

# TAMIL CULTURE

Vol. II - 1953

தனிநாயகம் அழகனார்



உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவனம்

International Institute of Tamil Studies



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Vol. II - 1953

ஆசிரியர் :  
தனிநாயகம் அடிகளார்



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உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவனம்

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### அணிந்துரை

காலத்தால் உருவாகியும் வளர்ந்தும் முதிர்ந்தும் மொழிகளுக்கெல்லாம் மூத்த மொழியாக இருப்பது தமிழ்மொழி, எனினும் அதன் இளமையையும் எளிமையையும் தெளிவையும், இனிமையையும் உலகறியச் செய்ய முனைப்புடன் செயல்பட்ட அறிஞர் பெருமக்கள் பலர். அவர்களுள் “திறமான புலமையெனில் வெளிநாட்டார் அதை வணக்கம் செய்தல் வேண்டும்” என்ற மகாதவியின் மந்திர மொழிக்கேற்பத் தமிழ்மொழியின் பெருமையை உலகமெலாம் பரவச் செய்த பெருமக்களுள் தவத்திரு தனிநாயக அடிகளாரும் ஒருவர். அவர் உலக நாடுகளுக்கெல்லாம் தாமே தூதராகச் சென்று தமிழின் பெருமையை, தமிழனின் அருமையை, தமிழ்நாட்டின் தனித்தன்மையை எடுத்துக் கூறித் தமிழின் உயர்மொழிப் பண்பை உலகறியச் செய்தவர். உலகத்தமிழ் ஆராய்ச்சி நிறுவனம் தோன்றக் காரணமானவர்.

உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி மாநாடுகள் காணச் செய்தவர். ஈழத்தில் 02.08.1913இல் நாகநாத கணபதி பிள்ளைக்கும் (ஹென்றி ஸ்தனிஸ்லாஸ்) சிசில் இராசம்மா வஸ்தியா பிள்ளைக்கும் திருமகனாகத் தோன்றியவர். உலகெங்கும் சென்று உயர்தமிழுக்கு உரிய பெருமை கிடைக்கப் பாடுபட்டவர்.

தவத்திரு தனிநாயக அடிகளார் உலக நாடுகளுக்குச் சென்று தமிழ்மொழியின், தமிழ் இனத்தின் பெருமையை

உலகறியச் செய்தபோது ஆய்வாளர்களும் தமிழ் ஆர்வலர்களும் தமிழ் ஆராய்ச்சி இதழொன்று ஆங்கிலத்தில் வெளியிட வேண்டும் என்ற கருத்தினை அவரிடம் தெரிவித்தார்கள்.

அதன் பயனாக உலக நாடுகளில் பணியாற்றிவரும் தமிழறிஞர்களை ஒருங்கிணைத்துத் தமிழாராய்ச்சியை ஒருமுகப்படுத்தவும், வளப்படுத்தவும் 1952இல் **Tamil Culture** என்னும் முத்திங்கள் இதழை அடிகளார் தொடங்கினார். அவ் இதழில் தமிழ்ப்பண்பாடு, தமிழர் கல்விநிலை, தமிழர்களின் சிந்தனைச் செழுமை பற்றிய கட்டுரைகளைச் சமகால மேலைநாட்டு இலக்கியத் திறனாய்வுக் கோட்பாடுகளுக்கேற்ப அடிகளார் எழுதினார். மேலும் பல மேநாட்டறிஞர்களின் கட்டுரைகளையும் இடம்பெறச் செய்தார். அவருடைய நூற்றாண்டு விழா, மாண்புமிகு முதலமைச்சர் புரட்சித் தலைவி அம்மா அவர்களின் மேலான ஆணைப்படி தமிழ்நாடு அரசின் சார்பில் உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவனத்தில் சிறப்பாக நடத்தப்பட்டது. அவர் தொடர்புடைய நூல்கள் வெளியிடப்பட்டு அவரது தமிழ்ப்பணி போற்றப்பட்டது.

தவத்திரு தனிநாயக அடிகளாரை ஆசிரியராகக் கொண்டு 1952 ஆம் ஆண்டு முதல் முத்திங்களிதழாக **Tamil Culture** என்னும் இதழ் வெளிவந்தது. இவ்விதழின் தொகுப்புகள் இன்று உங்கள் கரங்களில் தவழ்கின்றன.

இவ்விதழ்கள் தமிழ்த் தொண்டு பரவுசீர்க் கருத்துக் கருவூலங்கள்; காலங் காலமாக நாடெங்கும் ஒளிவீசக் கூடியவைகள்; அருகிவரும் தமிழாய்வுக் களங்களுக்கு கலங்கரை விளக்கொளிகள்; அரிதின் முயன்று அன்னைத் தமிழ் வளர்த்த தவத்திரு தனிநாயக அடிகளாரின் **Tamil Culture** முத்திங்கள் இதழ்களை ஆண்டுவாரியாக ஒன்றுதிரட்டித் தொகுப்பு நூல்களாக வெளியிடப்படுகின்றன.

தமிழறிஞர்களின் தமிழ்த் தொண்டினை எப்போதும் பாராட்டுவதில் முதன்மையானவர் மாண்புமிகு தமிழ்நாடு முதலமைச்சர் புரட்சித் தலைவி அம்மா அவர்கள் ஆவார். மாண்புமிகு அம்மா அவர்கள் தமிழ் மீதும் தமிழர் மீதும் தமிழ்நாட்டின் மீதும் தமிழ்ப் பண்பாட்டின் மீதும்



கொண்டுள்ள அன்பும் கருணையும் அளப்பரியன. ஆதலால், இவற்றின் மேம்பாட்டுக்கெனப் பல திட்டங்களை மேற்கொண்டு வருகின்றார்கள். ஒல்லும் வகையெல்லாம் தமிழ் வளர்த்து வரும் மாண்புமிகு தமிழ்நாடு முதலமைச்சர் புரட்சித்தலைவி அம்மா அவர்களுக்கு உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவனத்தின் சார்பில் நன்றிகளைப் பதிவு செய்கின்றேன்.

தமிழ் மொழி வளர்ச்சிக்கு ஆக்கமும் ஊக்கமும் அளித்துவரும் மாண்புமிகு தமிழ் ஆட்சிமொழி, தமிழ்ப் பண்பாட்டுத் துறை, தொல்லியல் துறை (ம) பள்ளிக் கல்வித் துறை அமைச்சர் கே. சி. வீரமணி அவர்களுக்கும் நன்றி.

தமிழ் வளர்ச்சிப் பணிகளில் ஆர்வத்தோடு நாட்டம் செலுத்தித் தமிழ்த் தொண்டாற்றிவரும் தமிழ்வளர்ச்சி மற்றும் செய்தித்துறைச் செயலாளர் முனைவர் மு.இராசாராம் இ.ஆ.ப. அவர்களுக்கும் இதயம் கனிந்த நன்றியினைத் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

இந்நூல் சிறப்பான முறையில் மறு அச்சப் பெற முனைந்து உழைத்த உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவன அனைத்துப் பணியாளர்களுக்கும் அச்சகத்தார்க்கும் என் நன்றி.

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## **FROM MADURAI**

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## Reader's Forum

"I have found *Tamil Culture* of great interest, and so venture to write to congratulate you on it and express the hope that a venture so well begun may continue, even though it may be difficult to keep up so high a standard in all following issues.

I am personally interested, as a research worker, in the pre-Aryan cultures of this region as evidences of the spread of the earliest beginnings of civilization.

Also may I put forward two suggestions. First that a map of the distribution of the Tamil-speaking people of today would make an excellent frontispiece. It would distinguish the areas in which Tamils are (a) the majority, and (b) a considerable minority . . . .

Second a map of the megalithic monuments in South India and Ceylon would be of great value as evidence of the early spread of that culture. The article on *The Dolmens of Pudukottai State* is incomplete without such a map for that area. Of course the production of such a map for each such part of Tamilnad, to build up into one for the whole region, is a work demanding considerable research. But to ask workers on such a topic to put their results in the form of an accurate map is to stimulate them to do more accurate work."

C. B. FAWCETT,

*Emeritus Professor of Geography in the  
University of London.*

"I have been greatly impressed by your quarterly. It opens up new horizons."

J. W. CORNELL,

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"At a time when so many reviews of poor quality are printed, it is a pleasure to see *Tamil Culture* which is sedately edited and superbly printed."

*—Illustrated Weekly of India.*

"The printing and get-up of the Review leave nothing to be desired."

E.N.D.R. in *The Sunday Indian Express*.

"Allow me to congratulate you on the high spiritual and scientific level of the Quarterly. I am looking forward to receiving the following numbers."

PROF. GIUSEPPE TUCCI,  
*Instituto Italiano Per il  
Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, Rome.*

"A new journal makes its bow to the many students and well-wishers of Tamil literature and Tamil culture. It sets out to serve a real need, felt particularly since the demise of the excellent *Tamil Antiquarian* . . . .

But in future, the journal should serve more than its avowed purpose. In giving publicity to the present position of Tamil studies, in recording the progress of research and in suggesting lines along which it could proceed, the journal acts as a guide to Tamil scholars. In short the journal should be welcomed by a variety of readers."

S. M. in *Ceylon Daily News*.

The Magazine is really excellent reading. The Tamils of India and Ceylon should be grateful to you for your great efforts in reviving interest in Tamiliana.

R. MUTTU-RAMALINGAM, J.P.,  
*Advocate & Solicitor,  
Kuala Pilah, Negri Sembilan, Malaya.*

"We are especially happy that the Tamil Literature Society (52, New Colony, Tuticorin, South India) has sponsored so excellent a journal in English, the language for the international as well as the inter-regional exchange of ideas and thought. The editor, by way of introduction presents an able brief for the value of the ancient Tamil heritage and explains that the launching of *Tamil Culture* is in response to a wide spread demand for closer contact with the Tamil world, whose present literary activities bear witness to the persisting virility of its culture.

We wish the new journal high success and hope that the example set by this attempt to spread appreciation, through the English medium, of one of the important elements in the composite culture of India will be emulated by qualified enthusiasts of other language groups. "Tamil Culture" represents an important contribution to national prestige abroad as well as to better mutual understanding with the country and between all peoples. We hope that it will have a wide circulation."

—The Indian P. E. N.

"La revue est tout à fait intéressante et à encourager. Il est, en effet, essentiel de défendre—sans polémiques stériles—les lettres tamoules et les études dravidiennes.

Le premier numéro est presque trop riche; il est à prévoir, je pense, que dans les suivants, on s'attachera à servir les questions et à se concentrer sur des problèmes de mieux en mieux précisés de philologie ou d'histoire."

PROF. PIERRE MEILE,  
Ecole des Langues Orientales, Paris.

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# TAMIL CULTURE

*A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study of Tamilana*

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*Render unto Tamil the things  
that are Tamil*

THE EDITOR

A newspaper report that occasioned a number of letters to the Editors of English dailies of South India and Ceylon was a paragraph concerning the paper read by Dr. Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf on "New aspects of the Dravidian problem", at the fourth session of the International Congress for Anthropology and Ethnology held in Vienna last September. Dr. Fürer-Haimendorf who is the Professor of Asian Anthropology in the University of London, is reported to have concluded that the Dravidians arrived in South India about 300 B.C. If his lecture has been correctly reported, it would seem that he has taken no notice of archaeological finds outside of Mysore State and that he has not taken into account the antiquity of the earliest Tamil literature that has reached us. However, without seeing the complete text of his lecture, it is impossible to evaluate the new theory.

The concluding remark by the correspondent who reported the Vienna lecture is very relevant to the progress of Tamil studies. "It was unfortunate," says the correspondent, "that none of our South Indian scholars was present at this important Congress which brought home to all present the inadequacy of our research work in South India and the importance of the problem". That research work concerning South India is inadequate is very true. If it is to be ever adequate, the Universities, Cultural institutes and Government should realise its importance and collaborate for this end.

The High Commissioner for India in London has pointed out recently that it was an encouraging sign that of the three

thousand Indian students in the United Kingdom, only less than one hundred and sixty were being educated by Government, the rest being supported by private means. But Tamil scholarship has never been an open door to financial well being and no lecturer employed in the Tamil Department of a South Indian University may ever hope to save enough money to go abroad for a period of observation and study.

The High Commissioner for India in London also pointed out that the vast majority of Indian students were in technological and engineering colleges and that very few were engaged in the study of humanities. While it is understandable that India needs to encourage her youth to specializing in the sciences, she cannot afford to neglect the humanities which have been responsible for making her the intellectual aristocrat among the nations. Of the three thousand students in the United Kingdom, most likely there is not even one who is specializing in studies connected in any way with Tamil. It is the duty of the State Government to offer help to promising scholars. Prizes of a thousand rupees cum shawls, or an honorarium paid to court-poets can hardly be termed a satisfactory discharging of the State's responsibility towards the promotion of Tamil scholarship.

The Central Government has not been liberal either, in its outlook and in its attitude towards the study of the cultural heritage of the South. Its interest in these matters somehow halts with Sanscrit and Hindi and Hyderabad. As for the Archaeological Department, it may be non-existent so far as Tamil Nad is concerned. The former Director-General of Archaeology, the late K. N. Dikshit, wrote: "*The entire field of paleolithic, neolithic, and megalithic as well as iron age cultures in Southern India is so vast, and transcends in interests investigation relating to historic periods, that it is likely to form a major preoccupation for several years.*" The present Director and his regional subordinates would seem to think otherwise. They do not find opportunities for exercising their talent and their interest in Virampattinam, Adicheynallur, Korkai, Kayil and other historic places in the extreme South.

Another reason for the inadequacy of research work in the Universities of the South, is the lack of a plan to train scholars of outstanding merit. The University of Ceylon, for instance, offers its assistant lecturers opportunities to qualify also abroad for two or three years, but no such opportunity is afforded by the South Indian Universities. It is not sufficient for Tamil scholars to be familiar just with their own language and literature ; it is also necessary that as many of them as possible spend two or three years abroad at Universities that have faculties or departments of Oriental Learning such as Hamburg, Bonn, Paris and London. It is not that they will have better opportunities abroad for the learning of Tamil literature and language. No, but they will have better opportunities to acquaint themselves with modern methods of research and observe the lines along which modern western languages progress. This neglect has resulted in our having few Tamils who are authorities on Tamil Archaeology or Tamil History, or Tamil Linguistics and Comparative Philology. We hear of foreign scholars who travel all the way to India to study *in situ* the Dravidian speech of people like the Khotas or the Brahuis, or the script and characteristics of the Indus valley civilization, but we hear of no University scholars of the South engaged in research of this kind. If North Indian Universities can provide facilities for scholars and scholarship and establish permanent contacts abroad, why should the providing of equal facilities be less feasible to Universities which claim to be centres of Tamil learning ?

