THE DRAVIDIAN LANGUAGES

BHADRIRAJU KRISHNAMURTI
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Introduction

1.1 The name Dravidian

Robert Caldwell (1856, 3rd edn, repr. 1956: 3–6) was the first to use ‘Dravidian’ as a generic name of the major language family, next to Indo-Aryan (a branch of Indo-European), spoken in the Indian subcontinent. The new name was an adaptation of a Sanskrit term *dravi-da* (adj *dr¯avi-da*) which was traditionally used to designate the Tamil language and people, in some contexts, and in others, vaguely the south Indian peoples. Caldwell says:

The word I have chosen is ‘Dravidian’, from Dr¯avi.da, the adjectival form of Dravi đa. This term, it is true, has sometimes been used, and is still sometimes used, in almost as restricted a sense as that of Tamil itself, so that though on the whole it is the best term I can find, I admit it is not perfectly free from ambiguity. It is a term which has already been used more or less distinctively by Sanskrit philologists, as a generic appellation for the South Indian people and their languages, and it is the only single term they ever seem to have used in this manner. I have, therefore, no doubt of the propriety of adopting it. (1956: 4)

Caldwell refers to the use of Dravi đa- as a language name by Kumārila-bhaṭṭa’s *Tantravārttika* (seventh century AD) (1956: 4). Actually Kumārila was citing some words from Tamil which were wrongly given Sanskritic resemblance and meanings by some contemporary scholars, e.g. Ta. *cāru* ‘rice’ (matched with Skt. *cara*– ‘thief’), *pāmpu* ‘snake’, adj *pappu* (Skt. *papa*– ‘sin’), Ta. *atar* ‘way’ (Skt. *atara*– ‘uncrossable’), Ta. *māl* ‘woman’ (Skt. *mālā* ‘garland’), *vairu* ‘stomach’ (Skt. *vaira*– ‘enemy’)¹ (Zvelebil 1990a: xxi–xxii). Caldwell further cites several sources from the scriptures such as the text:

¹ The actual passage cited by Zvelebil (1990a: xxii, fn. 21), based on Ganganatha Jha’s translation of the text:

tad yathā dravi.da-bhāṣāyām eva tāvad vyājanānta-bhāṣāpaḍeṣu svarānta-vibhakti-
strīpratayādi-kalanāḥ iva svabhāṣānūpiṇānarthān pratipadyaṁnāḥ drṣṭyante;

tad yathā oḍanam cōr ityukte cōrapadāvācyam kalpayantī; panthānām atara iti
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Manusmṛti, Bharata’s Nātyaśāstra and the Mahābhārata where Drāviḍi- is used as a people and Drāviḍi as a minor Prakrit belonging to the Paisāci ‘demonic’ group. Since Tamizr was the established word for the Tamil language by the time Caldwell coined the term Dravidian to represent the whole family, it met with universal approval. He was aware of it when he said, ‘By the adoption of this term “Dravidian”, the word “Tamilian” has been left free to signify that which is distinctively Tamil’ (1956: 6). Dravidian has come to stay as the name of the whole family for nearly a century and a half.2

1.2 Dravidians: prehistory and culture

1.2.1 Prehistory

It is clear that ‘Aryan’ and ‘Dravidian’ are not racial terms. A distinguished authority on the statistical correlation between human genes and languages, Cavalli-Sforza (2000), refuting the existence of racial homogeneity, says:

In more recent times, the careful genetic study of hidden variation, unrelated to climate, has confirmed that homogenous races do not exist. It is not only true that racial purity does not exist in nature: it is entirely unachievable, and would not be desirable . . . To achieve even partial ‘purity’ (that

Thus, in the Drāvida language, certain words ending in consonants are found to be treated as vowel-ending with gender and case suffixes, and given meanings, as though they are of their own language (Sanskrit); when food is called cor, they turn it into cora (‘thief’). When a ‘path’ is called atar, they turn it into atara and say, true, the ‘path’ is atara because it is dustara ‘difficult to cross’. Thus, they add a to the word pāp ending in p and meaning ‘a snake’ and say, true, it is pāpa ‘a sinful being’. They turn the word māl meaning ‘a woman’ into māla ‘garland’ and say, it is so. They substitute the word vairi (‘enemy’) for the word vair, ending in r and meaning ‘stomach’, and say, yes, as a hungry man does wrong deeds, the stomach undertakes wrong/inimical (vairi) actions . . .

The items cited were actually of Tamil, namely cōru ‘rice’, atar ‘way’, pāp pok adj of pōmpu ‘snake’, māl ‘woman’ < makh; vayiru ‘belly’. Since these did not occur as such in Kannada or Telugu, Kumārila-bhaṭṭa was referring to Tamil only in this passage by the name Drāvide-.2

Joseph (1989) gives extensive references to the use of the term drāvida-, dramila- first as the name of a people, then of a country. Sinhala inscriptions of BCE cite dameça-, damela- denoting Tamil merchants. Early Buddhist and Jaina sources used damila- to refer to a people in south India (presumably Tamil); damilaraṭha- was a southern non-Aryan country; dramila-, dramida- and dravida- were used as variants to designate a country in the south (Ṛḥatsamhitā, Kādambarī, Daśikumāra-carita, fourth to seventh centuries CE) (1989: 134–8). It appears that damila- was older than dravida-, which could be its Sanskritization. It is not certain if tamiẓ is derived from damila- or the other way round.
Dravidians: prehistory and culture

is a genetic homogeneity that is never achieved in populations of higher animals) would require at least twenty generations of ‘inbreeding’ (e.g. by brother–sister or parent–children matings repeated many times) . . . we can be sure that such an entire inbreeding process has never been attempted in our history with a few minor and partial exceptions. (13)

There is some indirect evidence that modern human language reached its current state of development between 50,000 and 150,000 years ago . . . . Beginning perhaps 60,000 or 70,000 years ago, modern humans began to migrate from Africa, eventually reaching the farthest habitable corners of the globe such as Tierra del Fuego, Tasmania, the Coast of the Arctic Ocean, and finally Greenland. (60)

Calculations based on the amount of genetic variation observed today suggests that the population would have been about 50,000 in the Paleolithic period, just before expansion out of Africa. (92)

He finds that the genetic tree and the linguistic tree have many ‘impressive similarities’ (see Cavalli-Sforza 2000: figure 12, p. 144). The figure, in effect, supports the Nostratic Macro-family, which is not established on firm comparative evidence (Campbell 1998, 1999). Talking about the expansion of the speakers of the Dravidian languages, Cavalli-Sforza says:

The center of origin of Dravidian languages is likely to be somewhere in the western half of India. It could be also in the South Caspian (the first PC center), or in the northern Indian center indicated by the Fourth PC. This language family is found in northern India only in scattered pockets, and in one population (Brahui) in western Pakistan. (157)

He goes on to suggest a relationship between Dravidian and Elamite to the west and also the language of the Indus civilization (137), following the speculative discussions in the field. Still there is no archeological or linguistic evidence to show actually when the people who spoke the Dravidian languages entered India. But we know that they were already in northwest India by the time the Rgvedic Aryans entered India by the fifteenth century BCE.

