# The Real Awakener



## The Light of lights

### Words of Sri Aurobindo – 28

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## The Races of India

*"The philologists have, for instance, split up, on the strength of linguistic differences, the Indian nationality into the northern Aryan race & the southern Dravidian, but sound observation shows a single physical type with minor variations pervading the whole of India from Cape Comorin to Afghanistan. Language is therefore discredited as an ethnological factor. The races of India may be all pure Dravidians, if indeed such an entity as a Dravidian race exists or ever existed, or they may be pure Aryans, if indeed such an entity as an Aryan race exists or ever existed, or they may be a mixed race with one predominant strain, but, in any case, the linguistic division of the tongues of India into the Sanscritic & the Tamilic counts for nothing in that problem. Yet so great is the force of attractive generalisations & widely popularised errors that all the world goes on perpetuating the blunder, talking of the Indo-European races, claiming or disclaiming Aryan kinship & building on that basis of falsehood the most far-reaching political, social or pseudo-scientific conclusions."*

*– Sri Aurobindo*
*(CWSA 14: 550)*

## Vedic and Philological Studies (CWSA 14)

### 1. The Origins of Aryan Speech*

#### *a. The Science of Speech and the Other Western Sciences*

"In that pregnant period of European knowledge when physical Science, turned suddenly towards its full strength, was preparing to open for itself the new views, new paths and new instruments of discovery which have led to the astonishing results of the nineteenth century, an opportunity was offered to the European mind for a similar mastery of sciences other than physical. The Sanscrit language was discovered. It was at first imagined & expected that this discovery would lead to results as important as those which flowed from the discovery of Greek literature by Western Europe after the fall of Constantinople. But these expectations have remained unfulfilled. European knowledge has followed other paths and the seed of the nineteenth century has been Newton's apple and not Sir William Jones' Shakuntala or the first edition of the Vedas. The discovery of Sanscrit has, it is true, had a considerable effect on the so-called Sciences of Comparative Philology, Comparative Mythology, Science of Religion, ethnology and sociology; but these branches of knowledge are not sciences, they are systematised speculations. Their particular conclusions often change from generation to generation and none of them, not even the most certain, have the same cast of certainty as a scientific generalisation in the domain of physical inquiry. The law of gravitation is a permanent truth of science; the law that all myths start from the sun, the law of Solarisation, if I may so call it, is an ingenious error which survives at all only because it pleases the poetic imagination.

So great has been the failure that the possibility, even, of a Science of speech has been too readily scouted. But this is an excessive deduction, the reaction of disappointed expectation has exaggerated the meaning of the failure. To say that there can be no Science of speech is to say that the movements of the mind are not governed by intelligible processes, but rather by an incalculable caprice – a supposition that cannot be admitted. Intelligible processes there are for all natural action, and therefore also for mind & its instrument speech; the difficulty is to discover their precise lines of action. We need sufficient material and the right material; we need also the right way of approaching the material. Once that is discovered, the processes also will be discovered & the Science of speech founded." (523-24)

#### *b. The Uniqueness of Sanskrit Which Makes It Suitable for a Satisfactory Approach to the Problem*

"Sanscrit, I hold, is the key to the problem. In most other languages, we have a secondary or tertiary speech formation; we have to go beyond the actual form before us & reconstruct its parent tongue, to find again perhaps that the parent tongue has to be subjected to a similar reconstructive process. We have not sufficient materials for such a task; no instruments we possess can go deep enough. But Sanscrit, by a peculiar fidelity to its origins, presents us with a true primary form of speech, in which the vocabulary indeed is late, – a new structure of word flesh & tissue, – but the base of the structure is primitive, reveals the roots of its being and betrays the principles of its formation. The failure of the comparative

philologists to make use of their opportunity has been signal; it has even obscured the issue by creating a false system; but it is no more fatal or final than the failure of Aristotle to discover the law of gravitation, although he must have seen many fruits falling from many boughs. Sanscrit still stands there offering to us its secret." (524)

### *c. The First Mistake of the Philologists and the Basis of Sri Aurobindo's Approach*

"The fundamental mistake of the philologists is contained in their famous original formula, *pitā*, *patēr*, *pater*, *Vater*, *father*, and the hasty conclusions they have drawn from it which have prevented a deeper scrutiny of the roots of language. An identity of words between various languages can never in itself lead to any fundamental discovery. It does not even prove that the languages thus agreeing are of a single stock. In many of the most common domestic terms Tamil and Sanscrit agree, but they are still held to be of different families. All therefore that is proved is not the identity of these tongues but their contact – so close a contact of one with the rest that a number of the commonest ideas & relations came in all to be expressed by terms borrowed from one. Nothing more is proved; we have not advanced a single step towards a science of languages. Even the classification of tongues as Aryan, Dravidian, Semitic cannot be called scientific; it is empirical and depends upon identities which may not be fundamental. We must go deeper. European philology has started from word-identities and identities of final wordmeaning. I propose to start from root-identities and identities of original & derivative root-meaning and even from sound-identities and identities of fundamental and



applicatory sound meaning. It is, I believe, possible in this way to establish the unity of the Aryan tongues and some at least of the laws governing the birth & development of Aryan speech. My inquiry does not carry me farther. I do not pretend as yet to inquire into the laws of speech itself, but only to establish from data, some facts of Aryan speech which may eventually help in solving the wider problem." (524-25)

### *d. The Second Mistake of the Philologists*

"In another respect, also, the philologists seem to me to have misunderstood the conditions of their inquiry. They have been not rigid enough and yet too rigid. They have been too rigid in not allowing for the flexibility of mind movements. They have sought for the same invariable sequence which we observe in the physical world and admitted a law only where such sequence seemed to occur. The laws of physical formation follow a fixed line and their variations even are after a fixed fashion. But with the growth of life in matter there comes a growing element of freedom, of a more elusive principle & a more elastic variation; for this reason Science has found life more difficult to fathom & analyse than matter and her triumphs here have been far less notable than in the pure physical domain. Mind brings with [it] a still freer play, a still more elusive principle and flexible application. A general law always obtains, but the application, the particular processes vary more subtly and are more numerous. Science, not taking into account this law of increasing freedom, has in the domain of mind accomplished little or nothing. When we deal with the laws of speech, we must remember this flexibility of all mind-processes. We must ourselves keep a flexible mind to follow it and an open eye for all variations. It is for regularity

in irregularity that we must always be on the watch, not for a fixed, a cast-iron regularity. On the other hand the few laws which Philology has admitted, have been, by a sort of false compensation for their original narrowness, used with too free and even lax a play of fancy. Often indeed instead of working as a law, the philological principle presents itself as an ingenious means for inventing word-identities."(525-26)

### *e. The Third Error: The Rigid Philological Divorce of the Dravidian and Aryan Languages*

"I have disregarded as another error of imperfect inquiry the rigid philological divorce of the Dravidian & Aryan languages. Whether there be a separate Dravidian stock or no, it is to me a certainty that Tamil owes not only many of its most common terms, but whole families of words to the original Aryan speech. Its evidences cannot be neglected in such an inquiry as I have undertaken, for they are of the greatest importance. Indeed the theory worked out by me, took its rise originally not from any analysis of the Sanscrit word-system, but from an observation of the relations of Tamil in its non-concretised element to the Greek, Latin & Northern Indian languages. At the same time it is on an analysis of the Sanscrit word-system that I have chiefly relied. I have omitted from that system most of its Vedic elements. The meanings of Vedic words are often extremely disputable & it would be unsafe to rely whether on the significances fixed by the European scholars or on those fixed centuries ago by Sayana or even by Yaska. It is better, & quite sufficient for the immediate purpose, to rely upon the classical tongue with its undoubted & well-ascertained meanings.

These are the lines upon which I have conductedmy



enquiry. The full proof of the results arrived at depends upon a larger labour of minute classification both of root families and word families in all the greater Aryan tongues, – a labour which is already in process, but not yet complete. What I have written in this book, will, I hope, be judged sufficient for a secure foundation. If it does no more, it may possibly lead to a deeper & freer approach to the problem of the origin of speech, which, once undertaken in the right spirit and with an eye for the more subtle clues, cannot fail to lead to a discovery of the first importance to human thought & knowledge." (526)

### *f. Difficulties and Uncertainties in Proceeding on the Basis of Surface Similarities of the Words and the Unsuitability of Any Modern Language for Proceeding Deeper*

"In an ordinary language which has not preserved the evidence of its origins, we are compelled to start with the full-formed word as our first & earliest document. We then find words existing in very small, unconnected families, little individualistic groups which seem to have started life on their own account without any observable growth from a common stock with other words that have, physically, a race-resemblance to them. We can all see that *doceo*, *doctrina*, *doctor*, *docilis*, *documen*, *doctus*, *docte* are one family. They acknowledge their kinship openly. From this acknowledged kinship we can draw certain important conclusions; especially the law of development from a common root & certain fixed forms by the accretion of which to the root this development was effected. It is a beginning, but it does not carry us beyond the surface-strata of our subject of enquiry.

For when we look farther, we are confronted with a serious difficulty. We find a certain number of words which, in their formation, would seem to be connected like the family we have glanced at above though not so strictly connected: – *doleo*, I grieve, *dolenter*, painfully, *dolor*, grief are obviously so interconnected; *dolus*, fraud, *dolosus*, deceitful, *dolose*, deceitfully, are so interconnected; *dolo*, I hew, cut or break, *dolabra*, an axe, are so interconnected. But between these three families we have in Latin itself no proof of any connection. In languages which have so far worn away their original phonetic moulds that entirely unconnected words wear the same or a similar dress, this want of connection would not lead to any farther conclusion beyond our mere inability to establish a connection. But Latin is a language which has preserved its phonetic moulds to a considerable extent. If then these three little families are entirely unconnected, then any hope of establishing an effective Science of Speech-Origins or even a Science of Aryan Speech- Origins must be abandoned. For by the supposition to which we would then be inevitably led, there must have been three original roots, *dol*, to grieve, *dol*, to cut or split, and *dol*, to deceive, unconnected with each other in origin. How then did their significances come to be attached to them? By chance? by caprice? by arbitrary choice? by some obscure psychological law we cannot trace? We can no longer hope to decide." (527-28)

### *g. Sri Aurobindo's Hypothesis and Sanskrit as the Only Language Suitable for Applying It for Testing*

"The hypothesis I shall start from, – and every attempt to connect the superficially unconnected without which there can be no science, must start with hypotheses, – is that there



can be no such want of connection, that *dol*, to grieve, *dol*, to split and *dol*, to deceive must have been & are one root and not three and the three different significances now attached to them, have been developed not by caprice, chance or arbitrary selection, but have a natural connection and were developed in intellect by an intelligible psychological movement behind intellect from an original common meaning or mind-impression created in the Aryan mind by the sound *dol*. For I hold it to be obvious that speech must have started from what we in India would call the guna of sound, some natural property of particular sounds to create under given conditions a particular kind of impression on the mind which, constantly associated with that sound, became the basis of a number of special intellectual significances, called by us the meaning of words, much more variable, much less fixed than the basic mind-significance. Afterwards the intellect playing consciously with the sound, by association, by analogy, by figure, by metaphor & simile, by transference, by a number of means, may carry the intellectual significance far outside the bounds of the original mental impression. Still, if we have some evidence, clues may be found & then the vagrant word may be traced back to its parent mind-impression. For this reason we have to catch a primitive language when it is young or else find one which even in its maturity is more faithful than others to its primitive mould and preserves on its face much of its ancient history. Such a language is Sanscrit; it is, in fact, almost the only language which at all answers to our need." (528)

