

THE UNIQUENESS OF TAMIL LANGUAGE

Devaneyapavanar*

Reputed grammarian and linguist, he was once a lecturer in Salem Municipal College and he also served in Annamalai University on the eve of his retirement. Pavanar analyses here the Universality of Tamil language.

The history of a country may exist either written or unwritten. Written history may be true or false or partially true. Unwritten history may be extinct or descriptive or narrative. As the Tamil nation (or for that matter the Dravidian race) is of Lemurian origin, and as all the pre-Aryan Tamil literature and the post-Vedic pre-Sangam works, with a few exceptions, have been destroyed, the pre-Christian history of Tamil Nadu can only be of descriptive nature.

The post-Christian history of Tamil Nadu has already been written fairly well by many historians and historiographers.

The South Indian historians as a rule, acquit themselves admirably well in writing the post-Christian history of Tamil Nadu; but become entirely inactive and uninterested with regard to the pre-Christian history of the same, and suddenly turn to the North and base everything on the Vedas. They are even prone to grossly misrepresent facts, as they know for certain that a true representation of ancient Tamil Nadu will only reveal the glory of Tamil, and rebound to the credit of ancient Tamils. Their guiding principle is always to uphold Sanskrit and the Vedic system of culture. The two exceptions in this regard were the late Mr.P.T. Srinivasa Iyengar and Prof.V.R.Ramachandra Dikshitar, both of whom adorned the University of Madras as Head of the Department of History during different periods. If there was any other, it was

* Source: *The Primary Classical Language of the World*. By Devaneyapavanar, 2001. A commemorative Publication of Devaneyapavanar's Centenary Celebrations. (ed. Pulavar A.Nakkeeran), Published by G.Elavazhagan. pp.1-13.

T.R. Sessa Iyengar. All the others are of one mould and flagrantly betray their bias towards Sanskrit. They make a mountain of a molehill if it be in favour of the Aryans, and a molehill of a mountain if it be in favour of the Tamilians.

Under these circumstances, to expect a true and faithful history of pre-Aryan Tamil Nadu to be written by any of the pro-Sanskrit historians of today, is "to set the fox to keep the geese."

The Sources of Cultural History of Ancient Tamils

Tamil being the earliest cultivated language of the world dating from time immemorial, ancient Lemuria, the original home of the Tamilians, having been submerged long ago, it is vain to look for archaeological evidences in support of the antiquity of Tamil civilization and culture. It must be definitely understood, that oceanography and geology have taken the place of archaeology in the case of Tamil Nadu.

Under this situation, the Tamil language and literature alone constitute the sources of material for reconstruction of pre-Christian and pre-Aryan history of Tamil Culture.

Signification of the Term 'Tamil'

'Tamil' is one of those words whose origin and root-meaning are wrapped up in mystery. All that we can say at present without any fear of contradiction is, that it is a pure Tamil word being current as the only name of the language of the Tamils, from the days that preceded the First Tamil Academy established at Thenmadurai on the river Pahruli in the submerged continent.

After some of the Vedic Aryans migrated to the South, Tamil got the descriptive name '*Tenmoli*' lit. 'the southern language', in contradistinction to the Vedic language or Sanskrit which was called '*Vadamoli*', lit. 'the northern language'.

The word 'Tamil' or 'Tamilan' successively changed into 'Dramila', 'Dramida' and 'Dravida' in North India and at first denoted only the Tamil language, as all the other Dravidian dialects separated themselves from Tamil or came into prominence one by one only after the dawn of the Christian era. That is why Sanskrit and Tamil came to be known as *Vadamoli* and *Tenmoli* respectively. This distinction could have arisen only when there were two languages standing side by side, one in the North and the other in the South,

both coming in contact with each other. The Buddhist Tamil Academy which flourished in the 5th century at Madurai, went by the name of 'Travida Sangam'. Pillai Lokacariyar, a Vaisnava Acarya of the 14th century refers to Tamil literature as 'Dravida Sastram'. Even Tayumanavar, a Tamilian saint who lived in the 18th century, employs the word 'Travidam' to designate Tamil, on account of the established usage of the term in religious literature.

Telugu was the first Dravidian dialect to separate from Tamil, and so, Kumarila-Bhatta, an eminent Brahmin writer of the 7th century A.D., uses the term Andhra-Dravida-bhasha, 'the Telugu-Tamil language' for the first time to designate the entire family of the Dravidian languages.

