

Notes on Proto-Mansi word-final vocalism

I. Introduction

The history of the Mansi vocalism has been a subject of research already for more than a century. However, all three monographs published on the topic thus far (Hazay 1907, Kannisto 1919, Steinitz 1955) only treat first-syllable vocalism. Slightly more detail is found in Honti (1982 = GOV), who presents full Proto-Mansi (PMs) reconstructions in his comparative Ob-Ugric lexicon, but he still gives no overview of either the PMs second-syllable vocalism, its development from Proto-Ob-Ugric, or its development into the attested Mansi varieties. In this paper I attempt to take a first step towards this goal, focusing on word-final vowels in nominal stems.

As research material, the 724 Proto-Mansi reconstructions and 105 additional etymological cognate sets presented in GOV would seem to cover the bulk of the old inherited vocabulary of Mansi, and they provide a relatively comprehensive basis for probing the historical development of the Mansi varieties. To this could be still added a number of words of old Uralic heritage not covered by Honti due to the absence of cognates in Khanty (e.g. the reflexes of Proto-Uralic **kojwa* ‘birch’, **lämä* ‘broth’, **wetə* ‘water’). Such examples are however not numerous, and they do not seem to change the emerging big picture. Substantially more additional data can be found in the Mansi dialect dictionaries based on the collections of Munkácsi and Kannisto, but their analysis would first require further etymological work; they certainly contain much newer vocabulary from various other sources (e.g. Russian, Tatar, Komi, Khanty) that cannot be assumed to represent a common inheritance among the Mansi varieties. It may suffice to note that many of the developments discussed below have parallels even among the Russian loanwords in Mansi (cf. Kálmán 1956).

I will often additionally refer to “Old Mansi”, i.e. data from the manuscript records of Mansi dating from the late 17th to the early 19th centuries. Any additional



data of this type could in principle turn out to either agree with or to disprove most new proposals I will advance. The ultimately unpublished manuscript *Altwogulische Dialekte* by János Gulya, cited by Honti (1982), has unfortunately not been available for my consultation.

2. Known results

2.1. Final vowels in modern Mansi

Two straightforwardly reconstructible groups of word-final vowels in PMs have been recently treated explicitly by Riese (2001: 56–59, 120–125). The first group is reconstructed by him and also already by Honti (1982) as ending in PMs open **-ā* or **-ā̄*. According to Riese, a word-final vowel would remain in all Mansi varieties: Southern vowel-harmonic *-ā/-ā̄*, Western and Northern *-a*, Eastern *-ə*. This is indeed the typical set of reflexes (Table 1).

South	East	West	North	Proto-Mansi (GOV)	gloss
<i>tol'ā</i>	KU <i>tol'ə</i>	P <i>tul'a</i>	So. <i>tul'a</i>	<i>*tül'ā</i> (#116)	'ring (on finger)'
<i>pāskā</i>	KU <i>pāsγə</i>	P <i>passa</i>	So. <i>pāssa</i>	<i>*pīsγā</i> (#546)	'mitten'
<i>wāṅkā</i>	KU <i>wōṅχə</i>	P <i>wōṅka</i>	So. <i>wōṅχa</i>	<i>*wāṅkā</i> (#697)	'pit'

Table 1. Examples of the default development of PMs **-ā*¹

Occasionally also full loss of the vowel appears to take place in some varieties of Central Mansi = Eastern + Western (Table 2). The evidence of Southern and Northern Mansi and retained final vowels in other Central Mansi varieties still point to development from the same PMs stem type. The development seems to be common, though not completely regular, particularly following a consonant cluster ending in a nasal.²

The second group of PMs final vowels which Riese and Honti (1982) reconstruct are stems ending in PMs close **-ī* or **-ī̄* (Table 3). These show more attrition. The final vowel is regularly retained as Southern vowel-harmonic *-ē/-ī̄*, Northern *-i*, but lost in Western and Eastern. Honti (1999: 28) has furthermore suggested that **-əj* be reconstructed for this group instead.

1. The conventional abbreviations of the Mansi dialects can be found at the end of the article. In most cases I limit myself to citing one representative dialect form per each of the four main groups of the Mansi varieties (Southern, Eastern, Western and Northern).