### *h. A Further Examination of the Root dol*

"But a sound like *dol* is not & cannot be a pure, primary

& isolated sound. It has congeners, at least in form, brothers, cousins, more distant relatives. Does this kinship in form involve an original kinship in mind-impression and therefore in history of significance? If the theory of guna is correct, there must be some such kinship. Turning from Latin to the more fruitful field, themore copious evidence of Sanscrit, we find this root *dol* in the form *dal* (*a* sounded like the English *u* in *dull* and represented both in Greek & Latin by either *a*, *u* or *o*) meaning also to split, burst, & then to bloom, open. We find *dala*, a fragment; a blade, petal or leaf; we find *dalapa*, a weapon, that which splits, just as we have *dolabra*, an axe, from*dolo; dalmi*, Indra's thunderbolt, also the god Shiva; *dalika*, a piece of wood, that which is split. We find also *dalbha*, meaning fraud, dishonesty, sin, and we have this established that in Sanscrit also, the root *dal* meant to deceive as well as to split. We find also the reason why *dal* came to mean to deceive; for the word *dala* means not only the blade of a weapon, but the sheath of a weapon. In other words, *dal* must have borne the significance, to cover or to contain. We find from other Sanscrit instances that the idea of covering or hiding led naturally in the Aryan mind to the idea of fraud or deceit, as in *chad*, to cover, *chadma*, a disguise, pretext, fraud, dishonesty, trick. But how are the two significances, cover & split, connected? That they are connected, is established as a strong probability at least by the word, *cha*, cutting, dividing, a fragment or part, which in its feminine form *chā* means covering, concealing and the neuter *cham*, a house, that which covers. If they are connected, the idea of cutting must have led to that of cutting off, separating, screening and thence to the significance we find in *chadman*, covering, disguise, fraud. There is no distinct significance of pain attached to the root



*dal* either in Sanscrit or Greek; but we do find that the word *dalita* in Sanscritmeant crushed, oppressed, trampled, and, more curiously & significantly, we find *dālanam* in the sense of toothache. It is easy to see how the idea of cutting, tearing, rending must have led easily to the sense first of a special kind of pain and then by detrition of force to that of pain generally. But we find more. We find not only *dal*, we find other roots kindred in sound, having something of the same history. For instance, *dambh* means to kill, destroy, strike down; but *dambha*, the noun proper to this verb, means deceit, fraud, trickery, sin, ostentation, pride (we see how starting from the idea of fraudulent intention or hypocrisy we come to the very different idea of ostentation without fraud or pride, – again by detrition of special force); we find *dambha* & *dambholi* meaning like *dalmi* Indra's thunderbolt, and *dambha* means also, like *dalmi*, the god Shiva. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that to the Aryan mind *dambha* & *dalmi* were words so closely akin that they carried easily the same impressions to the mind and the same significance to the intellect. But what is then common to these two roots? It is the sound *da*, which must, therefore, by my theory have had a guna or mind-impression which naturally adhered in common to the two roots *dal* and *dambh*." (528-30)

### *i. The Second Step in Sri Aurobindo's Hypothesis and Its Support in the Sanskrit Language*

"It is the second step of my theory, therefore, that not only must the three *dal* families be one family, not only must one root-sound have had originally one root-meaning, but that all kindred root-sounds must also be of one family and have proceeded from the simple sound, consisting of

consonant & vowel, which is common to all of them, and the guna or natural mind-impression belonging to that simple sound must have been the basis not only of the intellectual significances common to its progeny, but of those even which vary most from each other. *Da* is the simple root-sound, – the primary root; *dal*, *dambh*, *dabh*, *daś*, *dah*, *dakṣ*, *daṁś*, *das*, *daṁs*, *dagh*, *daṅgh*, *daṇḍ*, *dad*, *dadh*, *dan*, *dam*, *day*, roots which we find or can trace in Sanscrit, are its derivative, secondary or tertiary root-sounds. The simple sound contains in itself the seed significance which it imparts to its descendants, whether sons, grandsons or remote progeny. We have thus immensely widened our basis and approached much nearer to a scientific consideration of language.

Let us see whether the hypothesis finds any farther support in the facts of the Sanscrit language. We take the senses to split, burst open, cut, tear, crush, destroy, cheat, belonging to *dal*; we find the same senses or kindred senses such as hurting, as in *dolor* and *doleo*, not only in *dambh*, but in *dabh*, to injure, hurt, deceive, cheat and its Vedic derivatives *dabdhi*, hurt, & *dabha*, fraud, – if these be the right senses; & in *dabhra*, little, small, from the sense evidently of cutting, a slice, or small part.We find them in *dam*, to crush, afflict, & so to subdue, overpower, tame, conquer, restrain and its derivatives, *dama*, *damaka*, *damathu*, *damana*, *damin*, *damya*, *dānta*; the last containing a lengthening of the vowel, to which we shall have occasion to return. We also find in *dama*, *damathu*, *damana*, *damya* the kindred sense of punishment, & we find in the Vedic sense of *dama*, the significance house, as in Latin *domus*, Greek δόμος, δῶμα (again we notice the lengthening of the vowel), from which at once we return to the idea of covering we had



to infer in *dal*. All these are evidently kindred roots belonging to the labial variety of the *da* family, formed that is to say by accretion of the sounds *p*, *ph*, *b*, *bh*, *m* (labio-nasal) or any combination of which they are the base to the simple sound.

We turn to other subfamilies. We find in the guttural subfamily *dakṣ*, to hurt or kill, *dakṣāyya*, a vulture (tearer of carrion); *dagh*, to kill, hurt; *dāgha*, burning; *daṅgh*, to abandon or leave, which I trace to the sense of cutting off, separating, casting away; an association of ideas we shall find again in Sanscrit.We find in the cerebral subfamily, *daṇḍ*, to punish, fine or chastise; *daṇḍa*, a cudgel, staff or sceptre, – afterwards any trunk, stalk or thing standing; fine, chastisement as in *dama*, *damathu*, *damana*; assault; subjection, control, restraint, as in *dama*; pride, as in *dambha*; a corner or angle, apparently from the sense of cutting off, separating & so containing, which mates it in its roots to *dama*, a house & *dal*, to feign or deceive. A number of derivatives from *daṇḍ* & *daṇḍa* repeat the same senses. We find also *dāḍaka*, a tooth or tusk and *dāḍhā*, a large tooth or tusk.We find in the dental subfamily *danta*, a tooth; also bower, arbour (to cover, screen, shelter); *dān*, to cut or divide, & its derivatives *dānava*, a Titan, *dānu*, a demon, also supposed to mean conquering or destroying, like *damana*; *dadhi*, a garment (to cover). We find in the liquid subfamily, along with *dal*, *day*, to hurt & *dāya*, loss, destruction, a part, share or gift. We find in the sibilant subfamily *das*, to destroy, bite, overpower (*dam*); to decay, waste, perish; to cast away (cf *daṅgh*, to abandon) & its derivatives, notably *dasyu*, an enemy; *daśana*, tooth & *daṣṭa*, bitten; *daṁś*, to bite, sting; *daṁśa*, bite, sting, cutting, tearing, tooth, pungency; a limb or joint; *dandaśa*, a tooth; *daṁṣṭrā* & other derivatives varying these senses; *daśā*, a division or period of time, afterwards a state

or condition, age etc; but we find also *daṁśana*, *daṁśa* and *daśana* in the sense of armour; *daṁśita*, mailed or protected; *dantura*, covered, overspread, – which bring us back to the idea of covering. The idea of protection once ascertained & traced, we turn back and find it recur in *dagh*, *daṅgh*, in *dānam*, protection (as well as gift), *day*, to protect, have pity, with its derivatives. The sense of giving which we find in *dāya* & can trace to the idea of cutting up, distribution or casting away, abandoning, handing over – but it can be shown to result really from the former – we get in *dā*, to give, *dānam*, a gift & many other derivatives; *dakṣiṇā*, a gift; in *dad* & *dadh*, to give, *dasma*, a sacrificer and in *day*, to grant, divide, allot. We have, in addition, *dah*, to torment, grieve, burn & its derivatives in the same sense; *dahara*, small, fine, young (cf *dabhra*), – a mouse or rat (the gnawer); *dahra*, small, fine, thin, a fire. Lastly we have, proving the previous existence of an obsolete root *da*, the adjective *da* in the sense of giving, destroying, cutting off; the noun *da*, a gift or donation and the feminine *dā* in the sense of heat (*dal*) and of repentance (*dolor*). The evidence is almost of an oppressive conclusiveness. It is a family of words, which bear the same or kindred meanings and seem all to go back to the root meaning to divide, usually with some idea of completeness, force, or even violence.

There are, we must note, a certain number of significances which do not at once trace themselves to or apparently connect themselves with the original sense. Some of these can on a moment's reflection be so traced & evidence of the particular association ofmeaning on which we have to proceed, can be found in other root families. Thus we have *daśā* in the sense of mind or understanding; *dakṣ*, to be competent or able; *dakṣa* & *dakṣiṇa*, expert, able, fit which connect themselves



with the Latin *doceo*, to teach, the Greek δοκέω, I think, seem & δόξα, opinion, idea, judgment; but the sense here is evidently that of discrimination or analysis as in the Sanscrit roots *ci* & *cit*, *cetas*, mind, *citta* etc; and this brings us back to the idea of division and distribution. We may compare *dambh*, to arrange & so collect, and *ci* bearing the same senses as well as to heap up, increase which we find again in *dakṣ*, to grow, increase (cf *dānam*, addition). There are other common senses, mostly connected with the idea of moving or of shining, *daṁś*, to shine (also, to speak?); *dakam*, water (to flow); *dakṣ*, to go or move; *dagh*, to go, leap, flow, attain; *dānu*, a fluid or drop; *dabh*, to go, push, impel; *dabhram*, the ocean (to flow); *das*, to shine, *dasma*, beautiful (bright, shining). These dissociated meanings are very few in number & rare in occurrence. Such as they are, they occur in different parts of the family, guttural, labial, dental and sibilant, and their presence & distribution proves yet more powerfully the now apparent & established truth that all Sanscrit words having for their basis the sound *da* are of one family, go back to the simple sound *da* as their simple root of being and derive from it all their varying senses. We have to add this fact, important for the particular family & as we shall see for the whole theory but not affecting our general conclusion, that we must seek in the original mind impression of the sound *da* some force of guna which gives rise directly to the idea of dividing with force or completeness and also can enter into ideas of motion & shining." (530-33)

### *j. The Third Step in Sri Aurobindo's Hypothesis*

"But we have not yet finished with this sound *da*. For just as the derived sound *dal* had its congeners, sounds kindred to it in form, so has the simple sound *da* other simple sounds

by its side which are kindred to it in form and ought therefore to be congeners. These sounds are *dā*, *di*, *dī*, *du*, *dū*, *dṛ* & *dṝ*. The vowel sounds *e* and *o*, *ai* and *au* are in Sanscrit merely modifications of *i* and *u*, so that these seven roots with the lost root *da* form the whole original family of simple sounds depending on and having for their common base & element, the consonant sound *d*. If these roots are found to be one original family, we have gained another step and come yet nearer to the foundations of speech. My third step in the hypothesis is to accept this supposition and to lay down the rule that all simple roots formed in sound by the accretion of a vowel to the consonant sound *d* are one family having the guna of that sound as their seed of meaning, just as they themselves are separately the seed of meaning to their own descendants. We get therefore a seed-sound in addition to the primitive root-sound and their descendants the secondary & tertiary root-sounds.

