Hidden secrets of Dravidian culture

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Abstract

This paper brings out the hidden glorious Dravidian Culture and the amount of influence made by Dravidian’s upon the Asian/foreign nations of the world. The Ancient Dravidian’s were the direct ancestors of the Tamils, Malayalees, Telugus, Canarese, and other tribes now occupying the greater part of South India. The fact that several Dravidian dialects such as Brahui, Villi and Santal are found stranded in the midst of other tongues in Baluchistan, Rajaputana and Central India. Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro have unearthed a seal (dated around B.C.) which shows a four-faced figure seated with legs folded in yogi-like posture, the posture traditionally associated with the state of contemplation. The Adichanallur remains of bronze figures of a variety of domestic animals and of fillets of gold beaten very thin gives the conclusive proof of the artistic development of the Dravidian races in pre-historic times. This author unearths the facts and relates the relationships between the discoveries made on ancient Dravidians.

Keywords: Dravidian, hidden secrets, Adichanallur remains, South India, Mohenjo-Daro

Introduction: The Ancient Dravidian’s were the direct ancestors of the Tamils, Malayalees, Telugus, Canarese, and other tribes now occupying the greater part of South India. The fact that several Dravidian dialects such as Brahui, Villi and Santal are found stranded in the midst of other tongues in Baluchistan, Rajaputana and Central India. This paper brings out the hidden glorious Dravidian Culture and the amount of influence made by Dravidian’s upon the Asian/foreign nations of the world.

Discussion: The diverse populations in India can be broadly classified phenotypically in to four ethnic classes: Australoid, Negrito, Mongoloid, and Caucasoid. The last ethnic group is spread over the entire country, with specific concentration in the northern regions. Australoid group is mostly confined to western and southern states. The Negrito element is restricted to the Andaman Islands, and Siddis. The only Negroid population in India, is a migrant group from Africa, reside in Karnataka, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. The four major groups of languages spoken by the Indians: Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Burman and Indo-European. Majority of main land populations of southern India are Dravidian speakers whereas those in northern India are Indo-European speakers. Austro-Asiatic languages are used exclusively by tribal groups, e.g. Korkus, Mundas, Santhals, Khasis, Nicobarese, Oraon, etc.

Excavations at Mohenjo-Daro have unearthed a seal (dated around B.C.) which shows a four-faced figure seated with legs folded in yogi-like posture, the posture traditionally associated with the state of contemplation. Around the seated figure are four beasts – the bull, elephant, buffalo and rhinoceros. This suggests the conclusion that the God later known as Siva, the great yogi (maha-yogin), was worshipped by the pre-Aryan people of Mohenjo-Daro in the aspect of Pasupathi, Lord of beasts. Who, then are these Dravidians? They are distinguished, says H. Risley, by their low stature, black skin, long heads, broad noses, and long fore-arm from the rest of the inhabitants of India. They form the original type of the population of India, now modified to a varying extent by the admixture of Aryan, Scythian, and Mongoloid elements.

Hypothesis

1. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa are not related to ancient Dravidians
2. Aryan invasion has not disturbed Dravidians
3. There is no relationship between Tamils and the ancient Dravidians
Topinard divides the Population of the Indian Peninsula into three strata, (viz) the Black, Mongolian, and the Aryan. The remnants of the first are the Yenadis and Kurumbas. The second has spread over the Plateau of Central India by two lines of way, one to the north-east and the other to the north-west. The remnants of the first invasion are seen in the Dravidian or Tamil tribes, and those of the second in the Jhata. The third was the Aryan. According to Ananda Coomaraswamy, a number of decorative motifs and cult figures from the Aegean region are found in northern and southern India in a striking manner. Dr. Sunitikumar Chatterji shows that the word Dramila was used to represent the Tamil Land in Proto-Dravidian or primitive Dravidian of the early centuries of the first millennium B.C. The Lycians of Asia Minor, whose original home was Crete, in their funerary inscriptions call themselves Trmmili. Trmmili therefore was an old name which was used in Crete to denote a section of the Cretan people. Dr. Chatterji identifies this Trmmili with the Dravidian Dramili, and says that this is one more point to prove that the original Dravidian's were a ramification of the old Aegean race. The languages of the Sumerians and Elamites have certain resemblances in phonetics and structure with themselves and with Dravidian and Lycian. Dr. Chatterji therefore suggests that Cretan, Lycian, Sumerian, Elamite, and Dravidian Languages might be mutually related, and that the Aegean islands, Asia Minor, and Mesopotamia might have originally formed one cultural area.