2. The cluster itself is often further broken apart by epenthetic *ə*.

South	East	West	North	Proto-Mansi (GOV)	gloss
<i>asmā</i>	KU <i>āsmə</i> , K <i>āssəm</i>	VS <i>asəm</i>	So. <i>osma</i>	* <i>āsmā</i> (#69)	‘pillow’
<i>mārnā</i>	KU <i>mōrnə</i>	P <i>marn</i>	–	* <i>mārnā</i> (#411)	‘roe’
–	KU <i>nārmə</i>	P <i>narəm</i>	So. <i>norma</i>	* <i>nārmā</i> (#439)	‘stall’
–	KU <i>pāynə</i>	P VS <i>pāyn</i> , VN LU <i>pāyna</i>	So. <i>poyna</i>	* <i>pāynā</i> (#492)	‘tree trunk’
–	KM <i>ūsəm</i>	P <i>wušma</i>	So. <i>ūsma</i>	* <i>wušmā</i> (#660)	‘a type of fishtrap’

Table 2. Examples of loss of PMs *-ā, *-ā̄ after nasals in Central Mansi

South	East	West	North	Proto-Mansi (GOV)	gloss
<i>kālē</i>	KU <i>χōl</i>	P <i>kōl</i>	So. <i>χōli</i>	* <i>kālē</i> (#243)	‘food for travel’
<i>ñolē</i>	KU <i>ñol</i>	P <i>ñul</i>	So. <i>ñuli</i>	* <i>ñulē</i> (#457)	‘Siberian fir’
<i>kiplī</i>	KU <i>kēpəl</i>	LU <i>kēpəl</i>	So. <i>kēmpli</i>	* <i>kīmplī</i> (#272)	‘seam’
<i>māñčī</i>	KU <i>mōñś</i>	P <i>mōñś</i>	So. <i>māñśi</i>	* <i>māñčī</i> (#398)	‘Mansi’

Table 3. Examples of PMs *-ī, *-ī̄

In the context of word-final vowels in Mansi, also the PMs bisyllabic consonant stems ending in *-əγ should be noted (cf. Table 4, Honti 1999: 32–34, Riese 2001: 69). These are the source of word-final close vowels in varieties of Central Mansi: Eastern -ī̄, Vagilsk and Lozva (Western) -i. Southern Mansi shows a different path of vocalization, transcribed in the Mansi records of Artturi Kannisto as half-long -ō̄, while Northern Mansi and the Pelym dialect of Western Mansi clearly retain the original consonant stem as -iγ. It has also been proposed that the corresponding word-final phonetic vowels in other varieties would still remain consonant stems phonologically. Southern -ō̄ has been analyzed already by Steinitz (1955: 54) as a realization of underlying /-ōw/, and further by Honti (1975: 13) as /-əw/. Eastern and Western -ī̄, -i is similarly analyzed by Honti (1999: 32–33) as a realization of underlying /-əj/. On this latter point, one can add to Honti’s arguments also the fact that in Eastern Mansi, long [ī] is otherwise not securely established as a phoneme, and in stressed syllables it might be interpretable as an allophone of /ē/ (Kulonen 2007: 19). It further bears noting that Honti’s analysis of Proto-Mansi *[ī] as */əj/ and Central Mansi [ī], [i] as /əj/ are independent from each other, as they have no etymological connection: loss of earlier *-ī̄ must precede the

vocalization of *-əγ to new -ī, -i. Per the Northern and Pelym evidence, diachronically the latter has probably also proceeded through -iγ, with no phonetic [əj] stage occurring at any point.

South	East	West, other	Pelym	North	PMs (GOV)	gloss
<i>ērəw</i>	KU <i>ērī</i>	VN VS <i>jēri</i>	<i>jeriγ</i>	So. <i>ērīγ</i>	* <i>īrəγ</i> (#60)	‘song’
<i>šośəw</i>	KM <i>sāsī</i>	LU <i>šōšī</i>	<i>šošiγ</i>	So. <i>sosiγ</i>	* <i>šośəγ</i> (#112)	‘currant’
TJ <i>kürtəw</i>	KU <i>kirtī</i>	LU LM <i>kirti</i>	<i>kirtiγ</i>	LO <i>kirtiγ</i>	* <i>kirtəγ</i> (#330)	‘northern pintail’ (<i>Anas acuta</i>)
<i>šinəw</i>	KU <i>šēnī</i>	VN VS <i>šēni</i>	<i>šēniγ</i>	So. <i>sēniγ</i>	* <i>šinəγ</i> (#596)	‘polypore’
<i>tārəw</i>	KU <i>tāri</i>	VS LU LM <i>tāri</i>	<i>tāriγ</i>	So. <i>tariγ</i>	* <i>tārəγ</i> (#648)	‘pine’

Table 4. Examples of PMs *-əγ

2.2. Final vowels in Old Mansi

A third, much less obvious type of original PMs word-final vowels has also been identified. As first discussed in detail by Gulya (1960), some of the 18th-century Old Mansi records show word-final vowels in many more words than the records from the mid-19th century on (cf. Table 5). Yet already some other Old Mansi records show some loss of these, and their loss is complete by the time of the first systematic Mansi field records of e.g. Reguly, Ahlqvist and Munkácsi. As this innovation covers all varieties of Mansi, earlier scholars were not able to distinguish these words from typical monosyllabic consonant stems. Honti (1982) takes no stance on the reconstruction of this group and only writes an indistinct PMs *-ə (he also appears to neglect some of Gulya’s data). I will adopt here the more specific notation of Zhivlov (2006), who reconstructs *-ə.