Let us see how this hypothesis fares when confronted with the facts of the Sanscrit language. We have seen in passin g that *da* & *dā* are the same root, one the short form, the other the long form. *Dā* has the same sense as *da*, *dāś*, like *daś*, means to hurt, kill, it means also, to give. There are no senses of the *dā* roots which are not shared by or traceable to the *da* roots. We must therefore proceed to the other vowels as forming three & not six classes of roots; we may treat in the absence of any opposing facts *dī* as a lengthening of *di*, *dū* of *du*, *dṝ* of *dṛ*. From the *da* family I have omitted the words which have for their basis the syllables *dar* & *dav*; yet these words are of great interest. For we find *dara*, in the sense of tearing, rending and also, like *dabhra* and *dahara*, of little, small. This sense of tearing, breaking, hurting we get again in



*daraṇam*, *daraṇi*, *darita*, *dardara*, *darma*, *darva* (injury, mischievous person, goblin, as in *dānu*), in *dāra*, a rent, hole, ploughed field extending itself to *dārāḥ*, a wife, *dāraka* (also a child, infant, young animal, sense belonging also to *dahara*), *dāraṇam*, *dārikā*, *dāri*, *dāṅ*, *dārita*, *dārin*, *darbha*, the sharp Kusha grass, *dardura*, a district, province, *dāru* (tearing, rending, also a piece of wood, wood or pine-tree), & *dāruṇa*, terrible, rough, cruel, frightful, sharp, severe, violent or agonising (of grief & pain), a word of great interest as it shows us how moral senses developed from the physical idea. We find too *dara*, a cave, *daratha* and *darī* (also a valley) in the same sense, from the idea of cleft or hole which we have already had in *dāra* & *dārikā*. Again we have the same word *dara* in the sense of a stream, *daraṇi*, an eddy, current or surf, *daratha*, fleeing, flight, scouring for forage, *dārdura*, water. Connected perhaps with the sense of flight but really expressing the oppressive troubling feeling of fear, we have *dara*, *darad* and *darada*, fear, *daratha* & *darita*, timid or frightened. We have *daridrā*, to be poor or needy, with its derivatives, connecting this family with the sense of suffering, oppression, distress, wretchedness, burning (cf *dagdha*, distressed, famished, dry, insipid, wretched, vile, accursed) we find in the *da* family.We have again *dāru* in the sense of liberal, a donor, kind (cf *dakṣiṇā*, also meaning kind). There are more curious identities. *Darad* means, among other senses, heart; now *dahara* and *dabra* also mean "the cavity of the heart or the heart itself". *Darad* means also a mound, mountain or precipice; *dardara*, *dardura*, likewise means a mountain; but in the *da* family we have also *da*, a mountain, *daśana*, the peak of a mountain, *danta*, the peak, side or ridge of a mountain. The identification in sense of this *dar* basis in its stock with the *da* family is complete. Their only senses, not

traceable to the common original meanings, which find no parallel in that family are those which spring from the idea of sound, *dardura*, *dardarīka*, a musical instrument; but we have in the Aryan vernaculars the word *ḍamaru*, a kind of drum, which may represent an original Aryan word not preserved in the literary language.

Now the question arises. Do all these words belong to the roots *dṛ* & *dṝ* or are they from an original root *dar*? There can be no doubt as to the answer. Nearly all, if not all, are avowedly children of the *dṛ* stock. It follows then that the roots of the *dṛ* family are one race with the roots of the *da* family, cousins perhaps, but members of a joint family who hold the same property in common & use it with a more than socialistic indiscriminateness. *Dṛ* itself means to hurt or kill, *dṝ* means to tear, rend, split, separate, disperse, and to fear; *dṛti*, a skin, hide, or bag; *dṛka*, a hole or opening; *dṛnphū*, a snake, thunderbolt (*dambha*, *dambholi*, *dalmi*), wheel (*dalbha* also means a wheel), the shining or burning sun. *Drp* is to inflame, kindle or to pain, torture; *drmp* also means to torture, afflict, distress, *dṛbh*, to fear, & *dṛbdham*, fear, finally *dṛś*, to see with all its derivatives. That this sense of seeing which we find also in *drp* (*darpaṇa*, a mirror, *darpaṇam*, the eye) comes not from the idea of light in reflection but from the original physical idea of discerning, separating with the eye, is evident from the fact that *das* also means to see. There are two sets of associations in this word which are of considerable help to us in fixing the exact history of certain developments in this family. The word *drp* expresses any violent troubling emotion; it means to be greatly delighted, wild, extravagant, mad or foolish, proud or arrogant (without anything of that idea of ostentation attached to *dambha*); *darpa* means pride, insolence,



rashness, heat, musk (from the strong, oppressive scent); *dṛpta* means proud. *Dṛ* again means to care for, mind, desire, & so to worship or respect – its root sense is evidently care, anxiety or excitement of love or other favourable feelings. We see more clearly now why words of this root bear the sense of grief, fear, pain. The mind-impression of the seed-sound carries with it this possibility of expressing any emotion or sensation which is oppressive, troubling, disintegrating to the peace of the mind. To the pervasive root idea of strong division, we have to add the idea of oppression tending to division which is thus revealed to our observation.

But *dṛpta* also means strong and this sense is found again in *dṛṁh*, to strengthen, fortify, fasten, be firm, grow or increase; *dṛḍha* is firm, fixed, solid, dense, strong, hard; *dṛḍham* means iron, a fortress or abundance; *dṛbh*, to tie, fasten, arrange, string together; *dṛṣad*, a stone or rock; *dṛh*, to be fixed or fasten, to grow, increase or prosper. We have met some of these meanings in the *da* family. We have found words there which mean a mountain, and these may now be attributed to this root meaning of firmness, solidity, size and density. We may notice also a group of words which we have hitherto omitted; *dāman*, a string, thread or rope, a bandage, a girdle, which also means a line or streak (from the idea of cutting); *dāmanī*, a foot-rope, *dāmā*, a string or cord and *dāminī*, lightning, from the idea of shining. We may also note, as it now appears, that the kind of light indicated by this family, is only an oppressive or a sharp piercing light as in *dāminī*, *dṛnphū*, *das*, to shine, and the words which mean fire or to burn. I have to suggest that this idea of firmness, solidity, compactness comes similarly from a sense of close, heavy contact, pressing things together into firm cohesion. What, then, is the result

of this detailed examination of the *dṛ* family of roots? Always the same; first, that, whatever their varieties of meaning, there is no sense the words of this household bear which cannot be paralleled from the roots of the *da* & *dā* household & does not either explain or get explained by them and, secondly, that these varieties resolve themselves to & derive from a common guna or mind impression variously applied." (533-37)

### *k. An Inevitable Conclusion from the Evidence Presented by Sri Aurobindo*

"We have completed our survey of this great *D* clan of Aryan words, so far as the Sanscrit language holds them & introduces them to us in its classical form. No one, I think, can regard this evidence without being driven inevitably to the conclusion that here we have no chance aggregation of words, no language formed by chance or arbitrarily, but a physico-mental growth as organic, as clearly related in its members, species, families, subfamilies as any particular species of physical fauna & flora. The words claim each other for kinsmen at every step. Not a single family, not one small group fails to bring forwards its claim, its documents, its oral evidence. All stand together, shoulder to shoulder, as closely as any Highland clan or savage tribe. The most opposite meanings meet in a single word, but always there is the evidence borne by the rest of the family to their common origin not only in body but in spirit, not only in physical sound form, but in mental sense origin & development. The proof is complete.

We have then a single great family with a common store of sense-property which each uses according to his needs.We



have a number of meanings all going back to a few radical significances. What are those significances? First, forceful, effective or violent division or separation; second, swift oppressive overbearing motion; third, heavy pressure or oppression; fourth, violent, oppressive, strongly agitated or simply emphatic emotion; fifth, strong, heavy sound; sixth, strong, overpowering scent; seventh, strong or swift action; eighth, strong, brilliant or oppressive heat or light; ninth, close, solid & heavy contact or cohesion. I have stated them at random, but I think a little reflection will show us that these nine fundamental ideas resolve themselves into the single idea of a heavy, decisive pressure, sometimes the idea of weight, sometimes the idea of decision predominating, applied to the fundamental experiences which would recommend themselves to the newly awakened and virgin observation of mankind; viz sound, contact or touch, (form), light, (taste), smell, motion & action, sensation objective & subjective. From the *da* family form & taste seem to be absent; either they have lost it or never applied themselves to these provinces of human observation. But we cannot yet say this precisely; for we have the word *deha*, body, the Greek δέμας, shape, body; δέμω, to build. It is obvious also that words expressive of taste must necessarily be fewer & more limited than the words expressing sound or touch. It is possible that words of form & taste were drawn by a figure from other primary senses & were not in themselves a primary application of the original mind-impression to the terms of intellectual appreciation.We shall have to examine languages more widely before this question can be decided. Another idea that hardly appears in this clan is that of human speech itself as distinguished from sound in general." (541-42)

### *l. An Additional Hypothesis*

"I, therefore, add an additional hypothesis to those I have already formulated, viz that the original guna or mind-impression created naturally & automatically by the seed sound (in this case the consonantal sound *d*) was applied primarily to the simple categories of sense observation, contact, sound, light, motion & action, including speech, sensation, and perhaps taste & form. It is no more than a hypothesis at present; for other sound families will have to be examined before this hypothesis can be either established or dismissed as untenable. I put it forward here for the sake of completeness.

It is not necessary to suppose that this perception of mental or sensational sound values, of the particular impression on mind-sensation of a particular inarticulate sound defining & separating itself on the human tongue or even its systematic application to the categories of sense observation was willed, conscious or intellectually reasoned out in the men who first framed their utterance into the vocables of Aryan speech. Nature, whatsoever Nature may be, guides the unconscious tree & flower, the unreasoning insect & animal to self-expression, to self-organisation, to self-evolution, & the result exceeds the best efforts of the deliberate human intellect. Why should she not have done the same for human speech? Instead of saying that men applied the guna of the particular sound to the sensations they wished to express, let us say that as in plant & tree & animal the sound itself, by the force of Nature, by the law of its own activity, *svadhām anu*, *ṛtūn anu*, "according to its own self-arrangement, in the straight line of the truth of things inherent in it," and helped by the half conscious responsive awakening mind, applied itself in the service of mind to the various classes of



sense observation which his awakening mentality demanded. I do not say this is the final & complete truth of the matter. But it is the only part or aspect of the truth of it at all consonant with our present way of approaching Nature as a blind force working in matter out of unconscious through half conscious into fully conscious action. It is the only theory which, provided it can establish itself, deserves, as it seems to me, to be called in the modern sense, rational & scientific; for it takes its stand on the two natural movements which constitute speech, the physical movements of articulation & the mental movement, partly sensational, partly discriminatory which attends the physical movements. And it seeks to establish itself by reducing the relation between these two motions to classified order & ascertained rule." (542-43)

