CHAPTER IV - SPREAD OF BRAHMANISM.

Agastya.

Since the time of the Brāhmaṇas, the Āryans made every effort to spread their culture and authority in Daksināpatha. The Rāmacarita is an allegorical representation of the expansion of Āryanism in Dekkan and South India. But much earlier than Rāma, sage Agastya played the Vasco de Gama of Āryan imperialism in India. All over the South, many legends are centred round the personality of Agastya which are reminiscent of historical occurrences. He not only braved the inhospitable Vindhyan region and explored a route between Āryavarta and Daksināpatha but also overcame the fierce opposition to his mission by the local non-Āryan leaders like Vātāni and Ilvala. In Andhra, in many a temple, the presiding deity is called Agastyēśwara and is supposed to have been installed by sage Agastya. One of the famous Telugu poets of the 15th century A.D., Śrīnātha has immortalised the episode of the conquest of the Vindhya by Agastya and his migration to the South in a beautiful poem, Bhūmeswara Purāṇa.

Rāma of Ayodhya.

In the foot-steps of Agastya, many of Āryan missionary migrated to the South and all over Dekkan and South India, there sprang up Āśramas or hermitages which began to radiate Āryan culture. But the expansion of Āryanism was not smooth and peaceful as indicated.

2. Ramayana, Aranya, Sarga 11.
3. Vavilla Ramaswamy & Sons, Madras.
by the stories of Vātāpi and Ilvala and Mārīṣa and Saubhūkha. Meanwhile, the Āryan princes of the North took up the cause of their missionaries. The greatest of them was Rāma, the Ikṣvāku king of Ayodhya. For his signal service of saving the Brāhmins that had migrated to the South from the harassment at the hands of the local non-Āryan races, Rāma was raised to the status of an incarnation of Viṣṇu. The patient missionary activity of the Brāhmins, supported by the princes, bore fruit and in the wake of Rāma's exploits in the South, Ikṣvāku kingdoms sprang up in Andhra. According to the Vayupurāṇa, the Jamapadas of Assaka and Mālaka were founded by two princes of the Ikṣvāku family. As mentioned earlier, the Jáma Dharmāntra informs us that another Ikṣvāku prince, Pāśodhara founded the kingdom of Pratīpalapura as early as the 5th century B.C. Pratīpalapura is identified with Bhātīprāśa in Guntur district.

Methosis of Āryanisation:

The process of Āryanisation progressed not like a whirlwind, destroying the local races and uprooting their religious systems. It was a slow but sure process, characterised by conciliation, compromise and synthesis which laid the foundations of that cultural pluralism of which India is justly proud. Already, the process of adjustment and conciliation was in progress in the North. The Āryan leaders of distinction like Parāśara and Saṅkaru did not

1. Rāmāyana, Balakanda, Sarga 30.
hesitate to have children by non-Aryan brides of very low origin and such an off-spring was in no way differentiated from their other children. Even in gods, the process of syncretism can be seen. Śiva, who was a mixture of Harappan Pasupati and Ṛgvedic Rudra, began to appear on the scene. The traces of the beginning of the process are visible in the Ṛgveda, in which Rudra is addressed as Pasupan, the protector of animals. In fact, for a long time, Śiva did not find place as the name of a God in the Brāhmaṇical literature and even Rudra was looked upon as the God of the Gajas and Nīgānas. The Mahābhārata story of Daksayāna reveals that the orthodox sections of the Āryans were strongly opposed to the admission of Śiva into the pantheon of the Āryan gods, but they were ultimately defeated and humiliated. The process of conciliation and synthesis progressed undermining the orthodox exclusiveness and intransigence. In the Bhaṭṭiprōlu relic casket inscriptions of the 3rd century B.C., the name of a person was given as Śiva. It is very interesting to note that the first Āryan coloniser of Daksina-patha, sage Agastya worshipped Śiva and installed images of Śiva throughout the South. The climax of this process of conciliation is represented by the acceptance ofVyāsa and Vālmiki as the compilers of Āryan sacred literature. Vyāsa, who is believed to have classified the Vēdas and composed the Jayakāvyas (nucleus of Mahābhārata) was of mixed origin—Brāhmaṇ father and fisher-woman.

mother. Vālmiki, the supposed author of the Epic, Rāmāyana, was a full-blooded Rṣādrī. The attribution of the authorship of the Brāhmaṇical literature to men of such origins is a master-stroke of diplomacy on the part of the Āryan leaders, aimed at reconciling the non-Āryans to the imposed Āryans customs and institutions.