Old Mansi	South	East	West	North	PMs (GOV)	gloss
Kg. <i>воата</i>	<i>wāt</i>	KU <i>wōt</i>	P <i>wōt</i>	So. <i>wōt</i>	* <i>wātə</i> (#724)	‘wind’
VTur. <i>лема</i>	<i>lēm</i>	KU <i>lām</i>	P <i>lēm</i>	So. <i>lām</i>	* <i>lēmə</i> (#167)	‘bird cherry’
VTur. <i>тора</i>	–	KU <i>tūr</i>	P <i>tūr</i>	So. <i>tūr</i>	* <i>tūrə</i> (#158)	‘lake’
Pel. <i>мания</i>	<i>miñ</i>	KU <i>māñ</i> , KM <i>māñ</i>	P <i>māñ</i>	So. <i>māñ</i>	* <i>māñə</i> (#428)	‘daughter-in-law’
Kg. <i>тара</i>	<i>tār</i>	KU <i>tōr</i>	P <i>tōr</i>	So. <i>tār</i>	* <i>tārə</i> (#155)	‘root’

Table 5. Examples of PMs *-ə-stems evidenced by Old Mansi data

While the known direct evidence is therefore limited to the Old Mansi records, it has subsequently been shown that more recent Central Mansi varieties still reveal indirect evidence of the PMs *ɔ-stems. This dialect group shows twofold reflexes of most PMs first-syllable vowels: generally long vowels in open syllables, short vowels in closed syllables, while the original PMs vowel length contrasts are mostly reflected as various quality contrasts. The split of PMs open front *ā̄ > *j̄ and *ǎ̄ into short and long variants is particularly noteworthy, as this allows simplifying the reconstruction of the PMs non-close front vowel system proposed by Steinitz (1955). Steinitz’s short *ǎ̄ can be rather identified as instances of *ā̄ secondarily shortened in Central Mansi, while his long *ē̄ can be rather identified as instances of his *ě̄ secondarily lengthened in Central Mansi. Honti (1980: 178) further realigns the latter phoneme as a “new” open *ǎ̄.

The role of the recent common Mansi apocope in this split does not seem to have been realized until recently. For example, Honti (1984: 49) clearly states the general syllable-closure conditioning of the development of vowel length in Central Mansi, but he still attributes the phonemicization of the contrast to analogical generalization. Zhivlov (2006: 79–85) however demonstrates that long-vowel reflexes are regularly found in words reflecting PMs *CVCə, and he proposes that these long vowels would have first arisen regularly in the original open syllable, later phonemicized after the loss of *ə. This convincing argument then further allows reconstructing PMs *ə also in certain cases where Old Mansi records are lacking. In nominals of the shape CVC in modern Mansi, short vowels in Central Mansi indicate PMs *CVC, while consistent long vowels indicate PMs *CVCə (Table 6). Honti (1982) does not yet recognize the need to reconstruct a lost word-final *ə in such cases, and he gives instead shorter reconstructions such as **māt, **ńēr, **k̄j̄r and **tāl.

South	East	West	North	Proto-Mansi (GOV)	gloss
<i>māt</i>	KU KM KO <i>mōt</i>	P VN LU <i>mōt</i>	So. <i>mōt</i>	* <i>mātə</i> (#376)	‘other’
–	KU KM KO <i>ńēr</i>	P VN VS LU <i>ńēr</i>	So. <i>ńēr</i>	* <i>ńīrə</i> (#447)	‘foam’
<i>kār</i>	KU <i>χār</i> , KM KO <i>k̄j̄r</i>	P VN VS LU LM <i>k̄j̄r</i>	So. <i>χār</i>	* <i>k̄j̄rə</i> (#319)	‘male’
<i>tāl</i>	KU KM KO <i>tāl</i>	P VS LU <i>tāl</i> , VN <i>tāl</i>	So. <i>tāl</i>	* <i>tālə</i> (#635)	‘winter’

Table 6. Examples of PMs *ɔ-stems reconstructed by Zhivlov (2006)

3. New results

3.1. Proto-Mansi *CVkCə

As discussed above in Section 2.2, vowel lengthening in Central Mansi provides consistent evidence for the reconstruction of PMs **ə* in nominal stems of the shape *CVCə. The Old Mansi data shows however that stems of the shape *CVCCə also occurred in PMs (Gulya 1960: 38–41), cf. e.g. Kg. *нелъма* ‘tongue’ < PMs **n̄ilmə* (GOV #463), *нюрма* ‘meadow’ < PMs **n̄ürmə* (GOV #476), *тылла* ‘feather’ < PMs **töwlə* (GOV #624, ***töwəl*). As before, lines of evidence can be found that allow indirectly uncovering some instances of PMs **ə* after consonant clusters as well. The first of these is the spirantization of **k*, **k^w* to *x*, *x^w*,³ which takes place in most of Central Mansi (cf. Honti 1999: 40–41). An initial fact to be established is that the change is evidently regular in the syllable coda: word-finally and as the first member of a consonant cluster (Table 7).