### *m. The Last Step in the Hypothesis*

"We have not, however, approached even yet the last step of our theory. For as there are families of words, families [of] root sounds, families of simple sounds, so also are there families of seed-sounds. These families are known to all grammarians & in Sanscrit they have been distinguished with a faithful & peculiar care & related to those parts of the organ of speech which play the decisive part in their articulation; but their relations to meaning seem never to have been studied. The seed sound *D* belongs to the group called dentals, which consists in Sanscrit of the hard *t*, the soft *d*, the aspirates *th* & *dh* & the dento-nasal *n* – for every consonant group except the liquids, the sibilants and the isolated aspirate *h* is composed of these five members, the hard consonant leading, the soft following, each attended by its corresponding aspirate and a nasal bringing up the rear. Sanscrit has three sibilants & even

these it attributes to the complete groups; *s* to the dental, *ś* to the palatal and *ṣ* to the cerebral family. The question then arises, are these groups only related in sound? or are they related also in guna and therefore in signification tendency? If there is any soundness in the theory I have been advancing, then as we have found the word-families united in a single root family with a single paternal root (as, *dal*, *dah*, *dabh* etc), these root families united through the paternal roots in a single primitive root family, phratria or brotherhood (as, the *da* family) with one paternal simple root, & these primitive brotherhoods united through their paternal root (*da*, *di*, *du*, *dṛ*) in a single clan with one paternal seed sound (*d*), so also we ought to find kindred clans united through their rulingsound into a single tribe based on the kinship of the paternal seed sounds. The sound *d* being closely related to the sound *dh*, must hold a similar guna and therefore carry with it similar intellectual significances, and, though they may coincide in a less degree, *t*, *th* and even perhaps *n*, though this is more doubtful, ought to be not far in guna & sense from the *d* & *dh* word-clans. We must now proceed to examine the facts & perceive how the theory fares in this last & final test." (543-44)

**2. Aryan Origins***

"Among all the many promising beginnings of which the nineteenth century was the witness, none perhaps was hailed with greater eagerness by the world of culture and science than the triumphant debut of Comparative Philology. None perhaps has been more disappointing in its results. The philologists indeed place a high value on their line of study, – nor is that to be wondered at, in spite of all its defects, – and persist in giving it the name of Science; but the scientists are



of a very different opinion. In Germany, in the very metropolis both of Science and of philology, the word Philologe has become a term of disparagement; nor are the philologists in a position to retort. Physical Science has proceeded by the soundest and most scrupulous methods and produced a mass of indisputable results which, by their magnitude and far-reaching consequences, have revolutionised the world and justly entitled the age of their development to the title of the wonderful century. Comparative Philology has hardly moved a step beyond its origins; all the rest has been a mass of conjectural and ingenious learning of which the brilliance is only equalled by the uncertainty and unsoundness. Even so great a philologist as Renan was obliged in the later part of his career, begun with such unlimited hopes, to a deprecating apology for the "little conjectural sciences" to which he had devoted his life's energies. At the beginning of the century's philological researches, when the Sanscrit tongue had been discovered, whenMax Muller was exulting in his fatal formula, "*patēr*, *pater*, *pitā*, *Vater*, *father*", the Science of Language seemed to be on the point of self-revelation; as the result of the century's toil it can be asserted by thinkers of repute that the very idea of a Science of Language is a chimera! No doubt, the case against Comparative Philology has been overstated. If it has not discovered the Science of Language, it has at least swept out of existence the fantastic, arbitrary & almost lawless etymology of our forefathers. It has given us juster notions about the relations and history of extant languages and the processes by which old tongues have degenerated into that detritus out of which a new form of speech fashions itself. Above all, it has given us the firmly established notion that our investigations into language must be a search for rules

& laws and not free & untrammelled gambollings among individual derivations. The way has been prepared; many difficulties have been cleared out of our way. Still scientific philology is non-existent; much less has there been any real approach to the discovery of the Science of Language.

Does it follow that a Science of Language is undiscoverable? In India, at least, with its great psychological systems mounting to the remotest prehistoric antiquity, we cannot easily believe that regular and systematic processes of Nature are not at the basis of all phenomena of sound and speech. European philology has missed the road to the truth because an excessive enthusiasm and eager haste to catch at and exaggerate imperfect, subordinate and often misleading formulae has involved it in bypaths that lead to no resting-place; but somewhere the road exists. If it exists, it can be found. The right clue alone is wanted, and a freedom of mind which can pursue it unencumbered by prepossessions and undeterred by the orthodoxies of the learned. Above all, if the science of philology is to cease to figure among the petty conjectural sciences, among which even Renan was compelled to classify it – and conjectural science means pseudo-science, since fixed, sound and verifiable bases and methods independent of conjecture are the primary condition of Science, – then the habit of hasty generalisations, of light and presumptuous inferences, of the chase after mere ingenuities and the satisfaction of curious & learned speculation which are the pitfalls of verbal scholarship must be rigidly eschewed and relegated to the wastepaper basket of humanity, counted among its nursery toys which, having now issued out of the nursery, we should put away into their appropriate lumber-room. Where there is insufficient evidence or equal probability



in conflicting solutions, Science admits conjectural hypotheses as a step towards discovery. But the abuse of this concession to our human ignorance, the habit of erecting flimsy conjectures as the assured gains of knowledge is the curse of philology. A Science which is nine-tenths conjecture has no right, at this stage of the human march, to make much of itself or seek to impose itself on the mind of the race. Its right attitude is humility, its chief business to seek always for surer foundations and a better justification for its existence. To seek for such a stronger & surer foundation is the object of this work. In order that the attempt may succeed, it is necessary first to perceive the errors committed in the past and to eschew them. The first error committed by the philologists after their momentous discovery of the Sanscrit tongue, was to exaggerate the importance of their first superficial discoveries. The first glance is apt to be superficial; the perceptions drawn from an initial survey stand always in need of correction. If then we are so dazzled & led away by them as to make them the very key of our future knowledge, its central plank, its basic platform we prepare for ourselves grievous disappointments. Comparative Philology, guilty of this error, has seized on a minor clue and mistaken it for a major or chief clue. When Max Muller trumpeted forth to the world in his attractive studies the great rapprochement, *pitā*, *patēr*, *pater*, *Vater*, *father*, he was preparing the bankruptcy of the new Science; he was leading it away from the truer clues, the wider vistas that lay behind. The most extraordinary & imposingly unsubstantial structures were reared on the narrow basis of that unfortunate formula. First, there was the elaborate division of civilised humanity into the Aryan, Semitic, Dravidian & Turanian races, based upon the

philological classification of the ancient and modern languages. More sensible & careful reflection has shown us that community of language is no proof of community of blood or ethnological identity; the French are not a Latin race because they speak a corrupt & nasalised Latin, nor are the Bulgars Slavs in blood because the Ugrofinnish race has been wholly Slavonicised in civilisation and language. Scientific researches of another kind have confirmed this useful and timely negation. The philologists have, for instance, split up, on the strength of linguistic differences, the Indian nationality into the northern Aryan race & the southern Dravidian, but sound observation shows a single physical type with minor variations pervading the whole of India from Cape Comorin to Afghanistan. Language is therefore discredited as an ethnological factor. The races of India may be all pure Dravidians, if indeed such an entity as a Dravidian race exists or ever existed, or they may be pure Aryans, if indeed such an entity as an Aryan race exists or ever existed, or they may be a mixed race with one predominant strain, but, in any case, the linguistic division of the tongues of India into the Sanscritic & the Tamilic counts for nothing in that problem. Yet so great is the force of attractive generalisations & widely popularised errors that all the world goes on perpetuating the blunder, talking of the Indo-European races, claiming or disclaiming Aryan kinship & building on that basis of falsehood the most far-reaching political, social or pseudo-scientific conclusions.

But if language is no sound factor of ethnological research, it may be put forward as a proof of common civilisation and used as a useful & reliable guide to the phenomena of early civilisations. Enormous, most ingenious, most painstaking have been the efforts to extract from the



meanings of words a picture of the early Aryan civilisation previous to the dispersion of their tribes. Vedic scholarship has built upon this conjectural science of philology, upon a brilliantly ingenious & attractive but wholly conjectural & unreliable interpretation of the Vedas, a remarkably minute & captivating picture of an early half-savage Aryan civilisation in India. How much value can we attach to these dazzling structures? None, for they have no assured scientific basis. They may be true & last; they may be partly true, yet have to be seriously modified; they may be entirely false & no trace of them be left in the ultimate conclusions of human knowledge on the subject: we have no means of determining between these three possibilities. The now settled rendering of Veda which reigns hitherto because it has never been critically & inimically examined, is sure, before long, to be powerfully attacked & questioned, & one thing may be confidently expected that even if India was ever invaded, colonised or civilised by northern worshippers of Sun & Fire, yet the picture of that invasion richly painted by philological scholarship from the Rigveda will prove to be a modern legend & not ancient history, & even if a half-savage Aryan civilisation existed in India in early times, the astonishingly elaborate modern descriptions of Vedic India will turn out a philological mirage & phantasmagoria. The wider question of an early Aryan civilisation must equally be postponed till we have sounder materials. The present theory is wholly illusory; for it assumes that common terms imply a common civilisation, an assumption which sins both by excess and by defect. It sins by excess; it cannot be argued, for instance, that because the Romans & Indians have a common term for a particular utensil, therefore that utensil was possessed by their

ancestors in common previous to their separation. We must know first the history of the contact between the ancestors of the two races; we must be sure that the extant Roman word did not replace an original Latin term not possessed by the Indians; we must be sure that the Romans did not receive the term by transmission from Greek or Celt without ever having had any identity, connection or contact with our Aryan forefathers; we must be assured against many other possible solutions about which Philology can give us no guarantee either negative or affirmative. The Indian *surańga*, a tunnel, is supposed to be the Greek *surinx*. We cannot therefore argue that the Greeks & Indians possessed the common art of tunnel-making before their dispersion or even that the Indianswho borrowed the word from Greece, never knew what an underground excavation might be till they learned it from Macedonian engineers. The Bengali term for telescope is *dūrbīn*, a word not of European origin. We cannot conclude that the Bengalis had invented the telescope independently before their contact with the Europeans. Yet on the principles by which the philologists seem to be guided in their conjectural restorations of vanished cultures, these are precisely the conclusions at which we should arrive. Here we have a knowledge of the historical facts to correct our speculations; but the prehistoric ages are not similarly defended. Historical data are entirely wanting & we are left at themercy of words and their misleading indications. But a little reflection on the vicissitudes of languages and especially some study of the peculiar linguistic phenomena created in India by the impact of the English tongue on our literary vernaculars, the first rush with which English words attempted to oust, in conversation & letter-writing, even common indigenous terms



in their own favour and the reaction by which the vernaculars are now finding new Sanscritic terms to express the novel concepts introduced by the Europeans, will be sufficient to convince any thoughtful mind how rash are the premises of these philological culture-restorers & how excessive and precarious their conclusions. Nor do they sin by excess alone, but by defect also. They consistently ignore the patent fact that in prehistoric & preliterary times the vocabularies of primitive languages must have varied from century to century to an extent of which we with our ideas of language drawn from the classical & modern literary tongues can form little conception. It is, I believe, an established fact of anthropology that many savage tongues change their vocabulary almost from generation to generation. It is, therefore, perfectly possible that implements of civilisation and culture ideas for which no two Aryan tongues have a common term may yet have been common property before their dispersion; since each of them may have rejected after that dispersion the original common term for a neologism of its own manufacture. It is the preservation of common terms and not their disappearance that is the miracle of language.

I exclude, therefore, and exclude rigidly from the domain of philology as I conceive it all ethnological conclusions, all inferences from words to the culture & civilisation of the men or races who used them, however alluring may be these speculations, however attractive, interesting and probable may be the inferences which we are tempted to draw in the course of our study. The philologist has nothing to do with ethnology. The philologist has nothing to do with sociology, anthropology and archaeology. His sole business is or ought to be with the history of words and of the association of

ideas with the sound-forms which they represent. By strictly confining himself to this province, by the self-denial with which he eschews all irrelevant distractions & delights on his somewhat dry and dusty road, he will increase his concentration on his own proper work and avoid lures which may draw him away from the great discoveries awaiting mankind in this badly-explored tract of knowledge.

