
CHAPTER-II: ARYAN INFILTRATION OF SOUTH INDIA

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The cultural contact between Aryans and Dravidians of the aryanisation of South is so great academic interest. A proper understanding of their cultural contact or interaction, is fundamental for a correct evaluation of Indian culture.

The word Aryanisation suggests that the Aryan people in the course of their peaceful colonisation of practically the whole of India met with and overcame opposition from pre-Aryan cultural groups.

The Aryans destroyed whenever possible and accommodated whenever necessary, but even so the cultures physically overwhelmed by them still left sufficient traces of their practices and traditions to influence the Aryan way of life so that some of the oriental practices of Mohenjodaro and Harappa have not been only survived but deeply influenced the Aryans themselves. This process of give and take occurred mostly in the fields of religion and mythology primarily and then in the field of language and literature.¹

In South India, this noteworthy picture reveals 'not only an Aryanisation of pre-Aryan cultures but also a clear Dravidianisation of the Aryans'.

Throughout the 19th century and in the early part of this century, the prevalent view of the ancient Indian history tended

to glorify the Aryans and their Rigveda, and treat the whole of Indian culture and civilization as their gift. But the discovery of the Indus valley civilization in 20's of the present century brought a change in this outlook. Since then there has been a strong reaction which places increasing stress on the pre-Aryan elements in Indian culture. Keen interest is being evinced in the study of Dravidian and even pre-Dravidian cultural traits.

MAJOR SOURCES OF STUDY

The most important event that took place in the history of India from 650 B.C. to 300 B.C. is the completion of the Aryanisation of South India. The works of the Sutra period relating to law and grammar are important source material for the study of Aryanisation of South India. The Dharamasastras of Baudhyana, Gautama, Apastamba, and so forth, and the Ashtadhyaya of Panini and Vatsayana's supplementary aphorisms or Vartikas on it. Besides these, all the works of the Buddhist Pali canon throw light as to how India was socially, religiously and to some extent politically knit together from 650 to 300 B.C., i.e., when the aryanisation of South India was almost completed.²

Apart from these important epic works like Ramayana and Mahabharata, Puranas and the Sangam literature (the last mentioned belong to a later date) also throw welcome light on this problem. The Asokan edicts, the accounts of the Greek writers and some of the Jaina stories and traditions which appear after the completion

of the aryanisation process also provide us with some insight into this problem.

THE CONCEPT OF DAKSHINAPADA

Before examining the cultural contacts of interacting between the Aryans of the North and the non-Aryans of the South, it is quite useful to have a cursory look at the idea of South, and the people who occupied South with a distinct culture of their own.

The Southern half of India is known as 'Dakshinapada' which means 'Road to the South'. In a vedic hymn, we meet with an expression 'Dakshina Pada' meaning with Southward foot and used with reference to a man who is expelled to the South from the Aryan fold.³ This cannot denote the 'Dakshina Patha' or Southern India as we understand it but rather the country lying beyond the region then inhabited by the Aryans. The concept of 'Dakshinapatha' referring to a distinct geographical unit consisting of all the land South of the Vindhya goes back to the Mahabharata days. It is to be understood against the term 'Uttarapatha' which is known as all the land North of the Vindhya. But by the time of the completion of Mahabharata, in its present form, 'Dakshinapatha' is limited to what is now generally understood by the term 'Deccan'. This idea is very well expressed while describing the military victories achieved by Sahadev in the South before the Rajasuya sacrifice performed by his eldest

brother, after fighting a successful battle against the Pulindas and Pandyas in the South, moved northwards of the Dakshinapatha.

Similar idea can be derived from the Ramayana, for example, while directing his search party for locating Sita, Sugriva divided the South into three geographical regions for their information, namely, (1) the region north of 'Dandakaranya' in the immediate neighbourhood of the Vindhya, (2) the region down to the Krishna and (3) the region south of the Krishna. In the second unit included Vidarbha, Rishtica, Mahishaka, on the one side, Vengi, Vanasika on the other. This roughly comprises the Dakshinapatha mentioned in Mahabharata.⁴

Even the earlier puranas like Matsya and Vayu give the main divisions of the land south of the Vindhya more or less on the same line. It is rather difficult to fix the period. According to S. Krishnaswami, Aiyangar, writing of these works must have commenced in the 5th century B.C. Hence it may be reasonably safe to conclude that the divisions of South Dakshinapatha (Deccan) and far south was clearly formed in the 4th century B.C. when the aryanisation of south was nearing completion and recognised since then.⁵

DRAVIDIANS AND ARYANS

DRAVIDIANS

As in the case of most of the countries in the world, certain polarity developed in India between north and south, owing

to difference in language and other cultural developments which have persisted through the ages, and by some modern assumptions. Notable among such facile assumptions are the ideas that the North of India is purely Aryan, Brahmin and Sanskrit while the South is Dravidian, non-Brahmin and Tamil.⁶

Of course, the racial history of India is the different ethnic stocks come to mingle with and form the population of India is extremely confusing. It was generally held by scholars for quite some time that, in the remote past, the entire India had been occupied by a single people whom Risley, who is considered an authority on the subject, called Dravidian. In his 'People of India', Risley avers that the present population of different parts of India represents mixtures in varying degree of several other, incoming race with Dravidians like Aryo-Dravidians, Suythio-Dravidians⁷ etc. to use his own terminology.

