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**LEMURIA RESEARCH FORUM**  
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This is to certify that Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms ..... Dr. M. RAMANI... B.AI.....  
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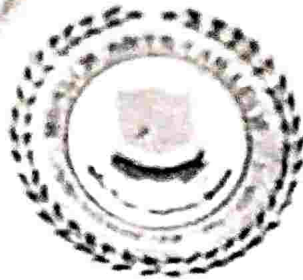
  
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**LEMURIA RESEARCH FORUM - KANYAKUMARI**

**MUSLIM ARTS COLLEGE, THIRUVITHANCODE**

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# MYTH AND FACTS: LEMURIA A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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## Abstract

For most people, continents are Earth's seven main large landmasses. But geoscientists have a different take on this. They look at the type of rock a feature is made of, rather than how much of its surface is above sea level. In the past few years, it is seen an increase in the discovery of lost continents. Most of these have been plateaus or mountains made of continental crust hidden from our view, below sea level. One example is Lemuria continent or the Kumarikkandam, the world's eighth continent that extends underwater in Indian Ocean. Several smaller lost continents, called micro continents, have also recently been discovered submerged in the eastern and western Indian Ocean. In Tamil mythology, Kumari Kandam is a mythical continent, believed to be lost with an ancient Tamil civilization, supposedly located south of present-day India in the Indian Ocean. Alternative names and spellings include Kumarikkandam and Kumari Nadu. This research tries to explore the myths and facts about Lemuria continent or the Kumarikkandam through various literatures.

Key words: Lemuria continent, Kumarikkandam, Lemur, Indian Ocean.

## Introduction:

A new study in the British journal Nature Communications recognizes additional samples of the volcanic rock zircon of up to 3 billion years old, providing additional evidence to support the underwater continent's discovery [2]. A comparatively young island, Mauritius is only a few million years' old—rocks that much older would have to belong to a continent. In the most recent study, researchers found the zircon in solid rock, not just in the beach sand, addressing a criticism of the initial study asserting that the mineral could have washed ashore from another, existing continent. A group of scientists from Norway, Germany, South Africa and the U. K. have discovered a submerged continent in the Indian Ocean.

In deep oceans the thickness of Earth's crust, which forms the upper layer of the planet and protects us from the extremely hot magma underneath it, is about seven km. But underneath Mauritius and leading to Seychelles, which is more than 1,000 km away, there were large chunks of the crust that were as thick as 30 km. It shall not be certain about the origins of the zircons but when combined with the evidence of thicker crusts in such big parts of the ocean floor, it can be quite certain that a small continent existed underneath Mauritius. There are a number of popular myths about submerged continents [7].

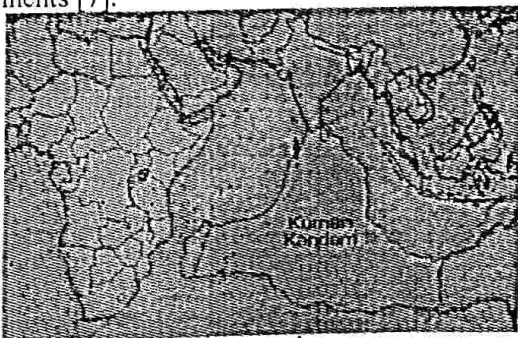


Figure: 1 Geographical Map of Kumari Kandam

For instance, in the 19th century Lemuria, a large submerged continent in the Indian Ocean, was considered to extend from Antarctica to Kanyakumari. But its claimed existence did not stand the test of science. The Earth's crust consists of seven or eight major "plates", which but slowly is constantly moving relative to each other. Figure: 1 shows the geographical Map of Kumari Kandam submerged under the Indian Ocean.

Over millions of years these have shaped how the world looks today. Some 140 million years ago, the Indian subcontinent split from a supercontinent called Gondwana, which also consisted of modern Africa, Australia, Antarctica and South America. It eventually collided with the Eurasian plate some 50 million years ago, raising the Himalayas in the process. Scientists predict that it was in between leaving Gondwana and colliding with the Eurasian plate that this continent Mauritius may have existed as an archipelago, a cluster of islands, squeezed in between Madagascar and the Indian subcontinent.

## Lemuria:

Lemuria is the name of a hypothetical "lost land" variously located in the Indian and Pacific Oceans [8]. Accounts of Lemuria differ, but all share a common belief that a continent existed in ancient times and sank beneath the ocean as a result of a geological, often cataclysmic change, such as pole shift. Lemuria is the name of a mythical continent purported to have been in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

## The Lemuria myth:

There is an old, persistent Tamil tradition about a land that existed south of India called Kumarikkandam (continent), a belief that is linked to the myth of the lost land of Lemuria, a figment of Western imagination. Accounts of the lost continent vary, but the common theme is that a large area went under the ocean as a result of geological cataclysms, a theory that geologists of today do not subscribe.

