 9706.
1.3.5. Another sound change that is typical for Dhivehi as well as colloquial Sinhalese, is the transition of /s/ to /h/ in initial and medial position. While Dhivehi has completely lost initial s- in its inherited vocabulary, Sinhalese shows a large amount of double forms with s- and h-, the variants with s- being used almost exclusively in the written language and in higher stylistic levels. In the oldest written sources of Dhivehi we often find s when it is to be expected from an etymological point of view; e.g., *sinu “border” (in the loc. sine, L2 4,1 and L3 2/2,3, and the compound dia-sin “water line”, L3 4/1,2 etc., spelt dyasin in L4 c/2,6), co-occurring with innu in the earliest lomāfānu (L1 mx/2,5, L3 4/1,2 etc.) and appearing as ēn (in dyahin “water line”, F4,3) and in (F4,2 etc.) in later times (cp. Sinh. ima/hima/sima. Pa. Pkt. Skt. sīmā- “id.”). In the same documents, there are many words with “unetymological” initial s-. These must be explained as examples of historical or hypercorrect spelling which implies that in the period in question, written (s) was already pronounced as [h]. C., e.g., the Arabic name Husain, which besides the original orthography ḥus(s)ayn (often in inscriptions, e.g. in IDMHM 2,15; ITAG 1,7; very often in RC, e.g. 26,4) is attested as (sus)ein) in an Evēla akuru lomāfānu (L2, 36,3).


In medial position, the change s → h has infected inherited words without any exception in all Maldivian dialects; e.g., sīvesi → A.M.F. divehi “islander”, ṃesēi → M.A. mēhi, F. mēhi “fly”, jasani → M.A.F. jahanī “beat” (trans.) etc. Medial s was conserved only when it was geminated for morphological reasons.125

Word-final s has remained unchanged in northern Dhivehi and in Aḍḍū while it developed into h in Fuū Mulaku where it is followed by a secondary short (echo) vowel which is not phonemic. This echo vowel is identical with the vowel of the last syllable; e.g., F. maha ḫāṣi “fish” (M.A. mas), F. gehe ḫes “tree” (A. ges, M. gas), F. uhu ḫus “tall, high” (M.A. us), F. faha ḫas “M.A. fas “ground, soil”), F. biḥi ḫis “egg” (M.A. bis), F. goho ḫos “going, having gone” (absolute of dani “to go”, M.A. gas) etc.126

In contrast to the inherited vocabulary, s has been preserved in loanwords and foreign words not only on the phonemic, but also on the phonetic level. C., e.g., M.A.F. alanāsi “Ananas”,127 M.A.F. mūṣu “monsoon, season”,128 M.A.F. ganī “shirt”,129 etc. The

120 Cf. Geiger (1941), 22, no. 341; Turner (1966) II, 775, no. 13435.
124 Cf. also 1.2.3.6.
125 For details cf. 1.3.9.5 and 1.3.9.5.1; for the morphological peculiarities cf. 2.3.2.7.1,2,2.
126 For more examples cf. 2.3.1.3; on general tendencies and developments of final consonants, cf. 1.1.3; for the change of h → h in Huvadi cf. 1.3.6.3.
127 For the worldwide dissemination of the fruit as well as the word denoting it, cf. Yule-Burnell (1902), 25 ff. s.v. ananas; Dhivehi must probably received it via Portuguese.
derivation of M.A.F. *sitī “letter” seems to be more complicated. If the word had emerged from OIA *cīsta- “message” directly or through an intermediate (not attested) MIA form, we would expect neither initial s- nor medial -t- for contemporary Dhivehi. Even if the Dhivehi word represented a prakritism (in the sense of a mot savant), -t- could not have been conserved as such. Therefore, the most probable source of sitī is Hi. cīthī “letter”; in this case, the change of initial c- → s- has nothing to do with the similar sound change in the early history of Dhivehi (cp., e.g., Old Dhiv. saīdu ← MIA canda- “moon”).

1.3.6: In the more recent past, Dhivehi has been affected by two remarkable sound changes: \(lp \rightarrow ft\) and \(lt \rightarrow st\).\(^{133}\) It is not possible, however, to establish the exact date of these changes, because \(\langle f \rangle\) and \(\langle s \rangle\) were never written with separate characters before the Tāna period. Thus it remains uncertain, since when the Dives akuru characters for \(p\) and \(t\) can be taken to represent \(\langle f \rangle\) and \(\langle s \rangle\), resp. Cp., e.g., the Dives akuru forms pasvaṁa “fifth” (ordinal number\(^{134}\), IDMD 2.4) and aputrenge “our” (pers./poss.pron., 1.pl.gen.\(^{135}\), RB 1,11) as against their Tāna equivalents fasvaṁa (ITMHM 4.3; ITAM 1.6) and aputrenge (RC 3,13). For Dives akuru \(\langle \ddot{g} \rangle\) vs. Tāna \(\langle \ddot{s} \rangle\), cp. kottu (absolutive of kurānī “to make, do”\(^{136}\), attested 209 times, beginning with L1 d1/1,2), raʃu “island, land” (attested 84 times, beginning with L1 ff2/1,1 as well) as against koʃə (ITMKM 1,13) and raʃu (RC 32,12) written in Tāna. While Maldivian documents do not provide exact information about the time of the spirantisation of \(lf\) and \(fp\) themselves, external evidence can be gained from Pyrard’s and Christopher’s wordlists which witness both to the changes of \(p \rightarrow f\) and \(t \rightarrow s\) (in initial and medial position). Pyrard, who sojourned in the Maldives from 1602 to 1607, noted \(\langle p \rangle\) in his wordlist in all cases concerned, while Christopher, who came to the Maldives in 1834, already wrote \(\langle f \rangle\) without any exception. Examples from Pyrard’s list are \(\langle alipan \rangle\) (M. aliʃən) “fire”, \(\langle penne \rangle\) (M. fen) “water”, \(\langle Bouraspaty \rangle\) (M. buryasfati) “Thursday”, \(\langle piʃəy \rangle\) (M. fiʃən) “knife”, \(\langle niʃəpaty \rangle\) (M. niʃəfati) “finger nail” and the name of the island \(\langle Mas-
pillasporry \rangle\) (cf. M. juʃ “small islet, sand bank”); in contrast to these spellings, Christopher’s list shows \(\langle alifang \rangle\), \(\langle feng \rangle\), \(\langle Burusfati \rangle\), \(\langle fiʃən \rangle\), \(\langle niʃəfati \rangle\). We may conclude that the change of \(p\) into \(f\) must have taken place not earlier than the early 17th century and not later than the early 19th century.

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\(^{133}\) Cf. Arab. mawṣim “season, time of festivities and harvest” (WEHR 1958, 950); cf. also YULE-BURNELL 1902, 577.

\(^{134}\) Cf. Arab. gamr (cf. WEHR 1958, 704).

\(^{135}\) Cf. TURNER (1966), I, 262, no. 4832.

\(^{136}\) For details on the development of -\(t\) → -\(s\), cf. 1.3.6.1.

\(^{137}\) Direct loans from Hindi or Urdu are quite common in modern Dhivehi. The Maldives always had both trading contacts and cultural relations with many parts of the subcontinent, the contacts to Pakistan being particularly close. There are many educated people in Maldives who dispose of a good knowledge of Urdu or Hindi. Last but not least, there is a tradition of visiting India and other countries of the subcontinent regularly because of serious health problems.

\(^{138}\) For detailed information on the geminates -\(pp\) and -\(ff\) cf. 1.3.9.6.

\(^{139}\) For the ordinal numbers cf. 2.5.2.

\(^{140}\) For details cf. 2.6.2.3.1.2.

\(^{141}\) For details on this irregular absolutive formation cf. 3.10.4.
1.3.6.1. For an exact dating of the change of \( t \rightarrow ñ \), however, the two wordlists do not give any reliable indication. The only fact that can be stated with certainty is that already in PYRARD’s time, the non-geminated phoneme /l/ was not realised as [t] any longer in medial position. The spellings (carè) “ripe coconut” (M. kâši), (tòri) “peel, shell, bark” (M. tosì), (yestarìn) “hair” (M. istaši), (aretì) “eight” (M. ašè lâš-ekì, indef. form) as well as the name of the island (Maspillaspoury) indicate that medial -t- was already pronounced as a palatal fricative r sound, the articulation being somewhere in between Czech ř and Turkish -r. CHRISTOPHER indicated a similar spirant by spellings like (kârhi) “ripe coconut”, (ròrhì) “flat bread” (M. ròšì), (bârhi) “eggplant” (M. bâšì), or (förì) “box” (M. fòšì), while in the case of (tòri) “bark”, (yestarì) “hair” or (tari) “plate, dish” (M. tašì) he used plain (r) as PYRARD did. GEIGER, who styled this spirant “a sound peculiar to Mâldivian, difficult to describe” (1919, 115 / 1986, 116; 1901-1902, III, 127), transcribed it with ⟨ř⟩, while BELL used ⟨r⟩. The pronunciation of medial /lr/ (← lì) as a palatal spirant similar to ř can still be heard in Fua’ Mulaku and also from the speakers of the “palace language” in Mâle, who alternate between [ř] and [r] without phonological reasons. It is only on the basis of an intermediate pronunciation [łuřǐ] that the peculiar development of the participle form M. hurì (← huṭi, cp. A. hiṣṣi, F. hiṣḥi [long form] and H. huṭi, cf. below) can be explained.

1.3.6.2. In the vernacular of Huvadû, the retroflex /l/ is preserved in its original quality without any exception, as the following examples illustrate: H. kauti “ripe coconut” (M. kâši, A.F. kaśi), H. galahütte gen. loc. “(on) the island Galafûši” (i.e. “stone-sandbank”, ← gala-hûtû ye ← gala-fûti-e, cf. A.F. gen. loc. fûše), H. hutì part.pret. “being, remaining; standing” (A. hiṣṣi, F. hiṣḥi, M. hurì, cf. M. humnû “to stand, remain, be”; 3.9.2.2.1). The same holds true for the inherited ending of the dative, -üta, which is preserved in its original form ending in a vowel as well as an apocopated variant ending in -i in Huvadû. Cp., e.g., H. doraṭa dat. “(to) the door” vs. M.A. dora’ l-âš, F. dorâha; H. mottât “upward(s)” vs. A. matta’, M. maccà’ l-âš, F. mattâha (dat. of the i-stem mati “top; above”).

1.3.6.3. The fricative /ʃ/ which had emerged from /p/ in the whole Dhivehi speaking area, finally developed into ĕl in Huvadû. While a similar sound change has remained exceptional in the other dialects (cp., e.g., M. aharen ← afuren ← *apuren, pers.pron.1.pl.s., originally meaning pl. “we”, nowadays sg. “I”,\(^1\) or M. kulañdâru hûhi, F. keraiâl kûhi vs. A. keraiâluru fûsh “bee hive”), it spread out in Huvadû, where it has affected a wide area. According to HLSD, 154, the subdialect of the eastern parts of the Huvadû-Atoll seems to be more conservative in this respect; cp., e.g., East-H. fûla “navel” vs. West-H. hûlâ (cf. M.A.F. fûlû). The material that has been collected so far does not suffice to draw final conclusions yet. There is no doubt, however, that no other dialect of Dhivehi shows such a strong tendency towards despirantisation in its phonemic system as does Huvadû. This agrees with the fact that the development of \( s \rightarrow h \) which can be observed in Dhivehi in general has reached a higher level in Huvadû than anywhere else in this language.

