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MARAIMALAI ADIKAL'S TANI TAMIL IYAKKAM AND HISTORY OF TAMIL
NATIONALISTIC MOVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to study the Tamil Nationalism in the works of Maraimalai Adikalar also pays a close attention to the background and unique features of Tamil language a how Maraimalai Adikal's writings gave importance to the Purist Movement and it ga rise to the Origin and growth of Tani Tamil Iyakkam principles and deals with the identit of his writings.

The works of Maraimalai Adikalar also encourages the English Students to underta research work in Classical Tamil Language. Moreover the contribution of Maraima Adikal's work stands as a role model for the Tamil writers to pursue the Purist style writings. It also gives space for further research on a comparative or an individual basis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a precious gift given to mankind to communicate their feelings and emotions. A well-developed language should have fertile vegetation in its grammar. There are many languages in the world which has the ample amount of sweetness and fertility adding fragrance to its culture and traditions. The south Indian languages are named as "Dravidian Languages". In the midst the south Indian Languages, Tamil attains the supreme position and it also has the motherly qualities when compared to other languages. The language used by the Tamils continues to live and grows while the rest are all respected spiritless languages.

Contemporary Tamil scholars are not sincere to themselves and their language due to lack of proper education and unclouded judgments. They are powerless to guide their people. It is important to investigate at this stage the difference in the essential makeup of ancient and modern leaders of light and learning.

Writers over 1800 years ago were careful to practice the art of writing in pure, well-chosen, simple and virile Tamil words. The great and deserving merit of 'Tamilian' is that for more than fifty centuries they have used their language with great care and attention and kept it so pure and undefiled. The scholars and poets kept the purity of Tamil intact and even where the influx of new ideas called for adaptations they, instead of borrowing, mostly coined words and phrases suited for the rhythm and the genius of the Tamil language. The Dravidian civilization and languages remain predominant even to the present day.

Every language is great and loved by its people. And no doubt each language has its own beauty and value. At the same time, how and in what aspect Tamil is great and unique? Unbiased Indian and International linguistic scholars have asserted authentically that the other entire south Indian Languages so called Dravidian languages are the off-shoot languages spring up from the Ancient Tamil so called 'Senthamizh', the classical form of Tamil. It is also asserted that Tamil was the only language spoken all over India..., during the yesteryears. Subsequently it was confined to south-India because of its simplicity in pronunciation with lesser number of alphabets.

"Tamil is an independent language with a rich store of words capable of expressing in a skillful hand all kinds of thoughts that appear in the different branches of learning". Every language has its own unique value and beauty. This main factor of simplicity and easiness in usage status coupled with abundant classical vocabulary is unparalleled in the case of Tamil as asserted by the global scholars which are the main reasons for its long survival. Out of several languages there is no language as sweet as Tamil. Not only the Tamil poet Bharathi, several open minded, unbiased foreigners too have accepted this fact. Tamil is distinctly incomparable with Sanskrit by way of characteristics and hence far different from other Indian Languages, which are Sanskrit-based

2. CLASSICAL DIVINE TAMIL

There are many reasons to show how Tamil attained the status of a living Classical Language. Tamil is one of the great classical literatures and traditions of the world. It predates the literatures of other modern Indian languages by more than a thousand years. Its oldest work, *Tolkappiyam*, contains parts that judging from the earliest Tamil inscriptions, date back to about 200 BCE. The ancient, the Sangam anthologies and the *Pathuppattu* date to the first two centuries of the current era. They are the first great temporal body of poetry written in India, predating Kalidasa's works by two hundred years.

Tamil compose is the only literary tradition indigenous to India that is not derived from Sanskrit. Indeed, its literature arose before the significance of Sanskrit in the south became strong and so is qualitatively different from whatever we have in Sanskrit or other Indian languages. It has its own grammatical tradition, its own aesthetics, and, above all an abundant of literature that is quite unique. It shows a sort of Indian sensibility that is quite diverse from anything in Sanskrit or any other Indian languages, and it contains its own extremely rich and vast intellectual traditions.

The standard of classical Tamil literature is such it is fit to stand beside the great literatures of Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Persian and Arabic. The profundity of its works, their varied scope and their universality qualify Tamil to stand as one of the greatest classical traditions and literatures of the world. Everyone knows the *Tirukkural*, one of the world's tremendous works on ethics; but this is merely one of a myriad of major and extremely varied works that comprises the Tamil classical tradition.