The last Ice Age had a profound influence on the prehistory of humankind. So in prehistoric studies of coastal areas, it is crucial to understand the consequence of changes in the sea level [1]. About 14,500 years ago, the sea level was lower by 100 metres. With subsequent global warming and melting of large masses of ice, the level started rising, in stages.



Figure 2: The lemurian as conceived by W. Scott Elliot, a staunch theosophist who published, in 1904, 'the lost lemuria'

Figure 2 shows a Lemurian [4] and how it permeated the Tamil tradition through folklore and writings as the lost continent of Kumari. As the sea level rose, the low-lying lands in the coastal region and the exposed continental shelves were inundated. This phenomenon gave rise to the stories and legends of deluges that permeated the African, Amerindian and Australian aboriginal folklore and Greek, Roman and Hebrew legends, and the Indian puranas, which referred to pralayas. The coastal areas south of India that were submerged in ancient times evidently gave rise to the Tamil myth of the lost continent of Kumarikkandam, while myths of the lost continents of Atlantis and Lemuria were generated in the Western world [10].

Lemuria is the name of a mythical continent purported to have been in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The lost continent derives its name from the primate lemur belonging to the group prosimians [11]. "The probable primeval home or 'Paradise' is here assumed to be *Lemuria*, a tropical continent at present lying below the level of the Indian Ocean.

#### Lemurs:

Lemurs now inhabit Madagascar Island, the surrounding smaller islands and Comoros Island. The term lemur comes from the Latin word *lemures*, meaning spirits of the night, a reference to many species of lemur that are nocturnal and so have large reflective eyes. Their distribution once extended from Pakistan to Malaya. The English geologist Philip Selater (1864) coined the term Lemuria in his article 'The Mammals of Madagascar'. Trying to explain the presence of fossil lemurs in Madagascar, he proposed that the Indian Ocean Island and India had once been part of a larger continent, Lemuria. His theory was put forward before the concepts of continental drift and plate tectonics provided the explanations for the similarity and distribution of

formations and fossils in different strata and continents.

During the 19th century, scientists frequently postulated the presence of submerged land masses in order to account for the present distribution of species. As Lemuria gained some acceptance within the scientific community, it began to appear in the works of scholars such as Ernst Heinrich Haeckel (1834-1919), a German biologist who promoted the work of Charles Darwin in Germany. Haeckel suggested that there was a land bridge that remained above water long enough to facilitate the migration of prosimians from Africa into India and the Malay Peninsula.

While explaining the evolution of man, there is a subtle but conscious attempt in the book to establish the superiority of the Aryan race. Later, some members of the Theosophical Society published essays, presented in the garb of scientific writings, on Lemuria and Atlantis. Thus the myth of Lemuria was perpetuated.

According to the teachings of the Theosophical Society, human beings evolved through seven successive root races, each of which populated and occupied different continents. Lemuria was occupied by the third root race called Lemurians, who were primitive beings. Subsequently, the more advanced inhabitants of Atlantis, called Atlanteans, replaced them. Aryans, the descendants of Atlanteans, were the fifth root race and were considered the pinnacle of evolution. Figure [3] shows a ring-tailed lemur. Also Figure [4] shows a ring-tailed lemur now belong to Madagascar. They are native only to the island of Madagascar. Most existing lemurs are small, have a pointed snout, large eyes, and a long tail. They chiefly live in trees. In fact, over 75% of the island's fauna and flora is found nowhere else. Lemurs evolved separately from other primates on the Indian Ocean island of Madagascar.



Figure 3: A Ring Tailed Lemur of Lemuria Continent

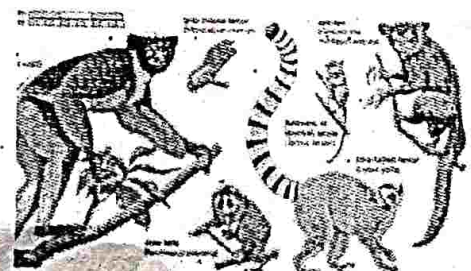


Figure 4: Ring Tailed Lemur of Madagascar

### Lost land of Tamils

The narratives about Lemuria found their way into colonial India about the time when folklore began to permeate historic knowledge as though they were fact. The writings of Wishar Cerve and the maps of Scott Elliot were brought into Tamil writings [3] by K. Appadurai, in his book *Kumarikkandam* been called as *Kadal Konda Thennadu* (Kumari Continent or the Submerged Southern Land, 1941). The term Lemuria found its way into certain Tamil textbooks and was given the Tamil name *Kumarikkandam* [5][6], or continent of Kumari. Names from Tamil classics were given to the mountain ranges, rivers, places and areas. For example, the puranic geography of an axial mountain called Meru as the centre of Jambudvipa (Sanskrit) or Navalam Theevu (Tamil) was accepted, and, later on, these names were attributed to certain parts of Lemuria, giving it acceptability among Tamil readers. In the 1920s, with Tamil revivalism and the efforts to counter the Aryan and associated Sanskrit dominance, the concept of Lemuria were wedded to the notion of the lost land referred to in Tamil literature [9].