In an earlier publication Cavalli-Sforza et al. (1994: 239) have given a genetic tree of twenty-eight South Asian populations including the Dravidian-speaking ones, which is reproduced below as figure 1.1 (their fig. 4.14.1). They say:

A subcluster is formed by three Dravidian-speaking groups (one northern and two central Dravidian groups, C1 and C2) and the Austro-Asiatic speakers, the Munda. The C1 Dravidian group includes the Chenchu–Reddi (25,000), the Konda (16,000), the Koya (210,000), the Gondi (1.5 million),
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Figure 1.1 Genetic tree of South Asian populations including the Dravidian-speaking ones and others, all found in many central and central-eastern states, though most data come from one or a few locations. The C2 Dravidian group includes the Kolami–Naiki (67,000), the Parji (44,000) and others; they are located centrally, a little more to the west. North Dravidian speakers are the Oraon (23 million), who overlap geographically with some of the above groups and are located in a more easterly and northerly direction. (239)

The second major cluster, B, contains a minor subcluster B1 formed by Sinhalese, Lambada, and South Dravidian speakers. The South Dravidian group includes a number of small tribes like Irula (5,300) in several southern states but especially Madras, the Izhava in Kerala, the Kurumba (8,000) in Madras, the Nayar in Kerala, the Toda (765), and the Kota (860 in 1971) in the Nilgiri Hills in Madras (Saha et al. 1976). (240)

3 Based on earlier writings, Sjoberg (1990: 48) says, 'the Dravidian-speaking peoples today are a mixture of several racial sub-types, though the Mediterranean Caucasoid component predominates. No doubt many of the subgroups who contributed to what we call Dravidian culture will
1.2 Dravidians: prehistory and culture

Several scholars have maintained, without definite proof, that Dravidians entered India from the northwest over two millennia before the Aryans arrived there around 1500 BCE. Rasmus Rask was the first to suggest that the Dravidian languages were probably “Scythian”, broadly representing “barbarous tribes that inhabited the northern parts of Asia and Europe” (Caldwell 1956: 61–2). There have been many studies genetically relating the Dravidian family with several languages outside India (see for a review of earlier literature, Krishnamurti 1969b: 326–9, 1985: 25), but none of these hypotheses has been proved beyond reasonable doubt (see section 1.8 below).

Revising his earlier claim (1972b) that Dravidians entered India from the northwest around 3500 BC, Zvelebil (1990a: 123) concludes: ‘All this is still in the nature of speculation. A truly convincing hypothesis has not even been formulated yet.’ Most of the proposals that the Proto-Dravidians entered the subcontinent from outside are based on the notion that Brahui was the result of the first split of Proto-Dravidian and that the Indus civilization was most likely to be Dravidian. There is not a shred of concrete evidence to credit Brahui with any archaic features of Proto-Dravidian. The most archaic features of Dravidian in phonology and morphology are still found in the southern languages, namely Early Tamil āyam, the phoneme $z$, the dental-alveolar-retroflex contrast in the stop series, lack of voice contrast among the stops, a verbal paradigm incorporating tense and transitivity etc. The Indus seals have not been deciphered as yet. For the time being, it is best to consider Dravidians to be the natives of the Indian subcontinent who were scattered throughout the country by the time the Aryans entered India around 1500 BCE.

1.2.1.1 Early traces of Dravidian words

Caldwell and other scholars have mentioned several words from Greek, Latin and Hebrew as being Dravidian in origin. The authenticity of many of these has been disputed. At least two items seem plausible: (1) Greek oruza/oryza/orynda ‘rice’ which must be compared with Proto-Dravidian *war-inci > Ta. Ma. Te. wari, Pa. verci(l), Gad. varci(l), Gondi wanji ‘rice, paddy’ [DED 5265] and not with Ta. arisi (South Dravidian *ariki) as proposed by Caldwell. Old Persian virinza and Skt. vr̥hi- ‘rice’ which have no Indo-European etymology pose a problem in dating the borrowing from Dravidian; (2) Greek ziggiberis/zingiberis ‘ginger’ from South Dravidian nominal compound *cinki-wēr (PD *wēr ‘root’) > Pali singi, singivera, Skt. śṛṅgaverav-; Ta. Ma. iṅci was derived from *cinki by *c [>s >h >] > 0, and by changing -k to -c before a front vowel.4 A number of place names of south India cited by the Greek geographers be forever unknown to us.’ Basham (1979: 2) considers that ‘the Dravidian languages were introduced by Palaeo-Mediterranean migrants who came to India in the Neolithic period, bringing with them the craft of agriculture’.

4 I am indebted to Professor Heinrich von Staden of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, for providing me with dates for these words in early Greek texts: oryza ‘rice’ (earliest occurrence in
Pliny (first century AD) and Ptolemy (third century AD) end in -our or -oura which is a place name suffix "ūr "town" from PD "ūr.

It is certain that Dravidians were located in northwestern India by the time the Aryans entered the country around the middle of the second millennium BC. Rgvedic Sanskrit, the earliest form of Sanskrit known (c.1500 BC), already had over a dozen lexical items borrowed from Dravidian, e.g. ulūkhalu- 'mortar', kunda 'pit', khāla- ‘threshing floor’, kāna- 'one-eyed', mayūra ‘peacock’ etc. (Emeneau 1954; repr. 1980: 92–100). The introduction of retroflex consonants (those produced by the tongue-tip raised against the middle of the hard palate) from the Rgvedic times was also credited to the contact of Sanskrit speakers with those of the Dravidian languages. (For more on this theme, see section 1.7 below.)

A Russian Indologist, Nikita Gurov, claims that there were as many as eighty words of Dravidian origin in the Rgveda, ‘occurring in 146 hymns of the first, tenth and the other maṇḍalas’, e.g. RV 1.33.3 vaila (sthāna-) ‘open space’: PD *wayal ‘open space, field’ [5258], RV 10.15 kiyāmbu ‘a water plant’: PD *keyampu (<kecampu) ‘Arum colacasia, yam’ [2004], RV 1.144 vṛiś ‘finger’: PD *vririnc-[5409], RV 1.71, 8.40 vīḷa ‘stronghold’: PD *vīṭu ‘house, abode, camp’ [5393], sīrā ‘plough’: PD *cēr, RV 8.77 kāṇukā: PD *kāṇikkay ‘gift’ [1443]; ‘T.Ya. Elizarenkova: kāṇuka is a word of indistinct meaning, most probably of non-Indo-European origin.’ Gurov also cites some proper names, namuci, kīkaṭa, paramaganda, as probably of Dravidian origin.5

1.2.2 Proto-Dravidian culture

The culture of the speakers of Proto-Dravidian is reconstructed on the basis of the comparative vocabulary drawn from DEDR (1984). Something similar to this has been done for the other language families (Mallory 1989: ch. 5). However, in the case of Dravidian, there are certain limitations to be taken into account:

1. Only four of the Dravidian languages have recorded history and literature starting from pre-CE to the eleventh century. The available dictionaries of the literary languages are extensive, running to over 100,000 lexical items in each case. The vocabulary of the non-literary languages is not commensurate. Now Tuḷu has a six-volume lexicon, but there is no comparable dictionary for Koḍagu, which is also semi-literary in the sense that Tuḷu is. The Badaga–English Dictionary of 1992 by Hockings and Pilot-Raichoor is fairly large. The remaining twenty or so non-literary languages spoken by ‘scheduled tribes’ do not have recorded lexicons/word lists of even one-twentieth of the above size. Therefore, most of the cognates turn up in the four literary languages, of which Tamil, the fourth century BC), orindes ‘bread made of rice flour’ (earliest fifth century BC), zingiberis ‘ginger’ (first century BC in Dioscurides). There is evidence of sea-trade between south Indian ports on the west coast and Rome and Greece in the pre-Christian era.