Whether the initial letter is voiced or voiceless, we do not find an 'r' inserted after it in any of the various forms of the word "Tamil" employed by foreigners, as in those used by North-Indians or Sanskritists. In the Indian segment of the Peutinger Tables, we find the names Damirice and Dymirice, and in the Cosmography of the geographer of Ravenna, the name Dimirica. We can safely identify these names with Tamilakam, by which name the Tamil country was generally known in ancient days. The Chinese pilgrim, Hwen Thsang has the form Tchi-mo-Io, which may also be read Dimala or Dimara. There is no difficulty in identifying this word with the name Tamil. The name given to Tamil by the first Danish Missionaries was Lingua Damulica, which may mean the Tamil language or 'the language of the Tamil country. In the Pali of the Mahawanso the form used is Damilo, the derivative of which is Damilo. Tamil was written 'Tamul' and the Dravidian family of languages styled 'Tamulian' at one time by European writers.

The oldest form of Dravida appears to have been Dramila or Dramila. The Dravidas are called Dramilas in Taranatha's Tibetan *History of the Propagation of Buddhism in India* (A.D.1573) and this is the form in which the word occurs again and again in the old Malayalam versions of the Sanskrit Puranas. The next old form that appears to have been most widely in use is Dramida, which by a single consonantal change becomes Dravida. It is apparent that the form Dramila is closest to the word Tamil.

Sanskrit has a tendency either to separate the consonant and vowel of the initial syllabic-consonant of a word and insert an 'r' between them, or to de-vowelise the syllabic-consonant and insert a 'ri' after it, when naturalising Tamil words.

e.g.	Tamil	Sanskrit	Tamil	Sanskrit
	<i>padi</i>	<i>prati</i>	<i>pudavi prithvi</i>	
	<i>padimai</i>	<i>pratima</i>	<i>madi</i>	<i>mri</i>
	<i>padikam</i>	<i>pratika madangam</i>		<i>mridanga</i>
	<i>pavalam</i>	<i>pravala medu</i>		<i>mridu</i>

It is exactly in keeping with this tendency that the word Tamil first became Dramila in Sanskrit. If we take all the Sanskrit alterations of the word Tamil in their historical order, there will be no difficulty at all in identifying the word Dravida with Tamil. Dr.Caldwell has rightly discovered their identity, but has gravely erred in deriving the original from its corruption, i.e., 'Tamil' from 'Dravida'. It is owing to this wrong conclusion that he has reversed the order of the Sanskrit forms of the word Tamil. Evidently he had no knowledge of the Sangam literature, and consequently no idea of the Lemurian origin of Tamil. The Vedic Aryans set foot on the Indian soil not before 2000 B.C. The first Tamil Academy seems to have flourished not later than 5000 B.C. when the language had no other name than Tamil. This chronology proves the preposterousness of Dr.Caldwell's conclusion. Even without chronological evidence it is easier to derive 'Dravia' from 'Tamil' than 'Tamil' from 'Dravida,' and hence the correction of the mistake by Dr. Grierson in his *Linguistic Survey of India*. It also naturally seems improbable and absurd on the face of it, that the highly civilized Tamilian people residing in the extreme south should remain for long without a name for their language or themselves and then be called by the Aryan immigrants, not by a Tamil but by a Sanskrit name.

The etymology of the word Tamil, as I have already stated at the outset, is not yet known. Some attribute to the word the meaning 'that which singularly possesses the letter 'l' and some others 'sweetness.' Both of these do not hold water, as the former demands comparison with all the other languages of the world as a prerequisite, and the latter only expresses the high esteem in which the language is held by the people who speak it. The only way to squeeze a plausible meaning out of the word is to treat it as a corruption of the compound word *tam-il*, which may mean either 'one's house' or 'one's country'. Originally it may have been prefixed to *moli* as an epithet so that the whole may have meant "house-hold language' or 'language of homeland', and denoted the refined speech of Tamil Nadu which differed from that of contiguous northern countries called *moli peyar deyam*, 'countries where the speech changed or was in the transitional stage'. Then, in the course of time, the epithet itself may have come to

denote the language, and gradually evolved into the present form Tamil. Mutation of 'l' into *l* is not uncommon in derivation. Comp. *malai* (cloud or rain), *kal-kaal-kaal-kaal* (blackness).