Some of the important references from Tamil Sangam classics are as follows: 1) in *Purananuru* 9, verses 10-11 are interpreted as a reference to a Pandya king who ruled a part of the lost land where the river Pahruli flowed. 2) in *Silapathigaram* (*KaduKaanKaathai*) (11:17-22) is a reference to a Pandya king who won over kingdoms in *Imayam* (the Himalayas) and *Gangai* (the Ganga) to compensate for his land lost to the deluge. Tamil scholars such as *Devaneyapaavaṅṅar* consider the deluge under reference to be the one that destroyed *Thenmadurai*. 3) According to *AdiyarkuNallar*, poem 104:1-4 from *MullaiKalithogai* indicates that the Pandya king resettled the survivors of the deluge in certain Chera and Chola territories. It is portrayed by certain Tamil writers that the series of deluges destroyed the Tamil civilisation and the survivors spread out and civilised other parts of the world.

The Tamil tradition about a lost land was committed to writing after the 10th century by commentators like *Nakeerar* in his commentary on *IraiyanarAkapporulurai*. *Nachinarkiniyar* and *AdiyarkuNallar* followed him. Those who wrote the commentaries exaggerated the extent of land that was submerged by the deluges referred to in *Silapathigaram* and *Kalithogai*. According to the commentators, there were 49 countries (*nadu*) in the lost land of Kumari and the distance between the river Kumari and the river Pahruli that flowed in the lost land was 700 *katham*, which according to one calculation is about 770 km.

The crucial question is whether the land referred to as Kumari was as large as a continent? The advocates of *Kumarikkandam* interpreted the term *nadu* to mean country. In Tamil Nadu and Kerala many small towns and villages have in their

names the term '*nadu*', which basically referred to a settlement, as opposed to '*kadu*', or forest. In the above Tamil references there is no mention of the term *Kandam*, referring to land the size of a continent.

If the oral traditions and the subsequent writings exaggerated the size of the submerged land called Kumari, what was the background to the lost land referred to in Sangam literature?

The present formations of India, Arabia, Africa, Antarctica, South America and Australia started breaking up due to natural upheavals and moving to different parts of the earth at the rate of 15,000 years per mile on an average and found their places in the Asian Continent. The movement of the earth mass, called *NavalamTheevu* in Tamil, caused the formation of the present continent of India [12]. There was a general belief that both Lemuria and *Kumarikkandam* were one and the same. However, it has been established by Frank Joseph, Secretary for Ancient American Association, in his book "*The Lost Civilization of Lemuria*", the existence of a land called Lemuria, one of the world's oldest civilizations, about 2.5 lakh years ago, in Indonesia. Hence, Lemuria and *Kumarikkandam*, which existed in southern part of India, are different lands. Mr. Joseph has also established that the Mohenjodaro letters of Eastern Islands are nearly 1,00,000 years old. He has critically examined the views of various findings by the researchers and established the source of Mohenjodaro letters as well as the ancient civilization of Moo and has written that due to natural calamities, the island of Moo was destroyed about 2.5 lakh years ago.

From *Kumarikkandam*, South of Tamil Nadu, about 15,000 years ago people moved to Africa and became Sumerians and those who moved from Africa to Arabia later became Jews. From *Kumarikkandam*, South of Tamil Nadu due to tsunami; people moved to Bengal and became Cholas and those who moved to Sind and Punjab became Cheras.

In *Sillapathikaram*, it was mentioned that one "*Ezhuthanga Nadu*" (7x7 = 49 countries) existed. So, Southern Tamil Nadu and Kumari Kandam are different regions. Those who have moved to Southern Tamil Nadu were called *Pandiyas* and they spread over Ceylon and Tirunelveli. For decades, scientists offered wild theories about the fabled lost continent of Lemuria in the Indian Ocean. Then, in 2013, scientists actually found some evidence.

### Conclusion

In this work a detailed research has been made to believe with a strong evidence that all aware that the origin of the Tamil people and their culture is shrouded in deep mystery. Though there are many traditions narrated in early literature, "*Kumarikkandam*", the land that lay to the south of India and, which later submerged in the Indian Ocean, has been a matter of conjecture for a study by

the researchers. Herewith this work concludes with a request to all the great Tamil scholars, eminent astronomers and mathematical experts to join together in this noble research to establish the glory

of Tamil language and Tamil race to the whole world. After this look at the "lost continent" of Lemuria, uncover the mysteries of the legendary lost cities and sunken cities of the ancient world.

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