South	East	West	North	Proto-Mansi (GOV)	gloss
<i>kolāk</i>	KM <i>k^woləx</i>	P <i>kuləx</i>	So. <i>χuləχ</i>	* <i>külāk</i> (#259)	‘raven’
<i>lāk</i>	KM <i>l̄əx^w</i>	P <i>lax ~ lax^w</i>	So. <i>lāk</i>	* <i>lāk^w</i> (#351)	‘ring’
TČ <i>l̄iŋ</i>	KM <i>lix</i>	P <i>lex</i>	So. <i>l̄iŋk</i>	* <i>l̄iŋk</i> (#168)	‘wedge’
–	KM <i>s̄ölx</i>	P <i>s̄ülx</i>	So. <i>s̄ülk</i>	* <i>s̄ülk</i> (#815)	‘slush’
TČ <i>jäkt-</i>	KM <i>jäxt-</i>	LU LM <i>jäxt-</i>	So. <i>jäkt-</i>	* <i>jäkt-</i> (#182)	‘to cut’
–	KO <i>ñəxśəm</i>	P <i>ñaxśəm</i>	So. <i>ñəχśəm</i>	* <i>ñk̄cām</i> (#444)	‘gills’
<i>ñoks</i>	KM <i>noxś</i>	P <i>nox^wś</i>	So. <i>ñəχś</i>	* <i>ñöks</i> (#449)	‘sable’
<i>okšār</i>	KM <i>oxśər</i>	P <i>oxśər</i>	So. <i>oxśar</i>	* <i>ökšār</i> (#679)	‘fox’
<i>takn-</i>	KM <i>tāxn-</i>	–	So. <i>taχn-</i>	* <i>tākⁿ-</i> (#122)	‘to stick (intr.)’
<i>pükñī</i>	KM <i>pöxəñ</i>	P <i>püxəñ</i>	So. <i>pukñi</i>	* <i>pükñi</i> (#496)	‘navel’
–	KM <i>ñixlət-</i>	–	–	* <i>ñiklət-</i> (#787)	‘to sweat heavily’
<i>tokr-</i>	KM <i>toxr-</i>	P <i>toxr-</i>	So. <i>toχr-</i>	* <i>tökr-</i> (#628)	‘to plug’

Table 7. Examples of coda **k* > *x* in Central Mansi

3. According to the phonetically close transcription of Kannisto, this is also indeed the velar fricative [x] (FUT χ), not the uvular/back-velar fricative [χ] (FUT χ) that occurs in Northern Mansi and the Lower Konda dialect of Eastern Mansi as the general reflex of PMs **k* in a back-vocalic environment (cf. Honti 1999: 39).

The word for ‘navel’ displays an interesting further detail. The Southern and Northern Mansi evidence shows that the word is a PMs $*\bar{i}$ -stem, developing regularly to a consonant stem in Central Mansi. The resulting consonant cluster $*x\bar{n}$ is however then further broken apart by epenthetic $\bar{\epsilon}$, a process still known to be synchronically active (cf. Riese 2002, Kulonen 2007: 26).

Central Mansi shows $*k > x$ also in other words which today have the shape CVC $\bar{\epsilon}$ C. The precedent of ‘navel’ suggests that these have evolved from PMs stems in $*-kC\bar{\epsilon}$, and that here, too, spirantization has taken place specifically in coda position, already before the loss of PMs word-final $*-\bar{\epsilon}$ and schwa epenthesis. With this relative chronology, no additional sound changes need to be assumed to account for the development of this word group, *contra* Honti, who proposes a separate spirantization rule before $\bar{\epsilon}$ + sonorant. Examples of this stem shape in the available data are not numerous (Table 8). In two of the three cases, the reconstruction can however be verified by the Old Mansi evidence.

Dating the spirantization of $*k$ as earlier than the loss of PMs $*-\bar{\epsilon}$ can be additionally supported by the evidence of PMs $*CVC\bar{\epsilon}$ stems. No spirantization of $*k$ occurs in these: e.g. KM $p\bar{\bar{o}}k^w$, P $p\bar{\bar{o}}k$ ‘plug’ < PMs $*p\bar{\bar{a}}k^w\bar{\epsilon}$ (GOV #494); KM P $s\bar{\bar{a}}k$ ‘pearl’ < PMs $*s\bar{\bar{a}}k\bar{\epsilon}$ (GOV #570). PMs $*-\bar{\epsilon}$ can be reconstructed here on the basis of the long vowels in the Central Mansi reflexes. A similar situation holds also for the PMs $*CV\eta k\bar{\epsilon}$ stems, for which see below.