"The word Tamil occurs in all the ancient Tamil classics as a common or generic name for the people and their language in India. The word is as old as the Tamil language and hence there is no need to derive it from foreign words like Dravida".*

Many do not know that the words 'Tamil' and 'Dravida' are different forms of one and the same vocable. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, which treats 'Tamil' as a native word, declares 'Dravida' to be a Sanskrit one and the name of a province of South India.

Need for distinguishing Tamil from the other Dravidian languages

Though the word Dravida is only an alteration or another form of the term Tamil, it gradually acquired the character of a doublet and came to be used as a generic appellation for all the South Indian languages, because of the essential and distinctive grammatical characteristics and a large number of primary roots which they possess in common. Therefore, Dr.Caldwell was perfectly right in adopting the term Dravidian, derived from 'Dravida', as a common name to designate the South Indian family of languages, leaving the word Tamil free to signify that which is distinctively Tamil and at the same time relieving the term 'Dravidian' of its ambiguity; as it was sometimes used in a restricted sense, as 'equivalent to 'Tamil,' for which purpose it was not suited after Tamil became the parent of one or more of the Dravidian Languages.

As Dr.Caldwell was a pioneer worker in the field of Dravidian philology, there was no need felt during his time for making distinction within the family itself between Tamil and the other languages. Now it has arisen for the following reasons.

- (1) As a result of advanced studies and research in Dravidian philology, the pre-eminence or supremacy of Tamil is realised far more than in the time of Dr. Caldwell.
- (2) The linguistic reorganisation of States in India has contributed much to linguistic distinction and consciousness.

* DI..p.58

- (3) Tamil alone possesses a literature which is distinctively Dravidian and original in design and execution.
- (4) The attitude of Tamil towards Sanskrit is diametrically opposed to that of the other Dravidian languages.
- (5) The Non-Tamil Dravidian languages have been Aryanised and alienated from Tamil so far, that they have reached a point of no return.
- (6) Purity, which is the life and soul of Tamil, is almost unknown to the other Dravidian languages.
- (7) The unique simplicity of Tamil phonology makes Tamil a class' by itself.

The above differentiae warrant invention of a new term to designate Tamil and other Dravidian languages collectively, demoting the old term Dravidian to denote only the non-Tamil languages of the family. The word best suited for the purpose is *Tamilican*, derived from *Tamilic*, a term which has already been used by European writers in what appears to be substantially the same sense in which I propose to use its derivative. The derivation is simple and similar to that of 'Dravidian'. As the Tamil language varied during its spread towards the north, its name also varied correspondingly, and hence, it is only proper that the varied forms should be designated by a varied name. Accordingly, of the two terms *Tamilican* and *Dravidian*, the former will be used as inclusive and the latter as exclusive of Tamil hereafter in this treatise.

Though Modern Tamil seems to have much changed from Old or pre-Dravidian Tamil, still, it will not be far wrong to say that Tamil is the parent of the Dravidian languages. Even Caldwell, who held Tamil only as the eldest member of the Dravidian family of languages, has described Tamil as "probably the earliest cultivated, of the Dravidian languages-in many respects the representative language of the family", "the oldest and most highly cultivated member of the family, and that which contains the largest proportion of the family, inheritance of forms and roots", the most copious and that which contains the largest portion and the richest variety of indubitably ancient forms" and that which furnishes most assistance "in the endeavour to ascertain the characteristics of the primitive Dravidian speech, from which the various existing dialects have divaricated."

Now it is eighty-seven years since the above passages were written."Some of the author's conclusions as to the dates of the older books have been rendered

obsolete by the researches of Indian scholars and by the investigations of the Government Archaeological Departments." The Sangam classics which were unknown even to Tamil scholars during the time of Dr.Caldwell, and in some of which, the tradition "which speaks of a large continent which once existed contiguous to Southern India, and which was submerged by the ocean during a certain inundation not far removed from human recollection" is recorded, were brought to light only after his time. Recent researches in Dravidian philology show, that the relation of Tamil to the Dravidian languages is that of parent and not that of sister, as is ordinarily held by Western philologists. Hence, the distinction between Tamil and its allied languages is fully justified.