To sum up, in the opinion of the various authorities here cited, the Dravidians seem to have been originally a Mediterranean people. It will be easily conceded that the people, who evolved the Punjab and Sindh culture, should have been a non-Aryan, presumably, the ancient Dravidian, people, since at the period assigned to this culture, the Aryans could not have entered India. Mr. Banerji is also inclined to this view. We also find striking resemblance between the finds of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro and those of Adichanallur and other pre-historic sites in South India.

Dr. Hall suggests that the Sumerians might be a branch of the Indian Dravidians, perhaps of the Indus valley. Lord Goschen — observations states “it is almost a moot point which further researchers may resolve, whether the Ancient Dravidian inhabitants of the southern Indian coasts were not akin to the Sumerians. South Indian pre-historic sites like Panduvaram Dewai — three and a half miles to the north east of Chittoor. The Pottery unearthed is of a fine description. The builders of those monuments were acquainted with the art of smelting and working iron. Adichanallur excavations 15 miles south east from Tinnevelly. The burial urns and other articles of pottery resemble the finds of other South Indian localities. According to Foote, there has been a true evolution in the potter’s craft which attained a stage of very real beauty. The bronzes exhibit a high degree of skill in workmanship and manipulation of the metal, while the same may be said of the iron implements.

The people knew how to forge iron into shapes for daily use both in agriculture and warfare. A cairn, situated on land 2 miles to the north of the village of Sirumugai and 8 miles from Mettupalayam show the urns contains human skulls and bones, corroded iron implements, pottery, domestic vessels, a few beads, stone flakes, drinking cups, and rice bowls is of excellent quality, red in color, but mostly covered with a false black glaze. The four-legged urns of the type found here have also been found in ancient graves at Perumbair and Pallavaram in the Chingleput districts, at Adichanallur in the Tinnevelly district, and in certain rock-cut tombs discovered on the west-coast. In the opinion of Mr. Longhurst, the presence of iron and stone implements in one and the same burial urn may show that these tombs go back to the early iron age, when large numbers of people continued to use stone implements long after iron was known.

The excellent workmanship shown in the beads, and the high quality of the domestic vessels, together with the numerous remains of iron weapons or implements, clearly show that the people, who made these quaint tombs for their dead, were highly civilized race of an advanced type. A large mound near Chingleput is surrounded by a number of megalithic graves, and believed to have been inhabited by a bearded race of “Pandyar”. The very name of Pandu houses, by which the tombs are familiarly known in every district, points to primitive pre-Brahmanical times and believes; all that is referred to about Pandavas being directly opposed to
Brahmanical rites and ideas, and savoring rather of aboriginal practices. 7

At Perumbair, 8 In the Chingleput district, the ancient burial sites of the people are indicated on the surface by circles of rough stone boulders, and in the Centre of each circle at the depth of from two to seven feet was found either a pyriform urn or an earthenware cist. The contents of these graves were pottery, stone objects, a few iron implements, and some chunk shell ornaments. The pottery is of a coarser fabric than that of Adichanallur. The dolmens on the Coromandel Coast near Kollur, four miles from Tirukoilur, are noteworthy. The Araikkananallur Pagoda near Tirukoilur is a striking object built on a rock, and is remarkable on account of the existence of five singular cells cut in the solid rock, where local traditions say the five Pandavas lived during their exile. In one of the structures were found some fragments of bones and some scraps of iron. These megalithic monuments in general resemble those of Adichanallur. It may be presumed that these monuments were built by the Dravidian races of South India. Dr. Chatterji believes that the old stone age weapons found in different parts of India belonged to the Negritos, the oldest Indian people in his opinion, and that the New Stone age implements were the work of the ancestors of the Kols. In his opinion the culture type, presented by the finds in the Adichanallur tombs, where articles of bronze and iron were obtained, and the burial customs therein indicated, resemble those of Crete, Cyprus, Anatolia, and Babylonia. He recognizes the closer affinities of Adichanallur tombs with those of Crete and Cyprus in the crouching position of the dead body, in the Sarcophagi, and in the golden masks and ornaments. But what is more important to our immediate purpose is to note the fact that the tombs of Adichanallur and those of Perumbair, Coimbatore, and other places in South India, which we have just now examined, bear resemblance to one another in some respects, though not in all, and that the megalithic monuments of these places are situated in South India, a part of the country which is predominantly Dravidian. M. Lapicque arrived at the conclusion that the remains at Adichanallur belonged to a Proto-Dravidian race. Some large earthenware urns excavated by Mr. A. Rea at the prehistoric burial site 9 at Adichanallur contained human skulls in a perfect condition. These skulls have been found, on being measured, to agree with the typical Tamil Skull. It is therefore contended that the bronze and iron age culture of Adichanallur is that of the early Dravidian. It may also be further maintained that the culture, represented by the other megalithic monuments of South India noticed above, is also that of the ancient Dravidian. The Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa culture.