The aloofness and retiring dispositions cultivated by Tamil scholars where international gatherings and comparative studies are concerned have created a psychological complex among both scholars and students of Tamil. It happens that in our Universities, even students who take to the specialized study of Tamil develop an attitude that tends to react against all modernization. Often they form a separated group all by themselves, and are in places considered the ante-diluvian element on the campus. Designations such as Faculty of Oriental learning and Department of Oriental studies, and awarding degrees such as Bachelor or Master of Oriental learning-the nomenclature itself is not helpful in making them healthily modern. No English University terms its faculty of

English as the Faculty of Western Learning. European languages in a Western University are grouped under "Modern languages", whereas we pride in a terminology that is geographically irrelevant to us and club ourselves as Orientalists. It is understandable for a University in Europe or America to have a faculty of Oriental studies as it would be understandable for India to have faculties of Occidental studies, but designations like B. O. L. and M. O. L. only tend to relegate Tamil students in popular imagination to an unreal distance both in time and space. If Tamil is to become more and more a medium of modern thought and expression, that will depend not only on the adaptability and inherent powers of the Tamil language, but also on the awareness, outlook, and *weltanschauung* of Tamil students, Tamil writers and Tamil scholars.

The inadequacy of research is not a little due to the inadequate equipment of those engaged in research and in University teaching. There is little attraction in Universities for the best talent since remuneration is so poor. Therefore, even if a University post is accepted in South India, it often serves for young lecturers as a spring-board for bettering their prospects. Competent lecturers who remain in Universities in spite of difficulties, are so heavily burdened with hours of lecturing that they can hardly find the time to devote themselves to study and research.

How necessary it is that a few in each University be masters of at least the English language and be well equipped in scholarship so as to be the interpreters of Tamil Culture to the East and to the West, is shown by the remarks of a Western critic regarding a book published recently by a University Professor. Marjorie Sykes in her review of the book, says: "A further factor which is detrimental to the book, both as a popular introduction and as a scholarly statement of the results of research, is the weakness of its expository style. It is wordy and tautological. It abounds in such phrases as "it goes without saying," "it is crystal clear", "mention may be made," "taking a bird's eye view," "we must not fail to note," etc. etc., most of which are unnecessary and many quite unsuited to their context, from which, after several readings one fails to extract any satisfactory meaning.

All original work done by Indian scholars in the vast field of Indian history is to be welcomed and encouraged. *It is for the Universities concerned to see that the highest standards of scholarship are maintained, and that the results of their work are presented in such a way that both historical science, and historical understanding may be effectively advanced.*"<sup>1</sup>

Is it because of the inadequacy of Tamil studies, and the lack of a sufficient number of Tamil scholars with an All India reputation — let alone international recognition — that even in 1952 South India and Tamilians receive such scant notice in books and periodicals that profess to interpret what the Indian Constitution has termed "the composite culture of India"? It is difficult to understand what other reason the editors of "The History and Culture of the Indian People" had, to be so negligent of the South in the two volumes of history that they have so far published.

This historical series is a conscious attempt to rewrite history and to rectify the distorted pictures that foreigners have drawn of India. It is prepared under the directions of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's President, His Excellency, Dr. K. M. Munshi, who in his foreward says: "In the course of my studies I had long felt the inadequacy of our so-called histories of India. For many years, therefore I was planning an elaborate history of India in order not only that India's past might be described by her sons, but also that the world might catch a glimpse of her soul." The first two volumes, we regret to state, are disproportionately emphatic on the contribution of the Aryans and grossly laconic about the non-Aryan peoples that form the basis of the earliest Indian history and Indian culture.

The first volume is entitled "The Vedic Age." The Aryan problem and Sanscrit literature form the subject of most of the studies, while the Pre-Vedic and the non-Aryan aspects of the Vedic age are very insufficiently treated. A. D. Pusalker deals with the "Indus Valley Civilization" in one chapter, but with the dexterity of a lawyer than of a scholar, attempts to meet at every turn the arguments for the Dravidian origin

<sup>1</sup> *The Aryan Path*, October, 1952, p. 462.

of the Indus Valley Civilization. S. K. Chatterji, however, in his study on "Race Movements and Pre-historic Culture" seeks to do justice to Pre-Aryan and non-Aryan India. He says with reason : "When the hypothesis of an Aryan invasion and occupation of India was first proposed some four generations ago, it was believed that the white-skinned blue-eyed, and golden-haired, Aryans, like their kinsmen of Northern Europe, entered India from the plateau of Central Asia, which was then a land of romantic mystery, came to this land of the black-skinned non-Aryans, made an easy and matter-of-course conquest of them, and imposed upon an inferior race or races their superior religion, culture, and language. It was believed that all the better elements in Hindu religion and culture — its deeper philosophy, its finer literature, its more reasonable organization, everything, in fact which was great and good and noble in it — came from the Aryans as a superior white race ; and whatever was dark and lowly and superstitious in Hindu religion and civilization represented only an expression of the suppressed non-Aryan mentality. This view is now being gradually abandoned."<sup>2</sup>

The second volume entitled "The Age of Imperial Unity" adds insult to the injury caused by the first volume. There is a study of Saivism by Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan of the University of Madras. But while the history of the Northern kingdoms is treated in hundreds of pages, South India and Ceylon are dismissed in twenty-two pages said to be from the pen of a scholar long gone to his reward, the late Dewan Bahadur S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar. What seems most ludicrous is that the chapter on Tamil language and literature is written by a Professor of English of the Andhra University, K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar.<sup>3</sup> The Professor, judging by the chapter, does not seem to have had a first hand knowledge of the ancient literature of the Tamils. He has merely summarised some out-dated books written in English on Tamil literature. Of the fifteen pages that have been allotted to him, he devotes not a few paragraphs to narrating the legends con-

<sup>2</sup> The Vedic Age, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> The Chapter is actually entitled "Dravidian Languages and Literature" but no other Dravidian literature is studied in the chapter though there is a brief reference to other Dravidian languages.



nected with Agastya and the three Sangams. Sentences like the following are extremely enigmatic : "The Kural is one of the few Tamil works that form a constituent of the popular culture of the Tamils." It is passing strange that the General Editor was unable to find a Tamil Scholar to supply this chapter on ancient Tamil literature.

Mr. R. C. Majumdar, ex Vice-Chancellor of the Dacca University and General Editor of this series has recently published a book *Ancient India* in which he says : "There is a general belief that all the best elements in Hindu religion and culture are derived from the Aryans, and whatever is lowly, degrading, or superstitious in it represents the primitive non-Aryan element mixed up with it. This view is certainly wrong, and we must admit that the Aryan religion, thoughts and beliefs have been profoundly modified by those of the Proto-Australoids and Dravidians with whom they came into contact in India. Though the extent of their influence is not yet fully known, there is no doubt that they underlie the whole texture of Hindu culture and civilisation and their contribution to it is by no means either mean or negligible. In some respects, particularly in material civilization, the Dravidian speaking peoples excelled the Aryans in building up the great structure known as Hinduism ".\*

Mr. Majumdar had a golden opportunity to rectify the false reading of Ancient Indian history which he and others have had reason to deplore. The errors of foreign historians are being corrected, but it is important that in this rewriting of history, the different regions of India are given their due place and importance. No linguistic chauvinism or regional patriotism or attachment to a mythical Aryan superiority should falsify the new history. Let not the error of the foreigner give place to the error of the compatriot.

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\* *Ancient India*, p. 24,

# Quotable Quotes

As an Andhra, I envy Tamil its possession of two such poems as *Silapadikaram* and *Manimekalai*, for which I can find no equivalents in Telugu literature. Even in translation they dominate the soul like a charm. What must they be like in the original ?

—C. R. Reddy in *Dravidian India*.

“Tamil and Sanskrit in spite of some analogies of words have no connection whatever. Their grammatical systems so widely differ that they certainly proceed from quite different origins. They are only to one another what a cocoa tree would be to a carrot plant.”

—Julien Vinson in *The Siddhanta Dipika*, Vol. 5. p. 31.

“Tamil is the only vernacular literature in India which has not been content with imitating the Sanskrit but has honourably attempted to emulate and outshine it. In one department at least, that of ethical epigrams, it is generally maintained, and I think it must be admitted, that the Sanskrit has been outdone by the Tamil.”

—Dr. Caldwell in *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages*.

“It is possible to write a simple sentence in pure native Tamil and then to express the same meaning in words almost wholly of Sanskrit derivation ; the differences in the two cases being something like the differences in the English style of Swift and Johnson.”

—W. Taylor in Introduction to Rottler's Dictionary.

“Rank and station are provided for by the use of various pronouns extending to several degrees of honorific expression. The language teems with words expressive of the different degrees of affinity. Where in European languages a long periphrasis would be required, Tamil presents the thing in its own single term. And this fecundity extends to all the ramifications of the family tree. If I speak of a sister I may either take a word, that gives the relationship subsisting between us or I may select one that will indicate our relative ages. Measures and divisions of time are equally minute and expressive. *The language thus specific gives to the mind a readiness and clearness of conception whilst its terseness and philosophic idiom afford equal means of lucid utterance.*”

—Rev. Perceval in *The Land of the Veda*.

“The invasion and conquest of these flourishing tribes by the Aryans was part of that ancient process whereby, periodically, the north has swept down violently upon the settled and pacified south; this has been one of the main streams of history, on which civilizations have risen and fallen like epochal undulations. The Aryans poured down upon the Dravidians, the Achaeans and Dorians upon the Cretans and Aegeans, the Germans upon the Romans, the Lombards upon the Italians, the English upon the World. Forever the north produces rulers and warriors, the south produces artists and saints and the meek inherit heaven.

—Will Durant in “*Our Oriental Heritage*”.

“When Deenabandhu C. F. Andrews stayed in our Ashram he told me how deeply impressed he was by the natural beauties of the Tamil Nad with its hills and valleys spread all over the land. He gave us one address on this very subject at our Sandhya time. He told me he saw nothing like this in North India. The great chain of the mountains that lie on the West and the East (Western and Eastern Ghats) linked by the gentler connecting hills that run across the country from East to West (The Javadi, Shervaroys, Anamalai and other hills) with their lovely water-falls as at

Courtallam and Papanasam make the landscape very picturesque and beautiful. The rivers that run from West to East and the vast fertile plains and green fields add to the picture. The great ocean surrounds the land on almost all three sides, and the point at Cape Comorin where the three seas meet is a charming spot. These gifts of nature have influenced the Tamil people in their long and ancient historical development."

—Dr. S. Jesudason in "*The History of the Tamils*".

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# Mohenjo-daro

SIR MORTIMER WHEELER

**B**ETWEEN THE years 2500 and 1500 B. C. it would have been possible to travel from remote Sutkagen-dor, near the shores of the Arabian Sea over 300 miles west of Karachi, to the village of Rupar at the foot of the Simla Hills — a distance of 1,000 miles — and to see on all sides men living in various degrees the same mode of life, making the same kind of pots and tools and ornaments, and possibly administrated by the same government. There was a widespread unity, widespread alike in time and in space. This unity is emphasized and partly explained when our travels take us past two great cities of a kind hitherto unparalleled in these parts. One of them lies beside the Indus 200 miles north-east of Karachi, at a spot which came to be known later as Mohenjo-daro, the Hill of the dead; the other 400 miles further on, stands near the little Punjab town of Harappa, beside a former course of the Ravi, tributary of the Indus. Here the art of living in cities, in other words *Civilization* had come into being and had co-ordinated human effort on a geographical scale unapproached in prehistoric times. Since its discovery in 1921, the now-famous Indus Civilization has rightly ranked amongst the great civilizations of the ancient world.

Almost all the known remains of this civilization lie within the limits of West Pakistan. That is a circumstance of which the new Dominion may be proud. It gives, indeed, a sort of basic unity to Pakistan itself in our historic consciousness. At the same time it presents the Pakistan Government with a special responsibility, of which it is well aware, as the custodian of the relics of an outstanding epoch of human endeavour. Mohenjo-daro is today one of the most spectacular

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Sir Mortimer Wheeler was formerly Director-General of Archaeology in India, and Archaeological Adviser to the Government of Pakistan. He is now Secretary of the British Academy, London. It is by his courtesy that this description is reproduced.

of all excavated cities, and well repays the arduous journey, to its site. Let us, in imagination, make that journey when the city was still standing in its prime, some 4,000 years ago, before time and the Indus floods had bitten into it.

Instead of approaching the city, as we do today, amidst sand and dusty tamarisk-bushes, we may suppose that we are passing through irrigated fields which, in their season, bear crops of wheat and barley, sesamum and field-peas, and a species of *rai*. Even a cotton-plantation may lend variety to the busy scene; at any rate, cotton is certainly known to the Indus citizens. As we draw near to the suburbs, we pass the cemetery where (on the analogy of Harappa) slight oblong mounds, ranged north and south like those of a Muslim graveyard, indicate the resting-place of the city forefathers. Beside and beyond them, smoking kilns begin to meet the eye, some for the baking of pottery, others for firing the millions of baked bricks used in the construction and reconstruction of the city's buildings and defences. And so we come at last to the great city itself, with its close-set houses and teeming streets.

We find that the city falls into two somewhat distinct parts, a lower and an upper. The latter, towards the western outskirts, is an oblong mound, 400 yards from north to south and 200 yards from east to west, and massively fortified. If, for the present purpose, we transfer to Mohenjo-daro the better-known details of the equivalent mound at Harappa, we shall see that the fortifications of this citadel—for thus it may be described—stand upon a bank or *bund* designed to protect the base of the defences from the floods which we know to have broken through occasionally into the town. Merchants from the distant city of Ur in Mesopotamia could tell us that their own native city-walls stood in part upon a similar protective foundation. On the Harappa-Mohenjo-daro *bund* rises a thick wall of mud-brick, 40 feet wide but tapering upwards to a height of 30 or 40 feet, and faced on the outside by a skin of baked brick to protect it from the monsoon-rains. At intervals along it, rectangular towers project, and the corners in particular are heavily reinforced in this manner. In the northern end the walls turn inward to flank a long approach up into the interior, and (at Harappa,



at any rate) other gates on the western side give access to external terraces, designed for ceremonial.