\(^{137}\) For more information on this sociolect cf. the introduction, 0.9.2.

\(^{138}\) On the particular problem of the dative ending in Fua’ Mulaku cf. 2.3.1.1.3.

\(^{139}\) For details cf. 2.6.2.3.1.2.
1.3.7. The phonemes /l/ and /nl/:

In contrast to Sinhalese where the retroflex lateral /l/ coincided with /ll/ in pronunciation which led to a permanent confusion in orthography, Dhivehi has preserved the phonemic difference between the laterals. The retroflex /nl/, which has also phonetically coincided with its dental counterpart /nl/ in Sinhalese, has lost its phonemic status in Standard Dhivehi, while the southern dialects still provide many examples of the retroflex nasal and, furthermore, even some minimal pairs contrasting this with dental /nl/.

1.3.7.1. Thus, e.g., M. fani “worm, caterpillar” is homophone of M.A.F. fani “(coconut) treacle” with dental /nl/ in the standard language, while the Aḍḍu and Fua’ Mulaku dialects show a distinctive retroflex /nl/ in A. fani, F. fāni “worm”144. An example of a minimal pair that is only distinguished by the two phonemes /l/ and /ll/ is M.A.F. ali “light” (noun and adj.) vs. M.A. aḷi, F. aḷi “ash, grey”.145


1.3.7.2. There are some isolated examples of a correspondence of M. Ʉ and A.F. Ʉ in Dhivehi. Besides the words M. jirālu / A. jerāda “roof”148 and M. rūli / A. rūdi “anger, temper”, which are doubtful from an etymological point of view, we have to note M. valu / A. vaḍa, F. valo “well” which is related to Sinh. vaḷa “hole, pit”. This word originates from

140. Cf. Geiger (1938), 56: “In some words there is an uncertainty concerning the spelling Ʉ or l and the dictionaries ... quote alternative forms.” – Mattzl (1983), 17: “Zwischen Ʉ und l besteht ein Unterschied der sprachgeschichtlichen Herkunft, der sich in den Schreibungen l und Ʉ erhalten hat. Die Aussprache beider Laute ist jedoch die gleiche.”

141. Geiger (1938), 62 on the phonetic loss of Sinh. Ʉ, often occurring in the written language even nowadays: “But owing to the fact that there is no difference now in pronunciation between n and n a great confusion has arisen in the Sinh. orthography ... and many words and forms are spelt with n by some people and with ŋ by others.”

142. The retroflex pronunciation of Ʉl as [ŋ] in medial position after Ʉl and before a following vowel which is typical for Standard Dhivehi, is exclusively bound to this phonotactic position and therefore has no phonemic basis; e.g., M. lādōn “I shall go” (1.ps.sg.fut. of dōn “to go”), which is pronounced as [dāŋoŋ] regularly.

143. Cp. Sinh. pōndapōn “treacle, honey, molasses”; for the etymology cf. 1.2.5.1.


145. For the secondary lengthening of the root vowel which is caused by a morphological rule, cf. 2.3.2.8.1.4.2.

146. For the secondary lengthening of the Fua’ Mulaku variant cf. 2.3.2.8.1.4.2.

147. For details on the traditional weights cf. Bell (1833), 118 f.

148. The etymological connection of this word with OIA, Pa. pātala-, Pkt. pātala- “roof” is rather problematic (cf. Turner 1966, 1, 433, no. 7694). In the Dhivehi forms, both the consonants and the long Dhiv. Ʉ could not be explained on this basis.
OIA *avatá- “hole in the ground” which through Pkt. *avada-149 developed directly into southern Dhivehi A. *vaḍa, F. vaḍ. The development of *d into *l which we observe both in northern Dhivehi and in Sinhalese, must be secondary as against this.

The verb M. *uḷeni “to live, be, behave” with its equivalents A. *veṇḍenē and F. *veņma must be considered within the same framework. While in the modern standard language and in Addū, the inflection of this verb shares the pattern of the e-stems, the Fua’ Mulaku variant shows the paradigm of the n-stems. The correlation of the dialectal variants becomes evident by means of the finite forms; cp., e.g., the 1.ps.sg.pres. M. *uḷen vs. A. *veṇḍen and F. *veṇdin, or the 1.ps.sg.pret. M. *uḷumīn vs. A. *veṇḍenēn, F. *veṇḍunīn.150 We cannot take it for granted that the northern and southern variants represent the same etymon, but we have to consider that besides the correspondence of the retroflex sounds *l and *nīd, there are also some older variants of the verb which speak in favour of an etymological relation.151 For the older standard language, two variant forms of the part.pres. of this verb are attested, viz. *velenā (L4 e/1,1) and *velenā (L4 e/2,4; L2 22,3 etc.).152 It seems obvious that *nu- represents a later development here, just as -o in atolu is opposed to -e- in older atelu. Thus we can assume that it was the retroflex consonant which influenced and changed the quality of the preceding vowel here in the same way as e became o in the position before a retroflex consonant (cf. 1.2.4.4).

Another example of the l-d-correspondence is provided by the dialectal variants of the part.pret. of kurani “to make, do”. The form M. *kuḷa “made, done”, which is attested frequently since L1 (ms/1,2) but is no longer used nowadays, opposes itself to F. *kela and to A. keḍe. In all probability, the e vowel of the southernmost dialects represents an earlier phonological stage here, too, just as the retroflex plosive -d- in A. keḍe seems to be more archaic than the retroflex lateral -l- of the other forms.153

1.3.8. Like Sinhalese, Dhivehi does not tolerate consonant clusters in any position.154 Thus, all words that show consonant clusters in initial or final position must be of foreign origin; cp., e.g., M. *gad “intention” ← Arab. qad “aim, purpose, intention”, or the sanskritism pratama “the first” which is attested in L2 33,2 (← Skt. prathamā- (cf. 2.5.2). In contrast to that, consonant groups in medial position can be based on two different developments. Either the words in question are of foreign origin as well (like *hafad “week” ← Class.Mod.Pers. hafa, *ilma “knowledge” ← Arab. ‘ilma, utta “sister” ← Arab. uṭaḥ), or – in all other cases – the cluster extends over a morpheme boundary of compound words (like M. donkē, A. donkē, F. donkē “banana” ← don “light, white; fairhanded, lightskinned” + ikell “longish fruit”; M.A. domvēli, F. domvēli “fine, white coral sand” ← don “light” (s.a.) + M.A. veli, F. vēli “sand”).

In normal pronunciation, consonant clusters occurring in sanskritisms or other foreign words are decomposed by means of anaptyctic vowels, regardless of their position within the

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150 The presanatised stop in the southern variants of the n-stems is regular; cf. also the tables given in 3.2.2.1 and 3.2.2.
151 Cf. also 3.9.2.2.4.
152 For more details cf. 3.9.1.1.3.
153 A detailed account of this participle is given in 3.9.2.2.5. For Sinh. *kuḷa “done” cf. GEIGER (1938), 57.
154 Cf., e.g., MASICA 1991, 125-7.
word. Frequent words show these vowels even in their written form; cp., e.g., fikuru “thought, thinking, idea” ← Arab. fıkʳ; tarğama “translation” ← Arab. tārｇaṁat; vāgutu “time” ← Arab. waḥṭ; iskuru “screw” ← Engıl. screw; furatama “at first” ← pratama (I.2 33,2) ← Skt. prathama-; M. burāṣati (this spelling is already attested in ITAG 3,2 and ITFM 2.6), F. berāṣati, A. berāṣet (with -sf- → -ss-) “Thursday” ← *brdhahaspati ← Skt. bṛhaspāti- “name of a deity / the planet Jupiter” (cf. also Sinh. bṛhaspatinda / bṛhaspatinda, Skt. bṛhaspatidiva- / bṛhaspativāra- “Thursday”; cf. TURNER 1966, II, 527, nos. 9303 and 9304).

1.3.9. Geminates

De Silva has shown in his table (1969, 203) that in modern Dhivehi all consonants with the exception of the prenasalised stops, the palatal spirant ʃ and the glottal spirant ჟ can occur as geminates. In contrast to De Silva’s statement according to which the retroflex lateral ɬ, too, appears only as a single consonant, there are a few examples showing geminated -ll- in Dhivehi. It seems, however, that all the words in question are of foreign origin. None of the numerous geminates in Dhivehi can be derived directly from a corresponding geminate in MIA, because during the transition period between MIA and NIA all MIA geminates were reduced to single consonants.155 Most of the geminates that occur in contemporary Dhivehi can be explained by secondary assimilations of different consonants,156 the assimilatory processes being progressive or regressive. There are clear indications that progressive assimilations began earlier than those directed backwards; nowadays, however, Dhivehi exhibits much more examples that are due to regressive assimilations. As a matter of fact, regressive assimilations are regularly met with until now as a result of word formation processes or – in rare cases – by phenomena of sandhi157 combining two words. The regressive assimilation of consonant clusters which leads to the formation of geminates has been reflected by the writing system of the standard language in recent times only. The most common spelling of geminates is ⟨C⟩, while ⟨CC⟩158 is used less often (e.g. evana “(the) first”,159 now written ⟨e’vana⟩ as against original ⟨ekvana⟩ in ITAG 3.1 and ITAM 1.4). In some cases, the various stages of the historical development of geminates is attested in detail in the written sources, as we will see below.

1.3.9.1. -Cy- becomes -CC- or -vv-. The occurrence of progressive assimilations as well as regressive ones at morpheme boundaries is attested by parallel variants such as rattehi “friend, compatriot” and rawhehi “native, local, indigenous, resident”. rattehi, being obsolete in the modern standard language, is still known in the southern dialects, where it has an antiquated touch, as well. The word is attested in its indefinite form ratveṣyaḵu already in F11,28, in the 18th century. Dhiv. *ratvehi- corresponds to Sinh. ratavādi(ya) “inhabitant or native of a country”, which according to Geiger has to be traced back through an intermedi-

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155 Cf. e.g., Geiger 1938, 39 or Masica 1991, 187.
156 On the historical development of the geminates cf. 1.1.5.
157 For details on the sandhi rules cf. 1.6.
158 The spelling of one and the same word can vary even nowadays, because there are no orthographical rules.
159 For details cf. 2.5.2.
ate form like Pa. ratttha-vāsina(n) to Skt. rāstra-vāsin-. (from Old Rāṣṭra- "kingdom, country" + vāsin- "inhabiting".) While the geminate -tt- in rāṭtehi is the result of a progressive assimilation of -tv-, the form raveli, which is no longer associated with rāṭtehi by the native speakers of Dhivehi, obviously has to be traced back to a regressive assimilation of -tv- into -vv-. Considering raveli, there are two different ways of formation which have to be taken into account. On the one hand, raveli could be derived directly from *ravveli as well. Although it seems rather unlikely, we cannot exclude the possibility that the two assimilation processes in question occurred at the same time (-tv- → -tt- and → -vv-), within one and the same dialect. On the other hand, we have to take into consideration that the form raveli could represent a (relatively) recent formation, namely a compound consisting of Dhive. ra' iras 'land, island' and veli ← *vesi "inhabitant, resident, inhabiting" (= Sinh. vasiya "inhabitant"; cf. also divehi ← *divu-vesi "islander, inhabitant of the islands, i.e. the Maldives", 1.3.9.5) which could have developed independently from the inherited compound *ravveli. While ratu is well documented in Old Dhivehi (since L1), there are no attestations of *veli as a single word at all. This is why we cannot expect to find out at what time *veli became obsolete in the spoken language. By all means, even if raveli were of comparatively recent origin, *veli still must have been in use at the time of its formation. — One more example of a progressive assimilation of -tv- → -tt- is avarṭerīā ← *avati-veri-ā "neighbour" (lit. "village-person"; M. avarīa-vāsi ← avarī "village" + def. form veri-ā "the person"; cf. 2.3.2.4.1). — Further examples showing regressive assimilation of -tv- → -vv- are, e.g., M. hivvaru hīt-varu "courage, encouragement" (hi' hiti "heart, mind, feeling"; vara "force, size, greatness"), M. kivve likī-vel "why" (cf. 2.6.7.2.5), M. evves lek-vel, A. evvies, F. evvias "even" (cf. 2.6.7.5).

