

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL
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The Second International Conference Seminar of Tamil Studies was held in Madras in January, 1968, in succession to the first conference which had been held in Kuala Lumpur in 1966. The total number of delegates was in the region of 500, and most countries of the world were represented, though naturally the largest number came from Tamil Nadu itself. Among the delegates attending were most of the leading authorities in the world on Tamil and Dravidian studies and a large number of contributions of a high standard were presented at the conference. The editing of the papers read at the conference was undertaken by Dr. R. E. Asher and the resulting publication is one of the most important contributions to Tamil studies that has appeared in recent years. Most branches of Tamil studies are represented—linguistic, literary, historical, and archaeological—and the work as a whole contains an up-to-date survey of the present state of research in these various branches. The publication will be indispensable to all students of Tamil and Dravidian.

In this volume J. Filliozat provides an historical account of archaeological work in the Tamil country, as well as a summing-up of the present state of research. Work in progress by the French Institute in Pondicherry is briefly summarized. There is an important article by H. D. Sankalia on the beginning of civilization in South India which contains an account of the latest research in this field from the earliest periods up to the historical age. Of particular interest is his revised dating of the so-called megalithic culture, which is now put back to the period 900 to 700 B.C., as opposed to the date earlier proposed of *c.* 250 B.C. Since it has often been thought, and may be the case, that this culture is associated with the spread of the Dravidians to the south, this conclusion is obviously of considerable importance for the early history of the Dravidians and the Tamils.

The art and architecture of the classical period are surveyed by T. V. Mahalingam. The most important epigraphical contribution is that by I. Mahadevan on Tamil-Brahmi inscriptions of the Sangam age, the understanding of which has been considerably advanced by him. Of particular interest are the identifications of certain names of rulers known previously from the Sangam literature, and now attested in contemporary inscriptions. V. I. Subramoniam gives a survey of work on Tamil literary history and its problems, particularly chronological, and lists the work that has been proceeding in recent years in the Tamil research institutes in providing indexes and reference works. A survey of work on the history of Tamil Nadu is provided by K. K. Pillay.

Linguistics is well represented. K. Zvelebil discusses the reconstruction of Proto-South Dravidian and the way it has developed to the individual languages, Tamil, Malayalam, etc. There is a study by P. Aalto on the alleged affinity of Dravidian and Fenno-Ugrian, with the conclusion that "the Dravido-Fenno-Ugrian hypothesis is worth further examination". The same problem is also examined by M. Andronov, principally from the morphological point of view, and there is a survey of various proposals to connect Dravidian with other language groups by R. Austerlitz. Other linguistic contributions deal with the role of aspect in the Dravidian simple verb (A. F. Sjöberg), initial plosives in Tamil (J. W. Schubert), vowel splits in Tamil dialects (M. Shanmugam Pillai), the so-called inflexional increments in Tamil (M. Israel), an account of the phonology of a Tamil text in Telugu characters of the 12th century (Bh. Krishnamurti),

and adjectives in Old Tamil (T. Murugarathanam). Loanwords from Tamil into Hebrew are discussed by Ch. Rabin, with the conclusion that some Tamil words had got into Hebrew by the 6th century B.C. Practical problems such as scientific nomenclature in Tamil (R. Ambihaipahar) and translation from and into Tamil (Panel D.) are also among the subjects discussed.

The published proceedings of the Second Conference make it clear that it was in every way a great success, and it is to be hoped that future conferences will be able to maintain the same high standard.

T. BURROW.