

**A MONTHLY OF DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTICS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA**

**43<sup>RD</sup> ALL INDIA CONFERENCE OF  
DRAVIDIAN LINGUISTS**

Those who would like to participate and present papers in the *43<sup>rd</sup> All India Conference of Dravidian Linguists* are requested to register their names and send the abstracts of their papers as early as possible. The registration fee (Rs. 500/- for life members and students and Rs. 1000/- for others) for the conference may please be sent to the Treasurer, Dravidian Linguistics Association, V.I. Subramoniam Memorial ISDL Complex, St. Xavier's College P.O., Thiruvananthapuram – 695 586. Bona fide students and research scholars have to produce certificates from the respective Heads of Departments. The abstracts of the papers can be directly mailed to Prof. S. Raja, Director, Centre for Advanced Study in Linguistics, Annamalai University, Annamalainagar, Tamil Nadu.

*Deadline for the submission of abstract*      **15.5.2015**  
*Deadline for the submission of full paper*      **5.6.2015**  
*Registration*      **5.6.2015**

**Accommodation**

Accommodation can be guaranteed only to those who register for the 43rd AICDL on or before **5.6.2015**. Accompanying persons also have to be registered by remitting Rs. 1000/- each.

**r->t IN LATIN AND MALAYALAM: IMPLICATIONS FOR HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS**

(Continued from the last issue)

**Methods and Results**

Many English words have Latin origins and verbs are no exception, as identifiable from their etymology. Numerous English words, including verbs, end in *-ate*. According to the Online Etymology Dictionary (OED), the English, when they began to expand their Latin-based vocabulary after A.D. 1500, simply made verbs from Latin past-participial adjectives without changing their forms (such as *aggravate*, *substantiate*) and it became the custom that Latin verbs were anglicized from their past participle stems (<http://www.etymonline.com/>). This being the case, a search was done in the OED using the string '*-ate*'. Verbs were identified from the output and their etymology evaluated, thus identifying the Latin past-participles and corresponding verbs.

A total of 445 English verbs ending in *-ate* were identified with Latin origin, of the type given in Table 1. In the vast majority of them, the English verbs were formed from the past participle of the Latin stems; but the past participle stems were formed from Latin verbs by changing the endings from *-re* to *-tus*. A very few had different formations such as *alteracari* to *altercates* and *apricari* to *apricate* (*ri->tus*) as well as

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*cachinnare* to *cachinnatum* (*re->tum*). On the whole, it can be seen that Latin verbs with *-re/-ri* endings have changed to participles ending in *-tus/-tum*. Effectively, this is *r->t* change during verb inflection. It was also noticed that 45 verbs were from Late Latin and 54 from Medieval Latin. No attempt was made to further delve into this aspect. Phonetic difference between alveolar r and uvular R also was not considered in this preliminary study.

**Table 1. Origin of Some Modern English Verbs**

<i>Latin Verb</i>	<i>Latin past participle</i>	<i>English verb before 1400c</i>	<i>Modern English verb</i>
lavare	lavatus	lavat	lavate
excavare	excavates	excavat	excavate
irrigare	irrigates	irrigate	irrigate
attenuare	attenuates	attenuate	attenuate
curare	curatus	curat	curate
desiccare	desiccatus	desiccate	desiccate
mutare	mutatus	mutat	mutate
culminare	culminates		culminate
pullulare	pullulatus	pullulate	pullulate

## Discussion

It is evident that the change of Latin verbs ending in *re/ri* to participles ending in *tus/tum* has been noticed since long, though it had not been perceived from the point of view of a *r->t* change and has not been given any linguistic importance historically or otherwise.

Likewise, in Malayalam too, no significance has been given other than it being one grammatical rule among many. But, in view of the ancient close association of Keralites with Europeans and the presence of letter t solely in Malayalam among Indian languages, the similarity of the verb inflection in the two classical languages assumes importance; this merits greater attention since it may throw light on the history of both languages and be an evidence of intense contact. Also, the change is too striking to reject it as a case of parallel, independent development and can safely be assumed as being contact-induced. Since the languages belong to geographically very distant areas, it is not an areal feature. It has been suggested that when forms from

different languages are too similar, they are more likely to have been borrowed, rather than inherited (Croft, W. 2005; Greenberg, J.H. 1953).