1.3.9.2. In northern Dhivehi final -ti and -di were affricated when they were followed by -e or -a. Through intermediate -ty- and -dy-, they developed into the geminated affricates -cc- and -jj-. In contrast, the southern dialects show a progressive assimilation in these cases, which leads to the geminated plosives A.F. -tt- and -dd-. While the formation of the voiceless geminate -cc-, which is attested already for the Old Dhivehi period, has survived in the standard language as a living phonological process until nowadays, the voiced affricate -jj-, which derived from -dy-, was restricted to some isolated examples. The same holds true for the southernmost vernaculars, where -ti before -e and -a is phonetically realised as -tt- while the corresponding development of the voiced geminate, -dd-, is met with in a few words only which can be considered as frozen forms.

1.3.9.2.1. From the synchronic point of view, the occurrence of the geminates M. -cc- and A.F. -tt- is a morphophonological feature in the formation of the indefinite form and the dative of the very rare i-stems with -t as their final root consonant. In addition to this, the morphophonological change in question has a paradigmatic function in deriving the following forms in the southernmost dialects: the definite form and all the case forms based on it in Adī; the gen./loc.sg. in Adī and Fua’ Mulaku; the abl./instr. in Fua’ Mulaku. The effect of these morphophonological rules may be illustrated with two nouns of this type which are in use nowadays:

The indefinite form of the i-stem M.A.F. eti “thing”, M. ecce’, F. ette’ but A. étta’, has to be derived from *eti-el/*eti-ak through the intermediate stage *eyok/*eyok. Other current forms are: M. dat.sg. ecc’i-leti-asl; Gen.sg. etti-ak, dat.sg. ettahi leeti-asl, abl. etten leeti-end; A. nom.sg.def. etti leeti-ul, gen.sg.def. ettah leeti- Ul, dat.sg.def. etti’i leeti-asl, abl.sg.def. ettahin leeti-ul-in; the distributional plural form M. ecceti, A.F. eteti leeti-ul “thing by thing, all things” (cf. 2.3.2.5). Cp. the earliest attestations, eyok (nom.indef.: sic L5 5/2,6), eyaku (abl.indef.; F5,26), eyaka’t (dat.indef.; F3,1), etye (probably instead of *eyok as nom.indef.; F3,1), etyeti (distributional plural form; F3,7; F2,14; F5,14; F8,29,30). — The case forms of M.A.F. mati “top, surface”, which are mainly used as local adverbs correspond to those of the preceding noun, cp. e.g., dat. M. macca’, A. ma’ta’, F. matuha imati-asl “to the top; up (to), upwards” (cp. the early attested form natyata in L2 5,1); gen/floc. A.F. matte imati-el “on the surface, upon the top; above, overhead”.

1.3.9.2.2. In the standard language, the affrication of final -ti is due to a certain kind of sandhi,162 when adjectives in predicative position precede the quotation marker -ē l-evel.163 Cf. M. rīūi “beautiful” as against mi kotari riccē lriti-evel “this room is beautiful” or M. hiti “bitter” as against sai hiccē lhitii-evel “(the) tea is bitter.”

1.3.9.3. As was stated above, there are only a few examples of the development of -di → -jj- in the standard language and of -di → -dd- in the southern vernaculars. In contrast to the change of -ti into -cc-/-tt-, which is regularly connected with a paradigmatic function, the parallel sound change of the voiced stop is restricted to isolated unchangeable forms. Thus, in southern Dhivehi, the i-stems kudi- “child” and kalamidi- “prince” show this morphonological process only in their definite nom.sg. and the depending case forms; cf. the nom.sg.def. A. kudda’ (F. kuddaj) ← *kudi-ē “the child”. In the standard language, besides kujjē ← *kudja’ ← *kudi-ē the indefinite form is affected as well by the affrication; cp. M. kujje’ ← *kudje’ ← *kudi-ek “a child”.164 — The nom.sg. kalamidi “prince”, which is well attested in the history of the language (L6 1,2 and 2,3; RA 21,1; kalamidi in F5,38 and RC 14,5), has kalamijjē as its definite form which has to be derived through *kalamidyā from *kalamidi-ē; all of the (frequent) attestations of this word show -(nj-) which was the usual spelling of *-jj-, hence the written form is regularly olidayna (e.g. RC 12,10; RC 22,11 etc.). — The modern Dhivehi word for “state, empire”, originally “kingdom”, which appears in the dialectal variants M. rājje (cf. divehi rājje as the official name of the Maldives) and A.F. raddade, represents a sanskritism. While the form rādy nickel (Skt. rājya- “kingship, kingdom”, cf. TURNER 1966, II, 619, no. 10694), which is attested already in L1 (g/1,5), L2 (6,1) and L3 (2/1,2 and 3/1,5) with the spelling -(dy-) for -fy-, represents the nominative, the numerous variants ending in -ē which appear in different spellings such as rādye (F5,13; F6,10; R7,13,20; F8,18; F13,2; F10,12,15; F11,9,17; IDME 3,25 and 27), rādē (F3,8,11), rāndye (F9,4; RB 1,3), rāni (RC 8,7), rājin (with Arab. źni RA 1,4) have to be explained as a locative form “in the kingdom, in the state”. In Modern Dhivehi the frozen form of the locative has been re-interpreted as a nominative.

162 For the distribution of the two suffixal variants cf. 2.3.2.1 (A.), 2.3.2.2 (F.), 2.3.2.3.1 and 2.3.2.3.1 (M.), resp.
163 For the sandhi rules cf. 1.6.
164 For further details on the morphology and on the use of these forms in the modern language, cf. 2.3.2.7.1, 2.3.2.8.1, 4.3 and 2.3.2.9.13.2.
In standard Dhivehi, the formation of the "preterite IV" which contains dāni "to go" as an auxiliary verb must be explained within this framework; cp. 1.ps.sg. ājāin \( \sim ^{*}-dāian \), 2./3.ps.sg. and 3.ps.pl. ājie \( \sim -dye \) \( \sim ^{*}-dēa, 1./2.ps.pl. ājāimu \( \sim ^{*}-dai̯imu. \) The historical development is clearly shown by the early attestations of M. veje "became", 3.ps.sg. pret.IV of vāni "become", viz. veddy (F10,18), veddy (F5,21.24; IDMMH 4,21), vegy (F10,10), vejya (spelled 〈vejya〉; RC 29,11) and 〈veja〉 (RC 5,3 and 30,13); the earliest attestations of the contemporary form veje (spelled 〈veje〉) can be found on a tombstone of the graveyard of the Male Hukuru Mosque (ITMMH 1,7; the dating is uncertain) and in RC (2,6).

1.3.9.4. The gemination and palatalisation of -n- preceding a stem-final -i in combination with the indefinite suffix is restricted to northern Dhivehi. Cf. the indefinite forms dōnē' \( \sim ^{*}dōnye' \) \( \sim ^{*}dōnīk \) \( \sim ^{*}dōni-ek, \) a boat (M. dōni "boat, ship") or dānē' \( \sim ^{*}dānye' \) \( \sim ^{*}dāni-ek "a bird" (M. dāni "bird"). The same holds true for the ending of the dative (dōnī'ā, dānī'āl-āsāl).

1.3.9.5. The paradigmatic interchange of -h- (\( \sim -s- \)) and -ss- occurring in some i-stems can be found in the whole Dhivehi speaking area, the phonological development of -siV \( \rightarrow -siV \rightarrow -syV \rightarrow -ssV \) being equivalent with A.F. -ti- \( \rightarrow -tī- \) and -dī- \( \rightarrow -dd- \) (cf. 1.3.9.2). Cp., e.g., M.A.F. divehi "Maldvian" vs. the nom.sg.indef. M.F. divese' ldivesi-ekl, A. divesa' ldivesi-akl (\( \sim ^{*}divu-vesi "islander\)). While the nouns ending in -hi (\( \sim -si \)) have survived as a comparatively homogeneous group in Addū, they were subject to morphological simplifications in Fua' Mulaku and even more so in the standard language. Cf. M.A. mehi, F. mēhi "fly" \( \sim ^{*}mesi (cp. the Sinh. stem māsi/-māhi- \( \sim \) Skt. māsika- "fly, bee")\), where in Addū -s- is preserved within the geminate -ss- almost throughout the paradigm while we find a compensatory change of -s- to -h- in Fua' Mulaku: cf. A. nom.def. messā lmesi-āl, nom. indef. messa' lmesi-akl (besides mēhā i mēhā), gen. messe lmesi-el, dat. messa' lmesi-aśl vs. F. nom.indef. (only) mēhe' lmesi-ekl, gen. mēhe lmesi-el, dat. mēha' lmesi-aśl.

1.3.9.5.1. The formation of causatives from verbs with -s as their original final consonant is affected by the same morphological interchange of -h-/ss-; cf. jahanī \( \sim ^{*}jasani "beat, strike, kick; blow (wind), ring (bell)" with its causative jassanī \( \sim ^{*}jasa-va-nī (cf. 1.3.9.12.1 and 3.2.1.1). \)

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116 For more details cf. 3.11.4.5.1.
117 For the loss of i in the standard language cf. 1.3.7.
118 The statement of HLSO (1985), 15 according to which "a morphophonemic feature of Divehi is that morphemes containing the dental nasal 'n' in the final syllable ... replace this nasal by 'ñ' when they are followed by certain suffixes" is not exact enough, because this is not a question of "certain suffixes". Besides the indefinite suffix, the phonetic process is also triggered by the ending of the dative, i.e. all nominal suffixes with initial vowel are concerned. - On the status of the palatal nasal n cf. 1.3.10.
119 On "dīva "island" cf. 2.6.2.3.1.4 (s.v. uren \( \sim -vren\); for "vēsi "inhabitant" cf. 1.3.9.1.
120 For details and examples cf. 2.3.2.7.1.2.2 and 2.3.2.11.3.3 (Addū), 2.3.2.8.1.4.4 and 2.3.2.12.5.2 (Fua' Mulaku) and 2.3.2.9.1.3.1 (Māle).
121 Cf. GEIGER (1941), 133, no. 1975 s.v. mēssā and TURNER (1966) II, 554, no. 9696 s.v. maksār.
13.9.6. The geminates -pp- and -tt- are of particular interest because the inherited Old Maldvian stops /p/ and /t/ are preserved in their original quality only within these geminates (cf. 13.6). There are only a few examples as to this, which will be treated below.