5 Based on a manuscript handout of a paper, ‘Non-Aryan elements in the early Sanskrit texts (Vedas and epics)’, submitted to the Orientalists’ Congress in Budapest, July 1997 (see Gurov 2000).
Malayālam and Kannāda belong to South Dravidian I and Telugu to South Dravidian II. The absence of cognates in the other subgroups cannot be taken to represent the absence of a concept or a term in Proto-Dravidian. The presence of a name (a cognate) in the minor languages and its exclusion in the major languages should lead to a significant observation that the cognate could be lost in the literary languages, but not vice versa.

2. Semantic changes within the recorded languages do not give us, in certain cases, a clue to identify the original meaning and the path of change. We need to apply certain historical and logical premises in arriving at the original meaning and there is a danger of some of these being speculative. For instance, certain items have pejorative meaning in South Dravidian I (sometimes includes Telugu), while the languages of South Dravidian II have a normal (non-pejorative) meaning: e.g. *maš-(-itu) ‘the young of an animal’ in South Dravidian I, but ‘a son, male child’ in South Dravidian II [4764]. Similarly, *pe(h)y/*peh ‘devil’ in South Dravidian I, but ‘god’ in South Dravidian II [4438]. We do not know which of these is the Proto-Dravidian meaning. We can speculate that the pejorative meaning could be an innovation in the literary languages after the Sanskritization or Aryanization of south India. There are, however, cases of reversal of this order, e.g. Ta. payal ‘boy’, so also all others of South Dravidian I; in Central Dravidian and South Dravidian II languages, pay---peyy-~ ‘a calf’ [∗pac-V- 3939].

3. While the presence of a cognate set is positive evidence for the existence of a concept, the absence of such a set does not necessarily indicate that a given concept had never existed among the proto-speakers. It could be due to loss or inadequacies of recording. In addition to one of the literary languages (South Dravidian I and South Dravidian II), if a cognate occurs in one of the other subgroups, i.e. Central Dravidian or North Dravidian, the set is taken to represent Proto-Dravidian. In some cases a proto-word is assumed on the basis of cognates in only two languages belonging to distant subgroups.

4. Where there are several groups of etyma involving a given meaning, I have taken that set in which the meaning in question is widely distributed among the languages of different subgroups. For some items two or more reconstructions are given which represent different subgroups. It is also possible that in some cases there were subtle differences in meaning not brought out in the English glosses available to us, e.g. curds, buttermilk; paddy, rice etc. in section 1.2.2.2.

Keeping these principles in view we reconstruct what the Proto-Dravidian speakers were like.6

1.2.2.1 Political organization
There were kings and chiefs (lit. the high one) [∗et-ay-anţu ‘lord, master, king, husband’ 527, ∗kōn-ţu ‘king (also mountain)’ 2177, ∗wēnt-anţu ‘king, god’ 5529, 5530],7 who

6 If readers want to read the running text, they may skip the material in square brackets.
7 Some of the words have plausible sources, e.g. ēt- ‘to rise, be high’ [916], kō ‘mountain’ [2178], given as a homophonous form of the word meaning ‘king, emperor’ 2177, but it could as well be
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People built houses to stay in [\(^\text{wū} \text{yū} \text{5393}, \text{il} \text{494}, \text{man-ay} \text{4776}, \text{ir-asu} \text{480}]\]; most of these derive from the root meaning 'to settle, stay, live'. Houses had different kinds of roofing, thatched grass [\(^\text{pūr} \text{i} \text{4225}, \text{pal} \text{4300}, \text{wēy} \text{'to thatch'} \text{5532}], tiles [\(^\text{pet-kk} \text{4385}]\) or terrace [\(^\text{mēt-ay}, \text{mār} \text{4796 a,b}]\].

There were umbrellas [\(^\text{kot-ay} \text{1663}]\) and sandals [\(^\text{kerupp} \text{1963}]\) made of animal skin/hide [\(^\text{tōl} \text{5359}]\) that people used. Among the domestic tools, the mortar [\(^\text{ur-al-al} \text{651}], pestle [\(^\text{ul-akk-V} \text{672}, \text{uram-kkal} \text{651}, \text{from} \text{ur-'to grind'} \text{665 and} \text{kal-} \text{stone} \text{1298}], grinding stone, winnowing basket [\(^\text{kēt-} \text{2019}]\) and sweeping broom [\(^\text{ci-pp/-cay-pp} \text{2599}]\) existed. Different kinds of pots made of clay [\(^\text{kā-}\text{nk-1458}, \text{kur-Vwi} \text{1797}, \text{cattti} \text{small 'pot' 2306}]\) or of metal [\(^\text{kinj-V} \text{1540, 1543, kem-pu}\) 'copper vessel' \text{2775}] were used for cooking and storing. Cattle [\(^\text{tōz-V-} \text{consisting of cows and buffaloes were kept in stalls [\(tōz-V-] \text{Milk [\(pāl} \text{4096}]\) and its curdled [\(^\text{pēt-}\text{pet-V} \text{4421}]\) form curds, buttermilk [\(^\text{cal-V-} \text{2411, moc-Vri} \text{4902, per-uku} \text{4421}]\) were churned [\(^\text{tar-V-} \text{to make butter/white oil [\(wēn-ney < \text{wel-ney} \text{5496}]\)}\]

Cloth woven [\(^\text{neC-ney-} \text{to weave'} \text{3745}]\) from spun [\(^\text{oz-akk-1012}]\) thread [\(^\text{eC-}\text{oz-V- 506, nāl 3728}]\), drawn from dressed [\(^\text{eHk-765}]\) cotton [\(^\text{par-att} \text{3976}]\) was used, but different types of garments by gender were not known.

Among the native occupations, agriculture [\(^\text{uz-V-} \text{to plough'} \text{688}]\) was known from the beginning. There were different kinds of lands meant for dry and wet cultivation [\(^\text{pān-V-} \text{agriculture land'} \text{3891}, \text{pun 'dry land'} \text{4337}]\) (literally 'bad', as opposed to \(^\text{nan-} \text{good'}\), \(^\text{pol-am} \text{field'} \text{4303}, \text{kaz-Vi-} \text{1355, key-m} \text{wet field'} \text{1958,} \text{wūy/}

the original meaning]; the last one seems to be related to \(\text{wēy} \text{'extensiveness, height, greatness'} \text{5404}]\). The meanings 'emperor, king' are based apparently on their later usage in the literary languages. The basic meaning seems to be the person who is the 'highest, tallest and the most important'.

8 DEDR should have separated the set of forms \(^\text{wēt-V-} \text{to lodge'} and its derivative 'house' from the homophonous root \text{wūt-} \text{to leave'} and its derivatives.
way-V- 5258]. Cattle dung [*pēnt-V (<∗pēl-nt-) 4441a, b] was used as manure. The word for a plough [*ṇān-kV] was quite ancient. A yoked plough [*cēr 2815] and a ploughed furrow [*cāl 2471] had basic words. Some parts of the plough had basic terms like the shaft [*kāl 2237], plough-share [*kāp- 1505], and plough handle [*mēz-i 5097].

Seedlings [*nāy-ū 2919] were used for transplantation. Harvesting was by cutting [*koy 2119] the crop. Threshing in an open space [*‘kal-am /‘kal-an 1376] separated the grain from the grass. Grain was measured in terms of a unit called *putti- (4262), about 500 lbs, and stored in large earthen pots [*wān-av 4124, 5327].