(i) Phonological simplicity of Tamil

Though Tamil is a classical language of the first order, its phonology consists of only thirty primary and three secondary sounds, most of them so simple as to be easily pronounced by infants, invalids and the decrepit, as well as by valiant adults. Even this number can be reduced to 31, if two of the secondary sounds are taken to be mere allophones of the vowels 'i' and 'u', as they ought to be. Thus, it will be seen, that Tamil, phonologically speaking, is the simplest of the classical languages of the world.

(ii) Purity of the Tamil vocabulary

"The ancient or classical dialect of the Tamil language, called Shen-Tamil (Sen-Damil) or correct Tamil, in which nearly all the literature has been written, contains exceedingly little Sanskrit; and differs from the colloquial dialect, or the language of prose, chiefly in the sedulous and jealous care with which it has rejected the use of Sanskrit derivatives and characters, and restricted itself to pure Ancient Dravidian sounds, forms and roots. So completely has this jealousy of Sanskrit pervaded the minds of the educated classes amongst the Tamilians, that a Tamil poetical composition is regarded as in accordance with good taste and worthy of being called classical, not in proportion to the amount of Sanskrit it contains, as would be the case in some other dialects, but in proportion of its freedom from Sanskrit! The speech of the very lowest classes of the people in the retired country districts accords to a considerable extent with the classical dialect in dispensing with Sanskrit derivatives. In every country it is in the poetry and in the speech of the peasantry that the ancient condition of the language is best studied. Even in prose compositions on religious subjects, in which a larger amount of Sanskrit is employed than in any other department of literature,

the proportion of Sanskrit which has found its way into Tamil is not greater than the amount of Latin contained in corresponding compositions in English.....

..... ".*

(ii) Roots of Most Dravidian words ascertainable in Tamil alone

Tamil	Mal.	Kaln.	Tel.	Tulu	Kur.	Malto	Kui	Gondi	Brahui	Roots
<i>onru</i>	<i>onnu</i>	<i>ondu</i>	<i>ondu,</i> <i>okati</i>	<i>onji</i>	<i>onta</i>	<i>eend</i>	<i>ro(ndi)</i>	<i>undi</i>	--	<i>ol</i>
<i>niir</i>		<i>niir</i>	<i>niiru</i>	--	--	--	--	<i>yeer</i>	<i>diir</i>	<i>niil</i>
<i>vaay</i>	<i>vaay</i>	<i>baay</i>	<i>vaayi</i>	<i>baa</i>	--	--	--	--	<i>baa</i>	<i>vali</i>
<i>var,vaa</i>	<i>vaa</i>	<i>baa</i>	<i>raa</i>	<i>baa</i>	<i>baraa</i>	<i>bara</i>	<i>baamu</i>	<i>varaa</i>	<i>bar</i>	<i>val</i>
<i>poo</i>	<i>poo</i>	<i>poogu,</i> <i>hogu</i>	<i>poovu</i>	--	--	--	--	--	--	<i>pugu</i>
<i>kal</i> (pl.sfx.)		<i>kalu</i>	<i>lu</i>	--	--	--	--	--	<i>k</i>	<i>kal</i>
<i>veendum</i>	<i>venaam,</i> <i>eenam</i>		<i>valenu</i> <i>vale</i>	--	--	--	--	--	--	<i>veel</i>

"Though the proportion of Sanskrit which we find to be contained in Tamil version of the Ten Commandments happens to correspond so exactly to the proportion of Latin contained in the English version, it would be an error to conclude that the Tamil language is as deeply indebted to Sanskrit as English is to Latin. Tamil can readily dispense with the greater part or the whole of its Sanskrit, and by dispensing with it rises to a purer and more refined style; whereas English cannot abandon its Latin without abandoning perspicuity. Anglo-Saxon has no synonyms of its own for many of the words it has borrowed from Latin; so that if it were obliged to dispense with them, it would, in most cases, be under the necessity of using a very awkward periphrasis instead of a single word. Tamil, on the other hand, is peculiarly rich in synonyms; and generally it is not through any real necessity, but from choice and the fashion of the age, that it makes use of Sanskrit... .. Through the predominant influence of the religion of the Brahmans; the majority of the words expressive of religious ideas in actual use in modern Tamil are of Sanskrit origin, and though there are equivalent Dravidian words which are equally appropriate, and in some

* *D.C.G Introduction pp.45-6*

instances more so, such words have gradually become obsolete, and are now confined to the poetical dialect; so that the use of them in prose compositions would sound affected and pedantic. This is the real and only reason why Sanskrit derivatives are so generally used in Tamil religious compositions."*