13.9.6.1. The geminate -pp- occurring in the kinship term M. bappa, A.F. bappā, A. appā “father” cannot be analysed any further because the word obviously originated in children’s language. – M. subpānē, A.F. subpānei “lungs” contains Dhiv. subpā-, which does not exist as an independent word; it second part is M. mē, A.F. mei “liver”. Dhiv. subpā- can be identified with Sinh. papu- “lungs” which, according to TURNER (1966, II, 511, no. 9090) has to be derived from OIA phupphusa- “lungs”. In Sinhalese, we also meet with a word papphusa “lungs” which, like Dhiv. subpā- (with the regular change of p - f-), must be explained as a sanskritism. – A few consonant stems with final /t/ which were combined with the honorific suffix -puṭu (→ -futu) in the standard language were obviously fixed in this combination before /pl/ developed into /fl/. The geminate -pp- occurring in these words is the result of an regressive assimilation of /Cp-/; cf. appulu ← *at-puṭu “hand of a person of high social status” and datpuṭu ← *dat-puṭu “tooth of a person of high social status”. Most probably, the island name dippolī (L2 15,1) shows the same development as well. – In a similar way the stem final -p of some verbs was preserved in their causative forms (cf. 3.2.1.1) because of a progressive assimilation leading to geminated -pp-. Cp., e.g., M.A.F. ḫīpanī ← *sipanī “to hold, catch (something)” with its causative hippanī ← *hippanī ← *hipa-va-nī “to let hold, let catch; stick” (cf. also the substantive M.A.F. hippī “sticker”, reflecting the part. pret. “sticked” of the causative hippanī); cp. also kafanī ← *kapanī “to cut (something)” with the simple causative (meanwhile being obsolete) *kappanī ← *kapa-va-nī “to let cut” and the double causative (cf. 3.2.1.1)1 M. kappavanī “to have something cut (by someone of a lower social class)”.

13.9.6.2. The geminate tt in many cases has its origin in a progressive assimilation of -tv-, as in the compound nouns ratṭēhi ← *rat-vēti “friend, compatriot” and aṭṭēriā ← *aṭṭ-er-vi “neighbour” (cf. 13.9.1). This is also true for causative formations with -tt- being based on primary verbs with original -t- (for ś ← t cf. 13.6.1). Cf. M.A.F. koṣanī ← *koṭanī “to chop, cut (e.g., wood)” with the double causative M. kottavanī “to let someone (belonging to a lower social class) chop”; the primary causative *koṭanī ← *koṭa-va-nī does not exist any longer (cf. 13.9.12.1 and 3.2.1.1).

13.9.6.2.1. The sound change -tt- ← -ty- is attested, e.g., in puṭṭī ← *puṭt-ā “and the island” (L1 t/2,1, L2 8,4 etc.; nom. puṭī in L1 mx/2,1, L2 9,2 etc.; cf. M. fūsī, A. fiṣī, F. fișī “small island”) and koṭṭā ← *koṭi-ā “and the enclosure” (L2 15,5 etc.; L3 6/2,2; L4 d/2,5), kottakā ← *koṭi-ak-ā “and an enclosure” (L2 26,4), koṭṭ-evyaṃa ← *koṭi-eviāna “being named ‘enclosure’” (L2 15,5); cf. the i-stem koṭi “enclosure, garden, fenced-in area” (cf. modern M.A.F. koṣī “cage”).

1 The etymology of mē / mei is not clear.
1.3.9.6.3. The geminate -ff- must be of later origin, because it cannot have developed before the transition of /fl/ into /l/. All examples concerned can be explained by assuming regressive assimilations; cf. M. raʃʃaॳ “landscape, rural district” (for ra’ /raʃ/ “land, island” cf. 1.3.9.1; pu:ss “the previous form of /l/ “back, surface, top side” is attested, e.g., as a locative avu puṭe “on horse back” in L1 (d1/4); cf. also GEIGER172 who connects (juː) “side” (his spelling (f) means ls – /fl/) with Sinh. pīṭa “OIA pṛṣṭha- “back, hind part”; M. juːʃ “/juːʃ “grain, cereals” (distributive plural “corn by corn”, cf. 2.3.2.5); M. fə /juːʃ “flour” corresponds to Sinh. pīṭa “id.”, ← OIA pṛṣṭha- “crushed, ground; flour”173; A. đaʃ “sole of the foot” ← /daʃ “/daʃ “actual “underside of the foot” (cf. the earlier form daʃ in L1 s1/1,4; L2 22,2: L5 5,1,2; F3,6; F10,19 etc. and daʃu in RC 5,12 “underside, bottom”; daʃu abl. “from the underside, from below” in F6,20; F7,32,38; F9,16; F11,22 etc.; F13,18; IDMHM 1,12; IDMEM 3,26); M. fa, A.F. fə “foot” belongs to Sinh. pə- “foot”, ← OIA pādu;174; A. effahara’ (e) faHAasi “one time, once (upon a time)” (e’ leki num. “one”; /faHaasi dat. of A. faHara (A. faHara “time”) etc.

1.3.9.7. Different geminates emerged in recent times as a result of assimilation on the morpheme boundary of compounds; cp., e.g., M.A.F. nikkuri init-kuril “forehead” (cf. M. ni’ init “forehead”); M. ebbas “agreement” (leki “one” + lbə “word, language”); M.A.F. emme lek-me! “all, entire, whole”179. It cannot be excluded that M.A.F. uḍaṇḍi luk-ḍaṇḍi “sugar cane” reflects a loan compound from Sinhalese (cf. Sinh. uk, uk-ḍanda, also ik, ugu, iugu “sugar cane” ← OIA iṣkū- “id.”.176)

1.3.9.8. As a rule, geminates that occur in foreign words are not changed in modern Dhivehi. Cp., e.g., M.A.F. adiṭta “Sunday” (sanskritism; cf. 1.2.1.1); M.A.F. buddi “mind, intellect, spirit” (sanskritism; cf. Skt., Pa. buddhi-, Pkt. buddhi- “intelligence, discernment”;177 M. budda “old man” (naut savant; cf. Pa., Pkt. buddha- “old”);178 M.A.F. tayyāru-o “ready” (← Pers. tayyār “ready”); M. mudarris “teacher” (← Arabic “id.”); M.A.F. billūri “of glass” (← Arab. ballūri, billuuri “crystal, of glass”); M. muazzif “employee, official” (Arab. muwazzaf “id.”; cf. WEHR 1958, 960); etc.


172 (1902), 920, no. 153 and (1941), 104, no. 1539.
174 Cf. GEIGER (1941), 95, no. 1417.
175 For detailed information about the pronominal adj. emme cf. 2.6.7.4.1.
177 Cf. TURNER 1966, II, 525, no. 9277.
178 Cf. TURNER 1966, II, 524, no. 9271.
179 Cf. TURNER 1966, II, 524, no. 9271.
180 About the Maldavian boat terms cf. 2.3.2.7.3.2.

1.3.9.9.1. Concerning the regular correspondence of certain consonant clusters and geminates, we have to note a few specific developments that occur only in a restricted dialectal area. Cf., e.g., M. būrāṣeṭi “Thursday” (ITAG 3.2, ITFM 2.6), F. būrāṣeṭi vs. A. berāṣeṭti with a transition of -ss- to -ss- (cf. 1.3.8) or M. īssāti “hair” vs. A.F. īssāti with a change of -st- to -ss-. There is also the very surprising correspondence of M. -ti- vs. A. -ṭī- in M. kattala, A. kattaḷa “sweet potato, batata” as well as A. -gg- vs. F. -jj- in A. eggūni legguni (nom.def. eggunā), F. eenj “single blossom of the coconut tree”. From a phonological point of view, these correspondences cannot be explained yet.

1.3.9.10. When a consonant stem ending in -dl comes into the position before a word with initial consonant, the resulting phonetic process occurring on the morpheme boundary is not the same in northern and southern Dhivehi. While in the standard language the development leads to a diphthong (Vi+C−ViC−), in the southern dialects a corresponding geminate emerges by regressive assimilation (Vt+C−VCC−). Cp., e.g., M. āṭṭila lat-ṭṭal vs. A.F. aṭṭela lat-ṭṭel “palm” (lat “hand, arm” + M. tila, A. F. tela “shallow (water); blade”); M. aṭṭāṇi vs. A.F. addāṇi “arm” (āṭṭ “hand, arm” + aṇi “stick”); M. dāddoli vs. A.F. daddoli “chin; jaw(bone)” (āṭṭ “teeth” + doli “cheekbone”); A. dakkāsi ḍdti-kaśi “alveols” (kaśi “bone”); M. raṇiy vs. A. raγga, F. raγga lāt-gal “red coral” (lit. “red stone”, lāt adj. “red” + γal “stone”); M. raṃmas vs. A. raṃmas, F. rammaha lāt-mas “soldier fish” (actually “red fish”, lāt “red” + mas “fish”).

1.3.9.11. While in the standard language -rr- in sirru “secret” (← Arab. sir “secret, mystery”) is articulated as a geminated alveolar vibrant, the ablative form A. /sirrun/ shows a regular dissimilation into [sidrūn]. For a similar development in external sandhi cf. 1.6.

1.3.9.12. Geminates in the verbal system

Generally speaking, the gemination of the last consonant of the verbal root has an important morphologic function in the formation of causatives. In many cases the historical development of causatives can thus be traced back both from the formal and from the semantic point of view (for further details cf. 3.2.1.1). Cp. the following examples:

1.3.9.12.1. M.F. fattanī ← *fatvanī ← *fattu-va-nī “to sink” (trans.),184 actually “to let swim, cause to swim”, from the basic verb fattan “to swim”; M.F. diwanī, A. diveevi “to drive, ride, sail”, lit. “to let run, cause to run”, from M.F. diwān, A. diveevi “to run”; M.A.F. jassani ← *jassane “to land, turn (on)” from M.A.F. jahanī ← *jatani “to beat, kick, blow”. M.A.F. dakkani “to show”, lit. “to let see” is derived from the transitive verb

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183 This word is unknown in the standard language. For the single blossom the common word meaning “flower, blossom”, mà ḫamal, is used here instead.
184 fattanī does not exist in Addū; for the causative meaning “to sink” the suppletive verb heruvani is used.
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*dakani “to look” which is obsolete in the modern standard language (but cp. the intr. verb M. dekeni “to see” which is derived from the same stem and, furthermore, the n-stem pres. A.F. dak. “to see” (intr.), with the pres.part. (long form) A. dokani, F. dokani). M. rissani “to ache”, lit. “to let ache” (e.g. holugā /gauli/ rissani “to have a headache”, lit. “to cause pain in the head”) is derived from the trans. *rissan “(cf. M.A.F. riheini ← *riseni intr. “to ache”). From a formal point of view, M.A.F. hudani trans. “to stop, finish” together with its intransitive derivative, hudeni “to stop”, are causatives of the irregular n-stem verb M. hunani, A. huni, F. hunni “to stand, remain, be” (cf. the part.pret. Old Dhiv. huṣi, A. huṣi, F. huṣi, and Sinh. hūvani). The transitive verb M.A.F. kokani “to cook” formally is a causative of the non-attested basic *kakani; cf. the intr. verb kekeni “to boil” (of liquids).

1.3.9.12.2. The whole morphological pattern of n-stem verbs such as M. bunani “to tie”, innani “to sit, marry, be married”, dannani “to know, understand”, hunani “to stand, stay, remain, be”, vannani “to enter” etc. is characterised by the geminate -nn-; cf. also 3.2.2, 3.6.5 and 3.9.1.2.

