



REVIEW OF RESEARCH

ISSN: 2249-894X

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.7631 (UIF)

VOLUME - 11 | ISSUE - 7 | APRIL - 2022



CLEAVAGE IN D.K. AND RISE OF C.N. ANNADURAI

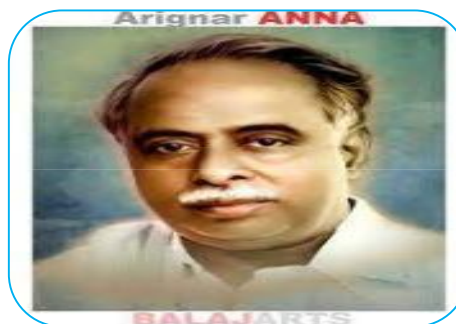
N. Sekar¹ & Dr. M. Palani²

¹Ph.D. Research Scholar in History, Government Arts College for Men Nandanam, Chennai.

²Assistant Professor of History, Government Arts College for Men Nandanam, Chennai.

ABSTRACT:

The regionalism gained importance when the nationalism neglected the majority of the people. In Tamil Nadu, the regional parties gradually emerged and gained political power by utilizing the regional aspirations of the people. E.V. Ramsamy was the father figure of the Dravidian parties in Tamil Nadu. He was the last President of the Justice Party and changed the name of Party as 'Dravidar Kazhagam' by the resolution brought by C.N. Annadurai. When the interests of the non-Brahmin Dravidians were neglected by the Brahmin dominated Congress, E.V.R. and his lieutenant C.N. Annadurai clamored for the demand of Dravida Nadu. When political aspirations saturated in the minds of the Annadurai and his followers in D.K., there arose differences between Annadurai and E.V. R and it culminated in the formation of the D.M.K. When D.M.K. came to power in 1967, the relation between E.V.R. and Annadurai became cordial. This paper attempts to focus the cordial and hostile relations between the duo Dravidian icons.



KEY WORDS: E.V. Ramasami, C.N. Annadurai, Dravida Nadu, Black Shirts, D.M.K., Dravidar Kazhagam

INTRODUCTION:

Periyar E.V. Ramasami (1879-1873) was an action-oriented prominent personality and addressed the roots of problems and had the courage to express his thoughts and pursue them relentlessly, no matter how powerful was his opponent. Among the various reformers of Modern India E.V. Ramasami is remembered for his effective activities on the field. He took social reforms for promoting the Tamil society on the whole.¹ He relentlessly fought for social justice which ensured equal status and equal opportunities to all, regardless of caste, creed, religion and gender.²

C.N. Annadurai, the peerless thinker, rationalist, writer, politician, referent, speaker and torchbearer of the Dravidians. Today he is the beacon of light for the Dravidian nucleus, shining as a man of vast experience in political affairs. He was honored above all for his keen intellect, boundless patience, extraordinary social service and naturalness, kindness of heart, keen sense of honor, hostile ideals, courageous stand in times of peril, brilliant spirit, extraordinary contribution to the advancement of the Dravidians.³ Annadurai excelled himself in all fields of literary and public activities.⁴

The Justice Party, which had become the home of the favoured and the privileged classes of society, was transformed into a mass movement by Annadurai under the leadership of E.V.R. and at the Salem Conference, the name of the Justice Party was changed under the resolution brought by Annadurai in 1944. During his career as social reformer he had edited some Tamil

newspapers, *Navayugam*, *Kudiarasu* and *Viduthalai*. He started a weekly magazine called *Dravida Nadu* to expose the principles and philosophies of the Dravidian movement. *Dravida Nadu* had captured the imagination of the Dravidian masses like a wild fire and became the most popular weekly of his time.⁵

On 10th October 1945, E.V.R. officially launched the Dravidian Freedom Force on the occasion when members of the Dravidian Force were given black shirts as mandatory uniforms, but Anna opposed it.⁶ The first provincial conference on black shirts was held in Madurai on May 1946. E.V.R. towards the end of his speech hinted that he was determined to make the Black Shirt Movement with a militant character and to use it as a weapon to bring about radical changes in society. Annadurai did not like this speech of E.V.R.⁷

E.V.R.'s interference in the affairs of the Dravidian Student Association, which had functioned efficiently as the party's district wing, not only increased its activities but also increased its membership. Its membership increased to 15,000, establishing branches in most towns in the Tamil Districts. E.V.R. was very suspicious of Annadurai's political ambitions. The students association was a power base for Annadurai but E.V.R. wanted to bring it under his direct control. His effort in that direction only provoked a confrontation with the student leaders. That was resolved with some difficulty thanks to the timely intervention of Annadurai.⁸

This rift was compounded when Annadurai raised a sum of Rs 25,000 on his own initiative to offer as a gift to the well-known Tamil poet, Bharatidasan, a disciple of Bharati. Annadurai considered it only right to honor him not because he was a prestigious poet, but because he was the only poet then echoed the political and social doctrines of the Kazhagam and as a result suffered material losses and great hardships. But for E.V.R. this was yet another effort by Annadurai to build his own image under the pretext of honoring a Tamil poet. As a result, E.V.R. not only boycotted the function held in honor of Bharatidasan on 26th June 1946, but also expressed some unwilling remarks.⁹