Old Mansi	South	East	West	North	PMs (GOV)	gloss
VTur. <i>maxma</i>	<i>tākəm</i>	KM <i>t̄xəm</i>	P <i>taxəm</i>	So. <i>tākəm</i>	$*t\bar{\bar{a}}k\bar{\epsilon}$ (#634)	‘louse’
SSo. <i>kächrae</i>	TČ <i>käxər</i>	KM <i>käxər</i>	P <i>küxər</i>	So. <i>kakkər</i>	$*k\bar{\bar{a}}k\bar{\epsilon}$ (-) (Honti 1999: 41)	‘stomach’
–	–	–	P <i>joxəl</i> , LM <i>jāxəl</i>	N <i>joxəl</i>	$*jok\bar{\epsilon}$ (#180)	‘dried fish’

Table 8. Cases of Proto-Mansi $*CVk\bar{\epsilon}$

The examples of PMs $*-kC\bar{\epsilon}$ can be further contrasted also with a second group showing retained k . Clearly native cases with Khanty or further Uralic cognates are again quite rare. Honti (1999: 41) only cites P *mēkəm* ‘people’, *mēkən* ‘chaff’ (not attested beyond Mansi), and proposes retention following a long vowel. A similar development is also seen in PMs $*s\bar{\bar{a}}k\bar{\epsilon}p-$ ‘to suffocate (intr.)’ > e.g. KM *sākəp-*, P *sākəp-* (GOV #94), despite the stem-final obstruent. The correlation observed by Honti seems to be correct, but a more parsimonious historical explanation is also possible: both the long vowel and the retained k can be seen as consequences of the overall stem structure, as both would be naturally expected in a PMs bisyllabic consonant stem of the shape $*CVk\bar{\epsilon}C(-)$.

3.2. Proto-Mansi *CVNCə

A second split development of word-medial consonant clusters in Mansi can also be connected to the absence or presence of word-final *-ə. Consonant clusters consisting of a nasal + homorganic stop or fricative show in Mansi two different reflexes: word-finally the nasal can be either lost or preserved (Honti 1999: 49–51). Words showing loss in one variety are however highly likely to show it also in others. Loss versus retention should therefore be assumed to reflect a real Proto-Mansi contrast. It is simple to posit that variable treatment in word-final position is due to original intervocalic versus coda position: *-NCə > -NC (cf. Table 9) versus *-NC > -C (cf. Table 10). Where available, this is indeed what the Old Mansi data shows as well. In the case of *ŋk, word-final spirantization in Central Mansi further confirms this reconstruction (cf. Section 3.1 above).

Old Mansi	South	East	West	North	PMs (GOV)	gloss
Kg. амба	<i>āmp</i>	KU <i>āmp</i>	P <i>āmp</i>	So. <i>āmp</i>	* <i>āmpə</i> (#33)	‘dog’
–	<i>kāmp</i>	KU <i>kāmp</i>	P <i>kāmp</i>	So. <i>kamp</i>	* <i>kāmpə</i> (#270)	‘hill’
Kg. лонта	<i>lōnt</i>	KU <i>lont</i>	P <i>lunt</i>	So. <i>lunt</i>	* <i>lūntə</i> (#360)	‘goose’
Kg. канта	<i>kānt</i>	KU <i>χōnt</i>	VS <i>kōnt</i>	So. <i>χōnt</i>	* <i>kāntə</i> (#750)	‘war, army’
Kg. шанши	<i>šānš</i>	KU <i>šōnš</i>	P <i>šanš</i>	So. <i>sāns</i>	* <i>šānšə</i> (#103)	‘knee’
Kg. конся	<i>kōńc</i>	–	–	–	* <i>kūńcə</i> (#299)	‘star’
–	–	KM <i>oŋk</i>	P <i>oŋk^w</i>	So. <i>ōŋχ</i>	* <i>āŋkə</i> (#44)	‘resin’
–	–	KU <i>iŋk</i>	P <i>jeŋk</i>	So. <i>ēŋk</i>	* <i>iŋkə</i> (#48)	‘younger sister of husband’
SSo <i>angu</i>	TČ <i>üŋ</i>	KM <i>ōŋk</i>	P <i>ōŋk</i>	So. <i>āŋk^w</i>	* <i>āŋkə^w</i> (#49)	‘mother’
–	<i>taŋ</i>	KU <i>toŋχ</i>	P <i>toŋ^wk</i>	So. <i>toŋχ</i>	* <i>tāŋkə</i> (#145)	‘hoof’
(SoO <i>танѣѳ</i>)	<i>tāŋ</i>	KU <i>tāŋχ</i>	P <i>tēŋk</i>	So. <i>tāŋχ</i>	* <i>tīŋkə</i> (#148)	‘fin’
–	–	KU <i>jōŋk</i>	P <i>jaŋkəlm</i>	LO <i>jāŋk</i>	* <i>jāŋkə</i> (#196)	‘swamp’
Kg. янка	<i>l’āŋ</i>	KU <i>jōŋk</i>	P <i>jōŋk</i>	So. <i>jāŋk</i>	* <i>jāŋkə</i> (#197)	‘ice’
Kg. банка	<i>pāŋ</i>	KU <i>pāŋk</i>	P <i>pāŋk</i>	So. <i>puŋk</i>	* <i>pāŋkə</i> (#526)	‘tooth’
SoG <i>paŋga</i>	–	KM <i>pēŋk</i>	P <i>pēŋk</i>	So. <i>pāŋχ</i>	* <i>pīŋkə</i> (#527)	‘fly agaric’