1.3.9.12.3. In the following verbs, the geminates are of different provenance, M. kappani /koʃanəl “to push” is composed of ko’ /koʃl “doing, making” (abs. of kurani “to do, make”) and a (nowadays obsolete) verb *pani with unknown meaning, which seems also to be the second part of M.A.F. lapanni (la’pani) “to close” (as to the verbal constituent la’ which cannot yet be explained, cf. M. lagani (la’gani) “to float, drift ashore; toss” = A. lāvanī, the inflexion of the negation particle ə in the negated 3.ps.sg.pres. A. la’ ni vei “(it is) not tossed” proves that la’ must be an independent word which is used as a constituent of a compound verb here). One more compound verb containing the absolute əkoʃl is M. kollani /koʃlanəl. The exact meaning of this verb is “to put down (by doing)”; it only occurs in M. dū kollani “to leave” (lit. “to put down slackening” = “to leave by slackening [the boat]”). — The first part of M. ekkurani lek-kurani “to add, mix” consists of the numeral e’ lek; thus, the basic meaning of the verb can be translated with “to make (in) one”. — M. hikkani “to let dry” (only in M. dha-hikkani “to bail water from a leaky boat”) obviously is a denominative verb; cf. M.A.F. hiki “dry”. — M.A.F. vikkani “to sell” goes back to the present stem Skt. vi-kriṇa- (Pa. vikknā-, Pkt. vikkna-) “to sell” via *vikna-, *vikna-, the geminate reflecting the older sequence of -kn-.

1.3.10. Loan phonemes

While in HLSD (1988, 14), ə is described as a phoneme of its own, DE SILVA (1969, 204) analyses ə as a cluster consisting of the phonetic components [ny] which, of course, has no phonemic status as such. Obviously DE SILVA’s analysis starts out from such cases as djinn’e ← *dinn’est ← *dzinek ← *dini-ek “a bird”, the secondary geminated ən of which is hardly phonemic. There are some isolated words with initial ə- in Dhivehi, however.

183 For the etymology of hunani cf. 3.9.2.2.1.
184 A complete list of the n-stem verbs is given in 3.4.2.3.
185 Cf. TURNER 1966, II, 678, no. 11640.
186 “On the one hand, our corpus of data does not contain any minimal pairs in which this sound contrasts with the dental ‘n’... In our analysis, the palatal nasal will be treated as a distinct phoneme on the grounds that it occurs frequently as a geminate cluster and the Dhivehins recognise it as distinct unit in their system of writing (faviyani).”
187 For details about the geminate ən cf. 1.3.9.4.
the ū of which cannot be analysed as a sequence of n and y by means of morphonological criteria. As most of these words must be explained as (presumably) old loanwords, it seems to be adequate to see a loan phoneme here, i.e., a sound with a "low phonemic level" within the Maldivian phonological system. There are only a few words with undisputable initial ññ in Dhivehi,160 M.A. ñåkë “aimless, foolish talk”; ñëkë “mentally retarded”; ñåkas “a sexual practice”; ñåm ñämu “a tropical fruit”, bot. “Cynometra cauliflora” (rare on the Maldives); the corresponding tree, which was imported from Sri Lanka, is called M.A. ñìm ñäm gas/ges, bot. “Fabacea leguminosa”. It cannot be excluded that the first three of these words contain the negation particle in its original form, ni (cf. modern A.F. ni vs. M. nu) which might have been reduced to ny in the position before a vowel.

1.3.10.1. A very frequent phoneme, which occurs exclusively in loanwords from Arabic and Persian, is ññl. In most cases it is pronounced in its original phonetic value as [x]. Cp., e.g., M.A.F. tårî “date, chronicle, history” ← Arab. târîh “id.”; A.F. xâdîma “servant” ← Arab. xâdîm “male servant”, xâdîma “female servant”; M. âlî boxârî, A. alî boxârî “Bukhârâ plum” ← Pers. âlu-boxârâ “(dried) prune” etc.

1.3.10.2. There is one more loan phoneme, which can often be heard in its original phonetic quality, viz. ñl. Cf. M.A.F. tûzâ “fresh” ← Pers. tûzâ “id.”, M. bûzâru, A. bûzâra “(oriental) bazaar, market” ← Arab./Pers. bûzâr etc. In contrast to that, we find the original voiced fricative l sound substituted by [d] in earlier loanwords; cp., e.g., namâdu “prayer” (attested since L.1 d/2,1) ← Pers. namâz.161

1.3.10.3. All other foreign phonemes (as listed in the table below) are substituted by autochthonous phonemes until nowadays; cp., e.g., M. haqîqî “real” ← Arab. haqîqi “id.”, M. faqîru, A.F. fakîru “poor” ← Arab. faqîr “id.”; M.A.F. bagûcî “garden” ← Pers. bagçe “id.” etc. Only a few people with a good knowledge of Arabic try to pronounce the sounds in question according to their original value.

1.3.10.4. The following table shows Arabic characters and their transliteration into Tâna:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tâna</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>transcribed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ññ</td>
<td>h, x</td>
<td>h, x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ññl</td>
<td>t, s</td>
<td>t, s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ññr</td>
<td>g, q</td>
<td>g, q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ññl</td>
<td>ññ</td>
<td>ññ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ññl</td>
<td>ññ</td>
<td>ññ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ññl</td>
<td>ññ</td>
<td>ññ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

160 The examples noted here are taken from the monolingual dictionary of Dhivehi (NCLHR 1985-91, 15. 1); HASSAN SA’ID confirmed that they are used in Adhû as well.
161 For this type of substitutions cf. GIPPERT (forthcoming).
Examples of Arabic words transcribed into Tâna:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Tâna</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dust</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>غُنُّر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stone</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>خَلَط</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alms</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>سُدُم</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>filter</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>بَذَل</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>captain</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>رَأَن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>midday</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>طُهَر</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hand</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>لِد</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>month</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>سُن</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Tâna</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>heart</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>قُلْب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ambergris</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>عَتْن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wine</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>خَنْث</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beat</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>ضَرِب</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>book</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>زِنْن</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>road</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>طَرِيق</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle</td>
<td>٤٣٥٢٥٤٣٢</td>
<td>وَسَط</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4. Syllable and word structure

As the earliest written documents of Dhivehi show, there were only open syllables in Old Dhivehi (cf. 1.1.2 ff.). It was only because of the systematic occurrence of the processes of apocope and syncope (cf. 1.1.3 and 1.1.5 above) that in the course of time new types of closed syllables emerged.

The following survey illustrates the most important patterns of word and syllable structure of modern Dhivehi. Geminates are treated like sequences of two different consonants.


Monosyllabic words which consist of a single long vowel in the standard language, such as a “new”, do not represent open syllables from a phonological point of view. Instead we have to deal with the phonetic realisation of a closed syllable here, as the correspondent forms A. an and F. al show. As a matter of fact, there is no word in Dhivehi which consists of only one long vowel.


197 For more details cf. 1.2.1.6.

1.4.4. Word structures like CVVCVCVCV as well as longer sequences of syllables occur in compound words only. Cp., e.g., M.A. vāreduni, F. vārcheduni “rain bow”.

1.4.5. The phenomenon of hiatus is met with very frequently in the southern varieties of Dhivehi. In contrast to that there seems to be a strong tendency in the standard language to avoid sequences of two vowels and, furthermore, to avoid hiatus by insertion of the glide y or the glottal stop [ʔ]. Thus, there are oppositions like M. (hiyā) – A. hīla “shadow”, M. (fiya) – A.F. fīa “1) petal, 2) wing” or M. (tari’e, tariye) – A.F. tarī’/tari-e “a star” which seem to be dialectal variants. In pronunciation, however, there is no clear difference between the dialects here. The widely held view of native speakers of the standard language that an intervocalic -y- or [ʔ] is audible in such cases, is obviously caused by the spelling. Palaeographic research shows that the assignment of the phonetic value y to a given letter is a comparatively recent development in the history of Dhivehi writing. In Dives akuru there were only two series of characters designing the initial vowels of words or syllables which could be used at random. It is possible that one of these series has to be traced back to a row of aksaras containing y-. We have to consider in this connection that there was no word-initial y- in Dhivehi, inherited /y/ having developed into /l/ in early times (cf. 1.7.1).

1.5. Word accent as a rule falls on one of the first two syllables in Dhivehi. At the same time, the following tendencies can be made out:

1.5.1. When both syllables are short, or the first syllable is long and the second short, the first syllable is stressed; cp., e.g., M.A.F. méhi “fly”; M. bōdu, A. bōūda, F. bōūdo “big, large”; M.A.F. tīki “drop”; M.A.F. bākari “goat”; M. ātōlu, A.F. diēle “atoll”. — M.A.F. nālī “weight unit, ca. 1 kg”; M.A.F. mōsun “monsoon, season”; M.A.F. bēsveriā “medical doctor; traditional naturopath”; M.A.F. sāfū “clean, clear”; M.F. bōkiba, A. bōkoba “pancake”.

Because of their special accentuation, three nouns with a paradigmatic interchange of -h- and -ss- in the position before a stem-final -i has to be treated as a particular group within the i-stems. Although their first two syllables are short, the stress falls on the second syllable, i.e., on the vowel followed by h or ss. Cf. M.A.F. dīvēhi “islander, insular”, i.e. “Maldivian”, indef.sg. M.F. dīvēṣe; A. dīvēssa “a Maldivian (man or woman)”; A. fiēhi, M.F. fiēhi “knife”, indef.sg. A. fiēssa, M.F. fiēsse “a knife”, A. kiēhi “saw”, indef.sg. kiēssa “a saw” (no exact M.F. equivalent).

193 Cf. 2.3.2.7.1.2.2.
194 Cf. F. nom.sg. kēhā, indef. kēhē and M. nom. kēs.
1.5.2. When the first syllable is short and the second long, it is the second syllable which is stressed; cp., e.g., M.A.F. timā “self”; M. ufāveri, A. ufā “happy”; M. furāṭu, A. ferāḍa “roof”; A. fehē, F. fahe “if”; M.A.F. falō “papaya”. — This rule is not effective, however, when the long syllable is preceded by a geminate; cf. A.F. bağlı “father”, A.F. māmmā “mother” (M. bāppā, māmmā).

1.5.3. When the first two syllables are long, the first syllable is stressed; cp., e.g., M.A.F. mihā “(the) man”; M.A.F. kāfūru “camphor”.

1.5.4. When in words with three or more syllables the first two syllables are short and the third is long, it is the latter one which is stressed; e.g. M.A.F. alanāsī “pine apple”; M. bakamānu, A.F. bakamānu “owl”; A. bejelā (def.) “the cat”.

To sum up these observations, the basic rule of Maldivian word accentuation can be stated as follows: The first long syllable in a word is stressed. This comprises syllables that are closed by geminates or consonant clusters.

1.6. Sandhi phenomena do not play an important role in Dhivehi. There are only a few rules that can be considered as un questionable.

1.6.1. On the basis of orally recorded stories from older native speakers of the Fua‘ Mulaku dialect we may state the rule that word-final glottal stops (← -k or -t) are realised as -d before initial l- or r-. Cf. the following two examples:

- F. truk lebāgeru → ru’ labān → [rud-labān] (T6, 26.31) “bending the coconut trees down”
- F. lenek rukahal → ene’ rukaha → [ened-rukaha] (T4, 44) “to another coconut tree”.