Two questions emerge here: the origin of the *r->t* change in Latin or Malayalam, and the era in history when the contact that induced the comparative change occurred. But, be it either, it can be assumed that the transfer, which involves structural modification, falls in Level 4-5 of staging of language contact proposed by Thomason and Kaufman, signifying very intense contact and cultural pressure. (Thomason S.G. & Kaufman T. 1988.). Given the large time scales involved, it will be difficult to get accurate answers for these. There will be further questions as to whether there are other changes in either language suggestive of linguistic contact.

As regards the language of origin, the antiquity of Latin and the origin of the letters r and t from the Phoenician are well established, whereas the origin of the Malayalam Ra and tta are not. Lack of any words starting with *ra* in any Indian language, including Malayalam, rules out any Dravidian origin of this phoneme. Written evidence of Ra, tta and nta are available in the first plate inscription discovered in Kerala, the Vazhappalli inscription (A.D. 832), indicating that this was present in the language even before that time (Ramachandran 2011). No significant lexical borrowing by Latin from Dravidian has been reported, which also suggests that Malayalam is unlikely to have influenced Latin. It has been hypothesized that the letter '*ta*' phonologically reached Malayalam from Hebrew (Pecman). The reasoning is that the word '*Yavan*' (meaning the Greek people) is mentioned in *Silappadikaram*, a novel written by a prince of the Chera empire in Kerala in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. This means that the Jews were in Kerala before the Greeks since, if their (the Greek's) arrival had been at a prior date, they would have been called Ehleeneekossâ, the name by which they used to call themselves. Hebrew has the letter t, though it is orthographically different.

[To be continued]  
V.N. Bhattathiri

**43<sup>rd</sup> AICDL  
FOR THE ATTENTION OF SCHOLARS**

The Dravidian Linguistics Association honours scholars who have made substantial contributions in the field of linguistics and Dravidian studies by giving awards and prizes. Interested scholars may please send their articles, books, dictionaries etc., with their bio-data to the Secretary, Dravidian Linguistics Association, V.I. Subramoniam Memorial ISDL Complex, Thiruvananthapuram. The last date for receiving the documents is **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.

**AWARDS AND PRIZES**

1. **Mrs. Susheela P. Upadhyaya Award** to a young linguist below thirty years of age for producing a good monograph or a couple of good research papers on any topic in modern linguistics. It should have been published within a period of 3 years before **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.
2. **Mrs. S.M. Katre Memorial Prize** for M.A. topper in Linguistics (**2014 March-April exam**). The mark-list should be duly forwarded by the Head of the Department.
3. **Award in the name of Prof. K. Anbazhakan** for Translation of Tolkappiyam in any international language. The book should have been published within a period of 3 years before **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.
4. **Award for the Best Monograph on Dravidian Tribes**. It should have been published within a period 3 years before **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.
5. **C. Achutha Menon Prize** for the Best Article or Book published on *Computer and Language*. It should have been published in an Indian journal and by an Indian within a period of 3 years before **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.
6. **Dr. George Jacob Award** for the Best Monograph on Dravidian Linguistics in any Indian language other than Dravidian. It should have been published within a period of 3 years before **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.
7. **Prof. K.M. Venkataramaiah Award** for the Study of Linguistic Minorities. It should be an Indian publication written in any international language other than Indian, and published within a period of 3 years before **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.

8. **Hermann Gundert Endowment** for the Best Dictionary, Lexicon or Encyclopaedia on any major Dravidian language and Dravidian Tribal language including Brahui. It should have been published within a period of 3 years before **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.

9. **Endowment of the Phonetic Society of India** for a Monograph or a Lecture.

10. **Panneerselvam & Thavamani Panneerselvam Award** for the Translation of a Book from Tamil to Kannada and vice versa. The book should have been published within a period of 3 years before **1<sup>st</sup> May 2015**.