But the affinities of languages to each other are, at least, a proper field for the labours of philology. Nevertheless even here I am compelled to hold that the scholarship of Europe has fallen into an error in giving this subject of study the first standing among the objects of philology. Are we really quite sure that we know what constitutes community or diversity of origin between two different languages – so different for instance as Latin and Sanscrit, Sanscrit & Tamil, Tamil and Latin? Latin, Greek & Sanscrit are supposed to be sister Aryan tongues, Tamil is set apart as of other & Dravidian origin. If we enquire on what foundation this distinct & contrary treatment rests, we shall find that community of origin is supposed on two main grounds, a common body of ordinary and familiar terms and a considerable community of grammatical forms and uses. We come back to the initial formula, *pitā*, *patēr*, *pater*, *Vater*, *father*. What other test, it may be asked, can be found for determining linguistic kinship? Possibly none, but a little dispassionate consideration will give us, it seems to me, ground to pause and reflect very long & seriously before we classify languages too confidently upon this slender basis. The mere possession of a large body of common terms is, it is recognised, insufficient to establish kinship; it may establish nothing more than contact or cohabitation. Tamil has a very large body of Sanscrit words



in its rich vocabulary, but it is not therefore a Sanscritic language. The common terms must be those which express ordinary & familiar ideas & objects, such as domestic relations, numerals, pronouns, the heavenly bodies, the ideas of being, having etc, – those terms that are most commonly in the mouths of men, especially of primitive men, and are therefore, shall we say, least liable to variation? Sanscrit says, addressing the father, *pitar*, Greek *pater*, Latin *pater*, but Tamil says *appā*; Sanscrit says addressing the mother *mātar*, Greek *mēter*, Latin *māter*, but Tamil *ammā*; for the numeral seven Sanscrit says *saptan* or *sapta*, Greek *hepta*, Latin *septem*, but Tamil *ēḷu*; for the first person Sanscrit says *aham*, Greek *egō* or *egōn*, Latin *ego*, but Tamil *nān*; for the sun, Sanscrit says *sūra* or *sūrya*, Greek *hēlios*, Latin *sol*, but Tamil *ñāyiru*; for the idea of being Sanscrit has *as*, *asmi*, Greek has *einai* (*esnai*) and *eimi*, Latin *esse* and *sum*, but Tamil *iru*. The basis of the differentiation, then, appears with a striking clearness. There is no doubt about it, Sanscrit, Greek & Latin belong to one linguistic family which we may call conveniently the Aryan or Indo-European, Tamil to another for which we can get no more convenient term than Dravidian.

So far, good. We seem to be standing on a firm foundation, to be in possession of a rule which can be applied with something like scientific accuracy. But when we go a little farther, the fair prospect clouds a little, mists of doubt begin to creep into our field of vision. Mother & father we have; but there are other domestic relations. Over the daughter of the house, the primaeval milkmaid, the Aryan sisters show the slight beginnings of a spirit of disagreement. The Sanscrit father addresses her in the orthodox fashion *duhitar*, O milkmaid; Greek, as well as German & English parents follow

suitwith *thugater*, *Tochter*, and *daughter*, but Latin has abandoned its pastoral ideas, knows nothing of *duhitā* and uses a word *filia* which has no conceivable connection with the milk-pail & is not connected with any variant for daughter in the kindred tongues. Was Latin then a mixed tongue, drawing from a non-Aryan stock for its conception of daughterhood? But this is only a single & negligible variation. We go farther and find, when we come to the word for son, these Aryan languages seem to differ hopelessly and give up all appearance of unity. Sanscrit says *putra*, Greek *huios*, Latin *filius*, the three languages use three words void of all mutual connection. We cannot indeed arrive at the conclusion that these languages were Aryan in their conception of fatherhood & motherhood, but sonhood is a Dravidian conception – like architecture, monism & most other civilised conceptions, according to some modern authorities, – for Sanscrit has a literary term for child or son, *sūnuḥ*, with which we can connect the German *Sohn*, English *son* & more remotely the Greek *huios*. We explain the difference then by supposing that these languages did possess an original common term for son, possibly *sūnu*, which was dropped by many of them at least as a colloquial expression, Sanscrit relegated it to the language of high literature, Greek adopted another form from the same root, Latin lost it altogether & substituted for it *filius* as it had substituted *filia* for *duhitā*. This sort of fluidity in the commonest terms seems to have been common – Greek has lost its original word for brother, *phrātēr*, which its sisters retain, & substituted *adelphos*, for which they have no correspondents; Sanscrit has abandoned the common word for the numeral one, *unus*, *ein*, *one* and substituted a word, *eka*, unknown to any other Aryan tongue; all differ over the third



personal pronoun; for moon Greek has *selēnē*, Latin *luna*, Sanscrit *candra*. But when we admit these facts, a very important part of our scientific basis is sapped & the edifice begins to totter. For we come back to this fatal fact that even in the commonest terms the ancient languages tended to lose their original vocabulary & diverge from each other, so that if the process had not been arrested by an early literature all obvious proof of relationship might well have disappeared. It is only the accident of an early & continuous Sanscrit literature that enables us to establish the original unity of the Aryan tongues. If it were not for the old Sanscrit writings, if only the ordinary Sanscrit colloquial vocables had survived who could be certain of these connections? or who could confidently affiliate colloquial Bengali with its ordinary domestic terms to Latin any more certainly than Telugu or Tamil? How then are we to be sure that the dissonance of Tamil itself with the Aryan tongues is not due to an early separation and an extensive change of its vocabulary during its preliterary ages? I shall be able, at a later stage of this inquiry, to afford some ground for supposing the Tamil numerals to be early Aryan vocables abandoned by Sanscrit but still traceable in the Veda or scattered & imbedded in the various Aryan tongues & the Tamil pronouns similarly the primitive Aryan denominatives of which traces still remain in the ancient tongues. I shall be able to show also that large families of words supposed to be pure Tamil are identical in the mass though not in their units with the Aryan families. But then we are logically driven towards this conclusion that absence of a common vocabulary for common ideas & objects is not necessarily a proof of diverse origin. Diversity of grammatical forms? But are we certain that the Tamil forms are not equally old Aryan forms,

corrupted but preserved by the early deliquescence of the Tamilic dialect? Some of them are common to the modern Aryan vernaculars, but unknown to Sanscrit, & it has even been thence concluded by some that the Aryan vernaculars were originally non-Aryan tongues linguistically overpowered by the foreign invader. But if so into what quagmires of uncertainty do we not descend? Our shadow of a scientific basis, our fixed classification of language families have disappeared into shifting vestibules of nothingness.

Nor is this all the havoc that more mature consideration works in the established theory of the philologists. We have found a wide divergence between the Tamil common terms and those shared in common by the "Aryan" dialects; but let us look a little more closely into these divergences. The Tamil for father is *appā*, not *pitā*; there is no corresponding word in Sanscrit, but we have what one might call a reverse of the word in *apatyam*, son, in *aptyam*, offspring and *apna*, offspring. These three words point decisively to a Sanscrit root *ap*, to produce or create, for which other evidence in abundance can be found. What is there to prevent us from supposing *appā*, father, to be the Tamil form for an old Aryan active derivative from this root corresponding to the passive derivative *apatyam*? Mother in Tamil is *ammā* not *mātā*; there is no Sanscrit word *ammā*, but there is the well-known Sanscrit vocable *ambā*, mother. What is to prevent us from understanding the Tamil *ammā* as an Aryan form equivalent to *ambā*, derived from the root *amb*, to produce, which gives us *amba* & *ambaka*, father, *ambā*, *ambikā* and *ambi*, mother and *ambañṣa*, the colt of a horse or young of an animal. *Sodara*, a high Sanscrit word, is the common colloquial term in Tamil for brother and replaces the northern vernacular *bhāī* &



classical *bhrātā*. *Akkā*, a Sanscrit word with many variants, is the colloquial term in Tamil for elder sister. In all these cases an obsolete or high literary term in Sanscrit is the ordinary colloquial term in Tamil, – just as we see the high literary Sanscrit *sūnuḥ* appearing in the colloquial German *Sohn* & English *son*, the obsolete & certainly high literary Aryan *adalbha*, undivided, appearing in the colloquial Greek *adelphos*, brother. What are we to conclude from these and a host of other instances which will appear in a later volume of this work? That Tamil is an Aryan dialect, like Greek, like German? Surely not; – the evidence is not sufficient; – but that it is possible for a non-Aryan tongue to substitute largely & freely Aryan vocables for its most common & familiar terms & lose its own native expressions. But then we are again driven by inexorable logic to this conclusion that just as the absence of a common vocabulary for common and domestic terms is not a sure proof of diverse origin, so also the possession of an almost identical vocabulary for these terms is not a sure proof of common origin. These things prove at the most intimate contact or separate development; they do not prove and in themselves cannot prove anything more. But on what basis then are we to distinguish & classify various language families? How can we positively say that Tamil is a non-Aryan or Greek, Latin & German Aryan tongues? From the indication of grammatical forms & uses, from the general impression created by the divergence or identity [of the] bulk of the vocables inherited by the languages we are comparing? But the first is too scanty & inconclusive, the second too empirical, uncertain & treacherous a test; both are the reverse of scientific, both, as reflection will show, might lead us into the largest & most radical errors. Rather than to form a

conclusion by such a principle it is better to abstain from all conclusions and turn to a more thorough and profitable initial labour.

I conclude that it is too early in the history of philological research, we have made as yet too crude and slender a foundation to rear upon it the superstructure of scientific laws and scientific classifications. We cannot yet arrive at a sound & certain classification of human tongues still extant in speech, record or literature. We must recognise that our divisions are popular, not scientific, based upon superficial identities, not upon the one sound foundation for a science, the study of various species in their development from the embryo to the finished form or, failing the necessary material, a reverse study tracing back the finished forms to the embryonic and digging down into the hidden original facts of language. The reproach of the real scientist against the petty conjectural pseudo-science of philology is just; it must be removed by the adoption of a sounder method & greater self-restraint, the renunciation of brilliant superficialities and a more scrupulous, sceptical & patient system of research. In the present work I renounce, therefore, however alluring the temptation, however strong the facts may seem to a superficial study, all attempt to speculate on the identities or relationships of the different languages, on the evidence of philology as to the character & history of primitive human civilisations, or any other subject whatever not strictly within the four walls of my subject. That subject is the origin, growth and development of human language as it is shown to us by the embryology of the language ordinarily called Sanscrit and three ancient tongues, two dead & one living, which have evidently come at least into contact with it, the Latin, Greek & Tamil. I have called



my work, for convenience' sake, the Origins of Aryan Speech; but I would have it clearly understood that by using this familiar epithet I do not for a moment wish to imply any opinion as to the relationship of the four languages included in my survey, or the race-origin of the peoples speaking them or even of the ethnic origins of the Sanscrit speaking peoples. I did not wish to use the word Sanscrit, both because it is only a term meaning polished or correct and designating the literary tongue of ancient India as distinct from the vernaculars used by the women & the common people and because my scope is somewhat wider than the classical tongue of the northern Hindus. I base my conclusions on the evidence of the Sanscrit language helped out by those parts of the Greek, Latin & Tamil tongues which are cognate to the word-families of Sanscrit, and by the origins of Aryan speech, I mean, properly, the origin of human speech as used & developed by those who fashioned these word-families and their stocks & offshoots. The significance of the word Aryan as I use it, goes no farther.

