

Tamil Civilization: Older than the Indus Valley and Sumerian Civilizations?

Introduction

Recently, the Tamil Nadu government officially announced that **iron has been in use in Tamil Nadu for 5,345 years**. This revelation has captured global attention. If iron has been in use for such a long time, the origins of Tamil civilization must date even further back. Exploring this further leads to astonishing discoveries about the antiquity of Tamil culture and its significance compared to the world's oldest civilizations.

Three Oldest Known Civilizations

Based on available historical evidence, the world's three oldest civilizations are:

1. Mesopotamian (Sumerian) Civilization – 7,300 years old

- This is considered the **oldest civilization in human history**.
- It flourished in present-day **Turkey, Iraq, and Kuwait**.
- Also known as the **Sumerian Civilization**.

2. Egyptian Civilization – 7,000 years old

- Emerged in modern-day **Egypt**.
- Known for its pyramids, hieroglyphics, and advanced culture.

3. Indus Valley Civilization (Harappan Civilization) – 5,300 years old

- Spread across modern-day **Pakistan and parts of India**, including **Gujarat, Punjab, and Rajasthan**.
- Known for advanced urban planning, trade, and script.

All three civilizations have left behind **archaeological remains**, providing strong evidence of their way of life.

Tamil Language's Influence on Ancient Civilizations

Tamil is one of the world's oldest languages and is still spoken today. Several Tamil words have been identified in ancient **Sumerian, Egyptian, and Indus Valley civilizations**.

• Sumerian Connections

- The word "**Asur**" in Sumerian means "**community**", which is similar to the Tamil meaning.
- Words like "**Azagar**", "**Nannan**", "**Marugan**" (**Murugan**), and "**Eelam**" were present in Sumerian inscriptions.

• Indus Valley Links

- Tamil scholar and former **IAS officer R. Balakrishnan** found that ancient Tamil city names like **Thondi, Vanji, and Korkai** exist in Indus Valley regions.

- 2,000-year-old Tamil script known as "Tamizhi" is believed to have influenced Indus Valley seals and symbols.

To encourage the deciphering of Indus script, the **Tamil Nadu government has announced a reward of \$1 million (10 lakh USD)** for anyone who can decode it.

Was Tamil Spread Through Iron Technology?

Technological advancements often lead to the spread of language. Tamil Nadu's **early expertise in ironworking** may have contributed to the diffusion of Tamil words into Sumerian, Egyptian, and Indus Valley civilizations.

Iron Technology: The Discovery at Sivagalai, Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu's Department of Archaeology made a groundbreaking discovery at **Sivagalai**, a village near the **Thamirabarani River** in **Thoothukudi district**.

- **Excavation Findings:**

- Numerous **burial sites** containing **iron objects**.
- **Carbon dating** confirmed these objects to be **5,345 years old** (older than the Indus Valley Civilization).
- This suggests that **Tamil Nadu had an advanced civilization using iron even before the Indus Valley Civilization fully developed**.

Ancient Iron Tool: "Vetti Irumbu" (Cutting Iron)

- In 2022, archaeologists found **Vetti Irumbu**, an ancient iron-cutting tool, at **Sivagalai**.
 - The tool was **3 inches long and 1 inch wide**, with a **tapered sharp edge** for cutting nails and iron objects.
 - A similar tool is still used **12 km away in Aathoor village**, showing the **continuity of Tamil ironworking traditions for over 5,000 years**.
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Tamil Iron Age: Possibly 7,000 Years Old?

- Developing advanced iron tools requires centuries of progress.
 - If Tamil Nadu was producing **high-quality iron tools** 5,345 years ago, the discovery of iron itself **could have occurred around 7,000-6,500 years ago**.
 - This would place Tamil civilization **among the oldest in human history, possibly older than Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations**.
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Key Takeaways & Facts

1. Tamil Nadu's Iron Age is older than the Indus Valley Civilization

- Archaeological discoveries at **Sivagalai** prove that Tamil Nadu used iron **5,345 years ago**, before Indus Valley metallurgy.

2. Tamil Language Influenced Ancient Civilizations

- Sumerian and Indus Valley civilizations contain **Tamil words**, proving **ancient cultural and linguistic links**.

3. Ancient Tamil Script (Tamizhi) Might Have Influenced Indus Script

- **Tamil Nadu government has announced a \$1 million prize** for deciphering Indus Valley inscriptions.

4. Advanced Ironworking in Tamil Nadu

- **Vetti Irumbu**, an advanced iron-cutting tool, was used **over 5,000 years ago** and still exists in Tamil Nadu today.

5. Tamil Civilization Could Be Over 7,000 Years Old

- If Tamil Nadu was producing **refined iron tools** 5,345 years ago, its **iron age could go back 7,000-6,500 years**.
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Conclusion: Tamil Nadu's Place in World History

The discovery of **iron tools dating back 5,345 years** challenges the timeline of human civilization. If further research confirms that Tamil Nadu's Iron Age began **7,000 years ago**, it would mean that **Tamil civilization is as old as, or even older than, Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations**.

This discovery has **the potential to change history**, positioning Tamil Nadu as one of the **earliest centers of human civilization**. The world is watching, and further discoveries may soon **rewrite history books forever**.