11. **K.N. Kuppuswamy Award** for a Lecture/Comparative Study of a Grammatical Text of Tamil, Sanskrit, Prakrit or Pali.

12. **Award for the Best Paper in the Conference** by a young full-time student or a research scholar. (Only bona fide students and full-time research scholars, who have produced certificates from their respective Heads of Departments/Supervising Teachers, can take part in the competition.)

The copy of the paper to be read needs to be entrusted with the concerned authority on or before **18<sup>th</sup> June 2015**.

**PROF. S.V. SHANMUGAM HONOURED**

Prof. S.V. Shanmugam, former Director of the Centre of Advanced Study in Linguistics, Annamalai University and a renowned scholar in Dravidian Linguistics has been honoured with Tolkappiyar Award for the year 2011-2012, instituted by the Central Institute of Classical Tamil, Chennai. It carries a prize money of Rs. 5 lakhs in cash, a certificate and a memorial prize, all of which will be presented to him by the President of India at New Delhi in May 2015. All members of DLA and ISDL express their heartfelt congratulations to Prof. Shanmugam on this occasion.

**APPLICATION FORMS**

The following forms can be downloaded from [www.ijdl.org](http://www.ijdl.org):

1. Application form for DLA life-membership
2. Registration form for 43<sup>rd</sup> AICDL

**INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR  
Reconstructing Classical  
Tamil Traditions: Global Quest**

A three-day international seminar on *Reconstructing Classical Tamil Traditions: Global Quest* was organized in honour of Rt. Rev. Robert Caldwell and Prof. Rev. Fr. Xavier Thaninayaga Adigal, sponsored by the Department of Tamil, Central University, Thiruvavoor from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The scholars discussed various aspects of the Classical Tamil language and related subjects, in several sessions.

**SPECIAL ENDOWMENT LECTURES**

The endowment lectures, specially arranged by the organizers, form the highlight of the All India Conference of Dravidian Linguists. The 43<sup>rd</sup> AICDL will have the credit of conducting three endowment lectures: *Prof. V.I. Subramoniam Endowment Lecture* to be delivered by Prof. K. Nachimuthu, *Prof. Nagamma Reddy Endowment Lecture* by Prof. N. Ganesan and *Smt. Lachchmi Jessaram Gidwani Memorial Endowment Lecture* by Prof. B.S. Khaira.

**A REQUEST TO INDIAN LIFE-MEMBERSHIP  
HOLDERS OF DLA WHO RESIDE IN  
FOREIGN COUNTRIES**

Those who have remitted only Indian life-membership fee for the DLA and now reside outside India are requested to:

1. Give their address in India so that we can send IJDL and DLA News to that address OR
2. Please remit US\$ 230/- so as to consider them on par with foreign life-members and to enable them to receive IJDL in their present address.

This is applicable to both Indian and foreign citizens who have taken Indian life-membership of DLA and now reside in foreign countries.

*Secretary, DLA*

**KERALA SAMSKARADHARAKAL RELEASED**

*Kerala Samskaradharakal* written by Dr. Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan was released by Sri. V.M. Sudheeran at a cultural meeting conducted in Indira Bhavan, Vellayambalam on 4.4.2015.

**NEW ENROLMENT FOR LIFE-MEMBERSHIP  
(March 2015)**

1. **Mr. Chandra Raj C.**  
"Chandrakantam"  
Pinakottukonam  
Karyavattom P.O.  
Thiruvananthapuram - 695 581  
Kerala
2. **Dr. Jeena S. Nair**  
"G. Vihar"  
Pattathinkara  
Thonakkal P.O.  
Thiruvananthapuram - 695 317  
Kerala
3. **Dr. P.D. Nimsarkar**  
Department of Linguistics  
Foreign & Indian Languages  
RTM Nagpur University  
Nagpur Library Building  
Ramdarpeth  
Nagpur - 10
4. **Dr. Mary Iype**  
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Pattom-Kowdiar Road  
Kowdiar P.O.  
Thiruvananthapuram - 695 003  
Kerala
5. **Dr. K. Pajaniveelo**  
Associate Professor of Tamil  
Periyar Arts College  
Cuddalore - 607 001  
Tamil Nadu
6. **Dr. Paramita Purkait**  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Linguistics  
Assam University  
Silchar  
Dargakona - 788 011  
Assam
7. **Dr. Soibam Rebika Devi**  
National Translation Mission  
Central Institute of Indian Languages  
Manasagangotri  
Mysore - 570 006  
Karnataka

