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Andre Sjoberg of Austin, Texas, USA in a series of publications, the important one being the proceedings of the Symposium on Dravidian Civilization conducted in 1968 and published in 1971 has brought to light the identity of the Dravidians and their contribution to Indian Philosophy, culture, and civilization.

Accidentally the Dravidian Linguistics Association was founded in Trivandrum in 1971, the year of the publication of Sjoberg's Dravidian Civilization, and the International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics appeared in the same year. Many Indian friends who had visiting assignments in Austin, and those who were visiting Fellows from the USA, then and after, in the International School of Dravidian Linguistics did not mention at all about Sjoberg's publications until it is traced by me from a foot note in a finish publication, recently. Sjoberg was kind enough to send her proceedings and the three other publications which form the basis of my observations and quotations that follow.

Many of the points noted by S.K. Pandian match with her students and hence I have extracted below those which are parallel in this monograph and in her publications.

P. Sundaram Pillai, the famous author of Manonmaniam, the Tamil Drama, and a well-known historian observed that the area south of Vindhya was true India and that most of what is ignorantly called Aryan Philosophy, is literally Dravidian or Tamilian at bottom (I.P.152). He also emphasized that real history of India should begin from the banks of Cavery and Tamraparni and not from the Ganges' as quoted by Vincent Smith.

Sjoberg adopts the 'Reasoning through Elimination' (Durkheim 1951) i.e., if the Aryan languages are part of the Indian European family, the differences in structure and meaning i.e., culture should be non-Aryan. Among the non-Aryan languages Austroloid and Tibeto-Burman being negligible minorities, the only language family which might have influenced Sanskrit from the Vedic period and the modern Indo Aryan languages should be Dravidian, which has a spread throughout India and in Pakistan, Baluchistan, Iran, and Southern parts of the erstwhile USSR. This all coincides with a literary wealth that dates back to the third century B.C.

This process of elimination was spelt out as the principle in one of the monographs of the Dravidian Linguistics-Association in 1973 where the differences between Indo-European and Indo Aryan in language and culture have to be traced back to the Dravidian mentioned. (Seminar on Grammatical Theories). It is an independent statement.

The earliest Sanskrit texts indicate close with Dravidians and inter-marriage with Dravidians. Soon after the arrival of the Aryans, some non-Aryans, particularly Dravidians, were accepted into the Brahmin fold during the period of the Vedas. The Aryans soon began to adopt many clearly non-Aryan patterns.

The linguistic evidence for Dravidian impact grows increasingly strong as we move from the Samhitas down through the later Vedic works and into the classical post-Vedic literature. (2.0.45)

Meenakshi (1985) holds the view that several Vedic hymns were composed by non-Aryans, Kuiper (1967) holds that the existence of several non-Aryan names among the Vedic priests proves that members of indigenous group had been adopted in the Aryan Community. Vyasa, the "Great Redactor" of the Vedas, was mainly non-Aryan in ancestry. (Chatterji: 1965: 55-57 (2 p. 46))

As linguists have long recognized, the content of a word must be distinguished from its linguistic form. For eg. Karma, Yoga, Moksha, and Samsara are Sanskrit words and their roots unmistakably Indo European, but concepts they refer to are certainly non- Aryan (or Sanskritic) in origin.

Yoga and the ascetic tradition in general are clearly pre-Aryan and can be traced in South Asia at least as far back as the Indus Civilization which reached its height in the third millennium B.C.

Bhakti is a post -Vedic late Upanishadic and post Upanishadic development that is almost thoroughly non-Aryan. Some authorities argue that it first arose in South India, in what was then the heart of the Dravidian country.

As Klostermaier emphasizes, Krishna is presenting the philosophy of Samkhya which too has its roots in non-Aryan India.

Another non-Aryan religious feature that appears in the epics and plays a central role in Hinduism is Shakti (power or energy) depicted as feminine. Shakti is important as it is linked to other key – non – Aryan patterns in Hinduism such as asceticism particularly in its aspect of Tapas (heat) and the concepts of Karma and Samsara. Shakti above all is central to goddess worship which clearly is pre – Aryan and mainly Dravidian.

According to Dandekar (1974) Vishnu was a pre – Aryan fertility God before he was vitally Transformed by the Vedic poet-priests into an "Aryan Deity". Certainly his dark-skinned incarnation Krsna incorporates important non-Aryan values (2 p.53-54).

Siva (the Great Yogi) is mainly Dravidian, as is his consort Sakti, who manifests herself in many shapes and forms.