In Daśāpatatha also, a similar policy was adopted. The non-Āryan religious beliefs and practices were rationalised and accepted. Grierson remarks: "We have the process before our eyes. Animism is discovered to be orthodoxy. Local aboriginal deities are discovered to be identical with Śiva or some other member of the Brāhmaṇical pantheon and the distinction of caste is conferred upon the converts. In other respects, the aboriginal customs and beliefs are at first left untouched and are allowed to develop themselves into one or the many branches of modern Hinduism. It is probable that the local priest was raised to the dignified position of Brāhmin and the prince to that of Kṣatriya. They might have received the Gōtras of their own initiators as in the case of Satyakāma Jābala. About the Āryanisation of the Mundāri tribes, S.G. Roy remarks: "By the more Hinduised Mundas their section names have been modified in order to assimilate them to the Hindu gotras or sections. Thus the Sāṃji or bull section has been transformed into the Sāṃdilya gōtra which sprang from the ancient Śishi or saint Sāṃdilya."
It is natural that new converts into a religion would be more punctilious in observing its rules and rituals and more zealous and in fact more effective in spreading it among their own kith and kin. The cases of some of the Rajputs in medieval India and the Turks in the History of Islam may illustrate the above point. But, K.A.N. Sastrı doubts the historicity of the Aryan-non-Aryan conflict in the South because: (1) he finds no hint of the conflict in the early Tamil or Sangam literature, and (2) the Tamils enthusiastically adopted the Aryan culture. But these might as well be attributed to the zeal and devotion of new converts.

**Progress of Brahmanism.**

Ancient literature — Brāhmaṇical, Jaina and Buddhist — contain references to the progress of Brāhmaṇism in Anıhara by about the 5th century B.C. It is already noted that the Brāhmaṇical and Jaina literatures refer to the establishment of the three Iksvāku kingdoms of Assaka, Mulaka and Pratipalapura, by princes who migrated from the North. As mentioned earlier, the Suttanipata relates the story of Bāvari, the royal priest of Kōsala who resorted to the South and established an Āśrama on an island in the river Godāvāri. The island was shared between the Janapadas of Assaka and Mulaka. Bāvari might have come to the South with the hope of receiving patronage of the Iksvāku kings of the two kingdoms who too had come from Kōsala. Bāvari seems to have been a scholar of

1. D.E.S.I., P. 13
great merit and attracted a large number of students. Even the
king of Kalinga honoured him by giving a large amount of money for
building his Jārāma which was situated on the borders of Asmaka
and Mula. Many such Brāhmin families might have migrated to the
South and settled down in different parts. In South India there
is a sect of Brāhmins called "Brāharcarena" which means "the great
migration" and it is taken to preserve the memory of the great trek
of the Brāhmins from the North. ²

The Bhīmesāna Jātaka³ gives us the impression that Brāhmanism
was well entrenched in Andhradesa. It states that Bōdisattva, who
was born as a Brāhmin, finished his Vēdic studies at Taxila and
resorted to Andhrādeśa to gain practical experience. It further
describes how Bōdisattva was duped by a Vaisya. This Jātaka makes
two points clear: (1) Andhra was already hospitable to Vēdic scho-
larship; (2) and its society was based upon the caste system. The
subsequent history of Andhra, deduced from inscriptions only proves
the correctness of the Bhīmesāna Jātaka.

The Nānakhāt inscription of Nāganikā⁴ gives a long list of Vēdic
sacrifices performed by her husband, Sātakarṇī I, in the early
decades of the 2nd century B.C. Sātakarṇī was Daksināpathapati
and therefore his zeal for Vēdic sacrifices should not be limited
to Western Dekkan where the inscription was found. The numerous
sacrifices and the Daksinā⁵ of Sātakarṇī clearly show that Dekkan

¹. Indian Antiquary, XVI, P. 49.
². K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, H.S.I., PP. 74-75.
⁴. A.S.W.I., V, P. 60 ff; Iudench List No. 1112; D.C. Sircar,
Select Inscriptions, I, P. 186 ff.
⁵. Vide Infra, Appendix II.
had become a stronghold of Brahmanism over a long period. Again, in the Nāsik inscription\(^1\) of Pulmāvī's time, Gautāmī Bāláśrī describes the religious policy of her late son Gautamiputra Sātakarpi, who flourished in the last quarter of the first century A.D. (A.D. 72-95).\(^2\) He took the title Ékabrāhmaṇa by promoting Vācic learning, patronising Brāhmaṇ families and stopping the mixture of castes. Especially the last part of the description (vinivartita, gāturvarga sankarādyā) implies that Varnedharmā was already a Sanātanadharma in the Dēkkan and it was seriously disturbed by certain extraneous factors—probably such as the spread of Buddhism and the invasions of foreigners. In addition, Bāláśrī's comparison of her son with heroes of the Hindu epics and Purāṇas such as Rāhu, Nābhāga, Dīlīpa, Balarāma, Kōśa, Rūna, Arjuna and Bhīma,\(^3\) only shows that the bulk of Hindu theology was already in existence by the 1st century A.D., and that Hinduism was making steady progress captivating the minds of the people by its picturesque mythology.