Paddy [*kōl-i 1906, *nel 3743, *war-tnc- 5265] and millets [*‘ārī‘ar-ak 812, *kōt-V- 2165] of different kinds were grown. The cultivation of areca nut [*‘at-av-kkāy 88, ‘pānkk- 4048], black pepper [*mil-V ku 4867], and cardamom [*ēl-V 907] seem native to the Dravidians, at least in south India.

Milk [*pāl 4096], curds [*per-V-āy-ppu 1376], butter [*wel-ney 5496b], ghee, oil [*ney 3746], rice [*war-inc- 5265] and meat [*iṭ-aycci 529] were eaten. Boiling, roasting [*kāy 1438, *wecc-wey- 5517] and frying [*way-V- 5325] were the modes of cooking [*at-ū 76, *wan- 5329] food on a fire-place [*col 2857] with stones arranged on three sides. Toddy (country liquor from the toddy palm tree) [*zam 549, ‘kal 1374] and Mahua liquor (brewed from sweet mahua flowers) [*ir-upp-a- Bassia longifolia 485] were the intoxicating beverages.

People carried loads [*mīt-ay- ‘bundle’ 5037] on the head with a head-pad [*cum-V- 2677] or on the shoulder by a pole with ropes fastened to both ends with containers on each [kā-avati 1417].

Different tools were used for digging [*kun-tāl ‘pick-axe’, *pār-ay ‘crowbar’ 4093], cutting and chopping [*kattī ‘knife’ 1204]. People used bows [*wil 5422] and arrows [*ampu 17a] in fighting [*pōr‘por-ū- 4540] or hunting [*wēn-ēta- 5527]. They had the sword [*wāl 5376, ‘way-cc-i 5399], axe [*maz-V- ‘mat-V 4749] and the club [*kut-V 1850b]. There was no word for a cart and a wheel until much later.10 In the literary languages there is an ancient word ‘tēr ‘chariot’ (3459) used on the battle-field or as a temple car.11 Buying [*‘kōl-‘kon- 215], selling [*wil- 5421] and barter [*mū- 4834] were known. ‘Price’ is derived from ‘sell’ [*wilav 5241].

9 Obviously a compound derived from *nām + kōl ‘our shaft’; kōl is used in the sense of a plough shaft in some of the languages. Its general meaning, however, is ‘stick, pole, staff’. In unaccented position the vowel has undergone variation as -kāl, -kēl, -kēl (-cel with palatalization in Tamil), -kal, etc.

10 The widely used set in the literary languages is Ta. Ma. *vanti, Ka. Te. *bandi ‘cart’, which is traced to Skt. bhānda- ‘goods, wares’, Pkt. bhundai (see EDR Appendix, Supplement to DBDa, 50). A native-like word for wheel is Ta. kāl, Ka. Tu. gālī, Te. gānu, gālu [1483] is probably related to ‘kāl ‘leg’ [1479].

11 This word occurs in South Dravidian I and Telugu. In Kota dēr ‘god, possession of a diviner by god’, tēr kān ‘diviner’, To. tēr ‘idol car, the car festival’. The origin of this word is not clear.
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People used medicines ['mar-untu 4719], presumably taken from tree ['mar-an 4711a] products. The expression ‘mother’, denoting mother goddess, was used for the virus smallpox. The rash on skin through measles etc. ['taŋ-tat-V- 3028] had a name. Not many words are available for different diseases. Some disorders had expressions such as blindness ['kur-untu 1787], deafness ['kev-itu, 'kep- 1977c], being lame ['cotti 2838], cataract ['por-aay ‘film’ 4295] and insanity ['picc-i’pic-V- 4142].

Certain items of food can be reconstructed for the literary languages of the south, the pancake made of flour ['attu 76, ‘app-am 155, ‘tocê-ay 3542]. The staple food was cooked rice, thick porridge [kāţ 1911, ‘amp-al 174], or gruel ['kāhći 1104] and meat ['tiz-avct 528, ‘ū/ūy 728]. Proto-Dravidians sang ['pāt-u 4065] and danced ['āt-u 347].

They knew of iron ['cır-umpu 2552], gold ['pon 4570, ‘pac-Vnt- 3821] and silver ['wel-nt 5496] derived from the colour terms for ‘black’ ['cír-V 2552], ‘yellow’ ['pac-3821] (not ‘pon), and ‘white’ ['wel 5496].

1.2.2.3 Social organization

The Dravidian languages are rich in kinship organization. Separate labels exist for the elder and younger in ego’s generation; but for the ones (one or two generations) above and below, descriptive terms ‘small’ (younger) and ‘big’ (older) are used, e.g. ‘akka- ‘elder sister’ [23], ‘tam-kay [3015], ‘cēl-āl ‘younger sister’ [2783], ‘anpa- ‘elder brother’ [131], ‘tamp-V- ‘younger brother’ [3485]; ‘app-a- [156a] ‘ayy-a- [196] ‘tan-tay ~ ‘tan-ti ‘father’ [3067; tan + tay vs. tan + ti (< ?-tay)], ‘anm-a- [183] ‘āy [364] / ‘aww-a[273] / ‘tål-ay-i ‘mother’ [3136], ‘mak-anu [4616] / ‘koz-V- [2149] / ‘maq-intu ‘son’ [4764];12 ‘mak-af [4614] / ‘kān-ttu, -ccu, -kku [1873] ‘daughter’. The same words are used for father’s sister/mother’s brother’s wife/mother-in-law ‘atta- [142], so also for their respective husbands ‘māma- [4813] ‘father’s sister’s husband/mother’s brother/father-in-law’. This is because of the custom of their daughter/son being eligible for marriage by ego. If we go to another generation higher or lower we find both neutralization of categories and a wide variation of particular terms in usage; examples: mother’s father/father’s father are indicated by the same term ‘tātt-a- [3160] or ‘pāt-ān [4066], but their spouses were distinguished descriptively in different languages, Ta. Ma. ‘pāt-i [4066] ‘grandmother’, Te. ‘anm-amma ‘mother’s mother’, nāyan (a)-amma ‘father’s mother’. Corresponding to Ta. mātt-app-aq ‘father’s father’, mūt-avai ‘grandmother’, Ma. mūt-app-an ‘grandfather’, mūt-app-an ‘father’s father’ (also ‘father’s elder brother’), mūt-amma ‘mother’s mother’ (also ‘elder sister of father or mother’)

12 The root ‘maq- underlies another set of kinship terms only found in South Dravidian II and borrowed from Telugu into Central Dravidian, e.g. Te. ‘mar-a-d [Mdn. Te. marid] ‘spouse’s younger brother, younger sister’s husband, younger male cross-cousin’; the corresponding female kin is māryd-ulu ‘spouse’s younger sister, younger brother’s wife, younger female cross-cousin’. Cognates occur in Gondi, Kui and Kuvi [see 4762].
1.2 Dravidians: prehistory and culture

[4954], Telugu, Tulu and Kodagu have independently developed expressions with 'mut-’old’ added to words meaning ‘grandfather/grandmother’ to refer to kinship two generations higher (‘great’): Te. mut-táta ‘great grandfather’, mutt-awwa ‘great grandmother’, Tu. mutt-ajje, mutt-ajji, Kod. mutt-ajjé, mut-táy id. [4954]. Even in the terms referring to one generation above, there is local specialization as well as variation in generation overlap. Thus it is not unusual to find a term meaning mother/father in one language means grandmother/grandfather in another language. Thus táta, appa, ayya have overlapping meanings regionally. The words for husband and wife are synonymous with man/woman *ā.l [399], *ka.n.t-a - [4756], *ma.zc-a - [4791] ‘man’; *āl [400], *pe.n-(t.t) - [4395] ‘woman’. The word for son-in-law and nephew were the same [*cāl-iy-antu 2410].13

Marriage [*mat-al-uv-ay, 4694 SD I, peń-ili, 4395a SD II, ‘wet-V- ‘to search, marry’, ND 5483] was an established institution. We do not know at what stage the tying of tāli ‘marriage necklace’ [3175] was introduced into the marriage ritual.