In such an enquiry, it is obvious that a kind of science of linguistic embryology is the first necessity. In other words, it is only in proportion as we get away from the habits & notions & apparent facts of formed human speech in its use by modern & civilised people, only in proportion as we get nearer to the first roots & rudiments of the structure of the more ancient and primitive languages that we shall have any chance of making really fruitful discoveries. Just as from the study of the formed outward man, animal, plant, the great truths of evolution could not be discovered or, if discovered, not firmly fixed, – just as only by going back from the formed creature to its skeleton and from the skeleton to the embryo

could the great truth be established that in matter also the great Vedantic formula holds good — of a world formed by development of many forms from one seed in the will of the Universal Being, *ya ekaṁ bījaṁ bahudhā vidadhāti*, — so also in language if the origin & unity of human speech can be found & established, if it can be shown that its development was governed by fixed laws & processes, it is only by going back to its earliest forms that the discovery is to be made & proofs established. Modern speech is largely a fixed and almost artificial form, not precisely a fossil, but an organism proceeding towards arrest and fossilisation. The ideas its study suggests to us, are well-calculated to lead us entirely astray. In modern language the word is a fixed conventional symbol having for no good reason that we know a significance we are bound by custom to attach [to] it. We mean by *wolf* a certain kind of animal, but why we use this sound and not another to mean [it], except as a mere lawless fact of historical development, we do not know & do not care to think. Any other sound would, for us, be equally good for the purpose, provided the custom-bound mentality prevailing in our environment could be persuaded to sanction it. It is only when we go back to the early tongues and find, for instance, that the Sanscrit word for wolf means radically "tearing" that we get a glimpse of one law at least of the development of language. Again in modern speech we have fixed parts of speech; noun, adjective, verb, adverb are to us different words even when their forms are the same. Only when we go back to the earlier tongues do we get a glimpse of the striking, the illuminating fact that in the most fundamental forms a single monosyllable did service equally for noun, adjective, verb & adverb & that man in his earliest use of speech probably made



in his mind little or no conscious difference between these various uses. We see the word *vṛka* in modern Sanscrit used only as a noun signifying wolf; in the Veda it means simply tearing or a tearer, is used indifferently as a noun or adjective, even in its noun-use has much of the freedom of an adjective and can be applied freely to a wolf, a demon, an enemy, a disruptive force or anything that tears. We find in the Veda, although there are adverbial forms corresponding to the Latin adverb in *e* and *ter*, the adjective itself used continually as a pure adjective & yet in a relation to the verb & its action which corresponds to our modern use of adverbs and adverbial or prepositional phrases or subordinate adverbial clauses. Still more remarkable, we find nouns and adjectives used frequently as verbs with an object in the accusative case depending on the verbal idea in their root. We are prepared, therefore, to find that in the simplest & earliest forms of the Aryan tongue the use of a word was quite fluid, that a word like *cit* for instance might equally mean to know, knowing, knows, knower, knowledge or knowingly & be used by the speaker without any distinct idea of the particular employment he was making of the pliant vocable. Again, the tendency to fixity in modern tongues, the tendency to use words as mere counters & symbols of ideas, not as living entities themselves the parents of thought, creates a tendency to limit severely the use of a single word in several different senses and also a tendency to avoid the use of many different words for the expression of a single object or idea. When we have got the word *strike* to mean a voluntary & organised cessation of work by labourers, we are satisfied; we would be embarrassed if we had to choose between this and fifteen other words equally common and having the same significance; still more should we feel

embarrassed if the same word could mean a blow, a sunbeam, anger, death, life, darkness, shelter, a house, food and prayer. Yet this is precisely the phenomenon – again, I suggest, a most striking & illuminative phenomenon – we find in the early history of speech. Even in later Sanscrit the wealth of apparently unconnected significances borne by a single word is phenomenal, but in Vedic Sanscrit it is more than phenomenal and offers a serious stumbling-block to any attempt by moderns to fix the exact & indisputable sense of the Aryan hymns. I shall give evidence in this work for concluding that in yet earlier speech the licence was much greater, that each word, not only exceptionally but ordinarily, was capable of numerous different meanings and each object or idea could be expressed by many, often by as many as fifty different words each derived from a different root. To our ideas such a state of things would be one merely of lawless confusion negativing the very idea of any law of speech or any possibility of a linguistic Science, but I shall show that this extraordinary freedom & pliancy arose inevitably out of the very nature of human speech in its beginnings & as a result of the very laws which presided over its pristine development.

By going back thus from the artificial use of a developed speech in modern language nearer to the natural use of primitive speech by our earlier forefathers we gain two important points. We get rid of the idea of a conventional fixed connection between the sound and its sense and we perceive that a certain object is expressed by a certain sound because for some reason it suggested a particular & striking action or characteristic which distinguished that object to the earlier human mind. Ancient man did not say in his mind, as would the sophisticated modern, "Here is a grey carnivorous



animal, with four legs, of the canine species who hunts in packs and is particularly associated in my mind with Russia and the winter & snow & the steppes; let us find a suitable name for him"; he had fewer ideas about the wolf in his mind, no preoccupation with ideas of scientific classification and much preoccupation with the physical facts of his contact with the wolf. It was the chief all-important physical fact he selected, when he cried to his companion, not "Here is the wolf", but simply "This tearer", *ayaṁ vṛkaḥ*. The question remains, why the word *vṛkaḥ* more than another suggested the idea of tearing. The Sanscrit language carries us one step back, but not yet to the final step, by showing us that it is not the formed word *vṛkaḥ* with which we have to deal, but the word *vṛc*, that root of which *vṛka* is only one of several outgrowths. For the second obsession it helps us to get rid of is the modern connection of the developed word with some precise shade of an idea that we have accustomed it to convey. The word *delimitation* & the complex sense it conveys are with us wedded together; we need not remember that it comes from *limes*, a boundary, & that the single syllable *lim*, which is the backbone of the word, does not carry to us by itself the fundamental core of the sense. But I think it can be shown that even in the Vedic times men using the word *vṛka*, had the sense of the root *vṛc* foremost in their minds and it was that root which to their mentality was the rigid fixed significant part of speech; the full word being still fluid and depending for its use on the associations wakened by the root it contained. If that be so, we can see partly why words remained fluid in their sense, varying according to the particular idea wakened by the root-sound in the mentality of the speaker. We can see also why this root itself was fluid not only in its significance, but in its

use & why even in the formed and developed word the nominal, adjective, verbal & adverbial uses were even in the comparatively late stage of speech we find in the Vedas, so imperfectly distinguished, so little rigid & separate, so much run into each other. We get back always to the root as the determining unit of language. In the particular inquiry we have before us, the basis for a science of language, we make a most important advance. We need not inquire why *vṛka* meant tearer; we shall inquire instead what the sound *vṛc* meant to the early Aryan-speaking races and why it bore the particular significance or significances we actually find imbedded in it. We have not to ask why *dolabra* in Latin means an axe, *dalmi* in Sanscrit means Indra's thunderbolt, *dalapa* & *dala* are applied to weapons, or *dalanam* means crushing or Delphi in Greek is the name given to a place of caverns & ravines; but we may confine ourselves to an inquiry into the nature of the mother-root *dal* of which all these different but cognate uses are the result. Not that the variations noted have no importance, but their importance is minor & subsidiary. We may indeed divide the history of speech-origins into two parts, the embryonic into which research must be immediate as of the first importance, the structural which is less important & therefore may be kept for subsequent & subsidiary inquiry. In the first we note the roots of speech and inquire how *vṛc* came to mean to tear, *dal* to split or crush, whether arbitrarily or by the operation of some law of Nature; in the second we note the modifications and additions by which these roots grew into developed words, word-groups, word-families and wordclans and why those modifications & additions had the effect on sense & use which we find them to have exercised, why the termination *ana* turns *dal* into an adjective or a noun & what



is the source & sense of the variant terminations *ābra*, *bhi*, *bha* (*Delphoi*, *dalbhāḥ*), *ān* (Grk. *ōn*) & *ana*.

This superior importance of the root in early language to the formed word is one of those submerged facts of language the neglect of which has been one of the chief causes of philology's abortiveness as a Science. The first comparative philologists made, it seems tome, a fatal mistake when, misled by the modern preoccupation with the formed word, they fixed on the correlation *pitā*, *patēr*, *pater*, *Vater*, *father* as the clef, the mulamantra, of their Science & began to argue from it to all sorts of sound or unsound conclusions. The real clef, the real correlation is to be found in this other agreement, *dalbha*, *dalana*, *dolabra*, *dolōn*, *delphi*, leading to the idea of a common mother-root, common word-families, common word-clans, kindred word-nations or, as we call them, languages. And if it had been also noticed, that in all these languages *dal* means also pretence or fraud and has other common or kindred significances and some attempt made to discover the reason for one sound having these various significant uses, the foundation of a real Science of Languages might have been formed. We should incidentally have discovered, perhaps, the real connections of the ancient languages & the common mentality of the so-called Aryan peoples. We find *dolabra* in Latin for axe, we find no corresponding word in Greek or Sanscrit for axe; to argue thence that the Aryan forefathers had not invented or adopted the axe as a weapon before their dispersion, is to land oneself in a region of futile & nebulous uncertainties & rash inferences. But when we have noted that *dolabra* in Latin, *dolōn* in Greek, *dala*, *dalapa* & *dalmi* in Sanscrit were all various derivatives freely developed from *dal*, to split, and all used for some kind

of weapon, we get hold of a fruitful and luminous certainty. We see the common or original mentality working, we see the apparently free & loose yet really regular processes by which words were formed; we see too that not the possession of the same identical formed words, but the selection of the root word and of one among several children of the same root word to express a particular object or idea was the secret both of the common element & of the large & free variation that we actually find in the vocabulary of the Aryan languages.

I have said enough to show the character of the inquiry which I propose to pursue in the present work. This character arises necessarily from the very nature of the problem we have before us, the processes by which language took birth and formation. In the physical sciences we have a simple and homogeneous material of study; for, however complex may be the forces or constituents at work, they are all of one nature and obey one class of laws; all the constituents are forms developed by the vibration of material ether, all the forces are energies of this ethereal vibration which have either knotted themselves into these formal constituents of objects and are at work in them or else still work freely upon them from outside. But in the mental sciences we are confronted with heterogeneous material and heterogeneous forces and action of forces; we have to deal first with a physical material and medium, the nature & action of which by itself would be easy enough to study and regular enough in its action, but for the second element, the mental agency working in & upon its physical medium and material. We see a cricket ball flying through the air, we know the elements of action & status that work in and upon its flight and we can tell easily enough either by calculation or judgment not only in what direction it will



pursue its flight, but where it will fall. We see a bird flying through the air, – a physical object like the cricket ball flying through the same physical medium; but we know neither in what direction it will fly, nor where it will alight. The material is the same, a physical body, the medium is the same, the physical atmosphere; to a certain extent even the energy is the same, the physical pranic energy, as it is called in our philosophy, inherent in matter. But another force not physical has seized on this physical force, is acting in it and on it and so far as the physical medium will allow, fulfilling itself through it. This force is mental energy, & its presence suffices to change the pure or molecular pranic energy we find in the cricket ball into the mixed or nervous pranic energy we find in the bird. But if we could so develop our mental perceptions as to be able to estimate by judgment or measure by calculation the force of nervous energy animating the bird at the moment of its flight, even then we could not determine its direction or goal. The reason is that there is not only a difference in the energy, but a difference in the agency. The agency is the mental power dwelling in the merely physical object, the power of a mental will which is not only indwelling but to a certain extent free. There is an intention in the bird's flight; if we can perceive that intention, we can then judge whither it will fly, where it will alight, provided always that it does not change its intention. The cricket ball is also thrown by a mental agent with an intention, but that agent being external and not indwelling, the ball cannot, once it is propelled in a certain direction, with a certain force, change that direction or exceed that force unless turned or driven forward by a new object it meets in its flight. In itself it is not free. The bird is also propelled by a mental agent with an intention, in a certain

direction, with a certain force of nervous energy in its flight. Let nothing change in the mental will working it, & its flight may possibly be estimated & fixed like the cricket ball's. It also may be turned by an object meeting it, a tree or a danger in the way, an attractive object out of the way, but the mental power dwells within and is, as we should say, free to choose whether it shall be turned aside or not, whether it shall continue its way or not. But also it is free entirely to change its original intention without any external reason, to increase or diminish its output of nervous energy in the act, to employ it in a direction and towards a goal which are quite foreign to the original object of the flight. We can study & estimate the physical & nervous forces it uses, but we cannot make a science of the bird's flight unless we go behind matter & material force and study the nature of this conscious agent and the laws, if any, which determine, annul or restrict its apparent freedom.