The highly elaborate philosophy of Savia Siddhanta an intellectual analysis of the mystical experiences of the bhakta or devotee is distinctly and thoroughly Dravidian (Neil 1974: 62 – 63. (2p.64)

"Why do so many allegedly Aryan Cultural Traits in India apparently lack counterparts in areas of Indo-European settlement outside of India?" The answer very likely is that many of these features were either part of the pre-Aryan heritage or elsewhere the products of an Aryan – Non – Aryan synthesis.

Jainism and Buddhism also drew upon non-Aryan, mainly Dravidian tradition. Zimmer (1951: 218-219) observed that:

“the history of Indian philosophy has been characterized largely by a series of crisis of interaction between the invasion Vedic-Aryan and the non-Aryan, earlier, Dravidian styles of thought and spiritual experience. The Brahmins were the principle representatives of the former, while the latter was preserved and finally, reasserted, by the surviving princely houses of the native Indian traditions and is consequently a relatively simple unsophisticated, clean – cut and direct manifestation of the pessimistic dualism that underlies not only Sankhya, yoga and early Buddhistic thought, but also much of the reasoning of the Upanishads and even the so-called “non-dualism” of the Vendanta.’ (2: p.58)

‘The system of Tantra, which emerged in the medieval period in India, perpetuated many of the ideas of Sankhya, particularly and refined the application of the psychological principles alluded to above. Zimmer (1951:219) saw these affecting the whole texture of the religious life of India as well as much of the popular and esoteric Buddhist teaching in Tibet and East Asia’ (2 p.58)

‘Although the notion of Sakti is widespread in Hinduism the fact that the concept is most highly developed in Tamil Nadu and was given considerable emphasis in the Tamil literature dating back almost two thousand years, leads one to the view that the concept of Sakti is mainly a Dravidian development (2 p.60).

‘The Mother Goddess idea was of only importance in the Indo-European religion. Although the classical Greek deities included many prominent female figures, these evidently were inherited from pre-Classical Mediterranean civilizations and the old European culture (not to be confused with the Indo European) (Gumbutas, 1982)’ (2 p.61)

“Siva (the Great Yogi) is mainly Dravidian, as are his consort Sakti, who manifests herself in many shapes and forms, and their sons Karttikeya, modelled after the prominent Dravidian warrior God Murugan and the elephant – headed deity Ganesa, who is popular in India today’.
(2 pp. 62-63)

‘If is often not recognized that the South Indian (ie., Dravidian) component was the crucial one in the formation of bhakti as we know it today. Zaehner (1966:134) for example, observed that:

‘It was the Bhagvad-Gita that set-in motion the transformation of Hinduism from a mystical technique based on the ascetic virtues of renunciation and self-forgetfulness into the impassioned religion of self-abandonment to God, but the strictly religious impulse which gave momentum to the whole bhakti movement stemmed from the Tamil lands of south India. From the tenth century on all that is most vital in Hinduism manifest itself in the form of bhakti’
(2p.63).

Tyler, a highly respected Anthropologist, In India: An Anthropological Perspective (1973:68) observed that:

‘Aryan orthodoxy was obliterated by heterodoxy, and even though the heterodox cults themselves eventually declined, the pattern of Aryan dominance was forever shattered. Remnants of Aryan culture were to survive the destruction but only in “Dravidianized” form. In every cultural sphere, the ancient Dravidian forms reasserted themselves, transmogrifying Aryan doctrines and conventions, reducing Aryan Gods to Dravidian Gods replacing the Aryan cult of the family altar with the Dravidian temple, subordinating ritualism to devotionism transforming class divisions into caste distinctions and welding loosely knit tribal confederacies into centralized empires. The Hindu synthesis was less the dialectical reduction of orthodoxy and heterodoxy than the resurgence of the ancient aboriginal Indus Civilization. In this process the rude, barbaric Aryan tribes were gradually civilized and eventually merged with autochthonous Dravidians. Although elements of their domestic cut and ritualism were jealously preserved by Brahman priests, the body of their culture survived only fragmentary tales and allegories embedded in vast, syncretistic compendia. On the whole, the Aryan contribution to Indian culture was already established in the third millennium B.C. and the form of the Indian civilization perjured and eventually reasserted itself. (2p.43)

I can quote more. But an introduction to a book will not justify abundant quotations.

Sjoberg has argued that the historical facts concerning the origin and development of Indian civilization belie the traditional image that the most Indologists have had of the Dravidians. As with most minorities, the Dravidians have either been generally ignored or else imbued with a distorted image. “If my assessment is correct, a considerable re-evaluation of the course of development of one of the world’s great civilization is in order.” (2p 68-69)

These are the concluding sentences of Sjoberg in the publication cited below as the second. S.K. Pandian’s monograph has also a similar thrust but mildly expressed.

Sd/-
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Comparative Civilization Review No.23, 1990