There are no reconstructible words for caste or caste names. Native terms can be identified for farming [*u.z-a-tti 688], pot making [*koc-V - 1762], smithy [*kol 2133] and toddy tapping [*ēz-a-want- ‘toddy-tapper’ 549, from ‘ēz-am ‘taddy’]. There is an item meaning a weaver [*cāl-Vy-antu 2475]. Several occupational terms came later as borrowings from Indo-Aryan, e.g. Te. kamm-ari ‘blacksmith’, kunn-ari ‘potter’.

Lying [*poc-V-, *poy-nkk- 4531] and theft [*kol 1372] were known. There were expressions for service or work [*pān 3884] and slavery [*koz-V - 3523], but no clear words for the rich and the poor.

1.2.2.4 Religion

There were words for god [*pē(y), *pēn 4438, in SD II, but in SD I ‘devil’] and *kō’kōnt- [2177] ‘king, god’. There were animal sacrifices to attain wishes [*wel 5544]; this word has changed its meaning to ‘offerings made in fire’ after perhaps the Aryanization of South India. In Telugu wel-cu is ‘to sacrifice in fire’ and welpu ‘god’. The basic meaning of wel [ultimately from *weH₁-l, see Krishnamurti 1997b: 150] was ‘to wish, desire’. There is a special verb to denote animal sacrifices, al-V-kk- found in South Dravidian II and Brahui [297]. Pollution [*pul-V-4547] was observed on different occasions, menstruation [*muttu 4934], birth [*pur-utu], death etc. Not much is known about the religious rituals of Proto-Dravidians. Scholars have speculated about them in terms of the current ritual practices.

13 Trautmann (1981: 229–37) has reconstructed a paradigm of Proto-Dravidian kinship organization, using four semantic contrasts, ‘sex, generation, relative age and crossness’. He has not illustrated the contrasts in terms of linguistic categories used in different subgroups; he claims to have used the method of reconstruction of historical linguistics.
Words for tropical trees can be traced to Proto-Dravidian. Big trees like the banyan [‘āl, 382], neem [‘vē-mpu 5531], palm [‘tōz 380, ‘pan-V- 4037], tamarind [‘cin-tτa 2529], pipal [‘ar-ac/-al 202, ‘cvv- 2697], mango [‘māṃ- 4782, ‘maṭ-kāy 4772], jackfruit [‘pal-ac- ~ ‘pan-ac 3987] and myrobalan [‘nel-V- 3755] were part of the immediate environment of people. The small trees included the coconut [‘ten-kāy 3408], the date palm [‘cīn(t)- 2617] and the soap-nut [‘cīk-kāy 2607a].

Wild trees growing in forests included teak [‘tēnkk- 3452], Belleric myrobalan [‘tāṇg-i 3198], Schleichera trijuga [‘puc/-pυ- 4348], mastwood [‘punn-ay 4343], Eugenia jambolana [‘nāṇ-V- 2917] and Terminalia tomentosa [‘mar-Vr- 4718], etc.

A number of vegetables, cereals and fruit were used: greens [kucc-‘kuc-V- 1760], tubers, roots [‘kiz-Vnk 1347], fruit/pod [‘kāy 1459], mushroom [‘kānt (τ)- 1893], onion [‘uli 705], ginger [‘cink-i 429], yam, Colacasia antiquorum [‘kic-ampu 2004], brinjal [‘nāz-Vr- 5301], fenugreek [‘mentt-i 5072], radish [‘mūl-‘mūl-V- 5004], black gram [‘uz-unta 690], green gram [‘pac-Vγ-Vl 3941], red gram or tuvar [‘kar-νtī 1213], sesame [‘nū(w) 3720], plantain, banana [‘wāz-a 5373, ar-ντη 205], wood-apple [‘whf-V- 5509] and sugar-cane [‘καρ-αμμ- 1288, ‘κετ- ‘vk- 2795].

The following domestic animals were known: cat [‘wer-uku 5490, ‘pill-V 4180], rat [‘el- 833], dog [‘nah-ay/-att- kūzi 3650], pig [‘pan-tj 4039], donkey [‘kaz-ut-ay 1364], cow [‘ām(m)- 334], ox [‘er-usu 815, ‘ēp 917], buffalo [‘er-usm-V 816], sheep [‘kāf- i 2165]ram, goat [‘yātu 5152, ‘tak-ar 3000, mēnkk-V- 5087] and also the young of these [‘kat-ac- 1123]. There have been native words for horse [‘kat-τr-ay SD 1, 1711a from ‘kut-i ‘to jump’, Te. γυγ-ημ 1711b, māwu 4780] but their etymologies are doubtful.

Proto-Dravidians knew of reptiles such as the snake [pāmpu 4085], cobra [‘car-ac- 2359], scorpion [‘nēl 3470], chameleon [‘ot-Vkk- 2977, tonť-V- 3501] and different types of lizards [‘palli- 3994, ‘καν-τμ ‘house lizard’ 1339; ‘ταν-τη ‘bloodsucker lizard’ 1053]. There were mosquitoes [‘nāz-V/-nk 3715] and insects [‘puz-ut- 4312] of different kinds.

The wild animals which lived in the hills [‘kunt-am 1864] and forests [‘kuṇ(τ)- 1418; kāṭu 1438] included the iguana [‘ut-mp- 592], mongoose [‘mēnkk-‘uc- 4900], cheetah, panther [‘kōt-uτt-uc-mp- 1599, 2589], tiger [‘pul-i 4307, ‘uz-aw- 692], elephant [‘yṇay 516], black bear [‘el-V-‘uc- 857], porcupine [‘cve-t/-‘cvo-t- 2776, 2852], wild buffalo [‘kat-V- 1114], wolf [‘tōz-V-, ‘tūz-nt 3548], jackal [‘nari (kkv) 306], stag [‘kat-Vnc/-nt 1114, ‘uz-αpp- 694], deer [‘kur-Vc- 1785, mā-y 4780], hare [‘muc-Vl 4968], langur, black-faced monkey, baboon [‘mųy-cc- 4910] and monkey [‘kor-Vnk/-ntτr- 1769].

I could not find any word for lion14 or rhinoceros.

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14 DEDR 5158: yāli, dī ‘a lion; a mythical lion-faced animal with elephantine proboscis and tusks’; Ma. ṣṭe ‘lion, panther’; dī ‘a fabulous animal’. This is a doubtful etymology, as there are no cognates in any other language and the figure of this is found only in temple sculpture.
The known birds included the chicken ['kōz-i 2248, "koz-u 2160 in SD II], peacock [' раm-V 2902], pigeon, dove ['puṭ-Vc 4334, "kum-V 1930], 'imperial pigeon' ['pok-V 4454], parrot ['kīl-V 1584], crane ['kor-Vnk-nkk 2125], eagle ['kaz-Vkultu 1362], vulture ['par-Vntu 3977], crow ['kā-kk-/-sw- 1425], sparrow ['piz-Vcc 4190, "kur-Vw 1793] and owl ['ānt-ay SD I, 359]. A male of an animal or a bird was called 'pōn-nt-V [4586] and a female 'pen-ṭ-V [4395a, b].