Tamil is one of the primary independent sources of latest Indian culture and traditions. Tamil has its own works that are considered to be as sacred as the Vedas and that are recited alongside Vedic mantras in the great Vaishnava temples of south India, great example is Tirupati. And just as Sanskrit is the source of the present-day Indo-Aryan languages, classical Tamil is the source of modern Tamil and Malayalam.

There is a political reason for Tamil as not been recognized as a classical language: there is a fear that if Tamil is selected as a classical language, other Indian languages may plea similar status? This seems to be an unnecessary worry because everyone is well aware of the fertility of the modern Indian Languages. To qualify as a classical tradition, a language must meet several criteria: it should be Ancient, it should be of an independent tradition that arose mostly on its own not as a sprout of another tradition, and it must have a large and extremely rich body of ancient literature

Maraimalai Adigal (15 July 1876-15 Sep, 1950) was an eminent Tamil orator and writer. He was a devout Hindu, a great follower of Saivism. He has written more than 100 books, including works on original poems and dramas, but most famous are his books on his analysis into Tamil literature. Most of his literary works were on Saivism intuition called Podhunilaik Kazhagam. He was a pioneer of the pure Tamil movement and hence considered to be the father of Tamil Puritanism. He was very enthusiastic to bring people of Tamil

Nadu to practice the pure divine Tamil language in both writing and spoken terms. Politically he was inclined towards non-Brahmanism and hence he and his followers considered that the self-respect movement was born out of his efforts.

He discontinued his formal education but continued to learn Tamil language from a scholar Narayana Pillai. He learnt Sanskrit and English through his own effort. He later authored several articles in Tamil monthly called Neelalochani. He wrote essays, novels and books that deals with literary criticism, philosophy and religion composed during times of ailment were published as Thiruvotri Muruhar Mummanikkovai (1900). He also published his research work on Tamil literature Mullai Pattu Aaraichi for students of Tamil literature. He translated Kalidasa's Sakuntalai into Tamil. Some of his prominent works are: Pattinapalai Aaraichiyurai(1906), Tamizhthaai(1933), Sinthanai Katturaikal (1908), Arivuraikkothu (1921) Chiruvarkaana Srenthamizh(1934) Illainarkaana Inramizh, Arivuraikkovai, Maraimalaiyatikal Paamanaikkovai.

He resigned his job on 10 th April as a Tamil teacher and moved to Pallavaram, suburbs of Chennai. There he started to dress as a Sannyasin from 27 Aug 1911 and became to be known as Swami Vedhachalam. He became an exponent of pure Tamil movement advocating the use of Tamil language lacking of loan words from Sanskrit.

Maraimalai Adikal laid the foundation for the 'Tani Tamil Iyakkam' (Tamil Purist Movement). The reason why he gave much significance to Tani Tamil Iyakkam is to bring out the real sweetness and the fragrance of the Tamil language. Tamil is a divine, classical language, but now it is losing its strength by the entry of other languages.

3. TAMIL NATIONALISTIC MOVEMENT

In the early Twentieth Century in Tamil Nadu there is a Renaissance in the field of politics which also laid to its foundation. Later E.Ve. Ramaswamy Periyar and others tried to create some radical in the society and thereby the impact gradually entered in to the language. This made the Tani Tamil Iyakkam to stamp its footprints. Some went even to the extent of changing their name into pure Tamil. The name Suriyanarayana Sathiriyar is changed in to Parimaar Kalainar, Swami Vedhachalam in to Maraimalai Adikal and also changed the name of the streets in to Tamil and some kept and names for their house. Their interest towards the language reached its peak when they completely change the spoken form in to a pure one.

The main reason for how Tani Tamil Iyakkam gained momentum against several opposition is that the chief minister Rasagopalachariyar brought the language of Hindi to be compulsory and people who tasted the sweetness of Tamil language stood against the principle of the chief minister

People belong to one particular culture, customs and traditions were meant to be talented in certain fields, especially in Arts. To sail deep in to the field of arts they required education and knowledge about it. It depended on the field of their fertility of language and good richness in its culture. If the language is rich in its culture and traditions surely there will be more masters and experts, who wanted to bring-forth their language in to a supreme position. It is true that the supreme qualities of a language and also the knowledge in the field of Arts and supremacy will give birth and proper growth to the culture and its traditions.

There are various reasons for the mixture of other language into Tamil for example; new land territories marked by the British, trade and other relationships between neighbouring countries, influence of British rule etc. The more one exercises his mind in expressing himself clearly in his own mother tongue, the more his powers of concentration and expression increase and the better can he serve his country, language and religion.