Till quite recently, many among the eminent scholars held that, unlike the Aryans, the Dravidians had an indigenous origin. Hence the claim of scholars like P.T. Srinivas Iyengar, who goes to such an extent as to claim that Tamil land was the original home of man and civilization.⁸ They seek to establish hoary antiquity for the Tamil language and culture.

They claim that the Indus valley civilization and its script are the creations of Tamils, a claim that has been supported by non-Tamilian authors like Heras and others. Again,

they even claimed that some of the most important Vedic Tribes like the Bharatas were Tamils. All these fanciful assumptions have been regarded by the recent archaeological evidences and they are now practically ignored by the modern scholarship. These baseless assumptions are due mainly to the use of 'Aryan' and 'Dravidian' as racial terms and not as cultural terms.

Now it is generally held that Dravidians were as much foreigners, and that they entered India in different waves spread over long stretches of time. Scholars like Schoner and L.V. Ramaswami Aiyar trace Dravidian place names to ancient Mesopotamea and Iran and other Western Asia regions where the Indo-Aryans lived before they entered India. G.W. Brown observed similarities between Dravidian and Kharrean spoken in Mesopotamea after the arrival of Indo-Europeans there. For example, the word, 'Trimmalai' by which the Lycians of Asia minor had called themselves according to him, as close to the south of Dramila (Tamil). Caldwell, in his Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages, finds a connection between Susian and Dravidian as regards structure. The Hurrian and Kassite languages are said to possess clear affinity with Dravidian language. They believe that some genetic link between all these languages exists. They argue that, Western Asia being the home of Elamite, it is possible that Dravidian or Proto-Dravidian and its language reached from this part of the world.

Lahovary seems to establish links between the Dravidian language of South India and the oldest elements in Basque-a-Pre-Indo-European language on the border between France and Spain. He also finds similarities between this primitive language and Semetic language.

Apart from resorting to the Philological comparisons, these authors also resorted to comparing cultural traits found in these areas to drive this idea home. They pointed out that inheritance through women, the cult of the Mother Goddess and the name of the Lady of the mountain (Parvati) and the Snake cult, are notable culture traits common between these lands and South India. Hence Aryans had come into contact with Dravidian cultural elements even before their entry into India, as they had stayed in these regions prior to they moved into India.

Haimendorf,⁹ however, goes one step further and states that the Megalithic builders were the earliest Dravidians to reach India and that they arrived by sea; and that they never occupied much wider area than where we find them today. If this is accepted, the story of Aryan invasion and of Dravidians being pushed out of North India has no basis, observes Aryendra Sarma. But our survey of the megalithic skeletal and material evidence does not throw any definite light on this point.

ARYANS

The discovery of the Sanskrit language by the Western

scholars in the 18th century and the subsequent development of comparative philological studies of that language with European languages, resulted in the theory of an original Indo-European language. With this, the hypothesis of a common original habitat evolved.

Filippo Sassetti observed for the first time the relation between Sanskrit, the literary language of the Indo-Aryans and some of the principal languages of Europe.¹⁰ However, this relation is due to their origin from a common source was suggested by William Jones.

There is no consensus among the scholars regarding the original home of the Aryans. They tried to justify their respective stand on the basis of history, philosophy, racial anthropology and archaeological evidence. Central Asia, South Russia, Plateau of Palmir, Scandinavia, Germany, Austria etc. have been alternatively suggested as the original home of the Aryans.¹¹ Pargitar in his Ancient Indian Historical Tradition studied the geneologies and myths in the puranas and evolved a theory of indigenous growth of Aryan civilization and its spread outside India. But, now almost all the scholars believe that the great steppe land which stretched from Poland and South Russia to Central Asia was inhabited by the Aryans. They were mainly pastoral people. Probably, the natural increase of population or the search for new pasture land forced them to move towards east, west and south. Some invaded Europe

and became ancestors of the Greeks, the Latins, the Celts and the Tuatons who were later called Indo-Europeans. Those who had established themselves in the Near East and Iran, marched further eastward and entered India through Afghanistan near about 2000 B.C. These were called Indo-Aryans.

The earliest recorded traces of the Aryan people after their dispersion from the original home are sought to be found in the Near-East in the documents of the Mittanni Kingdom of north Mesopotamea during the period between 1500-1300 B.C. There is evidence that Vedic Gods were worshipped over these regions. Aryan language and Aryan religion closely resembling that of Rigveda was current in the region during this time as observed by V.A. Nilakanta Sastri.