Within the walls, the building-level of the citadel is raised 30 feet above the plain by an artificial platform or infilling of earth and mud-brick; and on this platform, amongst buildings of a more normal sort, stands a series of remarkable structures which we assume to be connected with the civic administration — whether secular or religious or both. One of these buildings contains a well-built tank which probably serves a ritual function. Another, with solid construction and cloistered court, is seemingly the residence of a high official, possibly the high priest himself, or perhaps rather a college of priests. Yet another is a large pillared hall, designed obviously for ceremony or conference. It is clear enough that this assemblage of unique and monumental structures, frowning from its pedestal upon the town below, represents the stern, masterful rule of which the "lower city" also constantly reminds us.

Before descending from the citadel, however, let us climb upon the eastern battlements and survey the lower city from above. At our feet, we see the houses and shops stretching for a mile towards the broad Indus, where another *bund* seeks to ward off the river that at the same time serves the city and threatens it. From beneath the two ends of the citadel, parallel streets, some 30 feet broad, stretch away from us and are crossed by other straight streets which divide the town-plan into great oblong blocks, each 400 yards in length and 200 or 300 yards in width. Within these blocks, purposeful lanes subdivide the groups of buildings and maintain the general rectangularity of the plan. It is clear that the city is no chance-growth. It is drilled and regimented by a civic architect whose will is law.

Even from where we stand, we can see that the streets are lined with a remarkable system of brick-covered drains. In the nearer distance one of these is being cleaned out by a uniformed municipal sanitary-squad, at a point where a man-hole has been built for the purpose. (2,000 years later, archaeologists will find the heap of debris still lying beside the man-hole). But it is the "hour of cow-dust," when the children are driving in the humped cattle and the short-horns

and the buffaloes from the countryside for the night, along streets which, though well-drained, are unpaved ; and the dust from the herds and from the solid wheeled "Sindhi" carts and on occasional elephant that wend amongst them rises high amongst the houses and obscures detail. We can just see that many of the houses are of normal oriental courtyard-plan, the rooms grouped round two or more sides of a court or light-well ; and here and there we can catch a glimpse of a brick stair-case leading up to a flat roof or an upper storey. For the rest, we must descend into the streets themselves

There, if we come from some of the ancient cities of the West, we are at once struck with the uniformity and monotony of the street-architecture, with the absence of monumental sculpture or other divertisement. At the best, the severe brick walls are coated with a mud plaster. In the main streets there are few doors and fewer windows ; most of the houses are entered from the side-lanes, where pie-dogs lurk and chase occasional cats, and children play with marbles and with the little terracotta carts and dolls. Through the doors of some of the better houses a glimpse can be obtained of furniture enlivened by inlay of shell or green-blue faience but of no great elaboration. Here and there a chute in an outside wall discharges waste and sewage into a brick-built soil-tank or into a large jar, pending the attentions of the busy sanitary-squad. Meanwhile, at the shop beside us, another municipal squad — the Inspectors of Weights and Measures — is sternly checking the shopkeeper's cubic stone weights against a standard set. All is orderly and regulated. At the same time, all is a trifle dull, a trifle lacking in the stimulus of individuality. The almost unvarying character of the city as a whole from century to century is reflected in this absence of suppression of personality in its details from street to street.

This sense of regimentation reaches its climax in a quarter where there are sixteen small, identical, two-roomed cottages for the housing of slaves or conscripts, reminding us of the coolie-quarter which lies between the citadel and the ancient river-bed at Harappa. We are further reminded that at Harappa, behind the two rows of coolie-cottages are serried lines of circular brick platforms for the pounding of grain in

central mortars, and behind these in turn, significantly near to the river and its shipping, lie parallel lines of granaries upon a brick-faced pedestal. At both cities we seem to see, as in Mesopotamia, the secular arm of an administration strengthened and straitened by religious sanction; a civic discipline rigidly enforced by a king-god or his priesthood.

That being so, the more regrettable is it that in our tour of the city we have not found a single building which can, with certainty, be described as a temple. It may be that the dust has obscured, as today a much later Buddhist stupa obscures, the highest point of the citadel, where the chief temple might be expected. Nor can we make good the omission later on at Harappa, since there a still more recent obstruction (a cemetery) will baffle the archaeologist. For the religion and ritual of these cities we must console ourselves with lesser relics. Thus terracotta figurines of women seem to show that a Mother-goddess played some part at least in domestic ritual, and there are suggestions of a form of phallus-worship. Seal-representations of a three-faced and horned male god squatting with legs bent double and surrounded, on one seal, by an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros and a buffalo, suggest a forerunner of the Hindu Siva. There are also many indications on seals and pottery that trees, particularly the *pipal* or sacred fig-tree were worshiped, as widely in India today. Animals, notably the bull, which is sometimes accompanied by a so-called "sacred brazier" or manger, were apparently objects of veneration, and composite animals, such as one with a human face, an elephant's trunk, the forequarters of a bull and the hindquarters of a tiger, presumably represent a synthesis of animal-cults. Snakes may also have been worshipped, and here again many parallels may be found in modern India. Altogether it is likely that the region of the Indus Civilization anticipated *certain of the non-Aryan elements* in the Hinduism of a long-subsequent age.

But we have not yet left the busy street, with its seething population. The dress of the local citizen is notably scanty but, so far as it goes ornamental. The women wear a short skirt held by a girdle which may be adorned with beads. Above the waist, the body is bare ~~save~~ for extensive necklaces which are usually of clay or stone beads but are sometimes of blue faience or green jadeite or even gold. The most re-

markable feature, however, is the fanshaped headdress worn with grave, ceremonious mien by an occasional lady of rank and fashion. At the sides of the headdress are pannier-like cloth extensions, carefully stiffened and balanced and of grotesque aspect to the foreign eye. Of the men, less is to be said. The poorer classes wear a loin-cloth, a few, particularly the priests and high officials, are wrapped in embroidered cloaks. Many of them are bearded, but the seniors sometimes shave the upper lip in accordance with a hieratic fashion more at home in the neighbouring civilization of Sumer.

Let us peer at the passers-by more closely. We find that about half of them are of medium height and slender build, with olive complexion, dark hair, long head and fine features. Similar men and women of this attractive appearance might be found in many places, from the western Mediterranean to southern Arabia and India. Amongst them are a few of smaller stature, dark, with curly black hair and pronounced lips, of an aspect recalling that of some of the "aboriginals" of the Indian peninsula. An occasional passenger has a broad head with regular but rugged features. Of mixed type is a priest with beard and shaven lip and a woven fillet round his hair, whose advent is received with obsequiousness by all within range. And striding amongst them in his Turkoman boots is an almond-eyed Mongolian who came in this morning after a moonlight trek with a camel-caravan which has brought a mixed cargo of dried fruits and the blue lapis lazuli and turquoise from Afghanistan and Iran. In brief, the human scene is as cosmopolitan as such scenes are wont to be.

One perennial feature of our surroundings continues to evade us : the language which many of these folk are speaking and which is indicated by clearly rendered but unintelligible characters upon goods in the shops and even on some of the pottery at the well. We nevertheless glance frequently at the seals and sealings bearing these unread characters, for they also bear vivid and superbly engraved representations of animals — cattle of various kinds, tiger, rhinoceros, elephant, crocodile — and, as already remarked, the shapes of gods. Only ordinary mankind, it seems is passed over as of no account. Once more, we find that the individual is of no great interest to this efficient but curiously detached society.

Before continuing our description, we may pause to consider for a moment certain aspects of these cities and their civilization on a more abstract plane. We have observed the astonishing *sameness* of that civilization, both from place to place within its 1,000 mile stretch and from age to age within its 1,000 — year span. Another quality of it is its *isolation*. Only in a general way is it linked with the smaller cultures of the last chapter. Its distinctive pottery — deep red with black pattern of scales or interesting circles of *pipal* leaves or peacocks or fish — its seals, some of its inlays and ornaments are peculiar to itself. We know not the circumstances of their origin. Its commercial intercourse with the outside world was of the slightest, at any rate in non-perishable goods; what trade there may have been in perishable commodities such as spices, unguents, cloth and slaves, we cannot of course tell in the absence of an intelligible record. Most of the tools in daily use were still of stone, long chert blades in particular being employed as knives and for other purposes; but simple axes, knives, arrow-heads, spears and other implements were also made from copper or its alloy bronze, and these metals, together with silver, were sometimes used for vessels or figurines. For these purposes copper was probably brought from Rajputana, not necessary beyond the jurisdiction of the Indus State. Iron was, of course, still unknown at this remote date. A little lapis lazuli was, as we have seen, imported from north-eastern Afghanistan. Occasionally a stone or alabaster unguent box may have come from South-Baluchistan or Southern Persia, a bronze socketed axe-head or rare gold disc-beads from Mesopotamia, a bronze pin from Northern Persia or Asia Minor, a fragment of amazonite from South India. Amongst exports, a few distinctive products such as seals, inlays, and pottery found their way from the Indus to Ur and other cities of Mesopotamia at a time which Mesopotamia archaeologists can identify as about 2300 B. C. But, considering that Mohenjo-daro lived through upwords of nine rebuildings, the total volume of this trade on either side is insignificant.

How then did the Indus cities come into being? In spite of their difference and detachment from the contemporary (and older) cities of Mesopotamia, it is unlikely that the civic idea was an absolutely independent invention of the



Indus folk. And here it is perhaps possible to find a useful analogy in the fully historical period. When Islam came to Pakistan and India from the West, it brought with it the *idea* of mosque and tomb, the *ideas* of the rhythmic triple *iwān*, the emphatic dome, the minaret. But India, whilst adopting these ideas adapted them to her traditions. She accepted but transmuted. And for a demonstration of this process, we have only to compare the Isfahan of *Shah Abbas* with the almost contemporary Fathepur Sikri of Akbar the Great: the one completely and soberly Persian, the other touched with the fantasy of the jungle. So also, we may suppose, in the third millennium B. C. India (Pakistan) received from Mesopotamia the already-established *idea* of city-life or civilization, but transmuted that idea into a mode substantially new and congenial to her. Above all, she developed her civilization, as at more than one later period, along ambitious imperial lines. Whether the outstanding cities of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa represent one empire or two, we cannot know; if the latter, we may recall that in the ninth century A. D. two Arab principalities divided the Indus between them in somewhat similar fashion, with capitals at Multan in the Punjab and Mansurah in Sind. It does not greatly matter. But the immensely vaster size of these two cities (each of them three or more miles in circumference), when compared with the other sites of the same culture, once again emphasizes that intense *centralization* which we have recognized at all stages of the Civilization. Sameness, isolation, centralization are its abstract qualities: it was a civilization within an Iron Curtain which preserved it marvellously intact for a thousand years, more or less. And then, about 1500 B. C., something happened to it.

We are once again on the eastern fortifications of the citadel of Mohenjo-daro. Before us lie the familiar straight streets, stretching for away towards the Indus. But otherwise the scene is a very different one from the peaceful evening homecoming which we witnessed before. Now volumes of smoke and flame are rising from several of the houses below us. Led by a gesticulating man in an outlandish chariot drawn by two small ponies which are stretched at a fast canter, a horde of howling swordsmen is rushing down one of the main streets. By the chariot-pole crouches the charioteer, and



every now and then the swaying figure beside him fits an arrow to a short, stocky bow and discharges it into the panic-stricken groups of fleeing citizens. As we watch, a gang of desperadoes turns into one of the side-lanes where half-a-dozen wretched creatures, including a small child, have just emerged from a house and are seeking escape. In a moment their bodies are sprawling in the dust and their cries cease. A little further on, a rash refugee has returned for some treasured knick-knack, and he shares the same fate. At another spot a pathetic group of eight or nine figures, half of them children, are emerging heavily laden from the Quarter of the Ivory Workers. They are surrounded: their screams reach a brief crescendo and die away. Their treasures have been transferred to other hands, and the looters are thrusting upon their way. Elsewhere again, we look down on one of the public well-rooms, in which local house-folk were drawing water when death came to their city. For a time they have cowered beside the well as the screams and the shouting draw steadily nearer. Now they can bear the suspense no longer. Two of them are climbing the stairs, have reached the street, when the invading mob closes upon them. They drop, and are instantly trampled into the sand. A burly fellow with raised sword turns on to the well-house stairs and cuts down the cowering woman who is struggling up them. She falls backwards across the steps, and her companion, still beside the well, is struck down instantly. Laden with plunder, the ravening horde sweeps on. A part of it is already streaming up the long stairway into the citadel on which we stand. It is high time for us to take flight into the future, through thirty-four centuries during which the poor bones of the massacred will lie there in the derelict streets and lanes until twentieth century archeologists shall dig and find them, where they, with their age-long Civilization, perished within the hour.

