

India: The Original Home of Aryans

by

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APPENDIX¹

The theory of the indigenous origin of the Aryans has been advocated by a number of scholars. MM. Ganganath Jha has tried, to prove that the original home was the Brahmarshi-desa². D. S. Trivedi suggests that the original home of the Aryans was in the region of the river Devika in Multan³. L. D. Kalla advocates the claims of Kashmir and the Himalayan region⁴. The various arguments in favour of this view may be summed up as follows:

1. There is no evidence to show that the Vedic Aryans were foreigners or that they migrated into India within traditional memory. Sufficient literary materials are available to indicate with some degree of certainty, that the Vedic Aryans themselves regarded Sapta-Sindhu as their original home (*devakritayoni* or *devanirmita-desa*).

Migrating races look back to the land of their origin for centuries. The Parsis in India remember their origin after eight hundred years. The ancient Egyptians and the Phoenicians remembered their respective lands of origin even though they had forgotten their location. The Vedic Aryans, if at all they came from outside, therefore, must have lived in Sapta-Sindhu so many centuries before the Vedic period that they had lost all memory of an original home⁵.

2. The linguistic affinities are not positive proofs of Aryan immigration. The Vedic Sanskrit has the largest number of vocables found in the Aryan languages. These are preserved in the languages of the Sanskritic family in different parts of India even when there has been inter-racial contact for centuries. On the other hand, if the pre-Vedic Aryan language was spoken in different parts of Europe and Asia where the Aryans had settled before coming to India, how is it that only a few vocables are left in the present-day speech of those parts, while the largest number of them is found in the distant places of ultimate settlement and racial admixture in India? On the contrary this disparity can easily be explained if the pre-Vedic was the language of the homeland of Aryans and the other Aryan languages came into existence as a result of the contact between migrating Aryans and non-Aryan elements outside India and Persia⁶.
3. The Vedic literature is the earliest extant record of the Aryan mind. How is it that in the course of their journey to the Sapta-Sindhu the Aryans left no such record elsewhere? This absence of literary records in other countries cannot be explained away by a hypothesis that the Aryans only reached a high stage of cultural evolution in India. But we can satisfactorily explain it if we suppose that the Aryans migrated from India, and the migration being only of the superfluous population of roving tribes without great cultural development, they could not impart the literary and cultural tradition to the counties in which they ultimately settled⁷.
4. The sacrificial rituals had long been established before the compilation of the Samhita. Therefore the home of Soma, the Muja-vant or Munjavant hills in the north of the Punjab, indicates the locality from which the sacrificial rituals developed.⁸

5. It is often argued that Lithuanian being the most archaic in the Aryan family of languages, Lithuania is likely to be the original home of the Aryans. But a language remains archaic even when the persons using it are unprogressive; or if they remain in a locality where no fusion is possible with races speaking other languages; or if they develop a highly refined technique for preserving and using archaic forms. The first two conditions are probably responsible for the archaic character of Lithuanian.⁹
6. It is argued that the tiger, a native of the Bengal swamps, is not mentioned in the *Rigveda*, but the place of honour is given to the lion. Similarly the elephant, mentioned as the *mrigahastin*, shows that it was a novelty¹⁰. These arguments do not carry much weight in view of the fact that the Harappa civilization of the Indus Valley shows little trace of the lion (supposed to be common in the desert of Rajputana) but is fully conversant with the worship of the tiger and the elephant as indicated by the seals. If in about 3000 B. C. the elephant and the tiger were so well known in the Punjab, it is absurd to suppose that they disappeared so completely as not to be mentioned in the *Rigveda* in c. 1500 B.C. The word *mriga-hastin* is merely a poetic term and does not imply novelty. In the same way the word *parvatagiri*, used for a mountain in the same *Rigveda*, clearly does not mean that mountains were strange to the Vedic peoples. Again it is said that rice is not mentioned in the *Rigveda*. Even so, salt is never mentioned in the *Rigveda*. Can we conclude that the consumption of salt was unknown in the *Rigvedic* times? Rice seems to have been unknown in the *Harappa* civilization also. This only proves that *yava* (barley) and wheat were the staple cereals of North-West India.
7. The geographical data of the *Rigveda*, as analysed in Ch. XIII, clearly show that the Punjab and the neighbouring regions constituted the home of the people who composed these hymns. There is no good ground for the belief that they or their ancestors lived in any other country.

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1. This Appendix is based on a long note on the subject prepared by Prof S. Srikanta Sastri and most of the arguments are advanced by Mr K. M. Munshi in *Glory that was Gurjaradesa*, I, Section II.
 2. Acharya Pushpanjali (=D. R. Bhandarkar Comm. Vol.), pp. 1-2
 3. ABORI, XX, 48 ff.
 4. POC, VI, 723-4
 5. Munshi, op. Cit., 46.
 6. Ibid, 81.
 7. Ibid, 82.
 8. Cf. KHDS, II, Part I, pp. 11-16.
 9. Munshi, op. Cit., 83.
 10. CHI, I, 81.