1.6.2. The realisation of geminates instead of sequences consisting of glottal stop + consonant at the word boundary must be considered as a sandhi phenomenon as well; cf. e.g.:

- F. lde ruk de-eteru → de ru’ dētere → [de rud-dētere] (T4, 44a) “between two coconut trees”.

1.6.3. In the Addū dialect, final -‘ ← l-š, -k, -tl, occurring in the position before initial vowel or h, is changed to -n; cf. the following examples:

- A. tege rašaš ebege → [ege raša ubege] (T16, 35) “he went to his (own) island” (ebege 3.sg.pret. of (M.) dona “to go”)
- A. fiňdaunä gos eĩdaš aral → [fiňdānä gos eĩdaar aral] (T1, 11) “the F.-bird, having gone (there) and having climbed up to the bed . . .” (gos abs. of (M.) dona “to go”, aral abs. of aran “to climb”)

1.6.4. For the affrication of final -pti in predicative adjectives preceding the quotation marker -ē l-evel in the standard language, cf. 1.3.9.2.2.

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195 labān ← labāgen, abs III “bending I having bent” of labāni “to bend (down)”; for the contraction of the abs. III frequently occurring in the F. dialect, cf. 3.11.4.3.
196 About the phonological rules concerning the formation of geminates cf. 1.3.9.
1.7. On the historical relationship of Dhivehi and Sinhalese

DE SILVA (1970b, 157 ff.) put forward several arguments that might speak in favour of an early dialectal differentiation of Dhivehi and Sinhalese. In the course of the present investigation, DE SILVA’s observations as to the comparative-historical phonology of the Insular Indo-Aryan languages deserve of being discussed in detail.

1.7.1. Although DE SILVA had only a very restricted corpus of Maldivian language material at his disposal, he noticed that the initial Sinhalese glide y- as inherited from Old and Middle IA y-, corresponds to the voiced dental stop d- in Dhivehi. He realised that d- must have developed through the palatal affricate "j from the original glide, y. At the same time DE SILVA recognised that the few Maldivian words which show initial y- must be of foreign origin; cp. the following examples: yath(-dāni) “yacht-(boat)” ← Engl. yacht, yağin “certain(ty)” ← Arab. yağìn “id.”, yauniyā “records, chronicle” ← Arab. yauniyāt “chronicle of everyday life”. For the regular correspondence of Dhiv. d- and Sinh. y-, DE SILVA listed the following correspondences (1970b, 157-8):197

M. dāni / Sinh. yunavā “to go”; cf. Pa. yañi, but Pkt. jāi “id.” ← OIA yāti “goes, proceeds, moves, walks, travels”.198 The nouns M. dānava and Sinh. yuvā- “journey”, which belong to the same root etymologically, are mots savants, as the consonants in medial position show; cf. OIA yātrā- “journey”, Pa. yatrā- (a sanskritism itself) “id.”, but Pkt. jatā-.199

M.A.F. da(yantu-ā-o) “iron (bar)” / Sinh. ya “iron”; cf. Pa. ayat(-a), Pkt. ałyəra-. OIA āyas- “metal, iron”.200

M.A.F. dan īdānu “unit of time covering three hours” ← Sinh. yama “(night) watch”; cf. Pkt. jāma- vs. Pa. yāmā-, Skt. yāma- “night watch of three hours”.201

One more undisputed example which has to be treated in this context is Dhiv. dāsu (RC 5,12) ← dāsu (attested since L1) “underneath”202 as against Sinh. yeta adv., postpos. “below, beneath” (← OIA adhāstā).203

1.7.2. DE SILVA accordingly divides the Indo-Aryan languages into a “y-group” and a “j-group”, depending on the fact whether OIA initial /y/ was preserved or changed into /l/ through intermediate /l/. He comes to the result that Sinhalese is a “y-language” in its main stock while Dhivehi belongs to the j-languages. Without any doubt DE SILVA was right in considering this twofold phonological development as a dialectal differentiation which originated in the Prakrit period. It is also right that it can be taken as an indication for a comparatively early separation of Sinhalese and Dhivehi.

197 Supplementary remarks as well as corrections as to DE SILVA’s treatise are not particularly noted.
199 Cf. GEIGER (1941), 140, no. 2087; TURNER (1966) II, 604, no. 10456.
200 Cf. GEIGER (1941), 140, no. 2081; TURNER (1966) I, 26, no. 590.
201 Cf. GEIGER (1941), 141, no. 2095; TURNER (1966) II, 605, no. 10467.
202 In modern Dhivehi this word has only a locative meaning; cf. loc. M. dəsətə, A.F. dəsī “below, beneath”, abl. M.A.F. dəsənum “from below”, dat. M.A. dəsəm, F. dəsaha “down”; Old Dhiv. dəsu is a common noun still.
203 Cf. GEIGER (1941), 140, no. 2085.
1.7.3. One more regular difference between Sinhalese and Dhivehi that was already treated by DE SILVA consists in the development of the palatal affricates of the Old and Middle Indo-Aryan period. In Sinhalese the initial /l/- of inherited words developed into /s/- which regularly changed into /h/- later; cf. Sinh. saññadhañña “moon” ← MIA candas-, OIA candras-“id.” An inherited initial /j/- became /d/- in Sinhalese, as, e.g., in divi “life” ← Pkt. jivi(y)iha ← OIA jivita- “living, life.” Old and Middle IA /k’/- and /s/- in medial position led to Sinh. /d/-, which in word-final position further developed into unvoiced /t/-, thus, e.g., Skt. krakaca- “saw” at first developed, through an intermediate form like Pa. kakaca-, to Sinh. kiyat-, then (by devoicing of the stem-final /d/ to the modern stem kiyat-.) Old medial /cc/- became Sinh. /s/-, while an inherited medial /ji/- developed into Sinh. /dd/-; cf. Sinh. m̄d̄a “central, middle, centre” ← Pa., Pkt. mañjha- ← OIA mādhyā- “id.” The latter sound change can also be found in Dhivehi, e.g., M. medu, A.F. mede “id.”

Besides the sound change of /jj/- → /dd/- treated above, DE SILVA realised that the heterogeneous substitution of the inherited palatal affricates in Sinhalese opposes itself to a very homogeneous development in Dhivehi. As a matter of fact, all the corresponding phonemes, which still existed in MIA, merged into a single phoneme in Dhivehi, viz. /s/- which in initial and medial position subsequently changed into /h/209. When the Maldivian language material is judged comprehensively, DE SILVA’s perceptions of these historical sound changes must be regarded as right in their main points; there are several particular problems, however, that cannot be solved without contradictory results even now. Thus, e.g., OIA rājan- “king” (cp. Pa. nom. rājā)210 exists in Dhivehi not only in the form ras (attested since L4 [b/2,3 etc.] which represents the expected development of /j/- → /s/-, but also as the stem radan which seems to reflect the original /n/-stem reinterpreted as a pluralis maiestatis (attested since L5 [b/2,2: mādradun], cf. 2.3.2.7.4.1). Besides these two variants which occur side by side until nowadays, the singular forms rāda (L4 g/1,6; F1,3 etc.; rāja) L2 3,1 and radu (F10,18 etc.) are attested as well. The corresponding Sinhalese form is rada as expected (cf. the older variants rad/rad and the inscriptional form raja211). It must be assumed that all Maldivian variants of this word which contain /d/ have to be considered as mots savants. In these cases, /d/- must have substituted the Skt. phoneme /j/- which did not exist as such in the sound system of Old Dhivehi.

211 With good reasons, Turner (1966, I, 185, no. 3570) points out that Geiger (1941, 43, no. 635) did not recognize that the Sinh. nom.sg. kiyata “saw” (stem kiyat-) has to be traced back to an original stem *kiyad- (with /d/- → /j/- → /c/-); the stem-final /t/ can be explained by the assumption that the pure stem was used as a plural which led to a devoicing of /d/, the final result being kiyat. The modern form of the nom.sg. (cf. above) was thus derived from this allomorphic variant. For a parallel development (from the late MIA period, after early MIA /c/- → /c/- and /j/- → /j/-, had coincided into the affricate /j/-), cp. the Sinh. stem behet- “medicine”, a plural form from which the nom.sg. beheta is derived, with the variant beheda from an original stem behed- which through *beseja emerged from Pa., Pkt. bheseja- “id.” (cf. Turner 1966, II, 549, no. 9623). Cf. also de Silva (1970b), 158 f., and 2.3.2.8.1.3 below.
212 However, there seem to be almost no examples attesting this sound change, cf. Geiger (1938), 49.
214 For more details cf. 1.3.5.
216 In the earliest inscriptions of Sinhalese, long and short vowels are usually not distinguished from each other; cf., e.g., Geiger (1938), 14.
Morphology

2. The nominal categories

The nominal system of Dhivehi comprises nouns, pronouns, adjectives and numerals as parts of speech. Despite of their partially remarkable morphological differences, all Maldivian dialects show the same grammatical categories, viz. case, number, definiteness and indefiniteness.

2.1. In Maldivian the noun has lost grammatical gender as a category of its own. This makes a great difference in comparison with modern Sinhalese, where the inherited grammatical distinction of animate masculine and feminine substantives has been preserved until nowadays, natural sexus and grammatical gender always corresponding with each other. Furthermore, the opposition of animate vs. inanimate nouns is expressed in manifold ways in the morphological categories of Sinhalese. The combination of both systems led to a threefold distinction of grammatical gender, animate masculine and feminine nouns being opposed to inanimate neuters. In the nominal system of Dhivehi, however, the morphological expression of the dichotomy of animateness and inanimateness plays a comparatively insignificant role.

2.1.1. Without any doubt Geiger’s observation that the inherited case system was sharply diminished already in Prakrit times in the prehistory of Sinhalese is valid for Dhivehi as well. Basically the inherited case forms of Old Indo-Aryan were reduced to distinctive forms of a direct case (casus rectus) and an oblique case (casus obliquus), the latter one serving as a basis for the formation of secondary case forms which developed in the period of Modern Indo-Aryan only. While the declension of northern Dhivehi, just like the one of Sinhalese, is rather agglutinative, the southern dialects show a much greater variety of inflectional declension patterns. In comparison with the paradigms of MIA, most of these case forms are secondary, however. In particular, the case system of South Dhivehi consists of a direct and an oblique case, a genitive-locative (the two forms being formally identical), a dative and an ablative, the latter serving as an instrumental case as well. In contrast to that, the case inventory of North Dhivehi comprises a special agglutinative locative which is different from the genitive. There is no formal accusative in Dhivehi; the object is morphologically expressed by the direct or the oblique case. Usually the direct case occurs in nominative function as the subject case of finite predicative verbs. When the predicate is infinite, however, the oblique case can serve as a subject case.

2.1.2. In modern Dhivehi the classification of nominal stems derives from the different declension types. Thus, the nouns can be divided into consonant stems, a-stems and i-stems, stems ending in other vowels being rare. On the other hand, consonant stems and i-stems have many subtypes. However, neither the stem classes nor the declension paradigms of modern Dhivehi can be derived directly from corresponding Old and Middle Indo-Aryan types, most of the formations in question being the result of secondary developments.