It remains to expand this story a little in the colder light of science and literature. Recent revisions of all the related evidence make it clear that the Indus Civilization was still living in the early centuries of the second millennium B. C. It was succeeded by a variety of (materially) inferior cultures, in some cases after a phase of violence. *Into this picture it is difficult not to bring the evidence of the earliest literature of India, the Rigveda, which is agreed to represent, from the*

*Aryan point of view and in the vague way of a hieratic hymnal, the conditions of the invasion of the Punjab by the Aryans at a date which, on archaeological and other grounds, is now commonly ascribed to the fifteenth century B.C. The vedic hymns make it clear that the mobile, city-less invaders differed at every point from the long-static citizens whom they invaded. The term used for the cities of the aborigines is pur, meaning a "fort" or "stronghold." One of these embattled cities is called "broad" and "wide." Sometimes they are referred to metaphorically as "of metal." "Autu-manal" forts are also named, perhaps with reference to the capacity of a bund, like that on which the Harappa defences stood, to withhold the autumn inundations. Forts "with a hundred walls" are mentioned. The citadel may be of stone or of mud-brick ("raw", "unbaked"). Indra, the Aryan war-god, is puramdara, "fort-destroyer." He shatters "ninety forts" for his Aryan protégé, Divodasa. The same forts are doubtless referred to where in other hymns he demolishes variously ninety-nine and a hundred "ancient castles" of the aboriginal leader Sambara. In brief, he "rends forts as age consumes a garment."*

Where are — or were — these native citadels? It has in the past been supposed that they were mythical or, at the best, mere palisaded refuges. But, since the discovery of fortifications at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro in 1944, we know too, that at least the administrative nucleus of these great cities was strongly fortified. We know too, that lesser sites of the same Civilization, such as Ali Murad and Kohtras in Western Sind and Sutkagen-dor in Makran, could boast defensive walls of stone, stone-and-mud, or brick. The general showing, then, is that of a highly evolved "aboriginal" civilization of *essentially non-Aryan type*, now known to have employed massive fortifications and known also to have dominated the river-system of Pakistan at a time not distant from the likely period of the earlier Aryan invasions of that region. What destroyed this firmly settled civilization? Climatic, economic, political deterioration may have weakened it, but its ultimate extinction is more likely to have been completed by deliberate and large-scale destruction. On circumstantial evidence, Indra and his Aryans stand accused. If we reject this evidence, then we have to assume that, in

the short interval which can at the most, have intervened between the end of the Indus Civilization and the first Aryan invasions, an unidentified but formidable civilization arose in the same region and presented an extensive fortified front to the invaders. The assumption is a wilful and unlikely one. *It is now, therefore, generally accepted that the Indus cities were, in fact, those referred to in the Rigveda, and that they were destroyed by Aryan invaders in or about the fifteenth century B. C. (See Five thousand years of Pakistan, by R. E. M. Wheeler, p. 24ff.)*

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# *The Tamil Script Reform*

T. P. MINAKSHI SUNDARAN, M. A. ; M. O. L. ; B. L.

INDIA has celebrated her fifth anniversary of the day she achieved Independence. She is a federation of States in one of which an ancient language continues to be current even in this Twentieth Century. The Tamilians are therefore both to look backward to the past for preserving their classical heritage and to look forward to the future for achieving progress in science and the modern arts. That is their peculiar problem at present because of their unique position in History. If language is the expression of a nationality, the Tamil language should become capable of performing this cultural duty.

Man stands up with his gaze towards heaven, looks and marches towards the horizon. The hands become freed and develop into the miraculous tools of the brain, its very embodiment, creating and shaping, as they wish, the world and the machines which are but his extended arms. Man finds that his most materialistic organ of eating creates music moving other hearts and utters words symbolising his innermost thoughts. Man thinks aloud ; thought is no more inaccessible. This is a discovery and a revolution. Society is knit together in this union of voices and communism of thoughts. The miracle is that it is the incarnation of thought in audible sounds. Society preserves this through its tradition. But after all, the audible sound, as an audible sensation, is ephemeral. When man's scribbling hands give permanence to these

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The Government of Madras appointed in the year 1950 a Committee for the purpose of making recommendations for the simplification of the Tamil Script so as to serve better the needs of modern printing machinery and discard the illogical accretions in the development of the Script. Six months ago the Government of Madras stated that because of strong opposition to the reform of the script, it was leaving it to the public to effect the changes it might deem necessary. T. P. Meenakshi Sundaran, who was a member of the Government Committee, here discusses the need for adopting the recommendations of the Committee,

thoughts through written symbols, another revolution is effected. Man's thoughts conquer time and space. Aristotle and Tiruvalluvar, Homer and Kambar speak to us through the ages. Our friends in foreign countries of the West through their letters, conquering space, speak to us as did the Letters of the Kings carried through their embassies in ancient times. Books are thus born.

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Once written down these books of great men cease to be individual possessions and become the common property of society. They can be copied and multiplied but there is a limit to human power. Man, however, overcomes this difficulty by inventing machines. If man is a thinking and a social animal, the books, the embodiments of men's thoughts, are the heritage of every man — not only of the learned few. The age of the Common man starts. The Printing press and its modern developments of lino-type, mono-type etc., have ushered in this age of universal literacy as the very basis of the Democracy of our country. The Printing press though nothing but matter, yet as the embodiment of the social urge of Man's spirit thus introduces the third great revolution in the domain of thought.

The common man — the ordinary labourer working the ever renewing machines has to keep himself in touch with their modern developments if he is to keep the wolf from his doors. The invention of mechanical devices and improvements are flashed through the wireless and the tele-type writer all through the world, to be printed in the evening papers, giving the latest news. The Tamil language and its scripts have to serve not only the poets and philosophers but also the motor driver and the electrician speaking and writing a peculiar Tamil jargon almost foreign to the learned, though popular among their own comrades. The democratic and practical need of the age should not be lost sight of in our preoccupation with our own classics. This supplies us with a guiding principle. The adult coming to the community Centre to receive his social education is to a little extent like the child familiar to us in our school. We shall therefore study the familiar child to throw new light on this problem.

Society it is that makes culture immortal, passing it on

from one generation to another by actual social contact and habits. Therefore, the greatest problem is to prepare the younger generation — the future citizens — for the necessities of the modern world. This is the era of the Child as a poetess of the West has sung. The Child is the father of the man and this ought to serve as our starting point. A Common Error Note-book of a higher form of a City High School reveals to us the difficulties the children are experiencing in our educational institutions, where their difficulties honest toil and first trials at creative expression, are condemned as errors by a tyrannical adult world of teachers, in their attempt at mechanising and standardising the human talent of the morrow. The longer ka and other syllabic letters ending in long ā, are with a few exceptions, written with the consonants followed by what in Tamil is called a kal of the form ா. (கா, சா etc.) The exceptions கை, கி, கி are a source of confusion to the children believing in the uniformity of Nature, which is the basis of all our sciences. These unsophisticated ones more often than not write these exceptional letters also with a kāl as பிா, சிா and சிா. The history of the Tamil script justifies their mistakes as the most ancient and correct forms. The exceptions have been introduced in the middle ages to avoid confusion in the running script. We, therefore, ought to be thankful to these new-comers to our world, teaching us good sense through their racial memory of the ancient forms.

There is another place where this fundamental feeling of uniformity of nature receives a rude shock. Whilst ordinarily we write the syllabic letters ending in āi with a double kombu (ஐ) preceding the consonant the letters nai, nai, lai, lai are not written according to this ordinary rule as னை, னை, லை and லை but instead are written as exceptions having the forms நை, நை, லை and லை, so as to avoid the confusion of the double kombu with ன etc. in the running script. Here also the good sense of the children condemned as a mistake by their teachers, puts us on our guard to understand and appreciate the ancient history of these letters which surprisingly justifies their so-called aberrations.

There is one other instance of this breach of uniformity more dangerous to the development of science and logic because of its occurrence almost at the second step of the child



in its progress in writing.  $\text{அ}$  and  $\text{ஆ}$ , the first two letters are related in form, even as they are related in sound. The long and short vowels and syllabic letters in the alphabet are uniformly thus related. But at the very second step, come the short  $i$  and the long  $i$  which have no similarity in form when they are written  $\text{இ}$  and  $\text{ஈ}$ . The connected forms  $\text{இ}$  and  $\text{ஈ}$  are not of ancient history and there is no meaning in persisting to use the grantha form of the long  $i$  when there is an ancient form still continuing to be current. That great friend of the children the late lamented Tiru C. R. Namasi-vaya Mudaliar re-introduced uniformity to this extent in his Readers.

These are some of the recommendations of the Committee appointed by the government of Madras for reforming the script — recommendations approved by the learned bodies of Tamil land. These are neither revolutionary nor heterodox ; they, in an orthodox way go back to the pristine purity of ancient usage.

The next source of confusion is between the sign of  $au$  ( $\text{ஔ}$ ) in the syllabic letters and the letter  $l$  ( $\text{ள}$ ).  $\text{ஔ}$  is  $au$  but nothing prevents any one reading it as  $ola$ ; and this remark is not hypercritical. The compound  $ollalal$  ( $\text{ஔள்ளுழல்}$ ) by elision of the medial consonant  $\text{ள}$  can become  $\text{ஔுழல்}$  ( $ol\bar{a}lal$ ) in poetry, according to the best usage of the grammarians.  $Vau$  ( $\text{வௌ}$ ) is liable to be read as  $vela$ . Arunagirinathar of Tirup-pukal fame uses the word "vellari" ( $\text{வௌள்ளரி}$ ) the cucumber in its unusual form  $velari$ , where the  $l$  medial or  $\text{ள}$  has been elided. How is one to distinguish  $velari$  from  $vauri$  ( $\text{வௌணி}$ )? If the children get confused and read the word  $\text{ஔாவை}$  as  $olavai$  according to a standing joke of the schools, who is to be blamed ? Who is to be slapped ? Certainly not the children who in their simplicity, yearn for a firm hold on the uniformity of Nature. The Grantha script avoids this confusion by having two different symbols, for otherwise it would have been impossible to read sanskrit in that script, because of the frequency of the sound  $au$  occurring in that language. It is the rarity of this sound  $au$  in Tamil which more often than not was written except in Grammar, in the more ancient way as 'av' ( $\text{Avvai}$ ,  $\text{navvi}$ ) that has not brought to the forefront its confusion with  $la$ . There is a suggestion to remove



au from the alphabet itself — a most revolutionary change which when adopted will make it impossible to print the ancient grammars or to transliterate foreign words where this *au* occurs. Nobody is compelled to write *au* instead of *av*: but in this age of freedom, we cannot compel a phonetician to write *av* when he feels he is hearing the sound *au*. For the purpose of differentiating these sounds in the scripts — for there is no confusion in pronunciation — the old form *௪* is retained for *l* whilst the same form with a slight difference — a line is drawn to the left from its perpendicular line as we draw in *ɾ* & *௪* to differentiate them from *ɾ* and *௪* respectively. The new form for the *au* in syllabic letters is *௪* — (க௪=kau).

A reference has been here made to the democratic and practical demands of the modern world, necessitating the printing of newspapers for the benefit of the labourers and the public. If Tamil were to become the language of our Government and courts, its scripts must lend themselves to be easily and neatly arranged in the type board so as to be operated upon, without much difficulty or waste of time. A language like the Chinese with its two thousand scripts is impossible for a typewriter and for the lino type board of the printing machine. We have in Tamil 12 vowels, 18 consonants, 1 Aytam, 216 combinations of vowels and consonants, as syllabic letters, making in all 247 letters, a number equally impossible for the typewriter and the lino. But fortunately the early printers of the Tamil country have now for centuries analysed these scripts into a few letter-forms which by permutation and combination give all the required 247 letters of the Tamil alphabet. *௪* in print is not one letter as in script, but a combination of two leads *௪* and *௪*; no new form is required for *௪* according to the usage of printers. (But in our recommendation *௪* will be a new lead.) The long syllabic letters *க௪*, *ச௪* etc ending in *௪* have been analysed into the dotless consonant and the *kāl* so much so that instead of having 18 new forms for these, the forms for the short syllabic letters *க*, *ச* etc., are themselves used along with one new lead the *kāl* (*௪*) thereby effecting a saving of 17 new letter faces. The recommendation to delete the exceptional forms *௪* *௪* and *௪* is helpful here as well.

The old printers have analysed *௪* series into kombu and *௪* etc. with the result that with one more new lead face for

the kombu and the old forms for  $\text{க}$  etc., they can print all 18 syllabic letters ending in  $\text{ஏ}$ . So have they analysed  $\text{கே}$  series into  $\text{க}$  and  $\text{ஏ}$  etc.,  $\text{கை}$  series into  $\text{க}$  and  $\text{ை}$  etc. With one additional sign alone for each one of these series, all the eighteen letters in each of the series can thus be printed. When these operators come to the syllabic letters ending in  $\text{ஒ}$  and  $\text{ஓ}$  and  $\text{ஔ}$ , the  $\text{கோ}$  series, the  $\text{கோ}$  series, and the  $\text{கௌ}$  series they need no new signs. By the combination of the kombu, the  $\text{க}$  etc., and the kal or la, they succeed in managing to give us these three series, without any difficulty. They have not gone against ancient usage by introducing these mechanical devises of economy. — the  $\text{ச}$  series.

There only remains the four series, the long  $u$  and the short  $u$  the long “ $i$ ” and the short “ $i$ ” the  $\text{இ}$  series in which this analysis has not been carried to its logical end. These letters in these series on account of their inseparable unity of forms refuse any such easy analysis. The typewriter board however analyses them into comon bits of letters. The hooks of the short and long  $i$  are separated from the main syllabic form; the board also separates the latter portions of the letters  $\text{ய}$   $\text{ப}$   $\text{த}$   $\text{ந}$  etc. But there is a technical difficulty. If the board were to be moving, there will be a space appearing in between these parts: to avoid this, the type board must be stopped from moving till both the parts of one and the same letter are typed. One hand has to be on the stop key almost paralysed for the time being. This impedes the speed of the typing. Red-tape-ism will thrive on this waste of time and efficiency engendered by this method. Some other method of analysis is therefore necessary.

As far as  $\text{இ}$  series and  $\text{ஐ}$  series are concerned, there is a wonderful uniformity in their forms; the hook denotes short  $i$ ; the hook with a circle at the right end denotes the long  $i$ . They are attached as it were, to the main consonant in the way in which they are cast now. A reference to the Malayalam scripts will make it abundantly clear that they need not be so rolled into one form. The hook can be separated and juxtaposed. Analysed this way there is no revolutionary change introduced. Instead of introducing 36 new letters, the trick can be worked with the original  $\text{க}$  etc. and two additional symbols, the simple hook and the rounded hook, thereby effecting a saving of 34 new lead faces.

The ௫ and ௮ series as they stand at present, defy any such analysis. The gordian knot, as has been suggested, can be cut by introducing new symbols for the short *u* and the long *u*, thus saving another 34 new letter faces. There are already the symbols in use for some of the Grantha letters included in the new alphabetical list of the Twentieth century such as ஜ ஃ ண ஁ ஂ & ஃ. These symbols are ௮ and ௯ used in ஁, ஜஃ *etc.* Therefore, there is no necessity for going in for any new letter face at all, and nothing except prejudice prevents the editors and authors using these forms uniformly for all the letters.

But, as matters stand at present, feelings run very high, whenever there is a suspicion, however baseless it may be, that Sanskrit usage is being forced on Tamil. The very idea of a reform of the script is resisted from all sides in other countries; but fortunately for the first time, in the history of Asian countries, such a reform has been tolerated and welcomed in this Tamil country. It is not prudence to jeopardise the possibility of its success of this reform, by rubbing the opponents on the wrong side, merely on theoretical grounds. The experts in Lino-type and Typewriter from a practical point of view, do not insist on this further economy for the efficient working of their machines.

