



## DRAVIDIANS CULTURE AND ARYANS SETTLEMENT IN TAMILNADU-ANALYSIS

Dr. T.  
Balasubramanian

M.A.,(His).,M.A., (His & Tour. Mgt)., M.A., (Pol. Sci)., B.L.I.Sc M.Phil.,Ph.D.

### ABSTRACT

The main objective of the study is to brought out the Dravidians Culture and Aryans Settlement in TamilNadu. The Dravidians form the largest racial group of the population. The Aryans migrated to Tamilakam in later times. These racial groups contributed to the evolution of a composite culture, dominated by Dravidian elements. Historians differ in their views on the original home of the Dravidians. The exponents of what is called Immigration Theory suggest that the Dravidians came from outside India. They claim that the Dravidians belonged to the Negrito, the Mongol or the Scythian races and they migrated to India before they moved south-ward. Central Asia, Persia, Tibet, Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean region are suggested as the early home of the people. The existence of common physical features between the Dravidians of India and the people of these respective areas and the prevalence of common words between languages are cited as evidences to such immigration to India.

**KEYWORDS :** Dravidians Culture, Aryans, TamilNadu

### INTRODUCTION

The population consists of the Dravidians and the Aryans. The Dravidians form the largest racial group of the population. The Aryans migrated to Tamilakam in later times. These racial groups contributed to the evolution of a composite culture, dominated by Dravidian elements. On the other hand, the advocates of the Emigration Theory assert that India was the original home of the Dravidians and that they migrated to other countries from the subcontinent. Thus Scott Elliot observes: "The locality of the origin of the earliest race from recent researches appears to have been on lands now submerged beneath the Indian Ocean". It is believed that South India formed part of a large continent called Lemuria and it was lost to the sea because of floods.

### Historians differ in their views on the original home of the Dravidians

Historians differ in their views on the original home of the Dravidians. The exponents of what is called Immigration Theory suggest that the Dravidians came from outside India. They claim that the Dravidians belonged to the Negrito, the Mongol or the Scythian races and they migrated to India before they moved south-ward. Central Asia, Persia, Tibet, Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean region are suggested as the early home of the people. The existence of common physical features between the Dravidians of India and the people of these respective areas and the prevalence of common words between languages are cited as evidences to such immigration to India. However, it should be asserted that no specific conclusion can be drawn from the existence of similarities among peoples and hence this theory cannot be substantiated.

On the other hand, the advocates of the Emigration Theory assert that India was the original home of the Dravidians and that they migrated to other countries from the subcontinent. Thus Scott Elliot observes: "The locality of the origin of the earliest race from recent researches appears to have been on lands now submerged beneath the Indian Ocean". It is believed that South India formed part of a large continent called Lemuria and it was lost to the sea because of floods. In fact, the *Silappadikaram* refers to a great deluge in which the Kumari Mountain disappeared. Nakkirar, in his commentary to the *Irayanar Ahapporul*, a Tenth Century work, observes that a great deluge devastated the then Madurai. Deepavamsa and Mahavamsa of Sri Lanka too refer to a deluge. Because of these references, Father Heras concludes that as Lemuria was submerged in the sea, the inhabitant, who were scattered, drifted to other parts of the world. Those

who reached and settled in South India came to be known as the Dravidians. Maclean, on the other hand, states that the Dravidians lived in the Indus Valley and some of them moved to the west by both sea and land and settled in Sumeria and Palestine while some others in South India. H.R.Hall too asserts that the Dravidians moved out of India and settled in Mesopotamia and Palestine.

Yet in the absence of positive evidence, it is not possible to accept any of these theories. In fact, a lot of imagination and distortion have crept into these formulations. The Brahminical historians, as the Brahmins themselves being foreigners, are interested in projecting the Dravidians as outsiders while the Dravidian historians in depicting the Dravidians as the original inhabitants of South India and Sri Lanka. Being a sea faring people, with commercial contacts far and wide, groups of them would have moved out or moved in. But it cannot be denied that the Dravidian habitations were wide spread throughout the Sub-continent from ancient times. The excavations that were carried out in different areas, whether they were in Sind or Maharashtra or Sri Lanka, have not only brought out the relics of Dravidian settlements but also established their megalithic antiquity. Added to this, the survival of some fourteen Dravidian languages like Kui, Kuruk and Malto in the hill tracts of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, leads us to believe in the overall spread of the Dravidians throughout India. It is to be concluded that in the remote past, the Dravidians lived throughout India. But with the advent of the Aryans and defeat in battles, they withdrew to the wilderness of the hilly tracts and the arid regions of South India where they developed their own distinct culture.

H.G. Rawlinson, in his work on India, has described the ancient Tamils as a hardy peasant folk who made good soldiers, bold sailors and skilled agriculturists. As peasants, they ploughed the land, planted fruit trees, kept herds of cattle, raised domestic birds and wove fabrics. They made boats and sailed the sea for trade, even too far off lands like Babylon and Sumeria. Being lovers of fine arts, they took interest in dance, music and literature. As warriors, they took pride in destroying the fields of enemies and carrying away cattle as well as women. They built their houses with wood, stone or bricks. Metal was not much in use. The elegantly finished pottery was a testimony to the artistic sense of the inhabitants. Vedic literature and the Tamil works refer to the cities and forts that they constructed. These indicated the level of material progress that the early people attained in the remote past.