Aquatic animals (amphibians) included the frog ['kapp-a 1224, 'par-Vṇṭu 'bullfrog' 3955], crab ['ṛam- 2901], different kinds of fish ['kay-V (l/-kk/-mpp-) 1252, "mīn 4885], prawn ['et-Vy 533], shark ['cot-ac- 710], tortoise ['yām-ay, 'cām-p- 5155] and crocodile, alligator ['mōc-"moc-V] 4952, 'nek-V] 3732. There is no native word for goose or swan. A male of an animal or bird was 'pōnt- [4586] and a female 'pen-ṭ̄-[4395 a].

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1.2.2.6 Climate and water sources

Words for sun ['pūz/"poζ-Vtu 4559, "nāc-Vtu 2910], moon ['nel-a-ncc-ncc 3754, 'tin-kal 3213 in SD I], stars ['cukk-V 2646, "niHn 4876], sky ['wān-am 5381], clouds ['myu-il 4892], wind ['wāl-V 5312], rain ['māz-ay 4753 SD I, 'pīz-u 4199 SD II, ND, 'tuw-V to drizzle' 3398], night ['cir-a-, 'cir-V-/nk- 'darkness' 2552, 'cīnk- 2604, 'nūl/"nal-V-night' 3621] and day ['pak-al 'daylight' 3805, 'ḥān-ṭu 'day' 2920, 'cir 'day' 2553, only in CD] existed. There were words apparently denoting dew, fog, frost ['pan-i- (kīl) 4035, 'māy-nt (t) 4641] which were used with extended meanings. Clear distinction was not made among 'snow', 'ice' and 'dew'. Only Kurux and Malto have words for snow, ice ['kīw-"kiw-V- 1618], but their etymology is not known. Being hot ['vec-"vey- 5517] and cold ['kal-"car- 3043] had expressions. There are no basic expressions for seasons, except perhaps for monsoon, or the rainy season ['kār 'dark clouds' 1278, 'kō̄r-ay 'west wind, monsoon' 2203 in SD I].

Water sources such as the sea ['kāt-al 1118], river, stream ['yāt 5159], canal ['kāl 1480], tank ['ket-ay/-swa 1980], lake ['kul-am-Vīc 1828] and well ['nāy 3706] were known. There were ships ['kāl-am 1305] and boats ['amp-i 177, 'kapp-al 119, 'pat-Vku 3838] for navigation. There were floats ['tep-p-V 3414] presumably used for sport or for short distances. Tubular tunnels for drainage ['tāmpu 3389] and covered sluices ['mat-Vku 4688, 'kal-Vnk- 1309] to drain surplus water from tanks were built. Only the southern languages have a word for navigator or boatsman ['taŋ-al 3049], but it is difficult to know its source.

1.2.2.7 Abstract concepts

The word for 'mind' was 'the one inside, the pith' ['ull-am, 'nei-cu, see above] and 'to think' was a semantic extension of 'to see, consider' (several verbs: 'kaHn- 'to see' 1443, 'cō-z 'to see, deliberate' 2735, 'pār 'to perceive, see, know' 4091, 'tām-ṭu 'to appear, strike to mind' 3566] and 'to count' ['ey- 793]. In Telugu, moreover, 'to say to
oneself’ [anukon-] is ‘to think’. There are some basic forms like Ta. *ningai* ‘to think’ [<*n-en-a-y, see neñ-cu above; 3683 SD I], *wak-*ay ‘to consider, deliberate’ [SD I, Te.] which are not semantically related to ‘see’ words. Kui and Brahui share a word which reconstructs to ‘él’ ‘mind, reason, knowledge’ [912]. Another pair of forms, restricted to South Dravidian I and Telugu, is *kar-V-nt- ‘to intend, consider’, *kar-V-ntt- n. ‘will, mind’ [1283]. There are basic verbs meaning ‘to know’ [*ata-V- 314, SD I, II, ND] and ‘to learn’ [*kal-’-kot- 1297, SD I, II, CD]. Understanding and knowledge are semantically related to ‘becoming clear or white’ [*tërterr-V- 3419, *tel-V- 3433, *wel 5496]. Writing was ‘scratching, drawing lines, painting’ [*war-V- 5263, ’kë-z- 1623] perhaps on palm leaves with a stylus; there were words for ‘reading, reciting’ [*tötu 1052, *cat-u- 2327] and ‘singing’ [*päf- 4065]. Forgetting was ‘being hidden, obscure’ [*maf-V- 4760]. There were basic expressions for fear, shame, beauty, strength etc.

There were basic numerals up to ten and one hundred; only Telugu has a native number word for ‘thousand’ *wëyjì, which DEDR relates to *wey-am ‘extensiveness, height’ (cognates only in Ta. Ma. and Go. 5404). The number nine [*teño 793] is also expressed as ten minus one. The numeral ‘eight’ and the verb ‘to count’ [*en 793] are homophonous. This has led some to say that Dravidians counted in terms of eight’. But the system is clearly decimal, 11 = 10 + 1, 12 = 10 + 2 etc., 21 = 2-10-1, 22 = 2-10-2. The preceding digit of a higher number signalled multiplication and the following one addition.

Time [*nër-am ‘sun’ 3774, ‘pëz-’poz-uttu ‘time, sun’ 4559] was referred to in terms of units of the day [*nål ‘day’ 3656, ‘når-ı < *nål-nt- SD II], month [*nel-V- 3754] and year [*yño 5153]; there were descriptive expressions for yesterday and the day-before-yesterday; similarly for tomorrow and the day-after-tomorrow. East and west have several reconstructible names, while north and south have one reconstruction each: east [*vër-V-nt- ‘the low area’ 2584, ’këz/’këz-Vkk ‘the area below’ in SD I], west [*më-l ‘high place’, mët-kku, *mel-Vkk 5086, *koj-Vkk 1649; the last one looks more basic], south [*ten, tej-kku 3449] and north [*wët-akku 5218].

1.2.2.8 Miscellaneous

There were basic words for all visible parts of the (human) body such as head, hair, face, eye, eyelid, eyeball, mouth, tongue, tooth, nose, ear, neck, trunk, chest, breast, stomach, hand, hip, leg, finger, nail, thigh, foot etc. Some invisible parts were also named, like the lungs [*poç-V 4569, tor-Vmp- 3515], bone [*el-Vmp- 839], liver [*taz-Vnk-3120], heart [*ksany-V 1693, *ull-am ‘heart, mind’ 698], brain [*mit-Vz 5062, *neñc-V ‘brain, mind, heart, pith’ 3736], bone-marrow [*mël-V- 5051], intestines [*wac-Vju ‘belly, intestines, foetus’, *kar-V ‘intestines, bowels’ 1274] and nerves [*nët-Vmpu 2903], possibly known and seen from killing animals for food and in sacrifices to gods.