Here is a question of human psychology and not of dry logic. The practical world is never the clear cut dream of the theorist. It is full of compromises. If the idea of the reform of the script were to take root, it would indeed be a great revolution. It will make possible further reforms in the future, if necessary, once the nation becomes accustomed to the notion of change. To spoil the good effect of this agreed reforms, on non-controversial points by insisting on doubtful symmetry and system, is to court defeat for all times to come. Discretion is the better part of valour.

The dotted consonant ௮ *etc.*, could have been analysed into ௮ *etc.* and the dot, but the dot thus separated will be confused with the sign denoting "degrees" in the measurement of temperature and angles. One may wait for a correct analysis of this series.

Therefore, these recommendations are not the last word on this subject. Children get confused when they come to

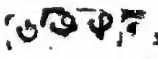

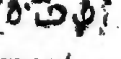


syllabic letters ending in *e* and *au*, the *கே* series, the *கே* series & the *கை* series, because the vowel signs here instead of coming after the consonant as *kal* or hook as heretofore, precede it. In syllabic letters ending *o* and *au* in the *கொ* series *கொ* series and *கௌ* series the confusion is worst confounded, for the vowel signs get split up and a part of them the kombu precedes whilst another part the *kāl*, follows the syllabic consonant. But any remedy will be only worse than the disease; because there is the great danger of making the handful of our literates in Tamil, illiterates, by introducing revolutionary changes. It is this overpowering consideration that stands on the threshold of our enquiry preventing the acceptance of the Roman alphabet.

There is nothing revolutionary in the recommendations. They hark back to ancient times. A few misguided devotees of Tamil are labouring under the fallacy that the present scripts came from Siva or Agastya fully formed like Minerva from the head of Zeus. They forget the gradual changes the scripts have undergone all through the ages. *Ka*, (க) for instances was originally like a plus sign (+). Writing on palmyra leaf, the straight lines tearing the leaf, have to be avoided and written as curves. The commentators like Naccinarkkiniyar point out the changes of the dots or pullis and kotus or-lines into kombu and kal. Has not Rev. Beschi as late as the 18 century introduced changes in vowels *எ* *ஏ* *ஒ* *ஓ* and in syllabic letters of the *கே* *கே* *கொ* *கொ* series. If there is any well established tradition about our scripts in Tamil land, it is a tradition of gradual change to meet the exigencies of times; and the recommendations of the Committee are, therefore, on the lines of the best tradition of this hoary land and its ancient language.

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# *The Evolution of the Tamil Script*

V. I. SUBRAMONIAM, B. A. (HONS.)

THE Tamil scripts to attain the present form have undergone evolutionary changes, from the days of the Thirunatharkuntru Inscription — which is the earliest known Tamil inscription of the 3rd century A. D. — down to the days of Father Beschi. The very word Tamil during the time of the Thirunatharkuntru Inscription should have been written as , in the time of the early Pallavas of the 7th century A. D. as , in the 8th century during the time of Nandi II as , in the 10th century during the time of Rajaraja the great, as , and during the rule of the later pandyas of the 13th century as . Attempts to alter the scripts to make them perfect, easy and uniform have not ceased even in our days. Since printing has established them any major reform is discredited and decried.

Among the Dravidian languages, only Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada have characters of their own. Tulu was written in Malayalam scripts and later in Kannada. The Ku language uses Oriya scripts. The other Dravidian dialects do not have an independent alphabet. The Kannada and Telugu characters which were derived from the Devanagari, have little difference between them. Modern Malayalam scripts have evolved out of Tamil Grantha characters. It is commonly believed by the Malayalis that it took place during the time of Euluthaccan of the 16th century, when the influence of Sanskrit was enormous. Before that, Vatteluttu script was commonly used for all purposes as in the adjacent Tamilnad up to the 16th century. The Mapalas of Malabar adopted until very recent times for their documents the Koleluttu script which is another form of Vatteluttu.

In the Tamil country the early Inscriptions were written in three kinds of scripts, (1) The Vatteluttu script (2) The

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Grantha script (3) the Tamil Grantha script called Tamil. The Grantha script was only for writing the Sanskrit words. Mostly no unit of Sanskrit, shorter than a word, or a word compound, or a phrase, was written in Grantha. The body of the Inscription was either written in Vatteluttu script or in Tamil. The available Inscriptions having Grantha and Tamil scripts date back to the 7th century A. D. and the Vatteluttu Inscriptions, except the Thirunatharkuntru Inscription, from the 8th century. There is evidence to show that the Vatteluttu was in vogue throughout Tamilnad. When the Pallavas dominated the Tamil country they popularised the Tamil script. Later, when the Pallava supremacy was displaced by that of the Cholas they also adopted the same characters as the Pallavas. As a result of it, the Vatteluttu script became popular only in the limited area of the Pandya and Chera countries. After a few centuries of precarious existence, the Vatteluttu script fell into disuse even in the Pandya territory. When the Malayalis began to use the modern Aryayeluthu script, Vatteluttu was finally discarded in Malabar. The difficulty in reading the Vatteluttu and the failure of political powers to back its usage, were the immediate causes for its disuse.

The arrangement of the alphabet in the Dravidian languages including Tamil, resembles exactly the arrangement of the alphabet in Sanskrit ; but, Tamil limits its vowels to twelve and the consonants to eighteen leaving out the soft consonants of the *varga*, aspirates and sibilants of Sanskrit. On the other hand Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam have adopted the sibilants aspirates and soft consonants of Sanskrit along with the peculiar Dravidian sounds like short  $e(\text{æ})$ ,  $o(\text{ö})$  and  $l(\text{ʃ})$   $r(\text{ṛ})$  etc. In these  $l(\text{ʃ})$  and  $r(\text{ṛ})$ , have gone out of use now in Telugu and Kannada but early inscriptions bear evidence to the fact that in the early days they both had  $l(\text{ʃ})$  and  $r(\text{ṛ})$ .

The origin of the Dravidian scripts was a favourite theme for research during the later half of the 19th century: and as many as a dozen illustrious scholars have put forth different theories. Among the three scripts mentioned above, Grantha and Tamil scripts, are accepted to have been derived from Brahmi. The origin of Vatteluttu alone is disputed. Many derive Vatteluttu from the Asokan Brahmi and a few



state it as of indigenous origin. According to Burnell, it is of Phoenecian and Aramic origin. Buhler thinks it to be a cursive script of Tamil. In the opinion of Gopinatha Rao, like all the other alphabets of India it is derived from the Brahmi variety of the Asokan script. An individual analysis of these letters will clearly prove that Vatteluttu has originated from Brahmi.

If the Dravidian alphabets like all other alphabets of India were derived from Brahmi, why should they be entirely different from other Indian scripts? The causes for the difference in the scripts are many. Though, differences in the writing material is the major cause in shaping the script, both in the North and South India the same material was used for writing from the beginning of writing. Different social circumstances influence very much the choice and character of the scripts. The most important cause is the range of sounds which a speech community habitually uses at the time when it gets its script, and the range of sound represented by the parent alphabet. The law of indolence that is, straight lines becoming curves and curves becoming straight lines propounded by Gobinatha Rao can have remarkable influence in changing the scripts. The high cultural antiquity as a cause of differentiation in scripts cited by Caldwell, deserves consideration. The innate tendency of the Tamilian to change every thing to suit the genius of his language and culture may also be an important cause for the difference in the script.

Scholars are equally divided in their opinion about the origin of Brahmi: Buhler and Weber trace it from the Phoenecian alphabet; Isaac Taylor, from the predecessor of the Sabeian and Deacke from the Cuneiform syllabary of Assyria and Babylonia. The British Encyclopaedia also states "the north Semitic as the mother of Brahmi." At the outset it must be made clear that these scholars did not take into consideration the Mohenjodaro script, for this buried civilization was discovered only in 1926. The light that Mohenjodaro sheds when tracing the history of scripts is important and far-reaching. Hence the older opinions of scholars need revision. Professor S. Langdon who specialized in this field discards the earlier theories of Phoenecian origin and states that the Brahmi has originated from the Mohenjodaro script,



Long before him, Sir Cunningham, the first Director of the Indian Archaeological Department supposed the existance of ~~an~~ indigenous pictographic script in India. But paucity of evidence made Buhler reject this supposition. Dr. G. R. Hunter in his thesis "The Script of Mohenjodaro" has come to the conclusion that the entire Brahmi alphabet is derived from the script of Mohenjodaro" and says "those scholars were not mistaken who connected Brahmi with the semitic and Phoenecian scripts for there is much evidence to show that these also were derived from the very same scripts of Mohenjodaro." Though the disappearance of this ancient civilization was neither felt nor recorded in India yet its religious and cultural influences on the Hindus are without doubt admitted by all scholars. Hence the knowledge of the script could have been in all probability and possibility passed on to the neighbouring inhabitants who were definitely non-Aryans-be they Dravidian or Mundas.

Now we should note an important epigraphical evidence, that the earliest Brahmi Inscriptions which are considered by epigraphists to belong to pre-Asokan period are found in considerable numbers in Southern India. In these Brahmi inscriptions there are some peculiarities worth noticing. According to K. V. Subramonia Iyer they have characters for all the sounds peculiar to the Dravidian languages such as  $l(\varphi)$   $r(\rho)$   $n(\text{err})$  and only two consonants for each varga — the surd and the sonant, and not four as in Sanskrit. The sonants were used in writing the Sanskrit words only. If his reading is true, then it clearly shows that Brahmi was first devised by the Dravidians because all the peculiar Dravidian sounds have characters in these early Inscriptions and later, extended and modified to suit the needs of Sanskrit. Foreign evidence also lends support to this inference. Megasthenes the ambassdor of Seleukos, had noted that the Indians did not have any written book nor a script. We should know that Megasthenes did not come down to South India and his knowledge about the South was little and second-hand, and even the information he has given about North India is to be taken with extreme caution. But Nearchus who preceded Megasthenes had taken note of the written letters on clothes. So it may be inferred that during the time of Nearchus and Megasthenes (about 302 B.C.) though writing was known

it was not widely used in the North. On the other hand in the South it was extensively used. So during the time of Asoka when a necessity to publish his laws of Dharma arose he would have accepted and modified the prevalent script of the South to suit his purpose. Thus the early suggestion of Ellis and Edward Thomas that the Aryans got their scripts from the early Dravidians, in the light of these facts, seems very probable. From the Mohenjodaro Pictographic script the neighbouring inhabitants would have derived their characters, and from those characters southern Brahmi would have been devised.

Hitherto the history of Tamil script has been traced from the earliest stage. Though the manner and material for writing were the same throughout, yet there were changes in the shape of letters, in the formation of conjunct consonants and in marking the pulli or virama, from time to time. In no two centuries were they constant. Even after printing was introduced in this country in the 16th century, the tendency to change did not cease. A few major changes have been introduced by Fr. Beschi the renowned Epic poet and Grammarian. It was he who introduced the modern form of (ஏ & ஒ) to distinguish clearly between short *e* (ஏ) and *o* (ஒ) from long *e* (ஈ) & *o* (ஔ). Formerly long *e* (ஈ) and *o* (ஔ) were written simply as *e* (ஏ) & *o* (ஒ) and the short as *ē* and *ō* with a dot on. To suit modern needs and to keep pace with other developed languages, the shape of Tamil characters, why the alphabet itself, need revision.

There are many irregularities in the Tamil script ; while long *ka* (கா) is written as கார் long *na* (நா) is written as னா instead of னார. Same is the case with *ai* (ஐ) — sign also as in கை and கை. If one and the same sign is used for denoting the lengthening and marking *ai* for all the vowels and consonants it would be simple for typing and printing.

Grammatically a vocalic consonant should be written, first the consonant, and second, the vowel. So the vocalic consonant *kai* (கை) to be written grammatically should be ககை the opposite of the present practice. The modern method of writing is also not phonetic. A few other Indian languages too have this defect.

Though no alphabetic system is phonetic in the true

sense yet it should be enough to express at least the most vital sounds. The Tamil alphabet is only just enough to express the indigenous sounds. Due to the increase of contact with other speech communities — both European and Indian, Tamil has been enriched by borrowing many words from them. But the present alphabet cannot express important sounds of those languages. So a few additions to our alphabet are necessary and the present difficulty in writing foreign technical terms due to the lack of alphabets, can be solved if these additions are made.

After Fr. Beschi the necessity to reform the Tamil script was felt by scholars and a few gave very good suggestions. In 1921 Dr. Gilbert Slater went so far as to suggest a common script for all the Dravidian languages for the cultural revival of the south, but was turned down by the then Legislative council of which he was a nominated member. The proposed improvement in the Tamil script by the Madras Government is another attempt. Let us hope that competent cultural associations will address themselves to this task which is an immediate necessity for the growth and development of the Tamil language.

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# *The Genius of Tamil Music*

A. A. VARAGUNAPANDIAN

UNTIL recently Tamil Music was a lost art even in the land of its birth. The Tamils were told and taught and even made to believe that compositions in their mother tongue could not be even set to music. There are even today in the heart of Tamil Nad exponents of music, who pride in passing over the claims of Tamil lyrics at public performances and private entertainments.

The system of music native to South India is known as Carnatic music and is distinct from Hindustani Music, the system in use in North India. Carnatic is the name given by the European traders in the 18th century to the region of South India between the Western Ghats and the Coromandal coast, that is exactly the land made up of the old Pandya and Chola kingdoms which with the Chera or Kerala made up the whole of the ancient Tamil-Aham (The Home land of the Tamils). From about the 10th century A. D. Kerala was lost to Tamil Nad because of the development of a new language called Malayalam formed by a greater admixture of Sanscrit with the old Tamil. It is a strange phenomenon in the history of words that the music of the Tamils should be called Carnatic. For, it is also synonymous with Kannadam, the language of the people who mostly inhabit Mysore and the West Coast between Goa and Malabar. Tamil Music has been known as Carnatic Music for at least two centuries and hence the term has come to stay.