Tamil, on account of its phonological simplicity and verbal richness, has a natural aversion to all foreign words, especially to Sanskrit ones, and in cases of unavoidable necessity naturalisation of foreign words, even to the extent of obliteration of identity, is an indispensable prerequisite, according to the orthodox tradition. Tamil is maintaining or is able to maintain its purity both glossarially and morphologically, even after the total extinction of the pre-Aryan Tamil literature and the submergence of the whole of ancient Pandinadu. Most of the words and inflexions in the Dravidian languages are either alterations or corruptions of the original forms which are treasured up only in Tamil.

Earliest cultivation of Tamil

Tolkappiyam, which is mainly a recast of an earlier work, or compilation of materials collected from many earlier works (and presupposes a long evolution of literary culture, was composed about the 7th century B.C. Literary tradition affirms that the First Academy which flourished more than 6000 years before Christ, both preserved earlier literature and produced new works exactly like its two successors. Though the periods of duration given for the Three Academies are incredibly long, the incredibility soon vanishes when we consider the aboriginality of the Tamilians, the high degree of linguistic and literary cultivation of Tamil and the geological antiquity to the Lemurian continent, in which the seats of the first Academies were situated.

The relatively high antiquity of the literary cultivation of Tamil being a matter of interest considered in itself, irrespective of its bearings on the question of Dravidian comparative grammar, I shall here adduce a few of the evidences on which this conclusion rests. "

"Classical Tamil, which not only contains all the refinements which the Tamil has received, but also exhibits to some extent the primitive condition of the language, differs more from the colloquial Tamil than the classical dialect of any other Dravidian idiom differs from its ordinary dialect..... As the words and forms of classical Tamil cannot have been invented all at once by the poets, but

* *Ibid.* pp.46-7

must have come into use slowly and gradually, the degree in which colloquial Tamil has diverged from the poetical dialect, notwithstanding the slowness with which languages, like everything else, changes in the East, seems to me a proof of the high antiquity of the literary cultivation of Tamil."*

"The higher antiquity of the literary cultivation of Tamil may also be inferred from Tamil inscriptions. In Karnataka and Telengana, every inscription of an early date and the majority even of modern inscription are written in Sanskrit..... In the Tamil country, on the contrary, all inscriptions belonging to an early period are written in Tamil....."†

"From the various particulars mentioned above, it appears clear that the Tamil language was of all the Dravidian idioms the earliest cultivated; it also appears highly probable that in the endeavour to ascertain the characteristics of the primitive Dravidian speech, from which the various existing dialects have divaricated, most assistance-will be furnished by Tamil."‡

The literary cultivation of Kanarese, Telugu and Malayalam dates only from the 9th, 10th and 14th centuries A.D. respectively.

The extraordinary copiousness of the Tamil vocabulary

"Another evidence of the greatness of Tamil" consists in the extraordinary copiousness of the Tamil vocabulary, and the number and variety of the grammatical forms of Shen-Tamil. The Shen-Tamil grammar is a crowded museum of obsolete forms, cast-off inflexions, and curious anamolies... Nothing strikes a Tamil scholar more, on examining the dictionaries of the other Dravidian dialects, than the paucity of their lists of synonyms in comparison with those of Tamil. The Tamil vocabulary contains not only those words which may be regarded as appropriate to the language, in as much as they are used by Tamil alone, but also those which may be considered as the property of Telugu, Canarese, &c. Thus, the word used for 'house' in ordinary Tamil is *viidu*; but the vocabulary contains also, and occasionally uses, the word appropriate to Telugu, *il* (Tel. *illu*); and the distinctive Canarese word, *manai* (Can. *mane*); besides another synonym, *kudi* which it has in common with Sanskrit and the whole of the Finnish languages. The grammar and vocabulary of Tamil are thus to a

* D.C.G. *Introduction*, p.81

† *Ibid.* pp. 85 & 86

‡ *Ibid.*, p.87.

considerable extent the common repository of Dravidian forms and roots. We may conclude, therefore, that the literary cultivation of Tamil dates from a period prior to that of the other idioms, and not long subsequent to the final breaking up of the language of the ancient Dravidians into dialects."*

