WHAT IS A TADBHAVA WORD?

Some Sanskrit terms have entered the technical vocabulary of modern linguistics, terms such as *sandhi* (lit. 'placing together') and *svarabhakti* (the insertion of a glide vowel between two consonants, lit. 'vowel-break'). While the literal meaning of these two terms gives at least some indication of their function, we also meet with terms borrowed from the vocabulary of the Indian grammarians which do not reveal any obvious meaning. One such term is *tadbhava* which has been used in modern works on Indian languages since last century to denote those words of the Indian vernaculars which are generally said to be 'derived from' their Sanskrit equivalents.

It is clear how the term *tadbhava* has come to be used in this way. As is well known, the Indian grammarians used the terms *tadbhava*, *tatsama*, and *deśī* or *deśya* to denote *prākṛta* or Middle Indo-Aryan words which modern linguists may identify as being derived from Sanskrit, identical with Sanskrit words, or regional. But even in its indigenous context it is far from clear what the meaning of the term *tadbhava* is. Surely, it does not mean 'derived from', and surely, the term was not picked at random by the Indian grammarians. The aim of the present paper is to search for the meaning of the term *tadbhava* and its place within the linguistic universe of the Indian grammarians.

Let us at first consider the definitions and references offered in our standard lexica. In his *Sanskrit Wörterbuch in kürzerer Fassung* (pw), Böhtlingk gives only a single reference for the term: "*tabdhava* Adj. daraus (d.i. aus dem Sanskrit) entstanden (von Wörtern im Prakrit und in den südindischen Sprachen) Medhātithi zu Manu 4.232". Monier-Williams (MW) gives the same reference, but does not translate the term, claiming however that the word is identical in meaning with *tajja*. Under this entry one finds: "*tajja*, mfn. sprung from (that, i.e. from) Sanskrit (as Prākrīt or other words), Vāgbh. ii, 2". This identification should be kept in mind. The Sanskrit-English dictionary of Macdonell gives: "*tad-bhava, a. derived from that, viz. Sanskrit (applied to Prākrit and South Indian Words)". The *Practical Sanskrit-English dictionary* by Apte gives: "*a. sprung from Sanskrit &c. (as Prākrit or other words)". The *Viçaspatyam* has no entry for the term.

R. Pischel (1900: 6), on the other hand, gives more references and an explicit interpretation: "*Saṃskṛtabhava* 'vom Sanskrit stammend' (Sr.),
gewöhnlich Tadbhava (Triv.; Mk.; Daṇḍin; Dhanika), auch Sanskritayoni (Hc. I, I; C.), Tajja (Vāgbhaṭa) und Vibhrasta (Bhāratiyan. 17, 3) \(^1\). As will become clear later on, I would contest that Śimharāja’s explanation of sanskritabhava easily lends itself to the translation ‘vom Sanskrit stammend’. With slight variations this is the prevailing interpretation of tadbhava among Western scholars; so for example H. Scharfe (1977: 186) who gives ‘derived [from Sanskrit]’ and K. C. Acharya (1968: 41) who gives ‘derived from Sanskrit’ as their renderings of the term. But other interpretations are met with as well. J. Beames (1872: 11) offers a far more interesting translation, namely ‘of the nature of it’. This is adopted by S. H. Kellogg (1893: 42): “The word Tadbhava, ‘of the nature of that’, denotes, on the other hand, all corrupted Sanskrit words, which, by the addition, loss, or change of certain letters, have come to appear in Hindī in a form more or less modified, and often greatly disguised.”

Now, if tadbhava is understood in the sense of ‘derived from Sanskrit’, and this sense implies the concepts of ‘time’ and ‘linguistic change’ from a Western framework, then serious misinterpretations of Indian grammar become likely in the following way: The purely Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need. The Western usage of the Indian term tadbhava is introduced into Western grammar to fulfil a certain need.

The descriptive terminology used in this connection shows an assumption of history for Prakrits, with no such corresponding history for Sanskrit. The terms are: tat-sama “Prakrit words which are identical with corresponding Sanskrit words”, tad-bhava “Prakrit words which (are not identical with corresponding Sanskrit words, but) are born from them by sound-changes etc.”, and deśya “regional or local words which could not be traced to Sanskrit”. Obviously, the terminology assumes a history for Prakrits, but not for Sanskrit.

To me this assumption is not necessarily so obvious. It is, of course, if one interprets the terminology as Deshpande does and he is absolutely justified in doing so if tadbhava is equated with tajja. But the question remains whether this is the most convincing interpretation of the term tadbhava or, at least, whether it is the only one possible. This can only be ascertained by approaching the term through a conceptual framework which is — as far as