This is after all a small matter. A far more serious observation is that Carnatic Music disowns its parent tongue and is completely dominated by Telugu and Sanscrit. The reason is political and social. From the 15th century up to the 18th century, Tamil Nad was governed by Telugu Gene-

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The writer of this article is the author of 'Panar Kaivali Yal Nul', and son of the late M. Abraham Pandither of Tanjore, the author of 'Karunamrutha Saharam'.

rals of the Vijayanagar Empire who ruled at Madurai, Tiruchirapalli, Tanjore, and Ginji. During their reign, Telugu adventurers carved out Zamindary estates all over the country and installed a number of petty-courts. Learned Brahmins from Andhra Desa were imported and granted Inams (gifts of lands). The Nayak princes, Zamindars and Inamdars cultivated quite naturally their own mother-tongue Telugu. Thanks to the influence of the Brahmins with the landed aristocracy and at the princely courts, Sanscrit also received great patronage. The Marathas who supplanted the Nayaks at Tanjore in the 17th century were great votaries of Sanscrit learning and culture. They established the famous Saraswathi Mahal Library at Tanjore, the treasure house of Sanscrit and Telugu manuscripts. At the same time, Travancore rulers equally patronised Sanscrit. Both Tanjore and Travandrum became thus the centres of Sanscrit culture and Carnatic music with Sanscrit and Telugu Sahityams (words). Tamil ~~was~~ driven into the background and languished for want of royal or aristocratic patronage. In the 19th century in the peace and security of British rule, Thiagaraja, Swathi-Tirunal, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Pattinam Subramania Iyer composed exquisite lyrics in Sanscrit and Telugu and thrilled the South Indian aristocracy of learning and wealth with the heights to which they raised Carnatic music. The fame of Carnatic music spread far and wide. Tamil songs were excluded from public and private entertainments. The Saivite mutts (monasteries) of Thiruvavaduthurai, Dharmapuram, and Thirupanandal were the only places where Tamil songs, lyrics, and devotional hymns were cultivated.

At the end of the 19th century, Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer, himself a product of Thiruvavaduthurai Adhinam, searched for old manuscripts of Tamil classics in nooks and corners of Tamil Nad and brought to light a number of books usually called Cankam Literature and carefully edited them. One of these books is the celebrated *Silappadikaram*, an epic poem in Tamil written by a Kerala prince, whose brother had his capital about the 2nd century A.D. at Vanchi very near Cochin. Along with the epic poem, an old commentary on it by one Adiyarkunallar was discovered. Probably he belongs to about the 11th or 12th century. An earlier annotation of the same epic was also brought to light. The

text, the commentary and the annotation are most valuable for research scholars, particularly for the light they throw on Tamil music. They give us a glimpse of the practice of the art of music as well as its technique as understood in those early times. My late revered father M. Abraham Pandither of Tanjore, made extensive resarches and re-constructed the musical edifice of Tamilaham which appears in his teatise called "Karnamrutha -Saharam" (கருணாமிர்த சாகரம்). I have myself made some research regarding the musical instruments in use in those days, namely the "Yal." My book is called "Pahnar Kaivazhi yenappadum Yal Nul" (பாணர் கைவழி எனப்படும் யாழ் நூல்.) *I have shown therein with abundant evidence that the old Tamil Yal is the modern Veena. This substitution of names is explained by all the Tamil musical terms being substituted by Sanscrit names in later days.*

The old Tamils called their language Muthamil (literally meaning three kinds of Tamil) indicating the three great divisions of the language namely (1) (இயல், literature ; mostly poetry), (2) Isai (இசை, Music), (3) Koothu (கூத்து Drama and Dance). Koothu is also known as Natakam (நாடகம்) when confined to Drama. The books on Music, Drama and Dance referred to in ancient commentaries are not available now. Even the few that are said to be available have not yet been printed.

Prosody which is one of the sub-divisions of Iyal Tamil, shows that letters, (எழுத்து), syllables (அசை), Seer (சீர்), Thalai (தலை), Adi (அடி), Thodai (தொடை) Koon (கூன்), Ethugai (எதுகை), Monai (மோனை) are so arranged as to satisfy the rules of music. The Pun (பண்) the musical mode and Thalam (தாளம், Time) are so arranged that sweet notes of the melodies may not sound out of place and time, and that the coherance of the subject may not be lost. The result of these has been the production of different kinds of Pah (பா, poetry) such as Venba (வெண்பா), Achiriyapa (ஆசிரியப்பா), Kalipa (கலிப்பா), and Vanchipa (வஞ்சிப்பா), and their varieties namely Thalishai (தாழிசை), Thurai (துறை), and Virutham (விருத்தம்). Tamil poetry was so composed as to be sung, and there was thus an intimate link between poetry and music.



The productions based upon prosody and music are capable of being easily learnt by heart, are easily explainable to others and are best protected from the admixture of foreign elements. The Pahs (பாக்கள், Poetry) which are chief parts of the Iyal Tamil become Puns (Songs) when sung to music of Isai Tamil. Though the term Pun (புண்) is a common name for Ragams (modes and notes) it means Pahs (words) sung to music. The Puns and Pahs when used with their respective Abinayams (gestures) become Nataka-Tamil (Drama). It was only after Pahs were made that the Isai-Tamil or music which accompanied their recitations came into existence. Pahs and puns were followed by Abinayam or gestures which brought out the meaning of the poetical compositions set to music. Abinayam, because of dancing and gestures developed into Natakam (Drama). This explains why our ancestors saw unity in the three divisions of the Tamil language and called it Muthamil (Triple Tamil).

It is worth while to remember what a foreign student of the Tamil language says about the quality of its poetry. "It is not perhaps extravagant to say that *in its poetic form*, the Tamil is more polished and exact than the Greek and in both dialects with its borrowed treasures, more copious than Latin. In its fulness and power, it more resembles English and German than any other living language." —Winslow.

Tamil Music being part and parcel of the language developed along with it and attained early a high degree of perfection. It is testified to by the epic *Sillapathikaram* with its commentary and notes. It was highly scientific in its fundamentals.

Unfortunately the later imitators of it in the North lost its fundamentals and its scientific character. Modern artists and scientific students of Carnatic Music follow the Sanscrit treatise on music called *Sangitha Ratnakaram* by Sarangadeva, a Cashmiri Brahmin of the 13th century at the court of Deogiri in Maharashtra, but are unable to explain the fundamental basis of that music.

The confusion created regarding sruthi by North Indian authors explains how they lost the scientific tradition of the Tamils. Captain Day in his book on "The music and musical instruments of Southern India" (p. 15) says :- "The exact

definition of what constituted *Sruthi* is difficult to determine, but it is thus vaguely given by the *Sangitha Ratnakaram*.

“A *Sruthi* is formed by the smallest intervals of sound and is perceivable by the ear ; it is of 22 kinds ; also every distinct audible sound is a *sruthi* ; it is a *sruthi* because it is to be heard by the ear.”

“Doubts however exist as to whether the intervals of the *sruthis* were equal or not.”

The following stanzas cited by the Commentator *Adiyarkunallar* shows some of the fundamentals of the ancient Tamil Music.

“சரிகம பதநியென் றேளமுத்தாற் றுனம்  
வரிபாந்த கண்ணினாய் வைத்துத் — தெரிவரிய  
வேழிசையுந் தோன்று மிவற்றுள்ளே பண்பிறக்குஞ்  
சூழ்முதலாஞ் சுத்தத் துளை”

“ச, ரி, க, ம, ப, த, நி, யென்னு மெழுவகைப்பட்ட எழுத்தடியாகப் பிறக்கும்  
சூல் முதலாகிய ஏழும்”

In the above lines he points out how the seven *Swarams* (Notes) *Kural* (சூல்), *Thutham* (துத்தம்), *Kaikkilai* (கைக்கிளை), *Ulai* (உளை), *Ili* (இளி), *Vilary* (விளரி), *Tharam* (தாரம்), (Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si, the corresponding names of notes in the Western system of Music) proceed from the seven letters *Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha Ni* (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, the seven letters of the C major scale of Western music).

Again in the following lines he proceeds to give the system of by which the twelve frets which are required for an octave, on a *Yal* (Veena) may be correctly fixed to the true pitches (tones) of *Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni*, and their five sharps.

*Silappadikaram* : *Arangetrukathai* :—

“ஏற்றிய சூவினி யென்றிரு நரம்பி  
னெப்பக் கேட்டு முணர்வின குகி  
வண்ணப் பட்டடை யாழ்மேல் வைத்தாங்கு”

Commentary and annotation :—

“என்பது, சூல் நரம்பு இரட்டிக்க வரும் பாலையையும், இளி நரம்பு இரட்டிக்க வரும் பாலையையும், இவைபோல் அல்லாத பாலையையும் இசை நூல் வழக்காலே இணை நரம்பு தொடுத்துப்பாடும் அறிவினை யுடையது”

“பட்டடை நரம்புகளின் இளிக்குப் பெயர், என்னை? எல்லாப் பண்ணிற்கு மடி மனை யாதலின் — வண்ணம் நிறம் — இதனை யாழ் மேல் வைத்தென்க. இளிக்கிரமத்தாலே பண்களை யாழ் மேல் வைத்தென்க”.

He says in these lines that each of the twelve frets, which produce the twelve pitches of the seven notes must be fixed on the Yal, so that they might harmonise with their respective Pahs (Sols or fifths) just as Kural with Ili (Do with Sol or C with G). We know by experience that Ili or pa (G) perfectly harmonises with Kural or Sa (C). The sweetness of the concord will be in proportion to the harmony of this Pa with Sa (G with C). He does not say here that this pa. (G) sounds at  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the whole length of the wire which produces Sa (C) of a Yal. But he says emphatically that the one who fixes the frets on the Yal, must have such a cultivated sense of ear as to appreciate the concord of the notes Kural and Ili or Sa and Pa.

It is not easy to indicate a sweet sound which can be minutely appreciated by the cultivated ear, by means of wire and calculations by the leveling rod. The internal ear as well as the nerve which differentiates auditory impressions are very subtle. The appreciation of sounds must be in proportion to the subtlety of the auditory organ. The first sound Sa (Do) should be so appreciated and the Pah (Sol) to it should be determined. Then if this Pa is made the Sa and if we proceed by the same process of fifths, we obtain the twelve musical pitches or tones of an octave. These twelve pitches of the seven notes are a gradually ascending series and are as concordant with one another as Sa is to Pa (Do to Sol). Even in “Bharatham” which is supposed to be the earliest Sanscrit work which treats about Music and dance, we find no clue as to how the twelve pitches may be derived in an octave. So we conclude from the above that even at an early age (from the commencement of the First Tamil Cangam, several centuries before Christ) the ancient Tamilians have had their singing with these twelve pitches derived from Sa-Pa system.

In Europe there was a good deal of controversy and doubt as regards these twelve pitches of an octave and these came to an end only about 125 years ago. These were first used by Hwvdon (1732-1809) and Mozart. As the twelve

pitches of the octave were equally divided and pianos constructed accordingly, modulation in all the keys become possible. This modulation was brought to perfection by the celebrated Beethoven (1770 - 1827) about 125 years ago. This arrangement of pitches is called Equal Temperament. So Equal Temperament was introduced as recently as 125 years ago. Captain C. R. Day in his book named "The Music and the Musical Instruments of South India" page 29, says as follows :

"The following table kindly sent me by Mr. Ellis shows the results obtained from a most minute and careful examination made by him and by Mr. A. J. Hipkims of a beautiful old Veena in perfect condition now in my possession. This instrument is between two or three hundred years old and is from the collection in the Tanjore palace. The results as will be seen tend to prove that the frets were purposely arranged for something like Equal Temperament. We see therefore that in India much the same results have been independently arrived at by the native musicians as have been attained by subsequent science in Europe" Cited in *Karunamrutha Saharam* at p. 141.

In the above, he gives a few important particulars about the Yal (Veena) that was taken to England from Tanjore (South India). This instrument appears to have been from the collection at the Tanjore palace Museum, and the frets in it seem to have been arranged so as to produce the twelve pitches of the seven Swarams (notes) in accordance with Equal Temperament. He says that on examination of it by Mr. Ellis and Mr. A. J. Hipkims, it was found that the frets were arranged not in conformity with the Diatonic scale used in Europe for 2,000 years but in accordance with Equal Temperament used for the purposes of modulation for the past century or two, and that the South Indian musicians had arrived at this system independently before it was ever discovered by the Europeans.

Captain Day after laborious research, discovered the fact that the twelve frets of the Yal were in accordance with the

Equal Temperament and mentioned the truth that this system was known in South India from remotest time. A little deeper research in the field would certainly convince all earnest students of music that we can conclude from what we find in the *Silappadikaram* written eighteen centuries ago that the Sa - Pa system (Do - Sol) is referred to in the ancient music of the Tamil country and that it has been always in vogue among the Tamils even to the present day.

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# *The First Tragedy in Kamban*

E. T. RAJESWARI, M.A., L.T.

## PART III

### I

**K** AMBAN'S work is sometimes called Kamba-natakam and therefore, one may expect here the dramatic element to predominate. His work is not a drama in the sense in which we now understand that term. It does not consist merely of the speeches of his dramatis personae. It is an epic, not a natural epic like that of Homer or Valmiki, but an artificial or learned epic like Virgil's or Milton's. Why it is called a drama is that, like a stage play, it is full of dramatic situations. This usage is justified in Indian poetry by the famous example of Maha Nataka called a drama, though it is not. Perhaps Kamban's work is a masterpiece of art unlike the patchwork of Maha Nataka, full of digressions, conceits, quibbs and discussions. It is because of this characteristic feature of concentrating on dramatic situations, following in the illustrious footsteps of Ilango and his Cilappatikaram, which is again famous as a drama of threefold Tamil, that this Kamba Natakam lends itself so fittingly to Pavaikuttu or shadow plays in Malabar and other places from very ancient times.

### II

Kamban does not therefore believe in the elaborate narrative conversation so naturally and beautifully handled by Valmiki. But Valmiki's influence has become so very great in India, that Kamban or for that matter any poet cannot help following his ancient lead, at least to the extent of referring to all that Valmiki has said. The following table shows the correspondence between Valmiki and Kamban :



Kamban	Valmiki	Kamban	Valmiki
1	23. 10 <i>etc.</i>	41	
2	23. 13, 14	42{	24. 27, 29, 30
3		43}	
4	23. 22	44	
5		45	
6		46	26. 7, 8
7		47	
8		48	
9		49	
10		50	{24. 27 }26. 10
11		51	
12		52	
13		53	26. 12
14		54	
15		55	
16		56	25. 16
17	22. 11 to 20	57	
18	„ „	58	
19		59{	25. 21
20	24. 15	60}	25. 20
21	24. 25	61	25. 22
22	25. 5	62	25. 17
23	25. 6	63	
24	25. 7	64	
25	25. 7	65	25. 22
26	25. 8	66	26. 1 to 5
27		67	
28	25. 9	68	
29	24. 9	69	
30		70	26. 17
31	25. 10	71{	26. 25
32	25. 10	72}	
33	25. 12	73	

Kamban	Valmiki	Kamban	Valmiki
34	25. 13	74	
35	25. 14	75	
36		76	26. 27 to 31
37		77	
38	24. 29 to 30	78	
39		79	
40		80	

It must not be assumed that there is a word for word translation or a direct borrowing. Even if there is an idea, it has been listed here. A comparison thus shows that Kamban proceeds in his own way. The life size portrait of Tataka is attempted by Kamban in the most graphic manner. The battle between Tataka and Rama is really the first battle Rama fights. Therefore it assumes a great importance in Kamban's eyes. It ceases to be a teasing of a worm ; such a teasing Kamban reserves for Curpanaka. The poet describes the battle here in all its seriousness.