\[\text{As Brāhmaṇism was making steady progress, the great law-givers Bōdhāyana and Āpastamba lived in the Dēkkan and wrote their Sūtras, regulating religion and society. Of the above two Sutrākārās, Āpastamba appears to be an Andhra or at least he resided and composed his Sūtras in Andhra. In support of this view, Buhler}\

\[\text{References:}\
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Nasik Inscriptions,} I, P. 196 ff.; Nāsik Inscription of Pulmāvī's time E.I., VIII, Nasik, Ins. No. 2.
  \item C.s.L. I, P. 312.
  \item Nasik Inscription, op. cit.
  \item B.N. Kāmosvāra Aiyar, "Kalpasūtras and Āpastamba", \textit{Quarterly Journal of Mythic Society,} XIII, P. 527.
  \item K.A. Nīlakanta Sastri, \textit{H.S.I.}, P. 328.
\end{itemize}\]
gives the following reasons: 1. (1) In describing the Srādhās, Āpastamba says that the custom of pouring water in the hands of Brāhmaṇas prevails among the Northerners. This indicates that Āpastamba was a Southerner. (2) The recension of Taittiriya Āryaṇyaka which Āpastamba recognises is called the Andhra Text, probably because it was followed in Andhra. "It seems exceedingly improbable that a Vedic teacher would accept as authoritative any other version of sacred word except that which was current in his native country". (3) A late work called Mahārṇava clearly states that the Āpastambīya system was established near the mouths of the Gāḍāvāri. This view is accepted by Kane who says, "According to the Mahārṇava quoted in the commentary on the Caranavyuhata, the Āpastambīyas were to be found to the south of the Narmada, in the southeast, that is in Andhra and the territory about the mouth of the Gāḍāvāri. Therefore it is natural to suppose that Āpastamba's school had its origin in the south probably in Andhra."

According to Buhler, Āpastamba lived about 500 B.C., but definitely not later than the 3rd century B.C. Kane says that "if a tolerably a definite period is demanded, then the Āpastamba Dharma Sūtras should be assigned to the period of 450–350 B.C."

1. Introduction to Āpastamba Sūtras, Sacred Books of the East, IV.
4. V. P. Kane, op. cit., P. 70.
Apaśṭamba framed rules regulating social relations and Vedic rituals. He prescribes a procedure for even the recitation of the Veda.\(^1\) He had to undertake this strenuous job as the "performers of Vedic rites found themselves in need of rules of interpretation, Nyāya to guide them through the maze of texts."\(^2\) Apaśṭamba clearly declared that he framed the rules according to the prevalent conventions and practices.\(^3\) All these indicate that by the time of Apaśṭamba, the Vedic studies and sacrifices were very popular in the South and therefore he had to frame the rules to clear doubts and systematise the Brāhmaṇical order.

From the Sūtras of Apaśṭamba, we learn that there was prevalent in Andhra, the caste system\(^4\) with the implied superiority of the Brāhmaṇ. But a high standard of piety and religiosity is enjoined upon him. He would be degraded to the position of a ṛgdeva if he commits theft or murder.\(^5\) Every day he has to observe the pāṃga yajñas.\(^6\) All the three upper castes should worship fire soon after bath.\(^7\) One interesting feature of the Sūtras is the elaborate rules prescribed for the worship of ancestors or Mane.\(^8\) Apaśṭamba describes the four orders of life.\(^9\) But he deprecated Sanyāsa. He laid down that food offered by one who became an ascetic\(^10\) should not be accepted.