E.V.R. boycotted the Independence Day celebration. He refused to honor the national flag, just as he later refused to recognize the Indian Constitution seeing it only as an instrument of Brahmins' tyranny. Annadurai, however, saw national independence as the achievement of all of India, not just the North Aryan. E.V.R. refused to listen and he also ignored Annadurai's repeated calls for a democratization of leadership within the party. In 1948, D.K. Conference, Annadurai led a walkout in protest against the political autocracy of E.V.R. But E.V.R. used the conference to condemn Annadurai, but alarmed by the possibility of a split, he attempted a compromise and in the same year appointed Annadurai as President of a conference. However, he refused to give in to Annadurai's demands for a democratic party organization.¹⁰

E.V.R.'s popularity took a disastrous turn in 1949, when at the age of 72 he married a 28-year-old girl, Maniammai who had been an active member of the party. In a statement setting out the reasons for their marriage, he said he did not trust his lieutenants. This marriage was contrary to Kazhagam's stated social goals, which included eliminating the practice of unequal marriage.¹¹ Annadurai split the D.K. and formed Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (D.M.K.) along with his lieutenants on 17th September 1949.¹²

At the 1956 Trichy conference, the D.M.K. decided to participate in the upcoming elections and published a manifesto incorporating a socialist image.¹³

E.V.R.'s 89th birthday was celebrated on 17th September 1967 in Trichy, the city itself then presented an occasion for celebration. In the morning, the Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai went to Periyar Maligai in Puthur, Trichy and happily placed wreaths to E.V.R. In the carriage sat E.V.R. and the Chief Minister, Mr. C.N. Annadurai both of them reunited after eighteen years of separation.¹⁴ C.N. Annadurai congratulated E.V.R. stating that E.V.R. had achieved in 25 years what could be done in two centuries and added that his work could be described as putting centuries in capsules. On 28th November 1967, the Hindu Marriage Reform (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act was passed. E.V.R. made his comments, saying it was a boon to the Dravidians who had not got it for centuries.¹⁵

From 1935 to 1969, E.V.R. and Annadurai's relationship was politically different but generally cordial. In spite of Annadurai's ideological tussle with E.V.R., the former's affection towards the latter was genuine and remained so until the very end.¹⁶ Both participated in the anti-Hindi agitation

and opposed Rajaji's *Kula Kalvi Thittam*. With the help of E.V.R., Annaduuri started his journal *Dravidian Nadu News* in 1942. ¹⁷ C.N. Annadurai, the great Tamil son, pointed out that E.V.R. was a social scientist to the core and he implemented the ideals of E.V.R. The last public address of E.V.R. was on 19th December 1973. He took his last breath in the C.M.S. Vellore Hospital. He left the rationalist world in pain. In his life he never sought any state honors. He never held any government post. There was talk of whether his body could be buried with state honors.¹⁸ 24th December 1973 was declared a state holiday in memory of E.V.R.

The early demise of Annadurai was a great shock to the Tamil and Dravidian society. Both of E.V.R. and Annadurai wandered in Tamil Nadu as the icons of Dravidian Unity. Not only Annadurai but his lieutenants like M.Karunannidhi also maintained a cordial relations with E.V.R..E.V.R. chosen the social field where as Annadurai selected political field. No doubt, the political mentor of Annadurai was E.V.R. Both of them popularised the ideals of D.K. and the Dravida Nadu.

END NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Saraswathi,S., *Towards Self Respect- Periyar EVR on a New World*, Madras : Institute of South Indian Studies, 1994. p.1.
2. Veeramani,K., *Saint or Sectarian*, Madras : Dravida Kazhagam, 1988, p.1 2.
3. Venu , A.S., *Life of Annadurai*, Madras: Kalai Manram, 1953, p.5
4. Ramachandran, S., *Anna speaks at the Rajsabha 1962-66*, New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1975, p.7.
5. *Ibid*, p.20
6. *Ibid*, p.21
7. Visswanathan, E.Sa., *The Political Career of E. V Ramasami Naicker*, Madras: Ravi and Vasanth Publication, 1983, p. 330.
8. *Ibid*, p.331
9. Mariamalaiyan, A., *Aringnar Anna Life* , Madras : Vanathi Publication, 1967, p. 163.
10. Hardgrave, Robert. L., jr., *The Dravidian Movement* , Bombay ; Popular Prakashan, , 1965, p.33.
11. Gowthaman, G., 'The Relation Between Thantai Periyar and Arngnar Anna' in *Proceedings Volume of the Tenth Annual Session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress*, Poondi : tamil Nadu History Congress, p.122.
12. *Ibid*, p.34
13. *Ibid*, p.54
14. An Admirer, *Periyar E. V Ramasami a Pen Portrait* , Chennai :The Periyar Self-Respect Propa- ganda Institution Publication, 1992, p 73.
15. *Ibid*, p.75
16. Kumarasami, Selvamuthu, L., 'Schism in Dravidar Kazhagam : Periyar Vs Anna –A Chapter on Ideological Conflict' in *Proceedings Volume of the 25th Silver Jubilee Annual Session of the Tamil Nadu History Congress*, Chennai : Tamil Nadu History Congress, 2018, p.57
17. Ramakrishnan, *EVR Periyar Life and Services*" (Tamil), Chennai: 1996. p.12.
18. Velusamy, N., *Periyar the Social Scientist*, Salem: 1999, p.2.