

Prehistoric Background to Pastoralism in the Southern Deccan in the Light of Oral Traditions and Cults of Some Pastoral Communities *

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1. Introduction

The Kuruvas (or Kurubas) are a shepherd community inhabiting the semi-arid regions of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh in Southern India. Like some groups of Kurubas (as they are called in Karnataka) and some groups of Dhangars in Maharashtra (SONTHEIMER 1975: 139–170), living in a similar semi-arid environment, they are either nomadic or practise transhumance moving with large flocks of sheep from one pasture to the other. They now lead a symbiotic life with the settled farmers and maintain themselves by the

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