

## 1

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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 *draviḍa-* (adj *drāviḍa-*) 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 *Drāviḍa*, the adjectival form of *Draviḍa*. 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 *Drāviḍa-* as a language name by Kumārilabhaṭṭa’s *Tantravārttika* (seventh century AD) (1956: 4). Actually Kumāriḷa was citing some words from Tamil which were wrongly given Sanskritic resemblance and meanings by some contemporary scholars, e.g. Ta. *cōru* ‘rice’ (matched with Skt. *cora-* ‘thief’), *pāmpu* ‘snake’, adj *pāppu* (Skt. *pāpa-* ‘sin’), Ta. *atar* ‘way’ (Skt. *atara-* ‘uncrossable’), Ta. *māl* ‘woman’ (Skt. *mālā* ‘garland’), *vayiru* ‘stomach’ (Skt. *vaira-* ‘enemy’)<sup>1</sup> (Zvelebil 1990a: xxi–xxii). Caldwell further cites several sources from the scriptures such as the

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

tad yathā drāviḍa-bhāṣāyām eva tāvad vyanjanānta-bhāṣāpadeṣu svarānta-vibhakti-  
 strīpratyayādi-kalpanābhīḥ svabhāṣānurūpān arthān pratipadyamānāḥ dṛśyante;  
 tad yathā ḍānam cōr ityukte cōrapadavācyam kalpayanti; panthānam atara iti

2 *Introduction*

*Manusmṛti*, Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* and the *Mahābhārata* where Drāviḍa- is used as a people and Drāviḍī as a minor Prakrit belonging to the Paisācī 'demonic' group. Since Tamiz 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.<sup>2</sup>

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

kalpayitvā āhuḥ, satyam dustaratvāt atara eva panthā iti; tathā pāpaśabdā pakārāntam sarpavacanam; a kārāntam kalpayitvā satyam pāpa eva asau iti vadanti. evam māl śabdā strīvacanam mālā iti kalpayitvā satyam iti āhuḥ; vairśabdā ca rēphāntam udaravacanam, vairīśabdā pratyāmnāyam vadanti; satyam sarvasya kṣudhitasya akārye pravartanāt udaram vairīkārye pravartate . . .

(Thus, in the Drāviḍa 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 *mālā* 'garland' and say, it is so. They substitute the word *vairī* ('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 (*vairī*) actions . . .)

The items cited were actually of Tamil, namely *cōru* 'rice', *atar* 'way', *pāppu* adj of *pāmpu* 'snake', *māl* 'woman' < *makaḥ*; *vayīru* 'belly'. Since these did not occur as such in Kannaḍa or Telugu, Kumārilabhaṭṭa was referring to Tamil only in this passage by the name *drāviḍa*-.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph (1989) gives extensive references to the use of the term *draviḍa*-, *dramila*- first as the name of a people, then of a country. Sinhala inscriptions of BCE cite *dameda*-, *damela*- denoting Tamil merchants. Early Buddhist and Jaina sources used *damiḷa*- to refer to a people in south India (presumably Tamil); *damiḷaraṭṭha*- was a southern non-Aryan country; *dramiḷa*-, *dramiḍa*- and *draviḍa*- were used as variants to designate a country in the south (*Bṛhatsamhita*-, *Kādambarī*-, *Daśakumāracarita*-, fourth to seventh centuries CE) (1989: 134–8). It appears that *damiḷa*- was older than *draviḍa*-, which could be its Sanskritization. It is not certain if *tamiz* is derived from *damiḷa*- or the other way round.

1.2 *Dravidians: prehistory and culture*

3

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 Ṛgvedic 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 (1.5million),