Maraimalai Adikal pin pointed that Tamil culture is quite independent and independent culture may seem impossible at first in the case of other Dravidian languages. As years goes on Purist Movement in Tamil gained strength and energy.

The nomenclature of Tani Tamil Iyakkam can be translated literally as 'separate Tamil Movement'. Its apparent manifestation was linguistic separation or a movement towards the purification of Tamil. The Tani Tamil was marked chiefly by emotional in fact the passionate worship of Tamil exemplified in the 'Tani Tamil

(literally Tamil Mother) in fact the little that the Tani Tamil Iyakkam can be consider as the Tamil Ethno-Nationalistic movement which does not claim separateness from the mainstream.

Tamil Ethno-Nationalistic movement brings forth an important role in the development of Tamil Nadu politics from 1920's to 1940's even though it was by no means the only politico-cultural movement at that period. Tani Tamil Iyakkam represented not only the major strata in the transitional years in Madras (Chennai) politics but emerged as the most important post-colonial discourse in Tamil Nadu.

There is a false impression among some Tamil people that Tamil nationalism is very much opposed to Hinduism and this is far from the truth. A Tamil nationalist can be a pious Hindu or may belong to any religion or even Atheist is of whatever the religious belief.

Cultural identity is people adaptation to their world, such as language, gestures, tools to make them to be alive and prosper, to flourish its customs and traditions that defines the value and organize social interaction, religious beliefs, rituals, dress, art, and music to make symbolic and aesthetic expression of its culture that exhibits the practices and beliefs and became associated with an ethnic group and provides its distinctive identity.

Tamil culture has a rich heritage brought by the legacy of the rulers like Cholas, Pandya's. The mushrooming of Hindu temples highlights the devotion of the people, which simultaneously led to the enrichment of music dance and literature. Tamilians have a large number of folk music and dances to feel joyful occasion like seasonal change. The Tamil cultures and customs are inaugural one and it is very rare to see this kind of cultures anywhere under the sun because of their Duty, Discipline and Dignity. Tamil speaking people particularly in Tamil Nadu and in Srilanka have more respect towards their language even from the period of Sangam.

The famous quotation "Kavari Dear that ceases to live upon the fall of its hair" describes the self-respect of the community of Tamilians. They have treated the 'Olukkam' [Discipline] as their two eyes in all walks of life and also in all circumstances even when the situation compelled them to end their life.

Tamil occupies the peak both linguistically and ethnically in the same group as a Malayalee or a Telegu or a Kannadiga. Yet the strong linguistic and cultural identity displayed by a Tamil has often times not been understood in a proper perspective. This is an attempt to show from a historical and linguistic perspective such that the Tamil ethos can be understood a little better.

The history has also been documented in the works and poems of Tamil writers, not necessarily in any structured continuity. In the same era when the north was dominated by the Mauryan and Gupta empires and other medieval dynasties, the Deep South history was being cared by the Chera, Chola, Pandya and Pallava dynasties.

The Tamil kingdoms were a legacy of their times and was warring in nature. Yet they were great patrons of fine art and culture. Music and Dance prosper even during early Tamil kings of the Sangam period. The roots of today's Carnatic music and Bharatha Natiyam can be traced to the beginnings as expounded in this great Tamil Silapathikaram. The temple turrets all over Tamil Nadu and the stone edifices that challenge the shores at Mamallapuram are standing testimony to the Tamil Mastery of fine artistic sculptures. The bronze works that were produced by the Cholas are national treasures now and aspired with intensity by international art community. Yet the biggest contribution of Tamil culture, to the colourfull diverse Indian heritage is the richest linguistic traditions of the Tamil language.

Tamil is one of the two classical traditions of India, the other is Sanskrit. Tamil is the oldest living language in India. Madurai, the capital of Pandyas usually associated with fostering and developing the language, more than any other, due to the traditions of the Tamil Sangam (as academic gathering for the poets and the writers) that was hosted in Madhurai.

4. CONCLUSION

The importance of Tamil language and its classical status is clearly portrayed in the writings of Maraimalai Adikalar. And it also pays an attention towards the readers of different culture can also understand

the background history and the rich culture of Tamil language and also the great tradition followed by them from the beginning.

The paper concludes with these few prefatory remarks and a fervent hope that in coming years the students of English department will take a deep interest in the study of Tamil language and will bring out the real sweetness and the great taste of Tamil language by understanding the meaning and can bring out the Tamil works in different manner.

Though they are many important and precious things hidden in the works of great Tamil writers, which will be useful for the other regional and also for the foreigners to understand the great traditions and rich culture.

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