A few Aryan traces are noticed among the documents of the Kassite dynasty of Babylon (C. 1750-1170). The Kassites were invaders from the Iranian Plateau. Vedic Gods are found in a list of Babylonian Gods. They entered Iran and India as conquerors.

The Aryan invasion of India was not a simple concerted action, but one covering centuries. The occupants of the land then resisted them, and a fierce and protracted struggle ensued. If the Aryans were 'lordly lions' the Dravidians were 'terrible tigers'.¹² But ultimately Dravidians gave up to the invaders. The victory enabled the Aryans gradually to conquer the greater

part of North India and the vanquished natives either submitted to them or found shelter in the South. Many consider these natives as Dravidians as they were called 'Dasyu' by the victors.

During the five centuries, from 3000 to 2,500 B.C. the Aryan settlers, colonists, adventurers, and 'Pilgrim Fathers' had got an almost secure footing in North India upto as far east Mithila or North Bihar, and probably a little beyond the Vindhya. It is almost certain that their small states were like so many islands in the sea of Dravidians and other non-Aryans. And these Dravidians were no mean rivals.¹³

Another Aryan wave which entered India through Gilgit and Chitral, on the north of the Punjab and at length gained a footing on the plains of the upper Ganges and Jamuna. Probably, they came as a series of hordes, one following another. They brought few or no women of their own stock and were, therefore, forced to take wives of Dravidian blood. Hence, the region where they established themselves, the 'Madhyadesa' or 'Middle land', came in course of time to be inhabited by a population whose blood was mixed in varying degree.¹⁴

These Aryan tribes began to move on further towards the east, south and west, mixing their blood in various degrees with the women of the races whom they conquered, and established the Brahmanic religion and polity to a great or less degree over Indian down to the Vindhya.

In the epic age, the classical Brahmanic culture opened into maturity. The Brahmanic rishis played a very important role in the expansion of the Aryan culture in different regions of India. The traditions of Vasistha, Bhargavas, Angirasas, Kanva, Atrey, Kasypa, Visvamitra etc. indicate their achievements for the Aryan expansion. Their life, devoted to the spread of Aryan culture, and their intellectual achievements prove that these rishis did a yeoman service in propagating the Aryan culture. They were the advanced guards for the spread of Aryanism. The Kshatriyas or rulers followed them, later on, the Brahman missionaries, who accompanied the Kshatriya conquerors introduced the essentials of Aryan culture and tradition among the masses, converted the principal figure to Aryan faith, and paved the way for social and cultural contacts by allowing high born Aryans with non-Aryans. The rishis who undertook missionary work, went in large number to distant lands. Performed sacrifices and followed religious rites and ceremonies in their new settlements. Their genuine missionary spirit, coupled with their peaceful character, not using any force, nor resorting to relation, despite provocation, helped a good deal in creating a favourable environment for the reception of Aryan religion and culture.

The Aryan rishis mixed with the aboriginals and made them cultured and civilized. The Aryan spirit was kept alive by the Brahmans, not the Kshatriyas, "but without the protection of the chief, the Brahman was powerless, and it was not the Brahman's

peaceful protection, but the military exploits of the chief that enthralled the popular imagination."¹⁵ On the other hand, it became inevitable to the Aryans, to adopt certain customs from the Dravidians. Sir John Marshal declared that the cult of Siva-Pasupati (= Rudra) was borrowed by the vedic Aryans from the Mohenjo-daro culture.¹⁶ Offerings to all other Gods are sacrificed into the fire, but those to Rudra and his servants (Rudriyas) are simply deposited at cross-roads or various forbidding places.

The tribes of Northern India, whom the Aryans gradually incorporated in their community, as Sudras, whoever they were, must have been organised and formidable race. The term, 'Sudra' which is now the common name of the mass of the inhabitants of India, whether Gaurians or Dravidians, has been supposed to have been originally the name of a tribe dwelling near the Indus. Originally they were black-headed race of aborigines and not a component part of the Aryan race, but brought under its influence by conquest. It was the first tribe that Aryans reduced to a dependent condition. So, similar name 'Sudra' was used by the Aryans on the conquest of the aborigines.¹⁷

Some times, Aryans used the epithet to less distinctive people. The main difference between the Dasyus and the Vedic Aryans appears to be religious. They said, the Dasyus were riteless, indifferent to the Gods, without devotion, not sacrificing, lawless, following strange ordinances, reviling the Gods etc.¹⁸

From all these points, we can safely infer that the Dasas or Dasyus who stubbornly, though unsuccessfully, resisted the Aryan invasions of the Punjab and the Gangetic valley, were predominantly Dravidian culture. It seems, these earliest inhabitants of India were Negrito. They were pushed by another race, whose culture was much higher than the Negritos. But by the time of the coming of the Aryans, they had been conquered by the Dravidians. Even in the Rigvedic period towards close the word dasa gradually came to be synonymous with a slave. In the next period the word Dasi regularly denoted a female slave.