Recent Publications: **The Morphosyntax of the Dravidian Languages**, P.S. Subrahmanyam, 2013, pp. xxx + 687, Rs. 1,000/- (US\$ 100/-). **A Survey of Smriti Literature**, N.P. Unni, 2013, pp. 8 + 164, Rs. 200/- (US\$ 20/-). **A Contrastive Study of Case in Bengali and Tamil**, Sourav Chakraborty, 2012, pp. 136, Rs. 120/- (US\$ 5/-).

## SOME HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ISSUES CONCERNING THE HISTORY AND PRE-HISTORY OF TAMIL NADU

(Continued from the last issue)

There is no evidence for any conflict between the early Cheras and the Pantiyas. If the Cheras had come into power on the West Coast, their early kings could be expected to fight the Pantiyas who would be on their southern border, rather than the Colas.

III [a] The part of the West Coast occupied by the Cheras is referred to in Sangam literature as Kutanatu meaning western country. Alternative names are not given. `Kutanatu' clearly was a term given by the easterners, If the Cheras had set up a Kingdom in the West indigenously, they certainly would have been civilized enough to give their country a name of its own without relating it to other parts of Tamil Nadu.

[b] At the end of the Sangam period, the Cheras' kingdom split into a western and an eastern component. While the eastern Cheras underwent many vicissitudes, the western kingdom survived without break for a longer duration. This gave rise to the notion in the Middle Age of the Cheras being the westerners of Tamilakam.

[c] The term *keralaputra* used in Ashoka's edicts was wrongly interpreted as the ruler of the region which is now known as Kerala. This term actually meant only Chera royalty and carried no geographical connotation at all. As a matter of fact, ancient references to 'Kerala' allude to the region later known as Konkunatu and not to the West Coast. This was not sufficiently appreciated by the early scholars.

[d] Scholars of view B had also accepted (though no fault of theirs) a corrupted version of the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea as authentic. This version, originally due to W. Vincent and C. Muller, was popularized in English by J.W. McCrindle (1879). It includes a reference to Muziris by J.W. McCrindle (1879) as a 'seat of government'. This statement was naturally interpreted to mean that the Chera capital was coastal in location. The version of Periplus with critical text and translation in German by B. Fabricius

published in 1883 is now accepted as the most authentic. This was mainly relied upon by W. Schoff in his English edition of *Periplus* (1912). In this translation, what McCrindle translated as 'seat of government' is corrected as 'of leading importance'. Obviously, the importance of Muziris was as a mart, and not in a political sense. Moreover, this version contains a sentence, "The kings of both these market towns live in the interior", which is absent in the earlier version. The market towns referred to could only be Muziris and Nelcynda. Thus, Periplus actually says that, like the Pandyan ruler of Nelcynda residing in the interior at Madurai, the Chera king also lived in the interior i.e., beyond the mountain range. However, the harm had already been done. Later scholars hardly took notice of the vital emendations brought out by Fabricius in the text of Periplus concerning the Cheras, and the earlier version was continued to be treated as authoritative, without a second thought.

