

Origin of word dravida essay



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The English word Dravidian was first employed by Robert Caldwell in his book of comparative Dravidian grammar based on the usage of the Sanskrit word *draviṇa* in the work *Tantravarttika* by Kumarila Bhaṭṭa (Zvelebil 1990: xx). As for the origin of the Sanskrit word *draviṇa* itself there have been various theories proposed.

Basically the theories are about the direction of derivation between *tamiṇa* and *draviṇa*. There is no definite philological and linguistic basis for asserting unilaterally that the name *Dravida* also forms the origin of the word *Tamil* (*Dravida* → *Dramila* → *Tamizha* or *Tamil*). Zvelebil cites the forms such as *dramila* (in Daṇḍin's Sanskrit work *Avanisundarikatha*) *damiṇa* (found in Ceylonese chronicle *Mahavamsa*) and then goes on to say (ibid. page xxi): “ The forms *damiṇa*/*damila* almost certainly provide a connection of *dr(a/a)viṇa* ” and “..

. *tamiṇa* < *tamiṇa* ... whereby the further development might have been **tamiṇa* > **damiṇa* > *damiṇa* / *damila*- and further, with the intrusive, ‘ hypercorrect’ (or perhaps analogical) -r-, into *dr(a/a)viṇa* a.

The -m-/-v- alternation is a common enough phenomenon in Dravidian phonology” (Zvelebil 1990: xxi) Zvelebil in his earlier treatise (Zvelebil 1975: p53) states: “ It is obvious that the Sanskrit *dr(a/a)viṇa*, Pali *damila*, *damiṇa* and Prakrit *d(a/a)viṇa* are all etymologically connected with *tamiṇa* ” and further remarks “ The r in *tamiṇa* > *dr(a/a)viṇa* is a hypercorrect insertion, cf. an analogical case of DED 1033 Ta. *kamuku*, Tu. *kangu* “ areca nut”: Skt.

kramu(ka). “. Further, another eminent Dravidian linguist Bhadriraju Krishnamurti in his book Dravidian Languages (Krishnamurti 2003: p. 2, footnote 2) states: “ Joseph (1989: IJDL 18.

2: 134-42) gives extensive references to the use of the term dravi? a, dramila first as the name of a people, then of a country. Sinhala inscriptions of BCE [Before Christian Era] cite dame? a-, damela- denoting Tamil merchants. Early Buddhist and Jaina sources used dami? - to refer to a people of south India (presumably Tamil); damilara?? ha- was a southern non-Aryan country; drami? a-, drami? a, and dravi? a- were used as variants to designate a country in the south (B? hatsamhita-, Kadambari, Dasakumaracarita-, fourth to seventh centuries CE) (1989: 134-8). It appears that dami? a- was older than dravi? a- which could be its Sanskritization. ” Based on what Krishnamurti states referring to a scholarly paper published in the International Journal of Dravidian Linguistics, the Sanskrit word dravi? itself is later than dami? a since the dates for the forms with -r- are centuries later than the dates for the forms without -r- (dami? a, dame? a-, damela- etc.

). So it is clear that it is difficult to maintain Dravida -; Dramila -; Tamizha or Tamil. The Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary[3] lists for the Sanskrit word dravi? a a meaning of “ collective Name for 5 peoples, viz. the Andhras, Kar? a? akas, Gurjaras, Taila? gas, and Mahara?? ras”.