The non-Aryan protest did not spend itself up only in religion and social matters. Mahapadmananda rose as their champion to overthrow the rule of the Kshatriya families in Magadha. He was admittedly of Sudra or non-Aryan origin, and he so terribly pushed the Aryan ruling classes that he has been described in the puranas as "the exterminator of the Kshatriya race like a second Parasurama".¹⁹

In India, the Aryans created their religious texts and the foundation of Vedic culture on which rests Indian civilization. Of course, that civilization has been deeply influenced and enriched by Dravidian cultural elements as the Dravidians and Aryans mingled and interacted themselves later. By 700 B.C. aryanisation had flooded all north India. The remains of the aboriginal tribes had either been absorbed, reduced to servitude

or driven into the hills and forests. But the south remained principally Dravidian.²⁰

CHRONOLOGY OF ARYANISATION

It is generally held that the aryanisation of the south begins in about 1000 B.C. But it gathered momentum only after the 7th century B.C. This can be inferred from literature and legends of the time. Until about 600 B.C. works composed in the north exhibit little knowledge of India South of the Vindhya. Panini, the founder of the most renowned school of grammar and who lived in about 600 B.C.⁹ had an extensive knowledge of the ancient geography of India. Most of the countries places and rivers mentioned by him in his sutras or grammatical aphorisms are found in the Punjab and Afghanistan. Belonging to India further South, he mentions Kachcha, Avanti, Kosala and Kalinga. But he makes no mention of any province to the south of the Narmada except the country of Asmaka near the source of Godavari. But acquaintance with South increased with the progress of time.

Vidarbha is known through its king Bhima, mentioned in the Aitareya Brahman, as having received instruction about the substitute for the Soma from Parvata and Narada. The Vidarbha kingdom was said to be famous for its special breed of hounds, which killed tigers. Vidarbha as is well known, corresponds to modern Berar. The Upanishads also refer to Bhargava, a sage of Vidarbha, as a contemporary of Asvayana and to Vaidarbhi

Kaundinya. Kundina, the capital of Vidarbha, has been identified with the modern Kaundinyapura on the bank of the Wardha in the Chandur Taluka of Amaravati District.²¹

Again, it was in the Brahmana period, however, the Aryans for the first time seem to have crossed the Vindhya range which separates the south from the North half of India. In the Aitareya Brahamana, prince named Bhima is designated Vaidarbha, Prince of Vidarbha. This shows that the Aryans had come down below the Vindhyas and settled in Vidarbha or Western Berar immediately to the South of this mountain range.²²

One of the oldest works of Pali Buddhist literature, the Sutta-Nipata that a teacher Bavari left Kosala and settled in a village on the Godavari in the Asmaka country in Dakshinapatha. Bavari is said to have sent his disciples to north to meet the Buddha. Their route lay through Patitthana in the Mulaka country. Mahishamati (Mandhata) on the Narmada, Ujjeni, Savatth (Capital of the Kosala country), Kapilavattu, Kusinara, Pava, Visali (Capital of Magadha) and they reached at Pasanaka Chaitya where Buddha was then.²³

The description of the south is important for two reasons: (1) Bavari's settlement was much to the south of Paithan, i.e., deep down in the present Deccan, and (2) the route also indicates that Bavari's disciples went to north through the Vindhyas. This gives a lie to the theory that Aryans were unable to cross the

Vindhya and hence they went to the Deccan through an eastern route. Bavari is said to have been learned in the Vedas and performed Vedic sacrifices. Perhaps he was one of the earliest teachers or scholar who took part in the process of aryanising the South. Thus, it is proved that the rishis were in the habit of moving in large numbers and to long distances, and making their settlements where they performed sacrifices. They took part in the task of colonising and aryanising the Southern lands by a slow process and peaceful permeation.

The Ramayana presents detailed description of ascetics like Bavari in the Dandaka forest. Katyana who wrote aphorisms (Vartikas) on Panini's work about 350 B.C., i.e., more than two centuries after Panini showed considerable acquaintance with the South.²⁴ He refers to the countries of the far South, Pandya, Chola and Kerala. If these countries were known to Panini, who being a great and thorough going grammarian would have certainly explained the formation of those terms, in his *Ashktadhyayi*. The only legitimate conclusion can, therefore, be drawn is that the names of those southern countries were not known to Panini, in other words, they were not known to the Aryans in the 7th century B.C. but were known to them by the middle of the 4th century B.C. When Katyayana lived. These countries were well known to Kautilya and the Asokan edicts.