### III

We may examine the stories in detail. Kamban starts with the story about Kama's ashrama, but the whole story is dismissed in a single verse. The next verse explains the connected term Angadesa. The third verse is a dramatic explanation of the story. Even this, as was hinted already, is by subsequent reference by Rama made a prelude to the story of Tataka. Kamban takes us straight to the haunt of Tataka without digressing on the gurgling waters etc. The story of Kama itself is given in Valmiki before the princes cross the river. Kamban is not anywhere clear about geography, but in any case here it is clear, he makes his narrative more dramatic, by giving the history of the place only when the princes are actually inside that grove, whilst it suits Valmiki's story-telling to give this explanation as soon as the ashrama is sighted at a very great distance.

Opening the drama of Tataka on the burning desert is itself dramatic. Teaching the Mantras to the princes in the midst of its burning heat so as to immediately produce a

supernatural effect is another instance of Kamban's dramatic art. There is again the rushing in of Tataka, just at the moment when Rama enquires of the sage of her whereabouts. Rama standing as a great satyagrahi even when the demoness is ready to hurl her fatal trident at him, creates a dramatic situation more telling than all possible verbal descriptions. The opening of the story with a description of the wanton destruction by Tataka suggests at the very outset, that the world cannot be saved as long as she lives. The poet in this way has created a favourable situation a magic casement where the reader under this enchantment believes that Tataka should be killed. The progress of the story and the final outcome are thus made almost inevitable. The speeches of Rama and Visvamisra will be, in what follows, shown as equally dramatic.

#### IV

There is the question of the construction of the plot. What position has this byplot of Tataka in the main plot of Ramayana? This is important in view of our description of Kamban's work as Kamba Natakam. The story-teller, true to his art, multiplies his anecdotes and he is satisfied even if they hang loosely about the main story. The dramatic poet, however, has to give us a well knit plot. It has already been hinted how the story of Kamashrama itself leads on to the description of Tataka's habitat.

Ramayana is said to consist of three different strands — the story of Rama's exile, the story of Ravana's adventure and the story of Hanuman's valour. Sita brings together Rama and Ravana while the monkeys join the fray as Rama's allies. The stories of Rama and Ravana are attempted to be unified by Kamban in this very story of Tataka. It is Rama's first conflict with the Rakshasas of Ravana's ilk. Marica the son of Tataka is to come as the golden deer, paving the way for Sita's abduction by Ravana.

Kamban has made this connection more patent and explicit. Whereas in Valmiki Marica alone is the son of Tataka and Sunda, while Suvahu is according to some manuscripts the son of Upasunda, Kamban makes both Marica and Suvahu

the children of Tataka. After their fall, they become the adopted sons of Sumali. Kamban brings out the implication by explaining that they thus become the maternal uncles of Ravana. Kamban further affirms that Tataka is in the service of Ravana. Therefore the attack on her is the first onslaught on Ravana's forces, and true to this, when Tataka falls down, Kamban exclaims it is the ominous breaking down of Ravana's victorious banner and flagstaff.

In narrating the story of Rama, Kamban begins from the very beginning and proceeds step by step chronologically in the good old Indian way. In giving us the story of Tataka, the poet like Homer and Milton plunges straight into the middle of the story for working up a climax. We meet Tataka; and the climax is soon reached though the past is also explained. Here we have the three unities of place, time and action as demanded by the disciples of Aristotle. Kamban's greatness is revealed by his superiority in handling thus the dramatic art, and the epic art of the so-called art of the East and the West with no slavish bias against or for any one of these.

## V

The difference between Valmiki's treatment of the story and Kamban's handling of the same plot is clear even to one who reads them as he runs, as is usually done by most of the readers of modern times. There is the conversation between Visvamitra and Rama both in Valmiki and Kamban. If one may use a half truth while Valmiki's Visvamitra reminds us of a grandmother and his Rama of a school boy, Kamban's Visvamitra reminds of a great Guru and Kamban's Rama reminds us of a jnani and it is no wonder he marries the daughter of the great Brahmajnani Janaka. Kamban comes after the Rama of Gnana Vasishta has become popular in this country. The conversation in Kamban is therefore turned to a higher pitch more serious, more condensed and therefore more dramatic.

Kamban's Rama has ceased to be a school boy and is now a fully developed man of high ideals of heroism and Dharma — not in any case the playful Rama of Valmiki

which we described. Perhaps it will be nearer the truth to say that Kamban has sublimated the idea of play suggested by Valmiki. The opening verse of Kamban's epic speaks of the never ending play of God. "*Alakilavilaiyattutaiyan*" The conception of Leela or play of God is a favourite idea of the poets and philosophers of the Tamil land, for emphasising His metaphysical detachment and purity. True gnani behaves like the actor on a stage always conscious of his true reality even whilst he plays his assumed role. Rama is true to this ideal. There is the famous passage in Kamban's where Rama is said to be extremely happy at the thought of his exile, his face beaming with joy more glorious than thousand blooming lotuses (Ayodya Kanda — Kaikeeculvinipatalam — verse 108) Again after the first encounter with Rama, Ravana returns home crestfallen ; he reports to his grandfather the heroic acts of Rama where the latter seemed to be unperturbed by any anger, aiming his arrows at Ravana even as Rama has aimed them in his youth at the hunchback of his wet nurse (Uttakanda — Kumbakarnan Vadaippadalam, verse 17).

## VI

True to his art of dramatic condensation, Kamban has avoided all the unnecessary details about the genealogy and the past history of Tataka. What is more, there is something of modernity in Kamban. Valmiki's Visvamitra artfully leads on his Rama to the desired end of killing Tataka. He mentions as a story-teller various examples from past history suggesting that Rama should follow his valuable precedents. Since Kamban has pitched his story at a higher level as the story of an ethical dilemma, he is not satisfied with these stories of ancient folklore, as they can carry no conviction to Rama as conceived by Kamban, even as they will not to any man of the modern world, especially in the crude way in which they are referred to in Valmiki, without any attempt at poetic sublimation. If Rama is not satisfied with Visvamitra's advice, he is not going to be satisfied with the stories he is going to tell. These stories may serve as raw materials for Kamban's art, but he refuses to give them in their crude form.

Valmiki reminds us of a natural state of society where customs, precedents and ancient history form the very embodiments of Dharma — the beacon lights, as it were, for ever guiding man on the righteous path. Kamban suggests a new era, where the basis of old society are re-examined afresh with a critical eye, to suit the changing times and expanding society to face new ideas, strange men and fresh problems. It is from this point of view he is reinterpreting Valmiki to the rising generation of the Tamilians of his day. Unless the stories referred to are also reinterpreted in a similar way, a casual reference to these old stories cannot carry conviction to the critical mind. The question of following the precedent and of obedience to the great is still there even in Kamban. But this problem takes a universal significance in the form in which Kamban describes them.

But in spite of this we find in certain manuscripts four verses beginning respectively with the phrases, "Mannar Mannavan" (58), "Piruku ennum" (59), "Vanakamtanil" (60) and "Atalal" (61) giving us in the most prosaic of verses the stories of Kavyamata and Mantara as told in Valmiki — evidently the work of an untrained hand bent upon introducing into Kamban what all is found in Valmiki. Even a casual reference to these verses will convince any critic that they do not show any trace of Kamban's art of dramatisation or versification.

## VII

At this point reference may be made to other verses which we have till now refused to consider. There is a verse beginning with the phrase "Kannavil" which is found in a few manuscripts. As it simply repeats the ideas found in the verse "Enralum Iramanai" (21) it could not have proceeded from the pen of Kamban. This new verse must have formed an introduction to the 17 verses describing the life history of Tataka which are not found however in a few manuscripts. Though they are found in most of the manuscripts, they do not fit into the scheme of things we have been trying to explain. Unlike the four verses we have rejected which appear to be later day additions as is proved by their absence from most of the manuscripts, these 17 verses must have



been introduced into Kambaṇ's work very early in history either by Kambaṇ himself, as an after-thought, or by some other old poet of great merit, as is clearly proved by their inclusion in many of the manuscripts now available.

Valmiki's Tataka is humanised in this version of the story and it is because of this we are tempted to believe that these 17 verses come from the pen of a poet of Kambaṇ's stature. The story as given in Valmiki with all its repetition and dim revelation does not amount to much. Tataka's father performs tapas for being blessed with a daughter, and the creator endows him only with a daughter but of a strength equal to thousand elephants. She is married and begets a child Marica. Her husband is killed by Agasthiya. Tataka with her son flies against the Rishi to wreak their vengeance only to be cursed as Rakshasa. From that moment she devastates the fertile land. No further explanation is given probably because Visvamisra does not want to emphasise the older and brighter side of Tataka or explain why she is inevitably metamorphosed into a Rakshasi. For, such a development of the story of Tataka will give additional strength and force to Rama's objection to kill a woman. It is this very reason which prompts us to conclude that these verses, in spite of the dramatic excellence, do not fit in within Kambaṇ's scheme of presenting the story as an ethical dilemma. These verses might have come after the description of Tataka's death. But if so, some inartistic hand has mangled this part, for pressing it into the previous part itself. Even if it had come at the end, there may not be that dramatic cohesion, being after all a digression, though it is possible to take this part of the story as a separate unit by itself. But it is futile to argue on these lines in the absence of any clue about its original position in the story.

### VIII

These verses first introduce us to the father of Tataka. The situation is made very concrete. We are given the name of her father Sukethu. He is of a wonderful prowess — wonderful to the whole world. The name of his father is also given as Sarcharan, an unnecessary detail in this short nar-

rative. (22) Valmiki gives this as the name of the father of Tataka's husband, though in some editions the latter name appears in the form Jambu. In passing we may note here alone another mistake by the composer of the four spurious verses. The name is Mantara as given in Valmiki ; but this is by a slip of the hand written as Kumati in all the manuscripts in which these four verses occur illustrating the unnatural pedantic passion for names which have not been correctly remembered. Passing on to the story of Tataka the poets refer to the fiery anger of her grandfather — a characteristic trait which Tataka unfortunately inherits. Sukethu feels very much for his childless state and performs a tapas for a long time. (23) The creator appears before him in answer to his prayers but regrets that the devotee can have no son, though the Lord blesses him with a daughter (24). She is to be possessed, more than any possible son, with the strength of thousand elephants (25). She grows up into womanhood as beautiful as Lakshmi herself. The father makes a careful search for a husband and finally gives her away in marriage to Sunda. (26). The married couple live a happy life of passionate attachment like Kama and Rathi of old, drowned as it were in the ocean of 'happiness — loving' intoxication (27). After a long time this damsel of divine beauty brings forth two sons Marica and Suvaku (28). They so excelled all others in magic tactics and in strength that even their mother can never fathom their greatness (29). The father is further intoxicated with the power of the children. It is very significant that the poet uses the word intoxication "Kalippu" and repeats it too.

The poet thus develops the story slowly emphasising the good in Tataka and then showing how the deterioration has been brought upon herself by her own wickedness. It is not for nothing that she is the grand-daughter of an easily irritable and clear-headed Sarcara and the daughter of the pure-hearted Suketu (22). Instead of running a happy home and making the world around her resonate with her ever expanding love and happiness, she seems to have developed by slow degrees into a nuisance to her neighbours — a thorn in their flesh.

Beauty, wealth, happiness and power intoxicate and

corrupt man. Man becomes too much self-centred when blest with this kind of giant-like superiority. Consideration for others never arises there. Man indulges in vain acts — purposeless acts — merely to give vent to his feeling of intoxicating strength. Slowly he comes to indulge in wanton destruction and to revel in vandalism. Sunda also is thus going down the inclined plane. He uproots and throws out all the innocent trees and plants in Agasthiya's grove (30) so kindly reared and brought up and so lovingly nursed by the good old Rishi. It is a wanton act of desolation — a sure and certain sign of his intoxication. He is like the children playfully throwing stones at the heads of poor frogs in a pond. This power intoxicated Sunda finding no more plants to uproot kills the deer, the loving pairs of deer so dear to the merciful tapasvins. Agasthiya is unable to bear the sight of this cruel death of his foster children — the immobile plants and dumb animals. The very look of his reduces our Sunda to ashes (31).

What a fall for Tataka, now almost at the height of all that happiness, nature and God can bless her with ! This misfortune does not strike her dead. Her sea of intoxication is churned afresh to its very depths and gorges forth the poison of an anger. We are naturally reminded of Kannaki, but Kannaki's cause was right. Where however is the time for this intoxicated woman to think of the right or wrong of it ? She rushes with her children to make an end of Agasthiya, (32) the cause of her unending misery, even as Kannaki rushed against the king and Madura. What can be more miserable to a woman than the death and that an unnatural death of her husband whose form also has not been left for her to see and weep on ?

The whole universe shudders at their movements and reverberates with the thunder of her challenge to the Rishi (33). The poet is trying to picture forth the fight between the super-natural powers of evil and good represented by Tataka and Agasthiya. In thus visualising the supernatural agencies the poet has no other recourse but to indulge in what appears to moderners as inexcusable exaggerations and hyperboles. If the description of this supernatural person is

accepted, the description of their acts and their effects follow as corollaries.