The colour spectrum was divided into four: white [*wel 5496], black [*kär/’kär-V-1278a], green–yellow [*pac-V- 3821] and red [*ken- 1931, et-V- 865].
There were several words for speech acts, namely "aHn- ‘to say’ [869], "pēc-\-pēz- ‘to talk, prattle’ [4430], "kēl- ‘to ask, to hear’ [2017a], "kep- ‘to tell, scold’ [1955], "col- ‘to speak, relate’ [2855], "pān\-pān-V- ‘to question, commission, inquire’, "pok-Vz ‘to praise’ [4235], "nāt-V- ‘to say’ [3784], "moz-V- ‘to say, speak (loudly)’ [4989]. It is difficult to sort out the minute differences in meaning or the precise contexts requiring the use of different terms.

Words for excrement or faeces ["piทย 4210] and ‘breaking wind’ ["p Modi-\-pi-t 4167] can be reconstructed for all subgroups.

Names for precious stones include coral ["tuw\-Vr 3284, "paw\-az 3998] and pearl ["mutt- 4959].

1.2.2.9 Observations

The foregoing outline of Proto-Dravidian culture gives a glimpse of a highly civilized people, who lived in towns in tiled or terraced houses, with agriculture as the main occupation. They drew water from wells, tanks and lakes, and knew drainage. They also carried trade by boat in the sea. However, there is no indication of the original home of these people. At least, it is certain that they do not have terms for flora and fauna not found in the Indian subcontinent. It is significant that Proto-Dravidians have not ‘retained’ any expressions for snow and ice and they do not have a name for the lion, rhino and camel. In view of this situation it would be safe to consider the speakers of the Dravidian languages as native people of India. This does not rule out the possibility of Proto-Dravidians being the originators of the Harappa civilization. In the third millennium BCE they must have been scattered all over the subcontinent, even as far as Afghanistan in the northwest where they came in contact with the early Ṛgvedic Aryans. After some groups had moved to the periphery of the Indo-Gangetic plains with the expansion of Aryans, several other groups must have been assimilated into the Aryan society. The major structural changes in Middle or Modern Indic strongly suggest a Dravidian substratum for over three millennia.

There have been Dravidian lexical items borrowed into Sanskrit and Prakrits during the Middle Indic period but most of these refer to concepts native to Dravidian: see table 1.1. The list shows that, during the long period of absorption and shift to Indo-Aryan

15 ‘Proto-Indo-Europeans . . . were far more obliging in passing on to us no less than two words for ‘breaking wind’. English dictionaries may occasionally shrink from including such vulgar terms as “fart” but the word gains status when set within the series: Sanskrit pardate, Greek perdo, Lithuanian perdzu, Russian perdet, Albanian pjerdh “to fart loudly” (distinguished from Proto-Indo-European "pezdz- ‘to break wind softly’)’ (Mallory 1989:126).

16 After completing this section I have read Southworth (1995) in which he has given a brief outline of Proto-Dravidian culture in three chronological layers. It was interesting reading, although I could not find evidence for his setting up three chronological stages in the evolution of Dravidian culture. I also do not find any reason to revise any part of this section in the light of the contents of that article.
Introduction

Table 1.1. A sample list of Dravidian borrowings into Middle Indo-Aryan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proto-Dravidian [DEDR]</th>
<th>Classical Skt./Middle-Indic</th>
<th>CDIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*a-l-amp- ‘mushroom’  [300]</td>
<td>Pkt. *ālamba- DNM</td>
<td>1365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ka-z-V ‘paddy field’  [1355]</td>
<td>Skt. *kardas-, kardama- ‘mud’</td>
<td>2867–70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ka-p-VI ‘cheek’  [1337]</td>
<td>Skt. kopol- ‘cheek’</td>
<td>2755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kut-V/*kant-V ‘eyeball’  [1680]</td>
<td>Skt. gudha- ‘globe’</td>
<td>4181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kat-ac- ‘young male animal’  [1123]</td>
<td>MIA *kukla- id.</td>
<td>2645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ku-n ‘fish’  [1252]</td>
<td>Skt. kaiwarta-/*kevarta- ‘fisherman’</td>
<td>3469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kai-n ‘gecko’  [1338]</td>
<td>Skt. gaul- ‘a house lizard’</td>
<td>4324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kut- ‘crab’s eye, a plant’  [1865]</td>
<td>Skt. gunjš- id.</td>
<td>4176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kor-Vnk ‘a stark, crane’  [2125]</td>
<td>Skt. *kanš- id.</td>
<td>2595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD II: *padl-V ‘female buffalo’  [3881]</td>
<td>Pkt. *padaka- ‘female cow’</td>
<td>8042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*cink-i ‘ginger’  [429]</td>
<td>Skt. *śrōnga- vera-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*az-Vatu ‘black gram’  [690]</td>
<td>Pkt. *ūdha- id.</td>
<td>1693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ka-t-ampu Anthocephalus cadamba  [1116]</td>
<td>Skt. *ālamba- id.</td>
<td>2710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kā, *kā-n ‘forest’  [1418]</td>
<td>Skt. kāñna- id.</td>
<td>3028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kur-Vnk ‘Pongamia glabra’  [1507]</td>
<td>Skt. *kāñja- id.</td>
<td>2785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ka-t- ‘rice water, gruel’  [1104]</td>
<td>Skt. *kāñja- id.</td>
<td>3322, 3326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kai-tay ‘fragrant screw-pine’  [2026]</td>
<td>Skt. ketaka- id.</td>
<td>3462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*koz-V ‘young’  [2149]</td>
<td>Skt. *kannya, kuda- ‘boy’</td>
<td>3527, 3245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*at-a-ppay ‘betel pouch’  [64]</td>
<td>Pkt. *adapp(h)ya-</td>
<td>1948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kuň-c ‘rice water, gruel’  [1372]</td>
<td>Skt. *kñṣa- ‘spirituous liquor’</td>
<td>3016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*kō ‘toddler, liquor’  [1372]</td>
<td>Pkt. *kñḷa-</td>
<td>2950–1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

by the Dravidian speaking tribes, only specialized lexical items from Dravidian were borrowed into Indo-Aryan, mainly items of need-based borrowing. However, the grammatical changes which had swept through Indo-Aryan were far-reaching, mainly because of transplanting the Dravidian structure onto Indo-Aryan (see section 1.7 below).

1.3 The Dravidian languages as a family

As early as 1816, Francis Whyte Ellis, an English civil servant, in his Dissertation on the Telugu Language,18 asserted that ‘the high and low Tamil; the Telugu, grammatical and vulgar; Carnataca or Cannadi, ancient and modern; Malayalma or Malaya.lam...and Tuluva’ are the members ‘constituting the family of languages which may be appropriately called the dialects of South India’; ‘Codagu’, he considered ‘a local dialect of the same derivation’. Speaking about Malto, he says, ‘the language of the Moutaineers of Rajmahal abounds in terms common to the Tamil and Telugu’. His purpose

17 The alternation kai-/kē- indicates Dravidian origin; varta-/vatta- is an Indo-Aryan stem.
18 Published as a ‘Note to the Introduction’ of A. D. Campbell’s A Grammar of Telooogoo Language Commonly Called the Gentoo, printed in Madras in 1816. This note was reprinted with an editorial note by N. Venkata Rao (1954–5).
1.3 The Dravidian languages as a family

was to show that Tamil, Telugu and Kannada ‘form a distinct family of languages’, with which ‘the Sanscrit has, in later times, especially, intermixed, but with which it has no radical connection’. He presented considerable illustrative material, mainly lexical and some grammatical, from Telugu, Kannada and Tamil in support of his hypothesis (Krishnamurti 1969b: 311–12). Ellis recognized the Dravidian languages as a family, thirty years after Sir William Jones had floated the concept of the language family in his famous lecture to the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta, on 2 February, 1786.