Thus, it is clear that since the 7th century the aryanisation process of the South progressed steadily. It had been

completed by the time of the establishment of the Mouryan empire which included all India except the extreme south, the rulers which had cordial diplomatic relation with the Mauryan rulers.

ARYANISATION OF SOUTH REPLETED IN LEGENDS, STORIES AND TRADITIONS

The aryanisation movement of the South can be traced from legends and stories found in the epics, the puranas and the Tamil literature. Though many of the historical persons and events discussed in these works are associated with myths and simple legends, historical truth and facts can be separated from the fictions. The Agastya legends which figure prominently in epics, puranas and Tamil literature provide the historical basis for aryanisation. Except for the brief account of his miraculous birth mentioned in the Rig Veda, he is otherwise a real historical person who composes hymns and lives with his wife and sister. The story of Agastya's encounter with the Daitya King Ilvala along with the three Aryan kings and the sad fate of Vatpi may be taken to mark the beginning of Agasty's connection with the South.

ARYANISATION OF SOUTH REFLECTED IN MAHABHARATA

It is stated in Mahabharata that Agastya drank up the water of the ocean to enable the Devas to remove their enemies who had taken shelter under the sea. In this connection, he had

made an agreement with the Vindhya not to grow until he returned from the South after this mission. This story has been generally accepted as representation of the spread of Aryan culture to the South of Vindhya and then across the sea to islands in the Indian ocean and the far-eastern countries.²⁵

The Andras, Sabaras and Pulindas are known from the Mahabharata to have been tribes of Deccan. The Andhras originally lived between the Krishna and the Godavari. Andhras in modern times are the Telugu-speaking people of the Deccan.²⁶

RAMAYANA AND THE ARYANISATION OF SOUTH

The Agastya story appears more vividly in Ramayana. Here Rama himself tells his brother Lakshmana about the greatness of Agastya. He describes him as one who intent upon the good of the world, destroyed the deadly demon Vatapi and thereby rendered the earth habitable. It is to be observed with keen interest that Dandakaranya was forest made fit for human occupation i.e., Aryan occupation by the success of Agastya. If the geographical location of Dandakaranya is taken into account, one finds that it is at the doorstep of the Aryans for them Dakshinapadha starts with Dandakaranya. Hence, aryanisation of South commenced with bringing Dandakaranya under their influence and this is explained through Agastya legends.²⁷

Agastya's conflict with Asuras and Rakshsas^{is} also dealt with

elsewhere in the Ramayana. Here sage Visvamitra explains to Rama the reason for Tataka's depredations against Aryan settlers. Agastya had earlier destroyed Tataka's husband Sunda. Hence Tataka's hostilities. Agastya cursed Tataka and her son Maricha which turned the former into an ogress and the latter into a rakshasa. Tataka was finally destroyed by Rama. In the Aranyakanda division of the epic Sita requests her lord Sri Rama and his brother Lakshmana not to kill Asuras without sufficient reasons lest sin might result from hasty actions.

From these stories and legends, Agastya may be taken as the pioneer fighter among the Aryans in South India. He is considered a holy man even today, especially in the Deccan, the area of his activity. He is for the first 'apostle' of the Aryan culture in South who fought and triumphed in the midst of barbarous enemies, observes D.R. Bhandarkar.

Janasthana, which in charge of Khara, brother of Ravana was very near to Chitrakoota. From this station, fierce rakshasas ranged the forest round, molesting the rishis in their isolated asramas. Here, the life of rishis became insecure.

Again, story appears vividly in the Ramayana. Walking through the great Dandaka forest, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana reached a spot where many rishis lived. It means a large number of rishis already came in touch with the south and established their colonies in the Dandaka forest. The rishis were greatly

troubled by the non-Aryans, their austerities were disturbed and, their huts and sacrificial pits were also destroyed. Then rishis met Rama and convinced that 'It is our good fortune, O King! that you have come to dwell in this region. Hereafter we shall perform our penance untroubled by raksasas. Look those bones scattered all round. They are the remains of ascetics killed and eaten by the rakshasa. The rishis on the banks of Pampa and Mandakini live in constant fear of their lives from these man-eating monsters. Rama assures that 'I shall stay in the forest and destroy the raksasas and free you from trouble, shed your fear.'²⁸ As we have already seen that the Brahman rishis, with a great zeal of spreading the Aryan culture, who carried their fire cult, took initiation and started their activities in Dandakaranya. With great hardship and troubles given by the non-Aryans, rishis were boldly penetrating the country in South. It is to be noted that Rama and his search party came across so many South Indian territories. S.C. De mentions in his work History of Ramayana and the Indo-Aryan Society in India and Ceylon, the place names and asramas like Kiskindhya, Rishyanuka, the Pampa, Panchavati, Godavari, etc. where they met hermitages like Agastyasrama, Sarbhngasram, Atri-asrama, Bharadvaja-asrama etc.²⁹

The site of Agastya's asrama has been located in many places from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari as well as outside India. It is because round to the great sage who played an important role

in furthering the aryanisation of the South, these naturally gathered in course of time a number of stories representing the further stages of the aryanisation movement he started, avers K.A. Nilakantasastri.