Table 9. Examples of Proto-Mansi *-NCə

Loss of the nasal to some extent depends also on the specific dialect and specific consonant cluster. Without striving for complete coverage, it can be observed that Northern Mansi generally retains final *mp*, *nt*, *ŋk/ŋχ* even in original consonant stems, and it loses the nasal only in the case of **nš* and **ńś* < **ńć*, while Central Mansi varieties only show occasional retained *nt*, possibly generalized from the inflectional stem. A number of the cases seem to have lost the nasal in all reflexes (it can be still identified thanks to Khanty cognates such as **čõńć* ‘back’, **lĩńć* ‘slobber’, **wäńć* ‘small’, **näńk* ‘larch’); but given the more variable dialect distribution of nasal loss in other cases, it is likely that loss has taken place only after the Proto-Mansi stage in these cases as well. One erroneous etymological comparison can also be identified: the word for ‘birch bark’, reflected as e.g. KU *ššš*, P *ššš* (GOV #597), should most likely be reconstructed as **ššš*, given the consistent long vowel reflexes. This cannot then be compared with Khanty **šĩńć* id., as suggested already by the mismatch between Mansi **š* (< **č*) and Khanty **ć*.

Old Mansi	South	East	West	North	PMs (GOV)	gloss
Čd. <i>кунѧ</i>	<i>kop</i>	KU <i>χop</i>	P <i>kup</i>	So. <i>χump</i>	<i>*kũmp</i> (#271)	‘wave’
–	–	KU <i>χăt</i>	P <i>kant</i>	So. <i>χant</i>	<i>*kănt</i> (#291)	‘earwax’
–	TČ <i>kot</i>	KU <i>χūt</i>	P <i>kunt</i>	–	<i>*kũnt</i> (#292)	‘backpack’
–	–	KU <i>kěnt</i>	P <i>ket</i>	So. <i>kěnt</i>	<i>*kĩnt</i> (#751)	‘hat’
VTur. <i>чючѧ</i>	<i>šoš</i>	KU <i>šonš</i>	P <i>šuš</i>	So. <i>sus</i>	<i>*šũnš</i> (#104)	‘flea’
–	<i>šiš</i>	KU <i>šiš</i>	P <i>šiš</i>	So. <i>sis</i>	<i>*šĩnš</i> (#105)	‘back’
TM <i>usch</i>	<i>oš</i>	KU <i>ũš</i>	LU <i>uš</i>	So. <i>ūs</i>	<i>*ũnš</i> (#688)	‘nelma’
–	–	KU <i>loš</i>	–	So. <i>luš</i>	<i>*lũńć</i> (#361)	‘slobber’
–	<i>űś</i>	KU <i>wiš</i>	P <i>iś</i>	–	<i>*wĩńć</i> (#696)	‘small’
–	<i>sũk</i>	KU <i>săx^w</i>	VN <i>săx</i>	So. <i>sańk^w</i>	<i>*săńk^w</i> (#81)	‘hill’
–	–	KU <i>săχ</i>	P <i>sax</i>	So. <i>sāńk</i>	<i>*sāńk</i> (#106)	‘heat’
VTur. <i>чегѧ</i>	<i>šĩk^w</i>	KU <i>šěx^w</i>	P <i>šěx^w</i>	So. <i>sěńk^w</i>	<i>*šĩńk^w</i> (#108)	‘fog’
–	TČ <i>lĩŋ</i>	KM <i>lĩx</i>	P <i>lex</i>	So. <i>lěńk</i>	<i>*lĩńk</i> (#168)	‘wedge’
–	–	KU <i>ńix</i>	P <i>ńix</i>	–	<i>*ńĩńk</i> (#432)	‘larch’
VTur. <i>нюхѧ</i>	–	KU <i>ńix</i>	VN <i>ńix</i>	So. <i>ńĩńk^w</i>	<i>*ńĩńk^w</i> (#467)	‘maggot’