212 “In der präkritischen Grundlage des Sgh. war der Unterschied der alten Declination bereits aufgehoben” (Geiger 1900, 56).
2.1.3. The **number system**, which is characterised by the distinction of singular and plural, is interrelated inseparably with the categorical dichotomy of definiteness and indefiniteness. The correlation of these two categories led to a very complex system which is preserved unaltered only in the dialect of Addū. It is characterised by the fact that the pure nominal stem as a rule functions as a plural form. This is the primary basis of the plural paradigms from which the definite and the indefinite singular forms are derived by additional markings. As to the formation of number, words designating human beings (persons) usually show a peculiar behaviour. In these cases the singular must be considered as primary, the plural being marked by special suffixes. The number system of North Dhivehi differs widely from this system. Here, the plural is regularly formed by a uniform suffix, the original meaning of which is "so much / many" as the earlier written documents of Dhivehi show. Furthermore, these texts reveal that in the language of Māle some hundred years ago the correlation of number and definiteness was practically identical to that preserved in Addū to this day. Comparing the linguistic areas in question, the treatment of number in the Fua’ Mulaku dialect is of special interest, because here, both systems intermingled with each other. In Fua’ Mulaku all peculiarities of the categories of number and definiteness can be found on the spot to a certain extent; this special constellation caused the emergence of a great variety of morphological and morphonological irregularities. A functional overlap of the categories of number on the one hand and of definiteness and indefiniteness on the other hand, which is quite similar to that of Addū, also exists in Sinhalese.\(^{213}\)

2.1.4. In function, the **pronouns** of Dhivehi can be divided into personal, demonstrative, possessive, reciprocal, interrogative, reflexive and indefinite pronouns and pronominal adjectives. In Dhivehi as in Sinhalese, the relative pronoun was lost already at an early period; instead of relative clauses, both languages use participial constructions regularly.\(^{214}\) Furthermore, there are no particular negative pronouns in Dhivehi; “nobody, no one, nothing” and the like have to be expressed periphrastically. In congruence with the noun, the pronominal system of Dhivehi distinguishes the categories of case, number, and, to some extent, also definiteness and indefiniteness. Corresponding to what has been said about the nouns, there is no formal expression of grammatical gender in the pronouns of the standard language and the Addū dialect. In contrast to that, the pronominal system of the Fua’ Mulaku vernacular shows a few traces of gender differentiation. Some of the pronouns can be used as attributes as well as independently. Partly the pronominal categories show considerable dialectal divergences; thus, e.g., even some personal pronouns of the northern and southern vernaculars represent different etyma. In Māle, where the social status of the speaker in comparison with that of the addressee is expressed in the first person, different pronouns are used to denote the different hierarchical levels. In southern Dhivehi, we do not find any traces of such a sociolinguistic differentiation. Here, however, the old formal distinction of the direct and the oblique case, which was lost in northern Dhivehi, has been preserved in the pronominal system. Despite the many differences, the Maldivian pronominal system is rather homogeneous in comparison with the “diffuse” pronouns of Sinhalese.\(^{215}\)

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\(^{213}\) Cf. Geiger (1900), 57 and 63.

\(^{214}\) For the invariable form *yan*, which can be traced back to the old relative pronoun, and for the expression of relative clauses in Sinhalese in general cf. Geiger (1941), 7 and 69 f. (1973), 564 and 626.

\(^{215}\) For Sinhalese pronouns cf. Geiger (1938), 123 ff. and (1900), 66 ff.; cf. also Matzel (1983), 30 f.
2.1.5. Neither in attributive nor in predicative position, the adjective does not show any morphological variation of its own in both Maldavian and Sinhalese. In particular, there are no suffixal formations of comparatives. Degrees of comparison are expressed by quantifiers such as “big”, “great”, “more”, “rather” or “very”. Furthermore, adjectival comparison can be expressed by purely syntactical means. When used independently, however, adjectives have the same inflectional variety as nouns.

2.1.6. The numeral system of Modern Dhivehi is the result of a manifold restructuring. Its most striking feature is a particular mode of counting based on a purely duodecimal system, which attracts special attention from a typological point of view. This system which in earlier times was used all over the Maldives, is almost lost nowadays. It is surprising that a similar system, built on duodecimal units, is not attested for Sinhalese at any time of its long history (cf. De Silva 1970b, 149). In Modern Dhivehi, as well, a decimal system prevails, in which relic forms of the old autochthonous numeral system are mixed with many sanskritisms and prakritisms. From the cardinal numbers (like nouns), an indefinite form can be derived by suffixation. Ordinal numbers are derived from cardinal numbers by means of a suffix, too.

2.1.7. In Dhivehi the term “adverb” is not related to a specific part of speech; it has to be understood as a functional general term instead. Adverbs derived from nominal parts of speech, such as, e.g., nouns or adjectives, but also pronouns, will be treated in the context of their underlying formations.

2.2. There are almost no word formation procedures in Dhivehi. As a rule, adjectives and nouns are not distinct from each other by special morphological marks. There are at least four suffixal elements of different productivity, however, by means of which adjectives can be derived from nouns or from already existing adjectives without further morphological marks. The frequency and the distribution of the particular suffixes within the different dialectal areas is subject to a considerable variety. Thus, the suffix -teri is obviously restricted to North Dhivehi (cp., e.g., M. bënu teri “useful”), and the same holds true for the rare suffix -(v)eti which almost exclusively occurs in the standard language (e.g. M. lëbu teri “dear”). In contrast to that, the adjective suffix -veri, which goes back to a former independent noun, occurs all over the dialects (e.g. M.A.F. budiveri “wise”). By means of the adjective gada “rich, strong”, which still occurs as an independent word as well, compound adjectives are derived from nouns. These secondary adjective formations represent a reverse type of bhuvrīhi compounds, cp., e.g., M.A.F. aligada “bright”, lit. “(being) rich (in) light”.

2.2.1. For the formation of nouns, there is only one kind of productive derivation in Dhivehi. In order to create nouns with abstract meaning, the word kan ikaml, “fact”, is added to semantically corresponding adjectives and substantives. Cf. M. rīti adj. “beautiful” vs. rītikan “beauty”, M.A.F. ufāveri adj. “glad, happy” vs. ufāverikan “happiness”, A. boña “big,
large” vs. boiđakăn “bigness, largeness”, A. fakiri adj. “poor” (≈ Arab. fāqīr “poor (one)”) vs. fakīrkan “poverty”; cf. also veri as an originally independent nominal stem meaning “person; leader” vs. verikan “government”.

2.2.2. There are practically no diminutive formations in Dhivehi. In all the investigated texts there is only one attestation of a suffix with diminutive function, which is joined to a nominal stem. In the Fua’ Mulaku version of the fairy tale Mākanā “The Crane”, we find rało-maṇa instead of F. raļo “wave”, maṣ-maṇa instead of F. maṣa ṣnaș “fish”, daro-maṇa instead of F. daro “firewood” etc. (further examples in 5.3.3). Possibly -maṇa reflects Dhiv. maṇi “pearl”. This word, albeit being attested already in L1 (f71,1), is obsolete in the modern language. Most probably the same etymon occurs also in M. maṇiku ← maṇika which was originally used as an aristocratic title (for an etymological discussion cf. 2.6.2.4.6).

2.2.3. There are two honorific suffixes in Dhivehi, the usage of which is confined to the standard language as well. -falu ← -pulu (cf. 1.3.9.6.1) is added to nouns denoting inalienable objects, while -kolu is joined to nouns denoting alienable objects; in both cases the function of the suffixes is to morphologically express the high social level of the owner of the objects in question. Cpr., e.g., iğiği-falu “finger” or appulu laipulu “hand” (of a noble person) as against gamš-kolu “shirt” or galam-kolu “pen” (of a noble person). As a consequence of the increasing democratisation of the Maldivian society, however, the two suffixes are becoming more and more obsolete in the modern language.

2.3. The noun

2.3.1. Case system and stem types

In Dhivehi the formation of the nominal stem types is closely connected to the rules of case formation. Within the system of nominal declension, there is a considerable divergence between the southern and northern dialects. While there are no remarkable differences in the function of the case forms all over the Dhivehi speaking area, their formation is very heterogeneous. Alongside some relics of the inherited inflectional system, an agglutinative declension developed in northern Dhivehi, while the southernmost dialects have preserved more archaic inflectional patterns until nowadays. The actual paradigms cannot be derived directly from the well known declension types of Old and Middle Indo-Aryan, however. According to Geiger, they had already disappeared to a high degree by the time of Sinhalese Prakrit. Comparing the Sinhalese data with the system we find in Dhivehi, we are forced to

220 For more details cf. 2.3.2.4.1, 2.3.2.4.2.

221 Claus Peter Zoller (personal information) proposes to derive the suffix from OIA maṇāk “a little” (Pkt. maṇā etc., cf. Turner 1966, II, 564, no. 9824).

assume that the inflectional state of the presumable Maldivian Prakrit must have been quite similar. The case system of modern Dhivehi and Sinhalese is based on the difference between a direct (or nominative) case (casus rectus) and an oblique case (casus obliquus), the latter being identical with the pure nominal stem. While the function of the direct case is restricted to the use as a nominative, the oblique case is the basis of all the other case forms. In Dhivehi this holds true for genitive, dative, and ablative in general. Besides this, the northern dialectal area has a particular locative case, too, while in the southernmost vernaculars the locative morphologically coincides with the genitive.

2.3.1.1. In the following paragraphs, we will give a comprehensive survey of the case suffixes in particular and – whenever possible – of their etymology. While the nominative and the oblique case have no homogeneous suffix in Dhivehi, all the other cases are characterised by unambiguous formal markers.

2.3.1.1.1. In the southern dialects, two different kinds of genitive formations can be distinguished. The morpheme variants which are used in the formation of the genitive of nouns and pronouns designating “non-persons” in general (A. -e, -i; F. -el-ei, -e)\(^2\), cannot yet be etymologised with certainty. It is quite probable, however, that they correspond with the genitive endings -ā and -a which PARANAVITANA (1956, I, cxiv) attests for medieval Sinhalese (8th to 10th century A.D.). Following PARANAVITANA, these endings (besides the genitive endings Sinh. -ā, -a, -u and -avu, occurring in the same inscriptions, which obviously have no equivalents in Dhivehi) have to be derived from “-sya in Old Indian which, in Middle Indian, is -ava”.\(^2\) They are opposed to the genitive suffix -ge, which in the South Maldivian area is used exclusively with nouns and pronouns designating “persons” in a wider sense, while it has become the only formal marker of the genitive in North Maldivian. This suffix must be derived from the locative of ge “house” without any doubt. According to GEIGER, the corresponding genitive ending of Sinhalese, -gē, has been contracted from geyi “in the house”; thus, gōvīya-gē daruvāh has the meaning of “the children (in the house) of the farmer”. In this connection, the original genitive meaning of the oblique case preceding -gē is still recognisable, at least when appearing in archaic forms.\(^2\) Cf. also PARANAVITANA’s statement (ib., cxiii): “Ge may therefore be equated with Skt. gehe ‘in the house’, i.e. ‘in the

\(^{22}\) Basiclly the distribution of the variant endings in the dialect of Adhā depends on the different stem types. In consonant stems, special phonological rules depend on the particularities of the phonological structure of the nouns in question; cf. 2.3.2.11.1 for details. For the dialect of Funa Muku which presents an even more complicated picture, cf. 2.3.2.12.1.