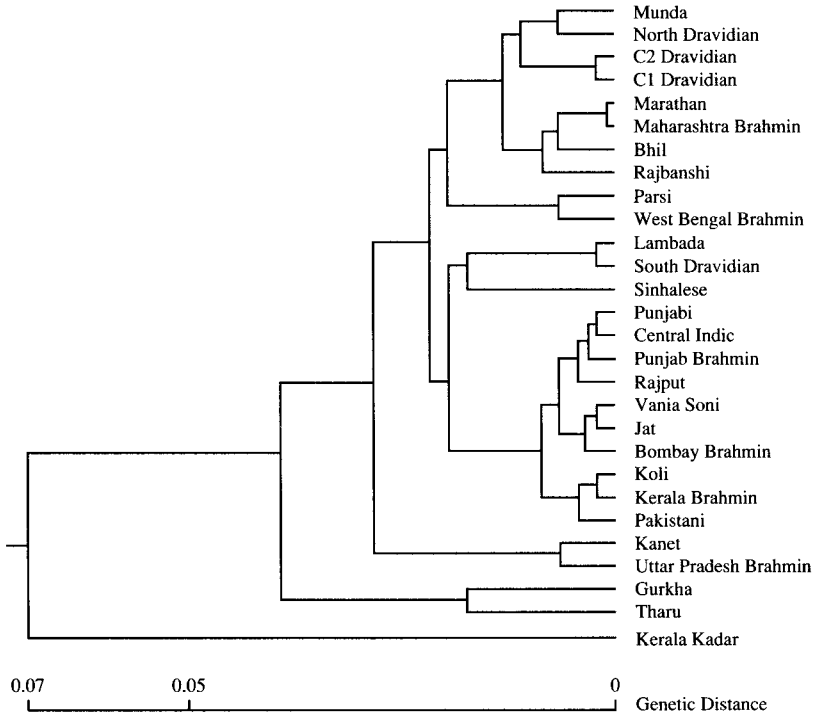


Figure 1.1 Genetic tree of South Asian populations including the Dravidian-speaking ones

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)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> 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

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 *āytam*, 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' [DEDR 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. *śṛṅgavera-*; Ta. Ma. *iñci* was derived from \**cinki* by \**c* [>*s* >*h* >] > Ø, and by changing *-k* to *-c* before a front vowel.<sup>4</sup> 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'.

<sup>4</sup> 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. Ṛgvedic Sanskrit, the earliest form of Sanskrit known (c.1500 BC), already had over a dozen lexical items borrowed from Dravidian, e.g. *ulūkhala-* 'mortar', *kuṇḍa* 'pit', *khāla-* 'threshing floor', *kāṇa-* '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 Ṛgvedic 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 *Ṛgveda*, 'occurring in 146 hymns of the first, tenth and the other maṇḍalas', e.g. *ṚV* 1.33.3 *vaila* (*sthāna-*) 'open space': PD \**wayal* 'open space, field' [5258], *ṚV* 10.15 *kiyāmbu* 'a water plant': PD \**keyampu* (<\**kecampu*) 'Arum colacasia, yam' [2004], *ṚV* 1.144 *vriś* 'finger': PD \**wirinc-* [5409], *ṚV* 1.71, 8.40 *vīlū* 'stronghold': PD \**wītu* 'house, abode, camp' [5393], *sīrā* 'plough': PD \**cēr*, *ṚV* 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*, *kikaṭa*, *paramaganda*, as probably of Dravidian origin.<sup>5</sup>

### 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 Baḍaga-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(s)* '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.

<sup>5</sup> 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).

Malayāḷam and Kannaḍa 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. *\*maṭ-i(ṅtu)* ‘the young of an animal’ in South Dravidian I, but ‘a son, male child’ in South Dravidian II [4764]. Similarly, *\*pē(y)/\*pēṅ* ‘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-V-* ‘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.<sup>6</sup>

### 1.2.2.1 *Political organization*

There were kings and chiefs (lit. the high one) [*\*eṭ-ay-antu* ‘lord, master, king, husband’ 527, *\*kō/\*kōn-tu* ‘king (also mountain)’ 2177, *\*wēnt-antu* ‘king, god’ 5529, 5530],<sup>7</sup> who

<sup>6</sup> If readers want to read the running text, they may skip the material in square brackets.

<sup>7</sup> Some of the words have plausible sources, e.g. *\*ēṭ-* ‘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

ruled [\*yāl, 5157]. They lived in palaces [\*kōy-il 2177] and had forts and fortresses [\*kōt-ay 2207a], surrounded by deep moats [\*akaz-tt-ay 11] filled with water. They received different kinds of taxes and tributes [\*ar-i 216, \*kapp-am 1218]. There were fights, wars or battles [\*pōr, 4540] with armies arrayed [\*ani 117] in battlefields [\*mun-ay 5021, \*kaḷ-an 1376]. They knew about victory or winning [? \*gel-/\*kel- 1972] and defeat or fleeing [\*ōtu v.i., ṍt-ṍam n. 1041, 2861]. Proto-Dravidians spoke of large territorial units called \*nātu (> \*nātu in South Dravidian II, 3638) for a province, district, kingdom, state [3638], while \*ūr [752] was the common word for any habitation, village or town. A hamlet was known as \*paḷḷ-i [4018]. [The highest official after the king was the minister \*per-kaṭa [4411] ‘the one in a high place’ (a later innovation in Kannāḍa and Telugu).]

### 1.2.2.2 Material culture and economy

People built houses to stay in [\*wītu 5393,<sup>8</sup> \*il 494, man-ay 4776, ir-uwu 480]; most of these derive from the root meaning ‘to settle, stay, live’. Houses had different kinds of roofing, thatched grass [\*pīr-i 4225, \*pul 4300, \*wēy ‘to thatch’ 5532], tiles [\*peṅ-kk-4385] or terrace [\*mēt-ay, \*māt-V- 4796 a,b].