The Dravidians had their own concept of religion. They believed in the forces of nature in the forms of Mother Goddess and Father God, with lion and bull as their respective vehicles. Yet they took interest in a material civilization and aimed at economic progress. Tamil was the popular language of the people. The origin of the word is attributed to the root *Tami*, which means, lovely. In fact, Tamil is considered a lovely language. By 950 A.D, in the *Chintamani*, it was used in the sense of sweetness. The ancient Tamil had an alphabet of its own – the *Vatteluthu* or round form of writing, which is traced to Brahmi character and Grantha script. The language of the Harappan inscriptions, according to Father Heras, is believed to have been the parent of all Dravidian languages, of which Tamil is the oldest and the richest. Beluchistana tribe called Brahui, speaks a language that is closely allied to early Dravidian language. This is taken as an indication of the existence of a Dravidian Colony, founded by the outgoing or incoming migrants in the Indus Valley. Excavations at Adichandallur near Tirunelveli and Mangadu near Kollam have brought out relics of Dravidian Settlements by 1000 B.C., during the pre-historic age. Weapons, vessels and ornaments made of bones, stone, iron, bronze and gold were in use.

### Aryans and Their Settlement

The advent of Aryans for conquest and colonisation in India, posed a threat to the Dravidians. The Aryan tribes reached India from Central Asia in successive waves of immigration, during the period from 2500 to 200 B.C. As a result, they displaced the Dravidians from the whole of the Indo-Gangetic basin. They colonized the plain, called it Arya Varta and founded numerous kingdoms like Kosala and Magadha. Just as the European colonists treated the Indians of America as savages and wretches, these Indo-Aryans depicted the Dravidians as demons and monkeys. They pushed the natives southward beyond the Vindhya or drove them to the mountainous terrains. As the fertile plains passed into the possession of the colonists, the Vindhya were looked upon as the frontier between the Aryans and the Dravidians. Manu considered the Vindhya as the southern frontier of Arya Varta. Until about 600 B.C, the literary works of the Aryans did not convey any knowledge of the Deccan in the South.

However, with the progress of centuries, geographical knowledge increased and by the First Century B.C, the Aryan tribes began to move southward. By a threefold process of conquest, colonization and conversion, they extended their influence. If Sri Rama was the hero of conquest, Parasu Rama was of colonization and Agastya was of conversion. *Ramayana* maintains the tradition of Aryan expedition to the Dravidian South. Bali and Ravana were great warriors who led Dravidian forces against Aryan tribes but they were defeated and destroyed because of betrayal and treachery by Sugriva and Hanuman who joined the camp of Sri Rama. As a result, the expedition culminated in the conquest of the Peninsula and destruction of Lanka. Vali Parai near Kanyakumari recalled the glory of the exploits of Bali but since Independence, it was named after Vivekananda. Supported by the local rulers, the Brahmins settled in the western region. Subsequently, it was claimed that Lord Parasurama created Kerala and donated it to the Brahmins. The legends that are centered on Agastya and mentioned in the Epics and the Puranas, preserve the memory of the Aryan cultural movement southward. From the *Ramayana*, it is learnt that Agastya brought with him several rishis and settled them in and around Dandakaranya. Also he is said to have lived in Kudagu and Pothihai Hills and spread the Aryan culture. As a consequence, the Dravidians were acculturated with Aryan religion and culture.

Aryan colonization and cultural movement were usually marked by subjugation of resisting powers as well as assimilation of cultures. The Aryans introduced to the

Dravidians their Brahminical religion, Sanskrit language and caste system. At the same time, the Aryans borrowed from the Dravidians concepts of the soul, rebirth and *karma*, which were incorporated in the *Upanishads* in subsequent times. The Agamic thoughts, relating to *tantricism*, worship and construction of structural temples were purely Dravidian. While fire worship is ascribed to Aryan tradition, the flower worship is ascribed to Dravidian. In fact, the interaction between the northern and southern thoughts and practices contributed to the evolution of a composite culture and not always dominated by Aryan elements.

### CONCLUSION

In subsequent periods, other ethnic groups moved into Tamilakam. The Jains and the Buddhists established monasteries and spread their religions in South India and Lanka Island. With the Roman conquest of West Asia, the Syrians and the Jews, who fled their lands, settled in the Western Coast. Christianity came in the wake of this migration. The demand for Arab horse and scope for trade brought the Arabs into the country. With them came Islam too. The interaction that followed these developments, affected Tamil identity considerably. It cannot be denied that alien domination crippled the Tamil population, eroded cultural values and led to loss of territories. Yet what was unique was that they retained their traditions, language and social customs to the present day.

### REFERENCES

1. Appadurai, A., Economic Conditions in Southern India (1000-1500 A.D.), Madras, 1936.
2. Sattanathan, A.N. The Dravidian Movement in Tamil Nadu and its Legacy, University of Madras, Madras, 1982.
3. Baliga, B.S., Tanjore District Hand Book, Madras, 1957.
4. Jesudasan, C., and Hepziba Jesudasan, A History of Tamil Literature, Calcutta, 1961.
5. Rajayyan, K., History of Tamilnadu 1965-1982
6. Robert L- Hardgrave -The Dravidian Movement -Bombay 1965.
7. Bhavan B.N History and Culture of the Indian People Vol.XI.
8. Lahovary N. Dravidian origins and the west Madras , 1963.