



Similarities between festivals ‘Diwali’ in India and ‘Samhain’ in European civilizations

Surendra Mathur*

*Retired Major (Sena Medal), Jaipur, India

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Abstract. Diwali is an Indian festival which is still alive in European tradition in a different form. The ritual for celebrating the Diwali and its cultural significance has close similarities with Samhain in Europe to that of India. The present perspective looked into available evidences for similarities of ‘Diwali’ with Samhain in European civilization. The study has been analyzed by dividing this topic into four parts, 1) Name Similarities between Samhain and Diwali, 2) Dates similarities between Samhain and & Diwali, 3) the similarity in the way these both festivals are celebrated even today and, 4) lastly Similarities of ‘Samhain’ in European countries. It has also been the New Year of many sects of the world. These festivals are in the heart of all societies and sects in India and Europe and thus they can help re-emerge the mythological cultures of the world. Will India look its relation with European culture in the light of Diwali?

Keywords. Diwali, Samhain, India, Europe, Celt, Brittnay, Tradition

Introduction

‘Sanatan culture’ (Indian Culture) was present in entire Europe once upon a time. People into the study of mythological religion and culture have started looking into it. Among the sects that have had a special Influence in Europe, one major sect was called ‘Celts’. Its influence was present in many countries such as France, Ireland, United Kingdom, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Austria, etc. Because of the Holocaust invasion of Rome they had to face thousands of years of slavery. They are now, beginning to reemerge again through continuous attempts of their masters called ‘Druid’, they are again establishing their centuries old belief system.

Their Gurus, so called Druids, has played very important role for the revival of their religion and cultural (1-2). The culture of the Celt perfectly matches with the Sanatan culture (3). Their main deity is Lord Parshuram and he is called as Dagda (4-5).

This culture of Europe is widely known as "Danube" culture. Danube is the second longest river is Europe after the Volga River and flows through many countries. The river passes through Germany Romania, Hungary, Austria, Serbia, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Croatia and Slovakia. The Danube flows



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southeast for 2,730 km and passes through four capital cities of Europe (Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest and Belgrade) (6).

Danube culture, is a culture associated with the Hindu goddess Danu. This goddess is of water, river and lakes, such as Ganga-Yamuna culture, Indus Valley culture. Goddess Danu at Bali (Indonesia) is the water goddess of Hindu. She is one of the two supreme deities in the Balinese tradition (7). The Temple built in Lake Bratan-Bali is dedicated to Goddess Danu (8). In Europe, the culture is known as "Tuath(a) De Danann" which means the folks of Goddess Danu" and also ("tribe of Gods"). Hindu address Lord Hari as, "Hari Om Tatasat", similarly Goddess Danu is called "Tatsat Danu or Tuath".

The purpose of writing this article is along with the Gods and Goddess in Europe, according to our study, the major festivals are associated with the Sanatan culture. These people make almanac to the similar to the one by Indians and celebrate the festivals accordingly. The present dominant religion there had to adopt these ancient mythological festivals and they could not Change them. People there have always believed in the lunar calendar. With so many similarities, why we are unable to recognize these festivals? There are two reasons for this. Firstly, forcing people write their local language in Roman Alphabets and secondly, imposing Gregorian Calendar (9), and fixing a date for each festival. Over the time, people have forgotten the matter and is no more an issue. These festivals though associated with Sanatan culture, are now difficult to identify. In order to confuse people further, the names of these festivals were associated with the names of the saints of the present dominant sect (10). Among all the festivals celebrated in European civilizations, Diwali is most close festival.

The present study attempted to the test this statement.

Different sects in India celebrate different festivals. Diwali is the most legendary and popular in it. This festival is celebrated all over India. In earlier times at Diwali people send New Year wishes to everyone but now only Diwali greetings are sent. There was mythological practice of closing accounts and opening new accounts on this auspicious day for centuries. It was a process of closing the financial year and the beginning of New Year. This has long been stopped. Now a days the financial year is from Apr-Mar. The impact of Indian culture and economy hand certainly been on Asian countries. Once upon a time Diwali was the most mythological and popular festival of Europe. This festival is known as Samhain in Europe.

Present Status of Samhain & Diwali

It is also important to understand the circumstances, related to this festival in Europe. As mentioned before, the dates of the festivals were imposed on the society there, so were the dates of this festival. Some festivals were forced to be combined. The festivals, that were combined is need to be identified. First is Shradha, which was forced to be limited to one-day on October 31. The books written by Celtic elders, clearly mentions that during the mythological period there was a season of 'Shradha' (11). It is now known as Halloween (12). 'Sarvapritri Shradha' was forced to be celebrated on November 01 in the named as "All Saints Day". Diwali began to be celebrated on 02 November in the name of Samhain. Thus, it became a three-day festival. If you analyze, the festival of Diwali usually falls within about ten to twelve days before or after November 02. The dates of festival have continued to change, even today.

