

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

INDIAN DIASPORA: THE ANCIENT HISTORY

*By Dr. Malti H. Shukla

ABSTRACT

The English phrase 'Aryan' comes by Sanskrit phrase *ārya*, and it is self-designation utilized by Vedic Indic people - migrated at Indian subcontinent at around 1500 BCE. The original term meaning is unknown & different meanings are proposed but the most of common being is a 'nobleman'. In 19th century CE, it was searched that the idiom was also used by ancestors of Indo-Europeans along with the Indo-Iranian tribal self-designation but this theory is no longer accepted. Later *Aryan* idiom was used as the synonym of Indo-European.

The linguistic studies also show that Aryans migrated at Indian subcontinent and thus Aryan language also gained ascendancy to the local languages and they gradually adopted the agricultural lifestyle - widely established by around 1000 BCE.

KEY WORDS: Aryans, Migration, India, Europe, Subcontinent.

Dr. Malti H. Shukla* - PH.D. IN SOCIOLOGY, SARDAR PATEL UNIVERSITY, VALLABH VIDYANAGAR.

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

INTRODUCTION

The English phrase 'Aryan' comes by Sanskrit phrase *ārya*, and it is self-designation utilized by Vedic Indic people - migrated at Indian subcontinent at around 1500 BCE. This Sanskrit term was cognate at Iranian phrase *arya*, which is self-designated. The Sanskrit & Iranian terms descend through a form *ārya* which is used by Indo-Iranian tribes for them also connected source of country-name Iran by phrase meaning *Kingdom of the Aryans*. The term Aryan is a history with controversy.

THE MISUSED TERM - ARYAN

The original term meaning is unknown & different meanings are proposed but the most of common being is a 'nobleman'. In 19th century CE, it was searched that the idiom was also used by ancestors of Indo-Europeans along with the Indo-Iranian tribal self-designation but this theory is no longer accepted. Later *Aryan* idiom was used as the synonym of Indo-European.

The linguistic studies also show that Aryans migrated at Indian subcontinent and thus Aryan language also gained ascendancy to the local languages and they gradually adopted the agricultural lifestyle - widely established by around 1000 BCE. Thus, *Aryan* developed yet another, purely racial meaning, probably one of the most familiar meanings today.

THE ARYAN MIGRATION

Prior to the Aryan migration at Indian subcontinent, a highly developed civilization at ancient India known as Indus Valley Civilization was there, which was located at today's Pakistan & northwest India which is a fertile flood

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

plain of Indus River & its vicinity. Earliest evidence for religious practices at the area dates back to approximately 5500 BCE, the farming settlements were began around 4000 BCE, and in 3000 BCE the first signs for urbanization appeared.

IN LITERATURE & MYTH

Linguistic studies show that the Aryans migrated at Indian subcontinent and the Aryan language also gained ascendancy at local languages and gradually they adopted the agricultural lifestyle. Despite the fact that we have no historical records of this period, we have a mythical record in the form of religious literature known as The Vedas, one of the most important religious books in Indian history. Stories about ancient Indian warfare and other hostilities are recorded in the Vedas, but the historical reliability of these episodes is uncertain.

MIGRATIONS FROM 3000 BC

In historic times, since about 3000 BC, various clearly identifiable groups of people have moved from area to area of the globe. In doing so they have profoundly influenced the human story. There are several different senses in which such people can be identified as groups, but few involve racial distinctions.

In prehistory the movement of a group is usually evident through traces of a shared language, which the migrants bring to a new place. The spread of a cultural influence, such as styles of pottery or religious practices, will show that

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

there was a close link between regions but will not necessarily prove permanent migration.

Sometimes large numbers of people arrive so suddenly, and with such hostile intent, that they are unmistakably recognizable as a group. They usually have a close tribal link with each other, and their names are likely to be remembered with distaste – the Huns, for example, or the Vandals. On other occasions identifiable groups are moved in large numbers against their will. The transfer of Africans to America in the slave trade is the most notable example, and here race comes closest to being a defining factor. But groups of voluntary immigrants to America – the Irish, for example - remain almost as identifiable in later generations and have a similar influence on the patterns of history.

There are therefore infinitely variable facets to the movement of peoples. Colonial ambitions take the Spaniards to America, where they exploit the Indian population but also interbreed with them. The same impulse takes the British to America and Australia, where they persecute the original inhabitants but themselves remain separate and exclusive. Persecution causes the Jews to move again and again during the centuries, but their own exclusiveness enables them to survive as a group.

The story of the movement of peoples given here does not attempt to keep separate these many different strands. It merely records the fascinating sequence of who has moved where and when and why.

SEMITIC TRIBES: FROM 3000 BC

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

When prehistory shades into history, in the Middle East, there has already occurred the first identifiable movement of a group of tribes linked by their language - the Semitic tribes.

Probably originating in southern Arabia, Semitic people have spread by 3000 BC along the desert caravan routes, up through Sinai and into the Syrian Desert. Five hundred years later they are an integral part of the culture of Mesopotamia, where there is a great Semitic dynasty as early as 2350 BC. Semitic tribes are the first to bring civilization to the coastal strip of Palestine and Phoenicia.