The Tamil tradition which speaks of Agastya's mission to South to keep balance of the earth on the occasion of Siva's marriage to Parvati in the presence of all Gods and sages in the North also suggests the same, namely, the aryanisation of the South.

The Nishadas mentioned in the later Samhitas and Brahmanas appears to be the generic term for non-Aryan tribes who were not under the Aryan control. The Samhitas explain the Nishadas as the off-spring of a Brahmana father and a Sudra mother. The epics represent the Nishadas as having their settlements in the Vindhya and Satapura ranges.³⁰

Based on the account given by Megasthenese, Pliny, the Greek writer, made an attempt to connect the Pandyas of South, with Lord Krishna.³¹ They are said to have descended from Pandaia, the only daughter of Krishna. She went away from the country of the Saurasenas whose principal town was Mathura. Krishna assigned to her that portion of land which his Southward and extended to the sea, i.e., the land of the Pandyas. This account narrated by Pliny, basing on the account given by Megasthenes is to be regarded as a combination of both truth and

fiction. From this tradition, D.R. Bhandarkar concludes, "What appears to be the truth of this account is that there was a tribe called Pandu round about Mathura, a place connected with Lord Krishna's infancy, and that a section of them went Southwards and settled there; they were called Pandyas and their capital was Mathura." The capital was named after Mathura of Northern nostalgic grounds. Either the Pandyas were Aryans or they claimed to be Aryans by making an attempt to connect them to the North. But this account is partly fictitious as no authority from any epic or purana is forthcoming to show that Krishna had daughter and of the name of Pandyas. Again, though Mathura is connected with the infancy of Krishna, he lived as a ruler, not at Mathura but at Dvarka. These are elements of fiction that got mixed up with the immigration of the Pandyas, if at all they were Aryans from North who migrated to the South.

The tradition woven round Parasurama's claiming of the coastal region of Karnataka and Kerala from sea is also linked with the aryanisation of South.

Parasurama, after killing his mother Renuka at the command of his father Jamadagni had to expiate this sin by undertaking extermination of the Kshatriyas, enemies of the Brahmins. This he did in twenty one expeditions and he gave the whole earth to Brahmins at the instance of Visvamitra. As he had no place to live in, he sought Subrahmanya's assistance and by penance, obtained from Varuna, the God of the seas some land to dwell on.

Its extent was to be determined by a throw of his Parasu (axe). He threw it from Kanyakumari to Gokarna, which became the land of Parasurama. He brought Brahmins to people this land who formed sixty-four gramas.³² Even the Kannada inscriptions of early twelfth century A.D. give Parasurama story in connection with the creation of Konakana. This again clearly refers to the Aryan settlement on the Western coastal region and the extreme South.

ARYANISATION REFLECTED IN TAMIL LITERATURE

Traditions make Agastya the father of Tamil, the author of the first grammar of that language and the royal chaplain (Kulaguru) of the divine line of Pandyan rulers, the descendants of Siva and Parvati, the first king and queen of this dynasty.³³

There is no clear and specific reference to Agastya in any of the early Tamil anthologies of the Sangam age. But his miraculous birth and his relation to Vasishtha were known to the author of the poem Manimekalai. This work informs us that Agastya was a friend of the Chola king Kanta. It was at his request that Agastya released the Kavi from his water pot. His abode was in the Malaya mountains. According to this work Agastya advised another legendary, Chola monarch to institute at Puhar an annual festival in honour of Indra. Another story narrated by Naccinarkkiniyar (C.A.D. - 1400) on the authority of a more ancient writer, is that Ravana who tyrannized over the extreme South was persuaded by Agastya when the latter came to Podiya hill

to leave that land alone and go back to Lanka.

References to Agastya's work on Tamil grammar make their appearance, first occurs only in the third Sangam. It is narrated in the Iraiyanar Agapporul Urai, a work of eighth or ninth century A.D. Here Agastya is counted as a member of the first and second Sangamas. His work Agathiyam is said to have been the grammar for the first Sangam, while that work together with the Tolkappiyam and three other works formed the grammar for the second Sangam.

For years, great scholars have been discussing whether Agastya wrote a treatise on Tamil grammar at all and if he did write one, then in what relation that work stood to the Tolkappiyam, the earliest extent Tamil grammar. Perasiriyar (C. 1300 A.D.) says that in his day some scholars held that Tolkappiyam, the author of Tolkappiyam composed his work on principles other than of the Agathiyam. But many object to this view and argue, deriving support from tradition, that Agastya was the founder of the Tamil language and grammar. Some of them consider that Tolkappiyam was the most celebrated of the twelve disciples of the great sage and that the Agathiyam was the original grammar and Tolkappiyam must be held to have followed its teachings in his work.