Independence of the Tamil language and literature

"The orientalist who supposed the Dravidian languages to derived from Sanskrit were not aware of the existence of uncultivated languages of the Dravidian family, in which Sanskrit words were not at all, or but very rarely, employed; they were also not aware that some of the Dravidian languages which make use of Sanskrit derivatives, are able to dispense with those derivatives altogether, such derivatives being considered rather as luxuries or articles of finery than as necessities. It is true it would now be difficult for Telugu to dispense with its Sanskrit; more so for Canarese; and most of all for Malayalam. Those languages having borrowed from Sanskrit so largely, and being so habituated to loop up to it for help, that it would be scarcely possible for them now to assert their independence. Tamil however, the most highly cultivated *ab intra* of all Dravidian idioms, can dispense with its Sanskrit altogether, if need be, and not only stand alone, but flourish without its aid."†

All the pre-Aryan Tamil literature, technical as well as general, displaying perfect, purity of word and thought, have been destroyed. Even the earliest extant Tamil literature is enough to prove the complete independence of Tamil language and literature from Sanskrit. The linking of the Tamil language, Music and Drama together as *Muttamil*, 'threefold Tamil,' the division of Grammar into Orthography, Accidence and Syntax, and that which comprises classification of literary themes, Prosody and Rhetoric; the division of subject-matter into *Aham* (Erotic) and *Puram* (non-Erotic); the five fold geographical treatment of erotic poems as *Kurinji* (hillside), *Mullai* (pastoral region), *Marudam* (agricultural region), *Neydal* (littoral), and *Palai* (desert); the four principal metres, viz., *Venba*, *Asiriyappa*, *Kalippa* and *Vanjippa* and their varieties, not to speak of the various allied and auxiliary metres; the eightfold classification of poetic works, each class called by the common name *Vanappu*, into *Ammal*, *Alagu*, *Tonmai*, *Tool*, *Virundu*, *Iyaibu*, *Pulan*, and *Ilaibu*; the 20 types. of simple rhythm described by *Tolkappiyam*,

* D.C.G. *Introduction*, p.82

† *Ibid* p.45.

the 100 types of complex rhythm described by *Avinayam*, and the numerous types of technical rhythm displayed by Arunagirinathar; are all peculiar to Tamil

Catholicity of Tamil

There is no major language in the world, perhaps, that is not enriched or influenced by Tamil in some way or other. The Glossarial or grammatical affinities Tamil has with the Aryan, Semitic and Scythian languages will be exhibited later on. Here I shall confine my attention only to some Australian and African affinities. Regarding the resemblance between the Dravidian and Australian pronouns, Dr. Caldwell writes as follows:

"It seems proper here to notice the remarkable general resemblance which exists between the Dravidian pronouns and those of the aboriginal tribes of southern and western Australia. In whatever way it may be explained, the existence of a general resemblance seems to be unquestionable; but it has not hitherto been observed that the Australian pronouns of the first person are more nearly allied to the Tibetan than to the Dravidian. This will appear from the following comparative view of the pronoun of the first person singular.

Dravidian	Australian	Tibetan	Chinese
<i>naan, yaan, naa, en</i>	<i>nga, ngaii, nagtsa, nganya</i>	<i>nga, nge, neged</i>	<i>nge</i>

"Whilst the base of this pronoun seems to be closely allied to the corresponding pronoun in Tibetan, and in the Indo-Chinese family generally, the manner in which it is pluralised in the Australian dialects bears a marked resemblance to the Dravidian, and especially to Telugu. Telugu forms its plurals by suffixing *lu* to the singular; the Australian dialects by a similar addition of *lu*, *li*, *dlu*, *dli*, & c. In this particular some of the dialects of the North-Eastern Frontier of India exhibit also an agreement with Telugu-e.g., compare Dhimal *naathou*, with *nyel*, you. In the Australian dialects I find the following plurals and duals of the pronoun of the first person -we, or we two, *ngalu*, *ngadlu*, *ngadli*, *ngalata*, & c. Compare this with the manner in which the Telugu forms its plural -e.g., *vaandu*, he, *vaandlu*, they; and even with the Tamil plural exclusive of the pronoun of the first person -e.g., *nan*, I, *naangal*, we.