The next great identifiable movement of a large number of tribes, using related languages, is that of the Indo-Europeans. By about 2000 BC tribes of this linguistic family are living as nomadic herdsmen in the steppes which stretch from the Ukraine eastwards, to the regions north of the Black Sea and the Caspian.

Over the coming centuries some of these tribes move south and west into more appealing areas - occasionally in a process akin to open warfare, and invariably no doubt with violence. But the development is much more gradual than our modern notion of an invading force.

INDIA-EUROPEANS IN ASIA: FROM 1800 BC

In Asia the first significant movement of this kind is by the Hittites, who establish themselves in Anatolia. Subsequently the Medes and the Persians become the dominant tribes on the Iranian plateau. These Indo-Iranians are related in language and culture to the Aryans who move down into India,

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

profoundly influencing the subcontinent. Their tribal religion contributes largely to Zoroastrianism in Persia and Hinduism in India (see the gods of the Aryans).

At a much later date, one of the Indo-European tribal groups in India makes a further move south. They are the Sinhalese. They settle in Sri Lanka, probably in the 6th century BC.

In doing so, they isolate themselves from the Indo-Europeans of north India, for they move to the south of a different linguistic group - the Dravidians, whose origin is unknown but whose language has no links with Indo European. After another lengthy gap, in about the 11th century AD, members of the largest Dravidian community, the Tamils, move into Sri Lanka from southern India and settle in the north of the island.

INDO-EUROPEANS IN EUROPE: FROM 1800 BC

In Europe the first Indo-European tribes to make significant inroads are the Greeks. They move south into Greece and the Aegean from the 18th century BC. Gradually other tribes speaking Indo-European languages spread throughout Europe. From an early date Germans are established in Denmark and southern Sweden. Balts settle along the southern and eastern coast of the Baltic Sea. Tribes using an Italic group of languages descend into Italy. Across the centre of Europe the Celts move gradually west through Germany into France, northern Spain and Britain. Another wave of migrating Indo-European peoples follows on behind, pressing westwards from Asia. The Slavs move into the region of Poland and western Russia, between the Vistula and Dnieper

rivers. The Scythians establish themselves in the area to the north of the Black Sea.

Any map will oversimplify patterns of tribal migration, for it must attempt to separate groups which in reality intermingle and overlap. If there is not too much pressure on the available territory, different tribes often coexist within a region. Even so, in broad terms, the tribes mentioned here from the great majority of Europeans at the time when Greece and Rome dominate the Mediterranean region.

MIGRATION BY SEA IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC: 2000 BC - AD 800

Probably at first more by accident than design, the islands of the south Pacific are reached by people sailing or drifting from southeast Asia. The first to be settled are those immediately to the east of New Guinea and Australia - the region given in modern times the name of Melanesia, because of the dark skins of the inhabitants (from the Greek *melas* black and *nesos* island). The pottery of the early settlers links them with the people of the Moluccas.

In around 1300 BC seafarers make the longest step so far in this process and reach Fiji, a group of islands intermediate between Melanesia and Polynesia.

The Pacific islanders develop a twin-hulled sailing canoe which is an extremely effective sea-going vessel. In boats of this kind they continue the process of spreading eastwards through Polynesia. The first staging posts are Tonga and Samoa.

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

The earliest surviving trace of human occupation in these islands is about 420 BC in Tonga and 200 BC in Samoa. But colonists are likely to have arrived considerably earlier than this, since by the 1st century BC humans have reached the much more inaccessible Marquesas Islands.

The final thrust, to the most remote island groups of the Pacific, takes place from the Marquesas. Hawaii is reached in about AD 400; Easter Island perhaps a century later; Tahiti and the Society Islands in about 600.

The last great step in man's colonization of the planet involves the longest sea journey of all - thousands of miles southwest from the Marquesas or Tahiti to New Zealand. This is accomplished in about AD 800.

THE JEWISH DIASPORA: FROM THE 6TH CENTURY BC

A unique strand in the story of the movement of peoples begins in the Middle East in the 6th century BC. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar many Jews live in Egypt or Babylon. In these alien surroundings they preserve their own customs. It is the beginning of the process by which the Jews spread throughout the world - the Diaspora - remaining always a minority in any society (until the creation of the modern state of Israel). Other tribes on the move either become a majority in their new home or are absorbed. Only the Jews, through retaining a religious and to a lesser extent a racial identity, survive through two and half millennia as a recognizable though widely scattered people.

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

The Jews of Alexandria demonstrate the ability of a Jewish community to flourish in a new context without losing its identity. They integrate so fully with the secular life of the city that their own first language becomes Greek. It is they who first use the phrase *diaspora* (Greek for 'dispersion') to describe Jewish communities living outside Israel.

Soon many of them no longer understand Hebrew. But they refuse to let this diminish their strong sense of a shared identity as God's special people, according to the covenant revealed in a book which they now cannot read. They commission, with Ptolemy's support and approval, the first translation of the Bible, the famous Greek version known as the Septuagint and their synagogue is the earliest of which there is evidence.

REFERENCES

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_human_migration
2. Jeffrey H. Cohen, Ibrahim Sirkeci. **Cultures of Migration.** University of Texas Press, 2011.
3. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7560/726840>.
4. <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/great-migration>