Table 10. Examples of Proto-Mansi *-NC

The development of Central Mansi vowel length in these stem types seems ambiguous. Zhivlov (2006: 80) suggests on the basis of **āmpə* ‘dog’, **jāŋkə* ‘ice’ that a long vowel would be regular in PMs **ə*-stems. However, a fully general rule of vowel lengthening before **-NCə* does not seem to hold. Short or shortened reflexes are common as well, e.g. in the cases of **lūntə* ‘goose’, **šānsə* ‘knee’, **pāŋkə* ‘tooth’, where the **ə*-stem reconstruction is assured by the Old Mansi evidence; compare also PMs **iŋtə* ‘horn’ > e.g. Kg. *аһма*, KM *ĕŋt* ~ *ānt*, P *oŋt* (GOV #52). A few long reflexes in PMs consonant stems appear as well, in the cases of **kūnt* ‘backpack’, **kīnt* ‘hat’, **šīŋk^w* ‘fog’. Southern Mansi *līŋ* as the reflex of **līŋk* ‘wedge’ shows additionally the sound change **ŋk > ŋ*, more typical for the original stems in **-ŋkə*, and at least this is likely a case of analogical reshaping.

3.3. Mixed vowel correspondences

As discussed in Section 2, altogether three types of PMs vowel stems have been identified in earlier research. However, among the modern Mansi varieties, also further final vowel correspondences can be found, which have so far not been accounted for. No truly new reflexes appear among these: the correspondences simply mix **A*-type, **I*-type and **ə*-type (zero) reflexes.⁴ Riese (2001: 125) for example lists a number of examples suggesting vacillation between **-ā* and **-ī*. This already suggests that much (perhaps all) of the situation is built on the three basic vowel stem types. “Unexpected” final vowels can often be simply explained as suffixal. However, phonological solutions can be still sought as well, by identifying conditional developments affecting the PMs stem vowels. Above in Section 2.1 I have already briefly mentioned examples that are likely to indicate loss of PMs **-ā*, **-ā̄* in Central Mansi varieties, seemingly conditioned by a preceding nasal consonant. In the following I will additionally propose two cases where secondary developments of PMs **ə* could be contemplated.

One relatively common “mix-up” is a correspondence of Southern Mansi *-ī* with a Northern Mansi consonant stem (Table 11): the former suggests PMs **-ī*, the latter PMs **ə* or **-C*. Central Mansi always shows a consonant stem, which could continue any of these options. The most plausible hypotheses for a conditional development are therefore **-ī > ∅* in Northern; **ə > -ī* in Southern; and suffixation of **-ī* in Southern. The one available piece of Old Mansi evidence best points towards the second of these. An examination of the examples reveals also a potential conditioning factor: all cases involve a front vowel in the first syllable, followed by a palatal consonant: **j* or **č*. It can be proposed that, in this particular environment, PMs **ə* was colored to *-ī* in Southern Mansi instead of being lost. Both parts of the conditioning environment seem to be necessary, as no similar coloring appears after PMs back vowels: cf. e.g. *kōŋč* ‘star’ < PMs **kūŋčə* (GOV #299), *sāl* ‘duck species’ < PMs **sīl’ə* (GOV #561), *wāj* ~

4. Mixed correspondences with **ə*-type reflexes can also be found. I leave these aside in the present study, since it seems clear that */γ/* cannot be assumed to have developed secondarily from an earlier simple vowel, and hence these cases must go back to either bisyllabic consonantal **Vγ*-stems or to secondary suffixation.

VTur. *важ* ‘fat’ < PMs **wājə* (GOV #666). Since Southern Mansi reflects also PMs **ā*- and **i*-stems as either *-ā*, *-ē* or *-ā̄*, *-ī* depending on vowel harmony, it is plausible that PMs **ɔ*-stems also showed a similar split in front and back allophones before their loss. It can be hypothesized that only the front allophone would have been further raised to *-ī* after palatal consonants.

Old Mansi	South	East	West	North	PMs (GOV)	gloss
–	<i>āčī</i>	KU <i>šš’</i>	–	LO <i>ās’</i>	* <i>āčə</i> (#1)	‘grandfather’
–	<i>īčī</i>	KU <i>īs’</i>	P <i>ēs’</i>	So. <i>ēs’</i>	* <i>īčə</i> (#2)	‘niece’
SSo. <i>naije</i>	<i>nājī</i>	KU <i>nāj’</i>	P <i>naj</i>	So. <i>nāj</i>	* <i>nājə</i> (#420)	‘lady’
–	<i>nājī</i>	KU <i>nāj’</i>	P <i>naj</i>	So. <i>nāj</i>	* <i>nājə</i> (#421)	‘fire’
–	<i>wājī</i>	KU <i>wāj’</i>	P <i>wāj</i>	So. <i>wāj</i>	* <i>wājə</i> (#665)	‘sock, stocking’

Table 11. PMs **ɔ* > *-ī* in Southern Mansi after front vowel + palatal consonant

Besides basic word stems, the same correspondence further appears also in word derivation. A common adjectival suffix in Mansi is **-j*; Riese (2001: 63) however notes that, added to monosyllabic CV stems, the suffix surfaces in Southern Mansi indeed as *-jī*. This may well suggest that this suffix should be reconstructed as PMs **-jə* instead.