"The resemblance between the Australian pronouns of the second person, both singular and plural, and those of the Dravidian languages is more distinct and special, and is apparent, not only in the suffixes, but in the pronominal base

itself. The normal forms of these pronouns in Dravidian languages are -singular, *niin*, plural, *niim*. The personality resides in the crude root *nii*, thou, which is the same in both numbers, with the addition of a singular formative (*nin*, thou) and a pluralising formative *m* (*nii-m*, thous or you). In some cases the pluralising particle *m* has been displaced, and *r*, which I regard as properly sign of the epicene plural of the third person, has been substituted for it -e.g., *niir*, you (in Telugu *miiru*). This abnormal form *niir* is most used as a nominative, the older and more regular *niim* retains its place in the compounds. Whilst *i* is the vowel which is almost invariably found in the singular of the pronoun of the second person, it is found that in the plural *i* often gives-places to *u* as in the classical Tamil *numa*, your, and the Brahui *num*, you. It is to be noticed also that the modern Canarese has softened *niim* into *niivu* or *niiwu*, in the nominative. It is singular, in whatever way it may be accounted for, that in each of the particulars now mentioned the Australian dialects resemble the Dravidian. See the following comparative view under the Australian head I class the dual together with the plural, as being substantially the same.

Dravidian

*thou, niin, nin, you,
niim, nim, niir, num,
niivu.*

Australian

*ninna, nignne, ngintoa, ningte
nimedoo, nura, niwa, ngurle*

"Compare also the accusative of the first person singular in Tamil, *ennei*, me, with the Australian accusative *emmo*.

The Ghana Engineer Mr. Evans Yao Dzato, who was deputed by the Government of his country to receive training on the Indian Railways, has said during his stay in Madras, that some Tamil words like *vaa*(come), *poo*(go), *tukku*(lift), and *devi* (an appendage to feminine names) are in ordinary use in Ewe, one of the languages spoken by the people of Trans Volta district of Togoland in Ghana, and remarked that many centuries ago there must have been frequent cultural and other contacts between Ghana and South India.

Apart from the universality of Tamil words, Tamil literature is full of maxims and principles reflecting Tamilian cosmopolitanism, humanism, philanthropy and indiscriminate munificence. The opening line of the 192nd stanza of *Purananuru* "Yaadum uuree yaavarum kelir" meaning 'All human habitations are our native places, and all men are our relatives,' best manifests the cosmopolitan nature of the Tamils. Unlike Sanskrit, the Tamil language and

literature are open to all, meant for all and aimed at the good of all. *Tirukkural*, the chief ethical work in Tamil, sets forth excellent moral principles of universal application; enjoins on all authorities to mete out uniform justice to all irrespective of caste, creed or community.

The grammatical structure of the Australian dialects exhibits a general agreement with the languages of the Scythian group. In the use of postpositions instead of prepositions; in the use of two forms of the first person plural, one inclusive of the party I addressed, the other exclusive; in the formation of inceptive causative, and reflective verbs by the addition of certain particles to the root; and, generally, in the agglutinative structure of words and in the position of words in a sentence, the dialects of Australia resemble the Dravidian as also the Turkish, the Mongolian, and other Scythian languages; and in the same particulars, with one or two exceptions, they differ essentially from the dialects which are called Polynesian; The vocabularies of the Australian dialects which have been compiled do not appear to furnish additional confirmation to the resemblances pointed out above; but it is difficult to suppose these resemblances to be unreal or merely accidental, and it is obvious that the Australian dialects demand (and probably reward) further examination.

It is also, still more difficult to be accounted for, that some resemblances may be traced between the Dravidian languages and the Bornu, or rather the Kanuri, one of the languages spoken in the Bornu country, in Central Africa. Most of the resemblances are, it is true, of a general nature-e.g., the Kanuri is agglutinative in structure, it uses postpositions instead of prepositions, it adds to nouns and sentences syllables expressive of doubt, interrogation and emphasis, in a peculiarly Dravidian manner, and its verb has a negative voice. It has an objective verb as well as subjective, like the Hungarian. The most distinctive resemblance to the Dravidian languages I notice is in the pronoun of the second person, which is *ni*, as in each of the Dravidian dialects. Even this, however, as has been shown, is common to the Dravidian with Brahui, Chinese, the language of the second Behistun tablets, and the Australian dialects. The Kanuri language differs so remarkably from the rest of the African tongues, that it is very desirable that its relationship should be fully investigated."*

* *D.C.G. Introduction*, p.76 & 77.