Philology is the attempt to form such a mental science, – for language has this twofold aspect; its material is physical, the sounds formed by the human tongue working on the air vibrations; the energy using it is nervous, the molecular pranic activities of the brain using the vocal agents and itself used & modified by a mental energy, the nervous impulse to express, to bring out of the crude material of sensation the clearness & preciseness of the idea; the agent using it is a mental will, free so far as we can see, but free within the limits of its physical material to vary & determine its use for that purpose of the range of vocal sound. In order to arrive at the laws which have governed the formation of any given human tongue, – and my purpose now is not [to] study the origins of human speech generally, but the origins of Aryan speech, – we must



examine, first, the way in which the instrument of vocal sound has been determined and used by the agent, secondly, the way in which the relation of the particular ideas to be expressed to the particular sound or sounds which express it, have been determined. There must always be these two elements, the structure of the language, its seeds, roots, formation & growth, and the psychology of the use of the structure.

Alone of the Aryan tongues, the present structure of the Sanscrit language still preserves the original type of the Aryan structure. In this ancient tongue alone, we see not entirely in all the original forms, but in the original essential parts & rules of formation, the skeleton, the members, the entrails of this organism. It is through the study, then, of Sanscrit especially, aided by whatever light we can get from the more regular & richly-structured among the other Aryan languages, that we must seek for our origins. The structure we find is one of extraordinary initial simplicity and also of extraordinarily methodical & scientific regularity of formation. We have in Sanscrit four open sounds or pure vowels, *a*, *i*, *u*, *ṛ* with their lengthened forms, *ā*, *ī*, *ū*, and *ṝ* (we have to mention but may omit for practical purposes the rare vowel *ḹ*), supplemented by two other open sounds which the grammarians are probably right in regarding as impure vowels or modifications of *i* and *u*; they are the vowels *e* and *o*, each with its farther modification into *ai* and *au*. Then we have five symmetrical vargas or classes of closed sounds or consonants, the gutturals, *k*, *kh*, *g*, *gh*, *ṅ*, the palatals, *c*, *ch*, *j*, *jh*, *ñ*, the cerebrals, answering approximately to the English dentals, *ṭ*, *ṭh*, *ḍ*, *ḍh*, *ṇ*, the pure dentals, answering to the Celtic and Continental dentals we find in Irish and in French, Spanish or Italian, *t*, *th*, *d*, *dh*, *n* & the labials, *p*, *ph*, *b*, *bh*, *m*. Each of these

classes consists of a hard sound, *k*, *c*, *ṭ*, *t*, *p* with its aspirate, *kh*, *ch*, *ṭh*, *th*, *ph*, a corresponding soft sound *g*, *j*, *ḍ*, *d*, *b* with its aspirate *gh*, *jh*, *ḍh*, *dh*, *bh*, and a class nasal, *ṅ*, *ñ*, *ṇ*, *n*, *m*. But of these nasals only the last three have any separate existence or importance; the others are modifications of the general nasal sound, *m-n*, which are found only in conjunction with the other consonants of their class and are brought into existence by that conjunction. The cerebral class is also a peculiar class; they have so close a kinship to the dental both in sound and in use that they may almost be regarded as modified dentals, rather than an original separate class. Finally, in addition to the ordinary vowels and consonants we have a class composed of the four liquids *y*, *r*, *l*, *v*, which were evidently treated as semivowels, *y* being the semivowel form of *i*, *v* of *u*, *r* of *ṛ*, *l* of *ḷ*, – this semivowel character of *r* and *l* is the reason why in Latin prosody they have not always the full value of the consonant, why for instance the *u* in *volucris* is optionally long or short; we have the triple sibilation *ś*, *ṣ* and *s*, *ś* palatal, *ṣ* cerebral, *s* dental; we have the pure aspirate, *h*. With the possible exception of the cerebral class & the variable nasal, it can hardly be doubted, I think, that the Sanscrit alphabet represents the original vocal instrument of Aryan speech. Its regular, symmetrical and methodical character is evident and might tempt us to see in it a creation of some scientific intellect, if we did not know that Nature in a certain portion of her pure physical action has precisely this regularity, symmetry & fixity and that the mind, at any rate in its earlier unintellectualised action, when man is more guided by sensation & impulse & hasty perception, tends to bring in the element of irregularity & caprice and not a greater method and symmetry. We may even say, not absolutely, but within the



range of the linguistic facts & periods available to us, the greater the symmetry & unconscious scientific regularity, the more ancient the stage of the language. The advanced stages of language show an increasing detrition, deliquescence, capricious variation, the loss of useful sounds, the passage, sometimes transitory, sometimes permanent of slight & unnecessary variations of the same sound to the dignity of separate letters. Such a variation, unsuccessful in permanence, can be seen in the Vedic modification of the soft cerebral *ḍ* into a cerebral liquid, *ḷ*. This sound disappears in later Sanscrit, but has fixed itself in Tamil and Marathi. Such is the simple instrument out of which the majestic & expressive harmonies of the Sanscrit language have been formed.

The use of the instrument by the earlier Aryans for the formation of words seems to have been equally symmetrical, methodical & in close touch with the physical facts of vocal expression. These letters are used as so many seed sounds; out of them primitive root sounds are formed by the simple combination of the four vowels or less frequently the modified vowels with each of the consonants, the two dependent nasals *ṅ* and *ñ* and the cerebral nasal *ṇ* excepted. Thus with *d* as a base sound, the early Aryans were able to make for themselves root sounds which they used indifferently as nouns, adjectives, verbs or adverbs to express root ideas, – *da*, *dā*, *di*, *dī*, *du*, *dū*, *dṛ*, *dṝ*. All these roots did not endure as separate words, but those which died, left an often vigorous progeny behind them which preserve in themselves the evidence for the existence of their progenitor. Especially have the roots formed by the short *a* passed out of use without a single exception. In addition the Aryans could form if they chose the modified root sounds *de*, *dai*, *do*, *dau*. The vowel bases were also used,

since the nature of speech permitted it, as root sounds & root words. But obviously this kernel of language, though it might suffice for primitive beings, is too limited in range to satisfy the self-extensive tendency of human speech. We see therefore a class of secondary root sounds and root words grow up from the primitive root by the farther addition to it of any of the consonant sounds with its necessary or natural modification of the already existing root idea. Thus on the basis of the now lost primitive root *da*, it was possible to have four guttural short secondary roots, *dak*, *dakh*, *dag*, *dagh* & four long, *dāk*, *dākh*, *dāg*, *dāgh*, which might be regarded either as separate words or long forms of the short root; so also eight palatal, eight cerebral, with the two nasal forms *daṇ* & *dāṇ*, making ten, ten dental, ten labial, eight liquid, six sibilant and two aspirate secondary roots. It was possible also to nasalise any of these forms, establishing for instance *daṅk*, *daṅkh*, *daṅg* & *daṅgh*. It seems not unnatural to suppose that all these roots existed in the earliest forms of the Aryan speech, but by the time of our first literary records, the greater number of them have disappeared, some leaving behind them a scanty or numerous progeny, others perishing with their frail descendants. If we take a single example, the primitive base root *ma*, we find *ma* itself dead, but existing in the noun forms *ma*, *mā* & *mam*, *matiḥ*, *matam*; *mak* existing only in the nasal form *maṅk* & in its own descendants, *makara*, *makura*, *makula* etc & in tertiary formations *makk* & *maks*; *makh* still existing as a root word in the forms *makh* and *maṅkh*; *mag* only in its descendants and in its nasal form *maṅg*, *magh* in its nasalised form *maṅgh*; *mac* still alive, but childless except in its nasal disguise *mañc*; *mach* dead with its posterity; *maj* alive in its descendants and its nasal form *mañj*, *majh* wholly obsolete.



We find in the long forms *mā* and *māṅkṣ* as separate roots & words with *māk*, *mākh*, *māgh* & *māc* as their substantial parts, but more usually deriving it would seem from a lengthening of the short root than from the long form as a separate root. Finally, tertiary roots have been formed less regularly but still with some freedom by the addition of semivowels to the seed sound, in either primitive or secondary roots, thus giving us roots like *dhyai*, *dhvan*, *sru*, *hlād*, or of other consonants where the combination was possible, giving us roots like *stu*, *śyut*, *hruḍ* etc, or else by the addition of another consonant to the final of the secondary root, giving us forms like *vall*, *majj*, etc. These are the pure root forms. But a sort of illegitimate tertiary root is formed by the vowel guna or modification, as, for example, of the vowel *ṛ* into *ar* & *ṝ* into *ār*, so that we have the alternative forms *ṛc* and *arc* or *ark*; the forms *carṣ* & *car*, replacing *cṛṣ* & *cṛ* which are now dead, the forms *mṛj* and *marj* etc. We find, too, certain early tendencies of consonantal modification, such as an initial tendency to get rid of the palatal *c*, *ch* and *j*, *jh*, replacing them by *k* and *g*, a tendency entirely fulfilled in Latin, but arrested in the course of half-fulfilment in Sanscrit. This principle of guna is of great importance in the study of the physical formation of the language & of its psychological development, especially as it introduces a first element of doubt and confusion into an otherwise crystal clearness of structure & perfect mechanic regularity of formation. The vowel guna or modification works by the substitution either of the modified vowel, *e* for *i*, *o* for *u*, so that we have from *vi* the case form *ves* (*veḥ*), from *jānu* the case form *jānoḥ*, or of the pure semivowel sound, *y* for *i*, *v* for *u*, *r* or, a little impurely, *ra* for *ṛ*, so that from *vi* we have the verbal form *vyantaḥ*, from *śu* the verbal form *aśvat*, from *vṛ* or *vṛt* the

noun *vrata*, or else of the supported semivowel sound, *ay* for *i*, *av* for *u*, *ar* for *ṛ* , *al* for *ḷṛ*, so that we have from *vi* the noun *vayas*, from *śru* the noun *śravas*, from *sṛ* the noun *saras*, from *kḷṛp* the noun *kalpa*. These forms constitute the simple gunation of the short vowel sounds *a*, *i*, *u*, *ṛ* , *ḷṛ*; in addition we have the long modification or vriddhi, an extension of the principle of lengthening which gives us the long forms of the vowels; we have *ai* or *āy* from *i*, *au* or *āv* from *u*, *ār* from *ṛ*, *āl* from *ḷṛ*, while *a* has no vriddhi proper but only the lengthening *ā*. The principal confusion that arises out of this primitive departure from simplicity of sound-development is the frequent uncertainty between a regular secondary root and the irregular gunated root. We have for instance the regular root *ar* deriving from the primitive root *a* and the illegitimate root *ar* deriving from the primitive root *ṛ*; we have the forms *kala* and *kāla*, which, if judged only by their structure, may derive either from *kḷṛ* or from *kal*; we have *ayas* and *āyus* which, similarly judged, may derive either from the root forms *a* and *ā* or from the root forms *i* and *ī*. The main consonantal modifications in Sanscrit are structural & consist [of] the assimilation of like consonants, a hard sound becoming soft by association with a soft sound, a soft sound hard by association with a hard sound, aspirates being replaced in conjunction by the corresponding unaspirated sound and modifying their companion in return, eg *lapsyate* and *labdhum* from *labh* substituted for *labh-syate* and *labh-tum*, *vyūḍha* from *vyuḥ* replacing *vyuḥ-ta*. Beyond this tendency to obey certain subtle but easily recognisable tendencies of mutual modification, which in themselves suggest only certain minor and unimportant doubts, the one really corruptive tendency in Sanscrit is the arrested impulse towards disappearance of



the palatal family. This has gone so far that such forms as *ketu* can be considered by Indian grammarians, quite erroneously, to proceed from the root *cit* and not from the root *kit* which is its natural parent. In reality, however, the only genuine palatal modifications are those in sandhi, which substitute *k* for *c*, *g* for *j* at the end of a word or in certain combinations, eg *lagna* for *lajna*, *vaktṛ* for *vactṛ*, *vakva* for *vacva*, the noun *vākya* from the root *vac*, the perfect *cikāya* & *cikye* from *ci*. Side by side with these modificatory combinations we have regular forms, such as *yajña*, *vācya*, *cicāya*, *cicye*. It is even open to question whether the forms *cikāya*, *cikye* are not rather from the root *ki* than actual descendants from the parent root *ci* in whose nest they have found a home.