Prof. Rhys Davids maintained that Ancient High Indian (i.e.) the Vedic language, was largely subject to Dravidian influence, both in phonetics and in vocabulary. The Dravidian dialects affected profoundly the sounds, the structure, the idiom, and the vocabulary of Sanskrit. The differences between the Vedic language and its hypothetic parent Indo-Germanic, are due to the influence of the Dravidian dialects of India. In the course of the development of India on account of the constant influence of the Dravidian tongues, Sanskrit lost the subjunctive mood, many in its development in India on account of this constant influence of the Dravidian tongues, Sanskrit lost the subjunctive mood, many infinitive forms, and several noun-declensions, forgot its richly varied system of real verb tenses, and adopted turns of expression peculiar to the Dravidian idiom. Mr. M. Collins has shown the existence of a Dravidic Substratum in the languages of North India. The Dravidian element makes its influence felt in the sounds employed not only in the Sanskrit itself. Dr. Gundert has pointed out the not inconsiderable number of Dravidian roots adopted into Sanskrit, a fact persistently ignored by the northern Pandits. It was proved years ago by Dr. Taylor that a Tamiloid language, now represented by its most cultivated branch in the south, constituted the original staple of all the languages of India. The existence of a Tamilian substratum in all the modern dialects of India. The existence of a Tamilian substratum in all the modern dialects of India and of the profound influence, which the classical Tamil has exercised on the formation and development of both the Vedic and the classical Sanskrit, is gradually coming to be recognized by students of Indian philology. Prof. Rhys Davids in his Buddhist India commenting on the evolution of the Aryan Languages of India maintains that the Vedic Sanskrit is mixed up with the primitive Dravidian. 10 Dr. Maclean holds that
there is little doubt that the Dravidian languages are comparatively older in point of time than Sanskrit.¹³

Mr. P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar after an examination of the Punjab and Sindh antiquities suggests that a complete picture of the Neolithic culture of India can be constructed from a study of pure Tamil Words, that elementary Tamil words are all monosyllabic, such as can very well be represented by the pictographic script referred to by Sir John Marshall, that languages spoken in India in old times (say20,000 Years ago) were all dialects of proto-Tamil, and that the language spoken in the heart of the Lower Godavary Valley is the Modern representation of Proto-Tamil Mr. P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar believes that the so-called Sanskritic or Gaurian languages of Northern India are only the ancient dialects of Proto-Tamil profoundly affected by Sanskrit. It is evident from the foregoing account that the Dravidian – speaking races were different from the Aryans, that they were sufficiently advanced to develop languages of their own, and civilized and numerous enough to absorb completely the numerically inferior Aryan foreigners, and enrich their speech with words relating to their professions which were in a high state of perfection among themselves.⁴

The Dravidians had made much progress in the industrial arts. They worked in metals. The Dravidian name for smith, karuma, from wary with incised marks resembling those of Mincan Crete, which the Vedic Karmara is probably borrowed, means a smelter. Their Artificers made ornaments of gold, pearls, and of precious stones for their kings. The explorations of the Hyderabad Archaeological Society have brought to light pottery with incised marks resembling those of Minoan Crete. The Adichanallur remains, we have already indicated, consisted of bronze figures of a Variety of domestic animals and of fillets of gold beaten very thin. These afford conclusive proof of the artistic development of the Dravidian races in pre-historic times. Such were the economic and industrial glories of the Dravidian race.⁴

Hypothesis concluded:
1. Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa are related to ancient Dravidians
2. Aryan invasion has disturbed Dravidians
3. There is relationship between Tamils and the ancient Dravidians

Conclusion
The enrichment of the civilization consequent upon the constant and lively interchange of ideas and experiences with the myriad races of the ancient world, the high degree of material prosperity that followed in virtue of this extraordinary commercial enterprise and remarkable outburst of literary and intellectual activity, witnessed during the Augustan Age of Tamil Literature. Further thorough detailed research and investigations to be made on the religious secrets, business methods, import and export, culture etc. by Dravidian’s happened in the past and the amount of influence made by Dravidians upon the Asian/foreign nations will help to understand the real glories influenced by Dravidians from south India in the past and present.

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