The scholars who support Perasiriyar also agree that Tolkappiyam was a disciple of Agastya, but at the same time they

are not willing to accept Tolkapiyan's indebtedness to Agastya. So they put forward the theory of hostility between teacher and pupil arising out of Agastya's jealousy and hot temper, which ended in mutual curse. Naccinakkiniyar records the story that after his migration to the South, Agastya sent his pupil (Tolkappiyan) to bring his wife Lopamudra from the North. Agastya instructed that a certain distance was to be maintained between them during the journey. But when the rising of the Vaigai threatened to drown Lopamudra, Tolkappiyan approached too close in holding out to her a bamboo pole and with the aid of it she reached the shore in safety. Agastya cursed them both for violating his instructions, stating that they would never enter heaven, to which Tolkappiyan replied with a similar curse on his master.

The affirmation and denial of Agastya's fatherhood of Tamil and of his work being the source of the Tolkappiyan are both symbols of an attitude to the incoming Northern Sanskrit influence, opines K.A. Nilakantasastri. The earliest reference to the Agastya occurs only in the 8th or 9th century A.D. and that was also the time when the Pandyan records begin to proclaim etc. preceptorship of Agastya to the Pandyas, the patron of Tamil literature and the Sangam. Almost all the stories meant to support Agastya's connection with Tamil and Tolkappiyan must have been elaborated in subsequent ages. But the attempt to give Agastya the dominant position in the evolution of Tamil culture evoked a

challenge later.

RESULT OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN NORTH AND
SOUTH: SYNTHESIS OF ARYAN AND DRAVIDIAN CULTURES

With the penetration of Aryans to the South and communication of their own civilization to the local people there took place a cultural synthesis or cultural fusion. But unlike in the North or Western Deccan (present Maharashtra) they were not able to incorporate them thoroughly into their own society and root out their language, and customs and beliefs. The vast majority of the people in the far South retained their own speech and customs but they were enriched and refined by contact with the Northern culture. On the other hand, the incoming Aryans had to learn the language of the people of the South in addition to cultivating their own Sanskrit idioms, to accept local customs and incorporate them as part of the new composite social order they evolved and accept and accommodate the gods and goddesses of the people of South into their own pantheon of deities.³⁴ Prakrit and Sanskrit never replaced the local languages in Tamil country, as did elsewhere in India. Tamil held its own and assimilated the incoming culture with ease as is seen in the Sangam classics.

CHANGE IN SOCIAL ORDER

In the Tamil literature which belongs to the earliest period, one can find evidence of the mingling of cultures and the sanskritisation of the South had gone far. This literature clearly

the divine rights of Brahmins and this movement attained considerable strength in later times. According to one poet it was the highest praise he could bestow on a king to say that he did nothing that could hurt the feelings of the Brahmins.

Due to the aryanisation of South, regular contact between the North and South had been established as early as 4th century B.C. Kautilya mentions the Southern trade route as more valuable to the people of the Ganges valley than the Northern routes leading to the Himalayan states.³⁶ In his view, though the Northern region had the advantage in blankets, skins and horses, much other valuable merchandise like conch-shells, diamonds, jewels, pearls and gold were more plentiful in the South. He also mentions the excellent cotton fabrics from Madura and other places in the South.

As a result of aryanisation, we find marked changes in religious beliefs and practices. The Hindu religion is the complex product of the interaction of Indo-Aryan and Pre-Aryan beliefs and practices. It is almost impossible to disentangle the contributions of the different races or cultures to its make up. The society though aryanised much of its religion was pre-Aryan in its essentials. The native element remained predominant. The worship of Pipal tree, the Phallic fertility cult, mother Goddess, belief in re-incarnation are all pre-Aryan elements which later crept into the Aryan religion. Among the new elements that entered

the Aryan religion most predominant are the cult of the moon and of snakes, of the devi and devadasi, phallic symbolism and human sacrifice. The idea of human sacrifice underlines the Purusha-Sukta which is of late origin. It has been interpreted by embodying some non-Aryan folk-myth of creation.

The cult of the moon gets mixed up with the cult of the sacrificial plant soma, the juice of which is identified with Amruta (drink of immortality) and drunk ceremoniously at sacrifices.

