

PREFACE

It is now definitely established that the Aryans came to India from outside. It is also asserted evidentially that among the people whom the Aryans met in India Nagas and Dravidians were prominent groups. Hundreds of bloody battles were fought between Aryans and Das (or Dasyus) are mentioned in Rigveda and these Dasa-Dasyus are now identified with the Dravidians. The political side of the Dravidians is not known up to the 3rd century A.D. for lack of literary and other evidences from their side. Even the enormous Sanskrit literature does not guide us much regarding the socio-political and cultural side of the Dravidians. Therefore, what is Dravidian culture and what is Aryo-Dravidian composite culture is a matter of rational conjectural assertion of the scholars.

In spite of all the uncertainties there are certain physical features associated with cultural, linguistic and anthropological divisions of present day India which guide us with the help of prima facie evidences about the cultural dominance of the various human groups that have made cultural side of India today.

Entire belt or bordering areas right from Nagaland, Bengal, Mizoram, Orissa, Andhra, Tamilnadu, Kerala, Karnataka and coastal area of Maharashtra are the indication that culturally and linguistically what is known as Dravidian India remains dominant

through the ages.

This would indicate that the middle part of India remained Arya-dominated and outer part of India remained non-Aryan dominated.

Historically speaking this can tell us that middle India (Madhya Pradesh, U.P., part of Bihar and Punjab) was once called Madhya Desh and was the cradle of Arya dominated culture. How long the conflict between Aryans and Dravidians continued in early period is difficult to tell. If the post-Vedic literature is to be believed it is possible to establish that co-operation between the two is more contributing than the clash. Among all the racial elements in India, the elements of Arya-Dravida race culture combination is more witnessing than any other combination.

The only problem is how to discern Aryo-Dravida cultural combination and point out with exactitude the cultural combination. It is a problem beyond anybody's reach. Whatever few traces and evidences are available in literary and other forms are used here to denote the result of this combination. It is often said that the philosophical part has been the contribution from the Aryan side and practical side of the Hinduism has been from the Dravidian. In other words, the Vedic culture was the contribution of the Aryans and the puranic culture was the contribution of non-Aryans with special reference to Dravidians is a contention well surmised

with the help of differences in the cultural connotation between the Aryans and Dravidians as reflected into two categories of Sanskrit literature (Vedic and Puranic) itself.

South India for the reasons partly known and partly unknown remains the cradle of Dravida culture exhibiting its own independent individuality even in modern times. Its linguistic culture determines its policies and its politics projects its image on Indian scene.

This cultural distinction has been discussed in this dissertation mostly with the help of literary sources. The literary evidences proving useful for our purpose are many but their authenticity and credentials can be challenged very often when they speak of other side. For example, the Sanskrit literature produced in the Southern region after 3rd century B.C. is only partially acceptable for our purpose whereas the Dravidian literature is meagre and broken in chain. The Sangam literature produced by Tamil poets in 3rd century A.D. is incapable to guide the historians in discerning Arya-Dravida elements in the South Indian culture.

In spite of all our inadequacies, we feel that we are still in a position to distinguish between Aryan and Dravidian elements of culture in the South provided the efforts are properly made.

Vedic literature is our important source and Buddhist and Jaina chronicles and Jataka stories have been extensively used for studying early culture of Aryans and Dravidians both in North and in South.

In addition to these, there are archaeological sources that have explained the three layers of cultures: palaeolithic, neolithic and copper. In fact we do not know when does the historical period begin in ancient South for lack of clear evidences.

Some information available in Sangama literature is quite useful for distinguishing Aryan and Dravidian culture from each other.

The art and architecture of South India is a good source but again in this connection also the literary evidence to distinguish Arya-Dravida elements in the culture is lacking but art and architectural motifs can suggest something and this has been made the major source here. The religious movements such as Saivites and Vaishnavites and Jainism and Buddhism are another important sources but these too have failed to produce a literary evidence of clarity, which we can use for our purpose though at places we have consciously used this literature too.

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