There were umbrellas [\*koḷ-ay 1663] and sandals [\*keruppu 1963] made of animal skin/hide [\*tōl 3559] that people used. Among the domestic tools, the mortar [\*ur-all-aḷ 651], pestle [\*ul-akk-V- 672, \*uram-kkal 651, from \*ur- ‘to grind’ 665 and \*kal ‘stone’ 1298], grinding stone, winnowing basket [\*kētt- 2019] and sweeping broom [\*cī-pp-/\*cay-pp- 2599] existed. Different kinds of pots made of clay [\*kā-nk- 1458, \*kur-Vwi 1797, \*caṭṭi ‘small ‘pot’ 2306] or of metal [\*kiṅṅ-V 1540, 1543, \*kem-pu ‘copper vessel’ 2775] were used for cooking and storing. Cattle [\*toḷ-V-] consisting of cows and buffaloes were kept in stalls [\*to z-V-]. Milk [\*pāl 4096] and its curdled [\*pēt-/\*pet-V- 4421] form curds, buttermilk [\*caḷ-V- 2411, \*moc-Vr 4902, \*per-uku 4421] were churned [\*tar-V-] to make butter/white oil [\*weṅ-ney < \*weḷ-ney 5496b].

Cloth woven [\*nec-/\*ney- ‘to weave’ 3745] from spun [\*oḷ-ukk- 1012] thread [\*ēz-/\*ēz-V- 506, \*nūl 3728], drawn from dressed [\*eHk- 765] cotton [\*par-utti 3976] was used, but different types of garments by gender were not known.

Among the native occupations, agriculture [\*uz-V- ‘to plough’ 688] was known from the beginning. There were different kinds of lands meant for dry and wet cultivation [\*paṅ-V- ‘agriculture land’ 3891, \*pun ‘dry land’ 4337 (literally ‘bad’, as opposed to \*nan- ‘good’), \*pol-am ‘field’ 4303, \*kaz-Vt- 1355, \*key-m ‘wet field’ 1958, \*wāy/

the original meaning]; the last one seems to be related to \*wēy ‘extensiveness, height, greatness’ [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’.

<sup>8</sup> *DEDR* should have separated the set of forms \*wīt-V- ‘to lodge’ and its derivative ‘house’ from the homophonous root wītu ‘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 [*\*ñāñ-kVl*]<sup>9</sup> 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 [*\*kōl* 2237], plough-share [*\*kāt-* 1505], and plough handle [*\*mēz-i* 5097]. Seedlings [*\*ñāt-u* 2919] were used for transplantation. Harvesting was by cutting [*\*koy* 2119] the crop. Threshing in an open space [*\*kaḷ-am* /*\*kaḷ-an* 1376] separated the grain from the grass. Grain was measured in terms of a unit called *\*puṭṭ-i* [4262], about 500 lbs, and stored in large earthen pots [*wān-ay* 4124, 5327].

Paddy [*\*kūl-i* 1906, *\*nel* 3743, *\*war-iñc-* 5265] and millets [*\*ār* /*\*ar-ak* 812, *\*kot-V-* 2165] of different kinds were grown. The cultivation of areca nut [*\*at-ay-kkāy* 88, *\*pānkk-* 4048], black pepper [*\*miḷ-Vku* 4867], and cardamom [*\*ēl-V* 907] seem native to the Dravidians, at least in south India.

Milk [*\*pāl* 4096], curds [*\*per-V-ku/-ppu* 1376], butter [*\*weḷ-ney* 5496b], ghee, oil [*\*ney* 3746], rice [*war-inc* 5265] and meat [*\*it-aycci* 529] were eaten. Boiling, roasting [*\*kāy* 1438, *\*wec-/wey-* 5517] and frying [*\*waṭ-V-* 5325] were the modes of cooking [*\*at-u* 76, *\*want-* 5329] food on a fire-place [*\*col* 2857] with stones arranged on three sides. Toddy (country liquor from the toddy palm tree) [*\*izam* 549, *\*kaḷ* 1374] and Mahua liquor (brewed from sweet mahua flowers) [*\*ir-upp-a-* *Bassia longifolia* 485] were the intoxicating beverages.

People carried loads [*\*mūṭṭ-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-waṭi* 1417].