These elements of variation noted, we are in a position to follow the second stage in the flowering of speech from the root state to the stage in which we pass on by a natural transition to the structural development of language. So far we have a language formed of the simplest and most regular elements; the seed sounds *a*, *i*, *u*, *k*, *kh* etc – eight vowels & their modifications, four in number; five classes of consonants & three nasals; one quaternary of liquids or semivowels; three sibilants; one aspirate; based on each of these, their first developments, the primitive and parent roots, as from the seed sound *v*, the primitive root group *va*, *vā*, *vi*, *vī*, *vu*, *vū*, *vṛ*, *vṝ* and possibly *ve*, *vai*, *vo*, *vau*; round each primitive root its family of secondary roots, round the primitive *va* its family, *vak*, *vakh*, *vag*, *vagh*, *vac*, *vach*, *vaj*, *vajh*, *vaṭ*, *vaṭh*, *vaḍ*, *vaḍh*, *vaṇ*, *vat*, *vath*, *vad*, *vadh*, *van*, *vap*, *vaph*, *vab*, *vabh*, *vam*, & possibly *vay*, *var*, *val* & *vav*, *vaś*, *vaṣ*, *vas*, *vah*; – the eight or more families of this group forming a root clan, with a certain variable number of tertiary descendants such as *vañc*, *vañj*, *vand*, *vall*, *vaṁś*, *vaṁh*,

*vraj*, etc. Forty of these clans would constitute the whole range of primitive language. Each word would in the primitive nature of language, like each man in the primitive constitution of human society, fulfil at once several functions, noun, verb, adjective and adverb at once, the inflection of the voice, the use of gesture & the quickness of the instinct making up for the absence of delicacy & precision in the shades of speech. Such a language though of small compass would be one, it is clear, of great simplicity, of a mechanical regularity of formation, built up perfectly in its small range by the automatic methods of Nature, and sufficient to express the first physical & emotional needs of the human race. But the increasing demands of the intellect would in time compel a fresh growth of language and a more intricate flowering of forms. The first instrument in such a growth, the first in urgency, importance & time, would be the impulse towards distinguishing more formally between the action, the agent and the object, & therefore of establishing some sort of formal distinction, however vague at first, between the noun-idea and the verb-idea. The second impulse, possibly simultaneous, would be towards distinguishing structurally, – for it is possible that the various root forms of one family were already used for that object, – between the various times and shades of the action, of establishing in modern language tense forms, voices, moods. The third impulse would be towards the formal distinction of various attributes, such as number & gender, & various relations of the agent & object themselves to the action, of establishing case forms & forms of singularity, duality, plurality. The elaboration of special forms for adjective and adverb seems to have been a later, the latter in fact the latest of the operations of structural development,



because in the early mentality the need of these distinctions was the least pressing.

When we examine how the old Aryan speakers managed the satisfaction of these needs & this new & richer efflorescence of the language plant, we find that Nature in them was perfectly faithful to the principle of her first operations and that the whole of the mighty structure of the Sanscrit language was built up by a very slight extension of her original movement. This extension was secured & made possible by the simple, necessary & inevitable device of using the vowels *a*, *i*, *u* & *ṛ* with their long forms and modifications as enclitic or support sounds subsequently prefixed sometimes to the root, but at first used to form appendage sounds only. The Aryans by the aid of this device proceeded, just as they had formed root words by adding the consonant sounds to the primitive root sounds, by adding for instance *d* or *l* to *va* had formed *vad* & *val*, so now to form structural sounds by adding to the developed root word any of the same consonant sounds, pure or conjunct with others, with an enclitic sound either as the connective support or the formatory support or both, or else by adding the enclitic sound alone as a substantial appendage. Thus, having the root *vad*, they could form from it at their will by the addition of the consonant *t*, *vadat*, *vadit*, *vadut*, *vaḍṛt* or *vadata*, *vadita*, *vaduta*, *vaḍṛta*, or *vadati*, *vaditi*, *vaduti*, *vaḍṛti* or *vadatu*, *vaditu*, *vadutu*, *vaḍṛtu*, or else *vadatṛ*, *vaditṛ*, *vaduṭṛ*, *vaḍṛṭṛ*; or else they could use the enclitic only & form *vada*, *vadi*, *vadu*, *vadṛ*.; or they could employ the conjunct sounds *tr*, *ty*, *tv*, *tm*, *tn*, and produce such forms as *vadatra*, *vadatya*, *vadatva*, *vadatma*, *vadatna*. As a matter of fact we do not find and would not expect to find all these possibilities actually used in the case of a single word. With the growth of

intellectual richness & precision there would be a corresponding growth in the mental will-action & the supersession of the mechanical mind-processes by more clearly & consciously selective mind-processes. Nevertheless we do find practically all these forms distributed over the root clans & families of the Aryan word-nation. We find the simple nominal forms built by the addition of the sole enclitic richly & almost universally distributed. The richness of forms is much greater in earlier Aryan speech than in later literature. From the root *san*, for instance, we find in Vedic speech all the forms *sana*, *sani*, *sanu* (contracted into *snu*), but in later Sanscrit they have all disappeared. We find also in Veda variants like *caratha* & *carātha*, *rati* & *rāti*, but in later Sanscrit *carātha* has been rejected, *rati* & *rāti* preserved but rigidly distinguished in their significance. We find most roots in possession of the *a* noun form, many in possession of the *i* form, some in possession of the *u* form. We find a preference for the simple hard consonant over the aspirate and the soft; *p* is more frequent in structural nouns than *ph* or *bh*, but both *ph* & *bh* occur; *p* is more frequent than *b*, but *b* occurs. We find certain consonants preferred over others, especially *k*, *t*, *n*, *s* either in themselves or in their combinations; we find certain appendage forms like *as*, *in*, *an*, *at*, *tr*, *vat*, *van*, formalised into regular nominal and verbal terminations. We see double appendages; side by side with the simple *jitvā*, we may have *jitvara*, *jitvan* etc. Throughout we see or divine behind the present state of the Sanscrit language a wide & free natural labour of formation followed by a narrowing process of rejection & selection. But always the same original principle, either simply or complexly applied, with modification or without modification of the root vowels & consonants, is &



remains the whole basis & means of noun structure.

In the variations of the verb, in the formation of case we find always the same principle. The root conjugates itself by the addition of appendages such as *mi*, *si*, *ti* etc, *m*, *s*, *t*, *ta*, *va* (all of them forms used also for nominal structures) either simply or with the support of the enclitic *a*, *i* or rarely *u*, short, lengthened or modified, giving us such forms as *vacmi*, *vadāmi*, *vakṣi*, *vadasi* or *vadāsi*, *vadat*, *vadati*, *vadāti*. In the verb forms other devices are used such as the insertion of an appendage like *n*, *nā*, *nu* or *nī* in preference to the simple vowel enclitic; the prefixing of the enclitic *a* to help out or augment the fixing of tense significance; the reduplication of the essential part of the root in various ways; etc. We notice the significant fact that even here Vedic Sanscrit is much richer & freer in its variations, Sanscrit itself more narrow, rigid & selective, the former using alternative forms like *bhavati*, *bhavāti*, *bhavat*, the latter rejecting all but the first. The case inflexions differ from the verb-forms only in the appendages preferred, not in their principle or even in themselves; *as*, *am*, *es*, *os*, *ām* are all verbal as well as nominal inflexions. Substantially the whole of the language with all its forms & inflexions is the inevitable result of the use by Nature in man of one single rich device, one single fixed principle of sound formation employed with surprisingly few variations, with an astonishingly fixed, imperative & almost tyrannous regularity but also a free & even superfluous original abundance in the formation. The inflexional character of Aryan speech is itself no accident but the inevitable result, almost physically inevitable, of the first seed-selection of sound process, that original apparently trifling selection of the law of the individual being which is at the basis of all Nature's infinitely varied regularities. Fidelity

to the principle already selected being once observed, the rest results from the very nature & necessities of the sound-instrument that is employed. Therefore, in the outward form of language, we see the operation of a regular natural law proceeding almost precisely as Nature proceeds in the physical world to form a vegetable or an animal genus & its species.

We have taken one step in the perception of the laws that govern the origin & growth of language; but this step is nothing or little unless we can find an equal regularity, an equal reign of fixed process on the psychological side, in the determining of the relation of particular sense to particular sound. No arbitrary or intellectual choice but a natural selection has determined the growth & arrangement of the sounds, simple or structural, in their groups & families. Is it an arbitrary or intellectual choice or a law of natural selection that has determined their significances? If the latter be true & it must be so if any Science of language be possible, then having this peculiar arrangement of significant sounds, certain truths follow inevitably. First, the seed sound *v* for example must have in it something inherent to it which connected it in man's mind originally, in the first natural state of speech, with the actual senses borne by the primitive roots *va*, *vā*, *vi*, *vī*, *vu*, *vū*, *vṛ*, *vṝ* in the primitive language. Secondly, whatever variations there are in sense between these roots must be determined originally by some inherent tendency of significance in the variable or vowel element, *a*, *ā*, *i*, *ī*, *u*, *ū*, *ṛ*, *ṝ*. Thirdly, the secondary roots depending on *va*, *vac*, *vakh*, *vañj*, *vam*, *val*, *vap*, *vah*, *vaś*, *vas* etc must have a common element in their significances and, so far as they varied originally, must have varied as a result of the element of difference, the



consonantal termination *c*, *kh*, *j*, *m*, *l*, *p*, *h*, *ś*, *s* respectively. Finally, in the structural state of language, although as a result of the growing power of conscious selection other determining factors may have entered into the selection of particular significances for particular words, yet the original factor cannot have been entirely inoperative and such forms as *vadana*, *vadatra*, *vāda* etc must have been governed in the development of their sense dominantly by their substantial & common sound-element, to a certain extent by their variable & subordinate element. I shall attempt to show by an examination of the Sanscrit language that all these laws are actually true of Aryan speech, their truth being borne out or often established beyond any shadow of doubt by the facts of the language." (547-76)

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