In three words also the “opposite” mixed correspondence can be attested: Southern consonant stem ~ Northern *-i* (‘breath’, ‘lip’ and ‘clay’ in Table 12). Taken alone, these examples would not be enough to raise much suspicion of a regular correspondence. However, all of them show PMs short close vowels **i*, **u* in the first syllable. These two vowels are never lengthened in Central Mansi, due to which it is difficult to positively identify any examples of PMs stems of the shape **CiCə*, **CuCə*. At the same time, PMs first-syllable **i*, **u* appear to combine relatively often with **-ī*, and several examples moreover either lack a Southern Mansi reflex (‘shape’, ‘roof in boat’, ‘oath’ in Table 12), or could be also derived through my above-suggested rule **ɔ* > *-ī* (‘nest’).

Even then, the inner-Mansi sound correspondences alone do not give reason to suspect that the latter two groups could not be simply PMs **i*-stems. To motivate the above phonological speculation, it should be further noted that most cases of PMs **i*-stems are either clear derivatives, or words of obscure origin in semantic areas typical for substrate lexicon.⁵ The identifiable PMs **ɔ*-stems instead tend to be neutral undervived nominals, often with well-established Uralic etymologies. Native Uralic word stems of the shape **CiCə*, **CuCə* thus appear to be a missing part of the known Proto-Mansi lexicon so far. Words such as ‘breath’, ‘clay’, ‘nest’, ‘lip’ could be promising

5. E.g. bird names: **čāŋčī* ‘sparrow’, **jātrī* ‘black grouse’, **šāŋki* ‘a duck species’; geographic terms: **mārtī* ‘mythical land of birds’, **sārī* ‘swampy area’; botanic terms: **čārī* ‘flower’, **mārī* ‘berry stem’, **nōrsī* ‘goat willow’.

candidates for “discovering” such a group, if a development $*-ə > -i$ in Northern Mansi were assumed to have taken place in these vowel combinations. In the absence of a clear understanding of the Uralic origins of the PMs stem vowel system, however, this train of thought could still quite likely be in error.

South	East	West	North	Proto-Mansi (GOV)	gloss
<i>läl</i>	KO <i>lil</i>	LU VS <i>lil</i> (P <i>läl</i>)	So. <i>lili</i>	? <i>*lilə</i> (#359)	‘breath’
<i>pitəm</i>	KU <i>pitəm</i>	P <i>pitəm</i>	So. <i>pit’mi</i>	? <i>*pit’mə</i> (#487)	‘lip’
<i>sowl’</i>	KU <i>sül’</i>	–	So. <i>sul’i</i>	? <i>*suwl’ə</i> (#580)	‘clay’
–	KU <i>χor</i>	–	So. <i>χuri</i>	? <i>*kurə</i> (#312)	‘shape’
–	–	–	So. <i>χuri</i>	? <i>*kurə</i> (#313)	‘roof in boat’
–	KO <i>ñul</i>	P <i>ñul</i>	So. <i>ñuli</i>	? <i>*ñulə</i> (#455)	‘oath’
<i>pit’i</i>	KU <i>pit’</i>	P <i>pit’i</i> , LU VS <i>pit’</i>	LO <i>pit’i</i>	? <i>*pit’ə</i> (#484)	‘nest’

Table 12. PMs $*-ə > -i$ in Northern Mansi after PMs $*i, *u?$

4. Conclusion

Earlier research has already identified three classes of word-final vowels in Mansi nominal stems: $*-A, *-I, *-ə$, of which the last is challenging to tell apart from original consonant stems. I hope to have shown that further progress can be made regardless when paying attention to conditional secondary developments in the historical phonology of the Mansi varieties, and that the “poorer” vowel inventory of non-initial syllables deserves its share of attention as well. In the future these results can hopefully be further incorporated into the bigger picture of Uralic historical phonology.

Abbreviations

For a fuller listing of the known Mansi varieties, see e.g. Honti (1982: 207–214, 1999: 13–14).

Old Mansi

Čd.	Cherdin	SoO	Upper Sosva
Kg.	Kungur	SSo	Southern Sosva
Pel.	Pelym region	TM	Middle Tavda
SoG	Sosva region	VTur.	Verkhoturyc

Southern Mansi

TČ	Tavda, village Čandyri
TJ	Tavda, village Janyčkova

Western Mansi

P	Pelym
LM	Middle Lozva
LU	Lower Lozva
VS	Southern Vagilsk
VN	Northern Vagilsk

Eastern Mansi

KU	Lower Konda
KM	Middle Konda
KO	Upper Konda

Northern Mansi

So.	Sosva
LO	Upper Lozva

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- GOV = see Honti 1982.
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