\(^{23}\) In this connection cp. the genitive forms rasunasya (L2 1,5), rasunasya (L2 1,4 and 2,1; L3 1/1,2 etc.) and rasunasya (L2 1,2) “the king’s”, which are attested in some written documents of Old Dhivehi and which have to be judged as sanskritisms (mots savants). In contrast to that the same documents also show the “real Maldivian” genitive rasun-ge “the king’s, of the king” which represents today’s normal genitive formation of nouns designating persons (L1 ml/1,2; L2 34,5 and L3 15/1,5).

place’. The change in meaning from the loc. to the gen. is a natural one: what is one’s house is one’s own, so the postposition ge came to denote ownership.” PARANAVITANA proves that in early medieval Sinhalese -gē occurs only as a genitive suffix in connection with personal names, not yet competing with the inherited synthetic formation of the genitive. This observation agrees with what we find in the early written documents of Dhivehi which show that in the earlier stages of the standard language genitive endings in -e were usual. Furthermore they prove that the suffix -ge, originally added only to nouns designating persons or to personal names, slowly developed into a general marker of the genitive. In the modern standard language, genitives in -e are completely unknown.

2.3.1.2.1. In the vernaculars of Addū and Fua’ Mulaku the locative of all nouns designating inanimate objects or non-persons is formally identical with the genitive. Hence, the morphemes that denote the locative are A. -e, -i and F. -el-ei, -i. In many cases we can decide only by the context, whether the forms in question have to be interpreted as genitives or as locatives (e.g. A. fen-e, F. fen-ei “of the water” or “in the water”). In older Dhivehi, most forms in -e represent locatives, while an unambiguous genitival use of the same morpheme with inanimate nouns is comparatively rare. Some of the forms attested in L1, which are taken by MANIKU/WIJAAYAWARDHANA (1986, viii-ix) to represent the possessive function of the locative, have to be interpreted as locative forms without any doubt in the given context, while other examples remain ambiguous. In two of the passages in question, madale appears together with the participles ot (otu) (pres./pret.: L2 10,4) and ovuna (pret.pres.: L2 18,4) “being (there), lying” and has to be translated as “(being) in the district” (in contrast to MANIKU/WIJAAYAWARDHANA, who translate “of the atoll” [in the sense of an administrative district]). The form sime which is rendered as “of the boundaries” (ib.) can be interpreted as a genitive or as a locative as well; cf. the phrase sime sataru mūnū “(the) four sides (mūnū, lit. ‘face’) on the border” or “the four sides of the border”, occurring in L2 (4,1-2) and L3 (2/2,3). Gome, translated as “of the village” (ib.), rather seems to have the function of a genitive in some passages; cf., e.g., gome kulla’ta “to the family/lineage of the village” (attested two times in both L1 2/2,4 and L2 4,5).

258 In modern Sinhalese -gē has the function of a genitive ending with all animate nouns (plants excluded): cf., e.g., MATZEL 1983, 22 and 67.

259 It has not yet been proved by means of the written documents that -e occurring in the last syllable of a substantive could give rise to a gen./loc. ending in -i in the older language of Māle, as it is the case in the dialect of Addū (cf. 2.3.2.11.1).

260 For the suppletive distribution of the verbs ommari “lie, be (there)” and tībeni “be (there)”, depending on the number of the subjects involved, cf. the detailed information given in 3.14.1.

261 The gen./loc. gen-e of the stem gom- “village” shows a type of umlaut which is very unusual in Dhivehi. The regular form would be gom-e. Such a form is indeed attested three times in L1 (md/1,4 and 6; mx/1,5), but it is not yet certain whether gom- has the meaning of “village” in these passages in question. The umlauted stem gen- is well attested in other case forms too (e.g., the instr./abl. gemen in 2.3.1.1.4.1), but it is the only example of this kind of umlaut within a nominal paradigm that has become known until now.
a common basic form ("loc. of -as- stems"), which already in the earliest period could have represented both case forms. For lack of convincing evidence, GEIGER’s supposition cannot be proved, however, the possibility of a syncretism of separate formal elements characterising the genitive and the locative remaining valid. GEIGER maintains that the locative suffix -ə (cp., e.g., bini “on the ground”; gam “in the village”; for the gen.suff. -ə cf. above), which frequently occurs during the 9th century, is the “result of a contraction” of earlier -e. This assumption cannot be proved by examples or parallel developments, either.

2.3.1.1.2.2. At a relatively late time an analytic locative formation came into use in the standard language of Māle which completely replaced the inherited forms in -e. The modern locative suffix -gi l-gai which can be added to inanimate as well as animate nouns, represents the inherited oblique case of the noun gai “body”. The original meaning of “on, in, at (something or somebody)” was “on/in/at the body (of something or somebody)” accordingly (for more details cf. 2.3.2.13). In the standard language, this formation has already become rigid and is no longer perceived in its original sense. But in the dialect of Fua’ Mulaku there exists a special declension type constituted by a few nouns designating animals only, which yields immediate insight into the development of the word gai into a case marking suffix (cf. 2.3.2.12.5.5).

2.3.1.1.3. The dative ending is -a’/l-aš in the standard language as well as in Addū. In Fua’ Mulaku, however, it has the variants -aha, -hā, -asā besides -a’/l-aš, depending on the type of the nominal stem and some additional phonological and phonetic criteria. Without any difficulties the ending M.A.F. -a’/l-aš and the variant F. -asā can be traced back to the dative ending -aš(a) which is frequently attested in the older written documents of Maldivian. This is obviously identical with the Sinhalese dative ending -(a)ta which through the intermediate stages of Pkt. atthām and attha (cf. Pa. atthām and attha) can be derived from Skt. ārthām or ārya, i.e., the acc./dat. of ārtha- “aim, cause”.

It is difficult to decide, however, whether the two variants F. -aha and -hā represent pure allomorphs of the ending l-aš, because a phonetic development of inherited i through s into F. h (in all positions) would be an exception, as can be shown by many comparable examples (cf. 1.3.6). Instead, there are some indications which suggest an identification of F. -aṅha-hā with a genitive ending -asa/aha, which is attested for the most archaic stage of Sinhalese in the function of a dative as well.

2.3.1.1.3.1. GEIGER (1938, 108-9) and (obviously following him) PARANAVITANA (1956, I, cxi) even assume that all Sinhalese dative formations are based on old genitives. GEIGER tries to document the development beginning with the Prakrit period. In the oldest inscriptions, genitives in -asa and -aha were used as datives, just like the genitives in -assa of Pali and Prakrit. Beginning with the 1st century A.D., these genitives occur in combination with a following -aśa (= MIA -aśa) or -atya (= MIA *atya) l-aśa (= MIA *atya). GEIGER and PARANAVITANA demonstrate this development by means of the dative of sūkha “multitude, assembly; community of bhikkhus” (= Skt. sākha-; cf. GEIGER 1941, 171, no. 2565), which is attested in inscriptions with and without sandhi in the form (sākha) (= MIA saṅghasaśa) besides (saṅghasa aṣa)-ye (= *saṅghasa aṣa/ya)-ye). GEIGER postulates that Sinh. *sagata or *saṅghata (atya-ye) must have been possible forms as well. In the plural, -aṭa is joined to the gen.pl. in -asa (= -āṭam). GEIGER illustrates this

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29 More extensive information as to this will be given in 2.3.2.12.2.
30 Cf. TURNER (1966), I, 29, no. 638 and further GEIGER (1941), 59, no. 865; (1900); 62; (1938) 108 f.; for the part the dative plays in the formation of the infinitive cf. 3.6.1.1 ff.
31 The genitives in question have the function of denoting an indirect object.
with the formation savva sattanata “to all beings”, which occurs in a 4th century inscription and which he derives from *savva-sattanathāhaṃ. The co-occurrence of different formations of this type can be observed up to the medieval period of Sinhalese, where we meet with datives in -a (e.g. ānat “to the village”) and -ahan (e.g. mahārād'hāna “to the great king”) as well as pl. forms in -anat (e.g. mahā-sāignat “to the great community”; minisat “to the people”). From the 11/12th century on, -ata, with a secondary final -a, comes into use again (cp., e.g., mithuraṇa “to the friends”). In the 12th century, too, the syncopated formant -ta is attested for the first time with a plural meaning (mehe-karuṇaṇa “to the workers”). The other variants continue to be used, as well, together with a pseudo-suffix -hata as in sago-hata which must be explained by a metanalysis of the type sago-hata “to the community of bhikkhus” (cf. above). The given development is summed up by PARANAVITANA as follows: “Having developed so early and merging itself in the gen. ending, -ta and -hata may be considered as dat. case-endings; but when -ata, -hata, or -ta is abstracted from a dat. form in Sinhalese, what remains is a gen.” — Both GEIGER and PARANAVITANA seem to postulate that every Sinhalese dative form must necessarily be based on a genitive. We cannot exclude, however, that the compound forms with the dative ārīthāya “for the sake (of)” (cf. above), occurring so frequently in OIA, might have served as a starting point of the formation in question, the derivation of -hata given above notwithstanding. This can be illustrated by the two Skt. examples of compounds (with a verbal noun as their first member) taken from the Rāmacarita, viz. rokṣa-pārthāya “for the sake / purpose of protection / shelter” (R. 3.8.7; rokṣaṇa- “guarding”, of rokṣati “guards”; cf. TURNER 1966, II, 610, no. 10547 and WERBA 1997, 468) and harṣa-pārthāya “for the purpose of frightening” (R. 1.48.7; harṣaṇa- “state of excitement, agitation, emotion, stimulation”, of the root hṛṣ- “to bristle; get / become / be glad, excited; shudder”; cf. TURNER 1966, II, 818, WHITNEY 1885, 208 and WERBA 1997, 387).

2.3.1.3.2. In particular cases, it will hardly be possible to find out the correct derivation of a given dative form if this is not attested continuously. Even in Sinhalese with its outstanding written tradition, this condition is fulfilled only in special cases. It goes without saying that the situation in Old Dhivehi, with its fragmentary documents, is much more hopeless, the few attested dative forms offering no chance for an exact analysis. We find, e.g., only a handful of plural dative forms such as Sinh. minisnat and Old Dhiv. misulata (L.6 1,4), mithunattu (F.10,21) “to the people” that can be traced back to underlying genitives without any doubt.

In the case of the dative endings -ahal-ha and -ašal-aš, occurring side by side in Fua’ Mulaku, we may presume with a certain probability that the former variants are based directly on an old genitive ending identical to Sinh. -ahal-asā, while the latter ones in all likelihood developed in the same way as the dative endings M.A. -aša’l-aš and Sinh. -aša. Considering the fact that the vernacular of Fua’ Mulaku represents a melting-pot of manifold peculiarities and influences, such a double-tracked development would not be astonishing at all.

2.3.1.3.3. In Dhivehi the dative has not only the function of marking indirect objects but also of expressing local and temporal directions, responding to the questions “where (to)?” and “when, (towards) what time?”. Besides this, the dative of some nouns and adjectives which are suited from the semantic point of view can be used for the expression of adverbial meanings (manner) without further formal additions or changes; cp., e.g., M. barabara’l-aš as an adverb “excellently” belonging to the adj. barabara “excellent”.


233 For this case and for further evidence cf. GEIGER and PARANAVITANA (ib.). GEIGER also gives details on the use of the suffix variants in Sinhalese.

234 About the frequent spelling of final l-š by 〈-n〉 cf. 3.6.3.2.3.