Zvelebil (1990a: xiv–vii) gives a detailed account of the first contact of Western missionaries with the Dravidian languages. In 1554 Fr. Anrique Anriquez (1520–1600), a Jewish Portuguese missionary of the Jesuit order, published the first book on Tamil in Roman script. First published in 1554, *Cartilha em Tamul e Português* was reprinted in 1970 by the Museu Nacional de Arquelogia e Ethnologia, Lisbon. Herbert Herring (1994) discusses, at length, the contribution of several German missionaries/scholars to Dravidian studies. Ziegenbalg (1682–1719), a Protestant German missionary, published the first Tamil grammar by a westerner, *Grammatica Damulica*, in Latin (1716) in Halle, Germany. Tamil was also called the Malabarian language. Karl Graul (1814–64) published an *Outline of Tamil Grammar* (1856) and brought out four philosophical treatises on Tamil. Graul translated Kuřal into German and Latin (1856).19

Robert Caldwell (1814–91) brought out the first edition of his *Comparative Grammar* in 1856, which marked the first, pioneering breakthrough in comparative Dravidian studies. Caldwell enumerated only twelve Dravidian languages20 and, as the title of his work suggests, he mainly drew upon the literary languages of the south with greater attention paid to Tamil, which he had studied for over thirty-seven years by the time he brought out the second edition of the book in 1875. With inadequate sources and with the comparative method and reconstruction of the proto-language still in their infancy,21 Caldwell could not have done better. He succeeded in showing family likeness among the Dravidian languages in phonology and morphology and in disproving the Sanskrit origin of the Dravidian languages, a view strongly advocated by many Oriental as well as Western scholars both before and after him. He also attempted to show a possible affinity between Dravidian and the so-called ‘Scythian’ languages.22

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19 Bibliographical details of these early works can be found in the *Linguistic Survey of India*, vol. IV (1906; repr. 1967, 1973 Delhi: Motolal Banarsidass).
20 Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Canarese (Kannada), Tulu, Kudagu or Coorg (Kodagu), Toda (Toda), Kota, Gond (Gondi), Khond or Ku (Kui), Orlon (Kurux or Oraō), Rajmahal (Malto). The modern spellings are given in parentheses. Caldwell adds a note on Brahui in the Appendix to the 2nd edition in 1875 (in the 3rd edition reprinted in 1956: 633–5).
21 He was a contemporary of August Schleicher (1821–68) of Germany who initiated the method of reconstructing the parent of the Indo-European languages.
22 ‘... a common designation of all those languages of Asia and Europe which do not belong to the Indo-European or Semitic families’ *LSI* 4. 282 (1906).
Introduction

C. P. Brown (1798–1884), a British administrative officer in the Telugu-speaking area, spent the bulk of his income on preparing edited texts of classics and published a grammar of Telugu and *A Dictionary, Telugu and English* (the last in 1852). Rev. Winslow’s *Comprehensive Tamil and English Dictionary* was published in 1862. Rev. Hermann Gundert (1814–93) published a monumental *Malayālam–English Dictionary* (1872) and,

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Map 1.1 Geographical distribution of the Dravidian languages in South Asia
earlier, a grammar of the Malayalam language (1859). Ferdinand Kittel’s (1832–1903) Kannada–English Dictionary (1894) and Männer’s Tulu-English Dictionary (1886) are still considered standard tools of reference for linguistic and literary studies in these languages. Grammatical sketches and vocabularies appeared on several minor Dravidian languages during the later half of the nineteenth century: Gondi (Driberg 1849), Kui (Letchmaje 1853), Kolami (Hislop 1866), Kodagu (Cole 1867), Tulu (Brigel 1872) and Malto (Droese 1884). Toda was identified in 1837 (Bernhard Schmidt) and Brahui in 1838 (Leech). Some of these materials are not easily accessible to scholars and are also inadequate for a comparative study.

1.4 Names of languages, geographical distribution and demographic details

There are over twenty-six Dravidian languages known at present. They are classified into four genetic subgroups as follows (see map 1.1):

1. South Dravidian (SD I): Tamil, Malayalam, Iruḷa, Kurุมba, Kodagu, Toda, Kota, Badaga, Kannada, Koraga, Tulu;
2. South-Central Dravidian (SD II): Telugu, Gondi (several dialects), Konḍa, Kui, Kuvi, Pengo, Manḍa;
Introduction

3. Central Dravidian (CD): Kolami, Naikri, Naiki, Parji, Ollari, (Kondekor) Gadaba;

South Dravidian I and South Dravidian II must have arisen from a common source, which is called Proto-South Dravidian. The shared innovations include two sound changes: (a) PD \(\ast i \ast u\) became \(\ast e \ast o\) before a low vowel \(\ast a\) (section 4.4.2), (b) PD \(\ast c\) became \((\ast s\) and \(\ast h\) as intermediate stages) zero in SD I; this change is now in progress in SD II (section 4.5.1.3). Morphological innovations include (c) the back-formation of \(\ast \tilde{n}an\) from Proto-Dravidian inclusive plural \(\ast \tilde{n}am\) as the first person singular, beside PD \(\ast yan\) ‘I’, (d) the development of paired intransitive and transitive stems with NP/NPP alternation in verbs (section 7.3.6), and (e) the use of the reflexes of \(\ast -ppi\) as a causative marker (section 7.3.3). There are several innovations within each subgroup. The typical ones for South Dravidian I are: (a) loss of the final -CV of 3msg pronouns \(\ast a\)wan ‘that man’, \(\ast iw\)an ‘this man’ (<\(\ast a\)wan-tu, \(\ast iw\)an-tu), (b) the creation of 2fsg in -a.l (section 6.2.3–4) and (c) the use of reflexive pronoun \(\ast \tilde{t}an\) as emphatic marker beside \(\ast -\tilde{e}\) (section 8.4.2). The typical innovations of South Dravidian II are: (a) the generalization of \(\ast -tt\) as past-tense marker, and (b) the creation of new oblique stems \(\ast n\)a- \(\ast m\)a- and \(\ast n\)i- \(\ast m\)i- for the first and second personal pronouns. The other subgroups are already the established ones in Dravidian. The details of subgrouping will be consolidated and reviewed in the last chapter.

See map 1.1 for the geographical distribution of these languages. A family tree diagram of the Dravidian languages is given as figure 1.2. Justification for setting up the subgroups will be seen in the succeeding chapters of this book.

General information about each of the Dravidian languages is given as figure 1.2. Justification for setting up the subgroups will be seen in the succeeding chapters of this book.

1.4.1 Major literary languages

There are four languages with long traditions of written literature, namely Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu. Tulu is said to have some literary texts of recent origin. Both Tulu and Kodagu are spoken by civilized, literate communities, unlike

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23 There have been speculative etymologies for the names Tamiḻ, Malayālam and Telugu. I have not given much thought or space to these. Zvelebil says (1990a: xxi) that tamiḻ was derived from taka- ‘to be fit, proper’ with \(\ast k\) > \(\ast w\) > \(\ast m\), but the \(\ast k\) and \(\ast w\) variants are nowhere attested. Koskinen (1996) relates tamiḻ to the lotus word tāmarai. Southworth (1998) suggests \(\ast tam-miz > tam-iz\) ‘self-speak’, or ‘one’s own speech’ by deriving \(miz/-muz\) as the underlying