\(^2\) A.B. Keith, A History of Sanskrit Literature, PP. 472-473.
\(^3\) History of Dharmaśāstra, I, I, P. 56.
\(^4\) Ibid.
\(^5\) Ibid, P. 57.
\(^6\) Ibid, P. 56.
\(^7\) Ibid, P. 57.
\(^8\) Buhler, AŚ, II, 7, 16.
\(^9\) Ibid, II, 9, 21, 1.
\(^10\) Ibid, I, 6, 13, 31.
However, with Āpastamba, the process of conciliation and synthesis between the Āryan and the non-Āryan systems took a long step forward. He admitted the religious practices prevalent among the Śūdras and the womenfolk into the fourth Vēda or the śātharṣva and gave official recognition as authorities on matters of religion to the Purāṇas which were becoming popular. He deprecated the path of renunciation or Śramaṇa but preferred to combine the paths of ritual and knowledge.

The vigorous celebration of Vēdic ceremonies and remarkable development of theological literature evidenced by the Bhāgāhata and Pāṭika inscriptions of the Sātavāhana period, mentioned above, were in all probability made possible by the work of clarification, systematisation and conciliation achieved by the great Śatrakāra, Āpastamba.

Discontent towards Brāhmaṇism.

However, it cannot be assumed that the progress of Brāhmaṇism had universal appeal in Andhradēsa. Further, even in the Earth, the 6th century B.C., was an age of spiritual unrest, reflected in the Upaniṣads and the Davānas. People began to doubt the efficiency of the Vēdic rituals and the validity of caste distinctions. It is not unreasonable to assume that the spiritual unrest had its echoes in Andhradēsa also. As in Magadhā, so also in Andhra, there were people who could not fully subscribe to Brāhmaṇism with its costly rituals and caste discriminations. Especially the erstwhile prominent tribes, the Nāgas and Yākas appear to have been seething with discontent and seized every opportunity to

inflict insult and humiliation on the Brāhmanists. The Kathāsaritarasagāra records the story of Dīpakarṇī, according to which, a certain Yakṣa by name Sātā eloped with a Brāhmin girl and the eponymous Sātavāhana was born of the union. The dynasty of Sātavāhana later became stout champions of Vedic ritualism. According to the Simhāsana-Dvātrakīrka, king Sālivāhana of Pratīṣṭhāna, was the son of Nāga Amanta. Again, Gunadhya, the Minister of one of the Sātavāhana kings, was the son of Nāga prince, Kṛtisena, by a Brāhmin girl.

Even on the intellectual plane, there was widespread discontent and people began to discuss fundamental problems of life. The Suttanipāta and the Mahāvastu record the story of a certain Sabhiya who went to the North in search of a teacher. Sabhiya became later one of the foremost disciples of Gautama Buddha. According to another tradition, a learned Brāhmin by name Kausthila resorted to the South for learning the Lokāyata doctrine. Kausthila was the maternal uncle of Sāriputta, one of the principal disciples of the Buddha. Kausthila was a past-master of the Brāhmanical Śāstras. Two things are clear from this account: (1) Kausthila was dissatisfied with the Brāhmanical Learning he had acquired in the North; (2) the Lokāyata Darśana which was the first systematic form of Indian materialist thought was very popular in Daksināpatha. In the South, Kausthila became a

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1. Kathāsaritarasagāra Tarānga 6, P. 15.
2. Banaghat and Nasik Inscriptions mentioned already.
4. Ibid. 126.
Farivrajaka, under the name Dirghanakha. In the Majjimanikāya, there is the Dighanakhasutta which the Buddha delivered for the benefit of Kanthila Dighanakha Parivrajaka.

The story of Dighanakha further informs us that already there had been established the Parivrajaka orders in the South. It is mentioned above that the Rāmāyana hints at the existence of the Parivrajaka orders in the South and the Ājīvikas also should have made their way to the South. Further, the criticism levelled against the monastic system by the South Indian Sutrakāras, Bdhāyana and Āpastamba clears all doubts regarding the existence of Monastic orders in Andhradesa.

The above account makes it clear that there was growing discontent in Daksinapatha towards Brāhmaṇism. As in the North, in the South also, "The time had already come for the earnest thinkers like Satyavaha Bharadvaja who represents the common case of all who called themselves Brāmanas against worldly Brāhmaṇas, to uphold transcendentalism against both asceticism as largely practised by the Vedic ascetics and worldly life as regulated with puritanic strictures by the Brāhmaṇa priests and jurists and thus to prepare the way for the rationalism of the Buddha who enunciated the Middle Path (majjima patipada) and sought for a via media of thought and conduct and intellectual training."

1. Vide Infra, PP. 56-57.
2. Bdhāyana stated that the Āstamani called PARIVRĂJYA, were introduced by an Aśura called Kapila, the son of Prahlāda who was not on good terms with gods. Bdhāyana Sūtras, II, 6, 30.
3. R.H. FeLta, Pre-Buddhist India, P. 343.