Different tools were used for digging [*\*kun-tāl* ‘pick-axe’, *\*pār-ay* ‘crowbar’ 4093], cutting and chopping [*\*katti* ‘knife’ 1204]. People used bows [*\*wil* 5422] and arrows [*\*ampu* 17a] in fighting [*\*pōr* /*\*por-u-* 4540] or hunting [*\*wēñ-ṭṭ-a-* 5527]. They had the sword [*\*wāl* 5376, *\*wāy-cc-i* 5399], axe [*\*maz-V-* /*\*maṭ-Vcc* 4749] and the club [*\*kut-V* 1850b]. There was no word for a cart and a wheel until much later.<sup>10</sup> In the literary languages there is an ancient word *\*tēr* ‘chariot’ [3459] used on the battle-field or as a temple car.<sup>11</sup> Buying [*\*koḷ-* /*\*koṇ-* 215], selling [*\*wil-* 5421] and barter [*\*māṭ-* 4834] were known. ‘Price’ is derived from ‘sell’ [*\*wilay* 5241].

<sup>9</sup> Obviously a compound derived from *ñam* + *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*, *-kil* (*-cil* with palatalization in Tamil), *-kal*, etc.

<sup>10</sup> The widely used set in the literary languages is Ta. Ma. *vaṅṭi*, Ka. Te. *baṅḍi* ‘cart’, which is traced to Skt. *bhāṇḍa-* ‘goods, wares’, Pkt. *bhaṅḍi* (see *DEDR* Appendix, Supplement to *DBIA*, 50). A native-like word for wheel is Ta. *kāl*, Ka. Tu. *gāli*, Te. *gānu*, *gālu* [1483] is probably related to *\*kāl* ‘leg’ [1479].

<sup>11</sup> This word occurs in South Dravidian I and Telugu. In Kota *dēr* ‘god, possession of a diviner by god’, *tēr kārn* ‘diviner’, To. *tōr ōḍ-* ‘(shaman) is dancing and divining’, Tu. *tēri* ‘idol car, the car festival’. The origin of this word is not clear.

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. [*\*taṭṭ-!\*taṭ-V* 3028] had a name. Not many words are available for different diseases. Some disorders had expressions such as blindness [*\*kur-uṭu* 1787], deafness [*\*kew-iṭu*, *\*kep-* 1977c], being lame [*\*coṭṭ-* 2838], cataract [*\*por-ay* ‘film’ 4295] and insanity [*\*picc-!\*pic-V* 4142].

Certain items of food can be reconstructed for the literary languages of the south, the pancake made of flour [*\*aṭṭu* 76, *\*app-am* 155, *\*tōc-ay* 3542]. The staple food was cooked rice, thick porridge [*kūz* 1911, ?*\*amp-ali* 174], or gruel [*\*kañc-i* 1104] and meat [*\*iṭ-aycci* 528, *\*ū/ūy* 728]. Proto-Dravidians sang [*\*pāt-u* 4065] and danced [*\*āṭ-u* 347].

They knew of iron [*\*cir-umpu* 2552], gold [*\*pon* 4570, *\*pac-Vṇṭ-* 3821] and silver [*\*weḷ-nt-* 5496] derived from the colour terms for ‘black’ [*\*cir-V-* 2552], ‘yellow’ [*\*pac-* 3821] (not *\*pon*), and ‘white’ [*\*weḷ* 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-āḷ* ‘younger sister’ [2783], *\*aṇṇa-* ‘elder brother’ [131], *\*tamp-V-* ‘younger brother’ [3485]; *\*app-a-* [156a] *\*ayy-a-* [196]/*tan-tay* ~ *\*tan-ṭi* ‘father’ [3067; *tam + tay* vs. *tan + ṭi* (< ? *-tay*)], *\*amm-a-* [183]/*\*āy* [364]/*\*aww-a*[273]/*\*taḷḷ-ay/-i* ‘mother’ [3136], *\*mak-antu* [4616]/*\*koz-V-* [2149]/*maṭ-in-ṭu* ‘son’ [4764];<sup>12</sup> *\*mak-aḷ* [4614] *!\***kūn-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 *pāṭṭ-ān* [4066], but their spouses were distinguished descriptively in different languages, Ta. *pāṭṭ-i* [4066] ‘grandmother’, Te. *amm-amma* ‘mother’s mother’, *nāyan (a)-amma* ‘father’s mother’. Corresponding to Ta. *mūtt-app-an* ‘father’s father’, *murṟ-avai* ‘grandmother’, Ma. *mutt-app-an* ‘grandfather’, *mūtt-app-an* ‘father’s father’ (also ‘father’s elder brother’), *mūtt-amma* ‘mother’s mother’ (also ‘elder sister of father or mother’)

<sup>12</sup> The root *\*maṭ-* underlies another set of kinship terms only found in South Dravidian II and borrowed from Telugu into Central Dravidian, e.g. Te. *maṟ-a<sup>n</sup>di* [Mdn. Te. *maridi*] ‘spouse’s younger brother, younger sister’s husband, younger male cross-cousin’; the corresponding female kin is *maṟa<sup>n</sup>d-alu* ‘spouse’s younger sister, younger brother’s wife, younger female cross-cousin’. Cognates occur in Gondi, Kui and Kuvi [see 4762].