IV Once the idea of the western origin of the Cheras was elevated into a dogma, several rationalizations came to be proposed and accepted in its support. Ptolemy's clear statement that the Chera capital Karoura was in the interior was taken to mean that the place was situated a little distance away from the shore. The Chera 'surname' Kuttuvan was connected with Kuttanadu even though the latter name does not occur in Sangam literature at all. The Greco-Roman Cottonara which they had mentioned as pepper country was wrongly identified with post-Sangam Kuttanadu instead of recognizing it as standing for Kutanatu of the contemporary Sangam literature. The reference to western side ('Kutapulam') of Vanci in one poem was interpreted as Vanci in Kutanadu. Pulinatu, a region which was dear to the Cheras, was identified in North Malabar on flimsy grounds, in spite of strong indications to the contrary. (Reasons invoked include sandy soil and the similarity of the terms 'Pulinatu' and 'Poynatu'). Sporadic references in Sangam literature to Periyaru (used probably as a qualification rather than as a proper name) were taken to refer to the river which is known by a similar name at present in Kerala. This was part of

Recent Publications: **The Contribution of Melpüttur Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭatiri to Sanskrit Literature with Special Reference to Vyākaraṇa**, P. Visalakshy, 2013, Crown ¼, pp. 428, Rs. 900/- (US\$ 81/-). **A Contrastive Analysis of the Phonological Systems of Bengali and Malayalam**, Dhruvajyoti Das, 2014, pp. xii + 140, Rs. 220/- (US\$ 20/-). **Veṭṭakka:ḍa Iruḷa Tuṇḍumallige - Ballads and Dictionary - Three Dialects**, R. Perialwar, 2014, pp. 8 + 112, Rs. 150/- (US\$ 15/-).

a general malaise of identifying ancient places with modern ones on the basis merely of resemblance of names.

4. Tamil Nadu historians have to take cognizance of the solid contribution of K.T. Varma regarding this issue:

I Well-nuanced (and cognizant of latest insights in the field) studies of Rajan Gurukkal's (2010) *Social Formations of Early South India* (OUP) *apropos* social formations, forms of production and forces of change in ancient Tamil society etc. [Some of them are published earlier but revised and updated in 2010].

5. As pointed out by Rajan Gurukkal in chapter 6 (pp. 136-154) of his (2010) *Social Formations of Early South India* (a revised version of his 1989 paper in *Studies in History* Vol. 2).

(i) The use of this [Tamil Sangam] literature as source material has to be preceded by a series of difficult exercises starting from the basic syntagmatic analysis of morphology to the complex paradigmatic, psycho-analytical and semiological analysis for grasping the principles of versification and genuine meaning of the poems. Though one cannot go by the apparent content of the poems, their overall institutional and ideational contexts, which are not far removed from reality, can be depended upon.

(ii) Scholars have been using the (Sangam literature) data for historical studies of ancient South India with an inordinate emphasis on the political aspects [*Earlier Studies of Ancient TN of Sangam Age*, Kanakasabhi Pillai, 1904; *The Tamils 1800 Years Ago*, S. Krishnaswami Iyengar, 1929; *History of the Tamils to 600 AD*, N. Subrahmanian, 1966; *Sangam Polity*, Vithiananthan, 1954/1971;

*Tamilar Calpu (Sangakaalam)*], though some did try to focus on the social aspects [S. Singaravelu, 1966, *Social Life of the Tamils: Classical Period*; K.K. Pillai, 1975, *A Social History of the Tamils*] too but this made no difference since the perspective has been the same. There have been scarce attempts at examining the socio-economic processes, instead of viewing the social, economic, political and religious mutually exclusive facets. An integrated utilization of the source categories in an anthropological perspective is yet to gain currency in the historiography of South India; the practice of identifying culture types, behind the source categories or naming the cultures after source-types persist, particularly among specialists.

[To be continued]

P. Ramanathan

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## MALAYALAM-TAMIL DICTIONARY

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A *Malayalam-Tamil Dictionary* compiled by the Department of Tamil, University of Kerala was released on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 by Justice Sri. P. Sathasivam, Honourable Governor of Kerala in the seminar hall of the Department of Botany, Karyavattom campus by giving a copy to Prof. Puthusseri Ramachandran. It consists of about 20,000 Malayalam words including words from the media and modern literature. It is immensely useful to translators of Tamil and Malayalam.

### NEW ISDL PUBLICATION

#### Phonetics and its Application to Different Areas

*B.B. Rajapurohit*

2015. PB. Demy 1/8. Pp. 160. Rs. 200/- (US\$ 15/-).