The Present study is limit to Deepavali (Samhain). The festival of Diwali is celebrated for five days in India (13). You will be surprised to know that Samhain is still a five-day festival in the Welsh province of United Kingdom. The present study has been analyzed by dividing this topic into four parts. 1) Name Similarities between Samhain & Diwali, 2) Samhain & Diwali Festival celebration dates, 3) the way festival is celebrated and 4) lastly Similarities of 'Samhain' in European countries.

Name Similarities between Samhain & Diwali

In India, this festival is known as Diwali, On this day Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya with Mata Sita after became victorious. Ayodhya residents started celebrating this day as a festival with great joy and then it became a major festival of Indians. This festival is celebrated by lighting lamps at home (14). Diwali festival usually lasts for five days and is celebrated during the Hindu lunisolar month Kartika (15). Diwali signifies spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and wisdom over ignorance (14).

Now analyzing the European festival Samhain, it has been found that it matches the purpose and beliefs of Diwali. Diwali is known with the name of Samhain in Europe (16). In Brittany (France), it is known as Samonios. Samhain has no direct meaning in English. Luckily, we got an extremely legendary calendar of Celts. It featured the month of November as "An t-Samhain". It has been mentioned earlier that Sanskrit language has had a great influence on all the languages of Europe (17). Analyzing the term "An t-Samhain" observation leads to believe that it could be a Sanskrit word, by writing this word in Sanskrit, this word come out as "Ann tasmai". By analyzing its meaning Ann in Sanskrit means Eternal and Tasmai means Greeting. Therefore, "An t-

Samhain" means "Greeting Eternal Gods and Goddesses", a day to bowdown to them.

How old is Celtic culture, is really unimaginable and surprising (18). They consider Lord Parashurama as the main deity (19). Certainly, this festival should be equally mythological. This meaning is still valid today and matches the objectives of this festival. Due to time and conflicting circumstances, its name (An t-Samhain) became popular by the name "Samhain". People kept forgetting the basic belief. It is also a matter to ponder whether this festival was celebrated before Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya. His arrival in Ayodhya on the same day could be a coincidence. The mythical New Year of the Celts begins with Samhain.

We will now analyze Brittany's calendar. Samonios is the name of this festival in Brittany (20). This festival is also celebrated on Amavasya (Dark Moon Day). Analyzed an old 2004 Brittany calendar. The main features of this calendar are, that the month starts on Gyaras. That is the eleventh day from Full Moon. Gyaras have importance for Hindus. As Diwali used to be the New Year in India in the mythological period, this five-day festival of their is starts from Gyaras and Diwali is celebrated on the fourth day, When analyzing the name in Sanskrit, Samonios came out to be "TamasNashah", meaning "destruction of darkness. The festival symbolizes "the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and wisdom over ignorance. It is the same belief and meaning

Samhain & Diwali Festival celebration dates

Sr. No	Ireland (Samhain)	Brittney (Samhain)	India (Diwali)
1	25 Oct 2003		25 Oct 2003
2	11 Nov 2004		12 Nov 2004
3	02 Nov 2005	01 Nov. 2005	01 Nov. 2005
4	23 Oct 2006		21 Oct 2006
5.	09 Nov 2007		09 Nov 2007

(Note: The dates of Samhain celebration in Ireland were obtained from Celtic Druid Temple www.celticdruidtemple.com & the date for Brittney of 2005 from the calendar)

Similarities in the way Samhain and Diwali are celebrated

First, we are presenting the information about the five-day celebrations in India. On the first day, Dhanteras is celebrated in which Lord Dhanvantari (God of Ayurveda) is also worshiped. The second day, Indian celebrate Naraka-Chaturdashi. On the third day Diwali is celebrated. On the fourth day, there is a program of social interaction, meeting people and relatives in villages and in addition farmers worship oxen. On the fifth day, the festival of brother and sister meeting is celebrated named as Bhai Dooj. A similar five day festival is also celebrated in the Welsh province of the United Kingdom and in Brittany, France. Their month starts with Gyaras, which is also an auspicious day for Hindus. People also keep fast on this day. These are all amazing similarities.

Similarities of 'Samhain' in European countries

It has been found that the Celts in Europe, call this festival "Samhain". In France it is called Samonios which means "TamasNashah" in Sanskrit that is the destruction of darkness". Celts are inhabited throughout Europe. In the Baltic countries also, it is called Samhain and generally celebrates on 1 or 2 November under the present circumstances. People

of many sects still celebrate according to the mythological almanac.

Conclusion

It is clear that Diwali has been the most important and most popular festival in India, Asian countries and Europe for centuries in different forms. These festivals are also followed by New Year. These festivals have also been the New Year of many sects of the world. In India too, it was considered the beginning of a new financial year, it is the most mythical New Year festival in the heart of all societies and sects, all over the world. It is a festival that can help re-emerge the mythological cultures of the world. India should take initiative for this. India has emerged as cultural and spiritual center to the world. India has also contributed significantly in Yoga and Ayurveda and other cultural heritage. To survive the mythological traditions, India can bring the whole world together in one thread.

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