The ideas of transmigration and re-incarnation of soul is common in later Vedic literature but unknown in earlier Northern Vedic religion. According to Heras, Rigveda is anti-philosophic and devoid of any ascetic ideals, it^{is} wholly materialistic. He deduces this view from questions made in Rigveda like, 'Is Indra existing? Who has seen him? He holds that the idea of God or Prajapati, transmigration and re-incarnation of soul etc. common in later Vedic literature is pre-Aryan and hails from the Dravidian people of the country whose theological doctrine is monotheistic. Ancestor's worship is also pre-Aryan. Similarly cow killing was practised by the Aryans; the sanctity of the cow is unknown to the Rigveda. The cow seems to have been cherished by the pre-Aryans in India, avers K.A. Nilakanta Sastri. The sanctity of tree connected with fertility is unknown to the Aryans of North, but later entered into Indian heritage of later times. All these represent an inseparable blend of Aryan and non-Aryan (pre-Aryan)

or Dravidian, according to most of the scholars.

Vedic religion was unicomical and sacrificed by fire-offerings was its central feature. The worship of image of Gods in temples is a relatively later development. Many are inclined to ascribe it to the influence of pre-Aryans. So attempts have been made to treat 'Puja' as a Dravidian (Tamil) word. They connect it with the words 'Pu' (flower) and 'Say' (do), Pusai being an act done with flowers. They also connect it with 'Pusu-Smear', the act of worship, in this case being the smearing on the ideas of the blood of the victim sacrificed to it. Another instance is 'Maya' a term of great philosophical importance and it is sought to be connected with Tamil word 'May' die or perish. But it has been accepted now as a Sanskrit term.³⁷

Due to the interaction between the North and South, the concept of most of the Vedic Gods has undergone change. Rudra, originally a good Aryan God, attained a dark side, erratic, ecstatic, gloomy one. Similarly, the worship of Kartikeya (Murugan in Tamil) is very common in the Tamil country and has almost disappeared in North India. The view has often been expressed that this God is a Tamil deity par excellence from the beginning. But this God is also an Aryan God, but acquired a number of local, non-Aryan traits. In the early Tamil literature, there are references to Velan, a name which later applied to Kartikeya, 'Velan, a literally means' (man with a spear). He is

often mentioned in contexts when he diagnoses the condition of love sick maidens as possession by Murugan (Kartikeya). The same literature contains the Kartikeya mythology in detail, his birth from Siva and Agni, his six faces and the motherhood of the Kartikas and of the wives of the six sages, his leadership of the divine hosts in the war against Asuras, particularly Garaka and Sura (the latter being purely a Tamil addition), and his eternal youth, beauty. One poem in the Paripadal avers that on the day Murugan espoused the Tamil huntress Valli his elder wife Dvayana, daughter of Indra shed so much tears as to fill the lake on the hill of Tirupparangunram, a hillock near Madura.³⁸

The Muruga cult is one of the important instances to show how Dravidians assimilated the Aryan culture. The Aryan has been taken over by the usual process of syncretism, such as his identification with Velan and his second wife Valli. The effort to Tamilise original Aryan deities may be observed in the identification of Korravai with Durga, the bestower of Pinnai as another wife of Krishna etc. This aspect of religious development indicates the mingling of originality distinct cultures to form the modern stream of Hinduism.

The integration of cultures was not always smooth, though some authors hold that the South willingly and gladly accepted the incoming culture without the least resistance. There were occasional differences and even conflicts in the process. The

legendary stories like Agastya's destruction of Vatapi, and the ascetics of the Dandakaranya to Rama about the disturbances to their sacrifice.

ROUTE OF THE ARYANISATION

The aryanisation of the South, as observed earlier, was a slow process. What were the routes followed by the Aryans? who moved in the South? Some of the scholars have held that the hills and forests of the Vindhya and the Satapuda ranges and the Narmada river formed an effective barrier to movement towards the South, and hence the chief line of communication must have been along the eastern coast. But it is almost established beyond reasonable doubt that Aryan expansion started from the North-West and proceeded towards the East and South. Comparatively the Western part of India has been aryanised earlier than the Eastern part.

The evidence of the Brahmana of the Ramayana and the Buddhist canon indicate early that the barrier of the Vindhyas was negotiated at convenient points and that the chief routes lay right across them, the Narmada and the Satapuras. Vidarbha is one of the earliest kingdoms to be aryanised. Rama's exile had been located around this region by many, while others would locate it in the Western Deccan, Nasik and its neighbourhood. The route taken by the pupils of Bavari from Asmaka to Magadha must have been the rivers of the usual Aryan route to the South,

which must have passed through the Avanti country to Mandhata on the Narmada, whence it crossed the river and mountains into the South.³⁹ The Mulaka country with Paithan as its capital city is taken as the next region of Aryan colonisation of South after Vidarbha and Asmaka.

Scholars find it difficult to trace route further South. According to K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, a section of Aryans moved along the Western gate and settled in the adjacent high lands and hence their settlements could be traced to the outskirts of Mysore and Coimbatore and Madura districts before they spread elsewhere. According to him, other routes then across the Vindhya might have been followed. There is the sea route from the mouths of the Indus to Gujarath and the North Bombay coast, or later the Eastern route.

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