The Rishi who has given us a limitless ocean of Tamil raises a threatening noise to put an end to her evil acts. The curse follows as night follows day. For after all even if he curses, the curse can only be an outcome — a fruition of their own acts. They have been acting as destructive agencies. What else do Rakshasas do? Rakshasas are not mere seekers after pleasure, but are in addition embodiments of hatred and jealousy bent on destroying all that is good — and therefore all that is against them. What else did Sunda, Tataka and their children do? Therefore says Agasthiya "Go down as Rakshasas" (34) and his words come true. (35) Powerless against his greatness, her children take refuge under Sumali, the leader of the Rakshasas, and they are accepted by him as his adopted sons (36), they thus becoming the maternal uncles of Ravana (37). Thus separated even from her own children she remains isolated — her heart ever burning at the thought of the Rishi's ire. She enters the desert now so full of burning fire on all sides — a befitting rendezvous for her (38). The metamorphosis is complete. This is Tataka (39).

The poet, whoever he may be, has shown the brighter and more human side of this woman — the beautiful and beloved daughter — the beloved wife and the beloved mother. It is true that the stroke of misfortune is of her own making. It is indeed a cruel stroke enough to disturb suddenly the mental equilibrium of any one, much more so of this blessed woman of all happiness, inheriting anger for two generations. No wonder she becomes an incarnation of hatred — another name for what in the language of the curses of Agasthiya is Rakshasa. It is not for nothing that she has been blessed with the strength of one thousand elephants by a conspiring nature. She is transformed from a happy woman into a self-centred dame, indulging in wanton destruction of plants and beasts and finally into the force of sheer destruction, wreaking vengeance on the whole world now pitted against her.

Under different circumstances she might have grown and died as a happy woman. We understand her fall. It is a

great tragic fall of all that is good in her. What a great tragic waste simply because of her fault of self-centred power intoxication ! This is the very root of her tragedy making her a misanthrope. Here is again an intoxication of hatred and anger but can she not complain of the conspiracy of circumstances ? The poet has made Tataka more human and therefore more lovable. The tragedy of personality stands fully revealed in this version of the story.

## IX

It is not this which appeals to the reader as the central tragedy of our story. This central tragedy has now to be studied. Ramayana may be looked upon as a series of tragedies. A number of people are killed or die broken-hearted. There is here therefore ample food for thought on the basic principles of tragedy, or rather of life and its problems.

Tragedy involves such a great tremendous waste of life and nature, and then wonderful achievements. Ravana — what a wonderful personality is his ! — how great are his achievements ! — yet all these come to nought. They are destroyed in the end ; not to speak of all the counter move and energy raised and developed only for the purpose of this destruction. Could not Rama's energies have been turned to better and more constructive purpose but for this tragedy ? Everyone realises these implications. At Ravana's death there is the heart-breaking wail of Mandodari. But all the readers along with her experience the very same tragic consummation. Kamban seems to be expressing himself through Mandodari.

The question of questions arises. "Why all this in this world — rather in the story," There can be no two different opinions about the sublime tragic seriousness of the story of Ravana's fall. There are however other stories in Ramayana where it is not so very clear, but at every step our mind keeps on asking "Why should it be this way ?"

The very first tragedy in Ramayana is that of Tataka. The seventeen verses humanising the story of Tataka explain in a way this tragedy. It is a tragedy of personality, a little tilted towards the self-centred human weakness. But what

tragic consequences flow from it till we come to a stage where we feel, that but for her death, the world cannot be saved. The poet has no time to develop the life of Tataka in all its tragic seriousness. His dramatic way of handling the story, as already been hinted, makes us demand her death. In that way indeed the end is satisfactory. This is however a poetic legerdemain, not a real grappling with the tragic problem. The tragedy of the enormous waste of all that went to make up Tataka is not emphasised as is emphasised in the case of Ravana, except by the author of the seventeen verses.

There are two sides to a tragedy — the destruction of the personality of the so-called villain on the one hand, and the destruction of the energy of the hero and others in bringing about this fall. In this tragedy of Tataka, Kamban skips over the first problem of waste very tactfully hypnotising us all into the belief that Tataka should die — the sooner the better.

## X

But it is the other side of the hero that has become a great problem with Kamban. Rama is actually shaped into a great personality in the white heat of the tragedies of the Ramayana. Can there be a sculpture but for the resisting stones? There is also the internal struggle going on corresponding to the external conflict. This is very well brought out in this first tragedy. Rama has his own conception of honour and valour. That is why in this story Kamban does not treat him as an adolescent boy. The hero is here a grown up young man ready for marriage and other serious and onerous duties of life. The prince has always a feeling of reverence for woman — thanks to his maternal influence. One who insults womanhood deserves in his judgement nothing but death. It is because of this Ravana has to be killed, and every one understands this situation. The death of Vali is not so clear. Once, however, this ideal conception of womanhood nourished in his heart of hearts by Rama is understood, Vali's death creates no problem to any reader of Kamban.

This regard for womanhood can never easily acquiesce in the voluntary woman slaughter. Valmiki himself senses the impropriety of a hero killing a woman. Strihatti is a great



sin. Valmiki's Visvamitra anticipates also such an objection. His Rama says that he does not feel enthusiastic about killing Tataka because of her female form, thus, feeling it beneath his dignity to fight with a woman. But Kamban's reverence for woman is something higher and nobler, and it is this that lies at the root of the tragic situation in the story of Tataka. It is this Rama of the high ideal in the very prime of his youth, before any doubts could have been cast on his ideal, that is faced with a situation where the killing of a woman seems to be the only possible duty. Hence arises an internal conflict between his sense of honour refusing to kill a woman and his sense of the inevitable situation into which he has been led. This is the ethical dilemma.

To start with, Rama is true to his principles. He like a true satyagrahi, refuses to move his little finger against Tataka even when his death is imminent at her hands. Rama has thus won a victory, but it is a victory of a theorist. The practical world, however is no sweet dream of a theorist. This is what Visvamitra at this tragic moment teaches Rama through an actual life situation. Things of the world are not watertight compartments as theorists are prone to argue. Woman for instance should be honoured; she should not be killed. This is a platitude worthy of a Polonius. But the practical question arises Who is a woman? This is indeed a very simple question which a theorist fondly hopes a child can answer. In this very story a situation arises, where no such simple answer could be given to the seemingly simplest of the questions. Is Tataka a woman in the sense Rama reveres that word? Who is the devil if she is not?

## XI

Is Visvamitra equivocating? No such doubt can arise in the present context. The seer, with all the moral seriousness at his command, opens out his heart with a cry, "I am not inspired by anger." This is not a theoretical protestation. Where is the necessity for making such a statement? Can the readers ever believe that Rama is not at that juncture convinced of the mystic detachment of Visvamitra? Even as a dying confession has a value of its own, this protestation

of a suffering heart carries for more weight than all the possible intellectual affirmations. It is the feeling of sincerity and human sympathy, not an intellectual gymnastics, that appeals to any heart. Inner communion of feeling is here brought about.

What is the personal interest of the sage? It is the common weal that demands everybody's service. Is there not something of an egotism in the feeling of theoretical honour refusing to see the practical aspect of the situation, especially for the son of a king who has to go to the succour of the millions of lives entrusted to his care? It is this villain of an egotism that meets with a fall in this internal conflict, but the wonder of it is Rama grows in moral stature.

Rama has a great teacher and preceptor in Visvamitra. Has he not himself realised the magical effects of the Mantras, the seer has bestowed on him? The moral seriousness of the sage, his absolute selflessness, his concern for the world at large — all these must have made a very great impression on Rama. The desert and desolation, her diabolical form and act, her attempt to kill them all — all these must have convinced him of the inevitable necessity. Only her feminine form has been standing in the way. But Rama stands converted in the end. His sense of honour, truly a false sense of honour, yields of course very grudgingly. His final conclusion is indeed sublime and majestic — a revelation of all the internal struggle and its final outcome.

It may be, there are occasions when doing something other than Dharma becomes a necessity. But should one do the non-moral act? "Things may be out of joint but am I born to set it right?" Does not this question itself involve a moral cowardice? Why shift the blame on other shoulders? Rama realises that he must perform even a seemingly non-moral act. Seeing all his arts of persuasion fail, a reliable leader of greater experience of the world and its ethical problems, moved by no feelings of blinding anger, or private prejudice, or mean lucre, is, because of the imminent danger to all, forced to command Rama in dangerous haste to kill Tataka. Is not what at first sight appears to be a non-moral act from a theoretical point of view, really an all compelling moral act under these circumstances?

Valmiki's Visvamitra wants ancient precedents to be followed, and he repeats many a time "obey my command and kill her." Kamban's Visvamitra does not say so; for he is not talking to a school boy to necessitate the issue of such orders or instructions. The sage is not in a mood to command. Obedience, outward conformity and passive discipline have no intrinsic moral value. But at the most dangerous moment, when Tataka is about to hurl her trident at Rama, the sage is so overpowered with the tragic sense of the situation, that he almost exclaims "kill her." It is, therefore, no order. It is the cry of a broken heart, standing on the brink of death and destruction of the whole world — the cry of the broken heart of a majestic and divinely powerful Rishi, bent upon saving the world. Rama realises the situation. Moved by the very anguish of this bleeding heart he stands converted. To do as bid by such a true and knowing and loving heart is indeed Dharma.

The conclusion of the story is the same in both Valmiki and Kamban, but what a world of change do we find when the feelings excited are taken into consideration. Perhaps the very same words are always used — "command" etc. But these become surcharged with emotion in Kamban. In the natural society of Valmiki there is an atmosphere of sincerity, where words have not yet become dead verbal shells. There, even an outward conformity is not a mere show. Kamban's society has become much more complex with more of divorce than of union between thought and action. Mere outward conformity and passive obedience remind Kamban, as they remind us, of military discipline — nothing more than a physical habit. Therefore, our moral sense demands an inner communion of minds and an active mental discipline vivifying all outward acts. It is this mental discipline which makes Rama say later on, on seeing Sita "I love her. My mind can never fall in love with a married woman; so she must be a virgin" (Balakandam 714) Mind itself becomes a moral guide, thanks to his association, and heart to heart contact with great souls. What is wanted is an active sympathy of a discerning heart which can understand the language of the true heart of the great seers, leading us on to a conversion of the heart and moral development. Kamban makes these

ideals concrete in his Rama. His interpretation of Valmiki, because of this, has still a value to the coming generation.

The question arises, "Is this the final answer?" But may not one raise a counter question? Is there except in death and theory such a thing as finality? Life is a continuous march from truth to a higher truth. Is that not the very moral of the story? Abstractions alone have a ring of finality about them. In this story we have a first attempt at a tragedy and at a solution of the problem of life. But Kamban gets so many opportunities for further attempts all through his epic, and he does attempt at an examination and explanation of these tragic situations, suggesting in his own inevitable way the resolution of these life mysteries to our great satisfaction, at least as long as we are under the magic spell of his higher poetry. A study of his method of handling these situations is sure to reveal to us the gradual growth of his conception of tragedy and life.

## XII

A tragedy from the pen of a great poet leaves in us an impression of a satisfying resolution of the complications of life — a feeling of poetic justice — an experience of suffused light and quiet joy. In this tragedy of Tataka there is the satisfaction and a feeling of justice. Kamban is playing on the surface of life; he hypnotises all by what is called a poetic legerdemain, as far as Tataka is concerned. As far as Rama is concerned, however, he takes a leap into the dark, reaches the very rock bottom of life, making it all glow with moral grandeur and beauty. Here is no legerdemain but a successful grappling with the tragic situation, a sufficient compensation for his superficial treatment elsewhere.

It is the final feeling that is important. What are the final words in this tragedy? The description of the blessings of the Devas is something external, unless it be a confirmation of our feeling of poetic justice. The final words even now ringing in our ears are those which describe the arrow piercing through the adamant chest of the lady of darkness. The whole tragedy is, a tragedy of the life of darkness and ignorance redeemed by no light or culture — a life of passivity

and passion rolling down the precipice — a darkness and a passivity unable to withstand the piercing arrow of light, truth and goodness — those higher ideals of great souls serving the common weal — those ideals expressed by the unfailing words themselves, of the great man. This is the idea of the last verse of the tragedy.

The last line has a more permanent effect on our mind, "Pullarkku nallor connā porul ena-p-poyirranre." It is indeed acting like a magical formula tactfully introduced by way of a simile, for giving us the final verdict — another example of Kamban's infusion of a moral spirit into the story. The world is there with all its defects as an unknown chain of cause and effect in that eternally moving wheel of life. The good men and their influences as teachers and guides are there to save the souls, but there must be people to hear them. It requires a certain amount of culture. The seed cannot grow on a barren field. The world — the ever-moving world — does change people, but it is only a few who are chiselled into a beautiful shape. This is real education for life from birth to death. But all are not blessed with this kind of education. Here is also a system of education following the method of monitors. But there are students of lower class in this school of life, too low to pass the higher examination, or to be benefited by monitors. There are many who are impervious to higher knowledge and nobler influence and who remain passive, and who, therefore, are drawn round and round the wheel of death, dashing their heads against the wheel in foolishness. Only a few resist this passivity, and actively get shaped into a significant form of any human worth. These are the good, the blessed souls reaping the benefit of the guides. They actively intervene to serve, becoming guides in their turn.

Rama is one such cultivated soul where the words of the sage bring a wonderful yield. But the words and efforts of sages and of God himself fail especially with those who have not been on the way to get a form and shape and significance. The sun rises at dawn, but all the lotus buds do not blossom, only those ready for bloom open into flowers ; others continue to be closed within themselves. The Sun is not futile even with reference to these ; for, they are even there worked up for blossoming in time. What is more curious is that the

dead flowers dry up in this very Sun, for becoming manure for those yet to be born. The Good therefore do not die ; their words do not die. They may not be patently effective in all cases. The instruction enters through one ear and leaves by the other ear -- that is the proverb. One who received the instruction like Tataka may die, but the words do not stick on to her to die with her. It escapes to become eternal, to be eternally saving others in time. By destruction itself, it will mould the whole world to salvation one day or other. Tataka has to be shaped into Rama. It is the eternal play of the Lord.

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# *Barathi at the Crossroads*

F. MORAIS S. J., M. LITT.

**S**UBRAMANYA BHARATHI is a name dear to every Tamil heart. The songs of Bharathi are heard in every corner of the Tamil country - in musical concerts and political meetings, railway compartments and village fairs. They are better known than the works of any other poet ancient or modern. Most of the Tamil journals go to Bharathi for their mottoes. On Bharathi day, meetings are held in many places, his songs are sung, and lectures are broadcast. Articles on Bharathi are frequent in Tamil journals. His collected works have gone through a third and a fourth edition. All of which point to the popularity this poet enjoys with the Tamil people.

A large measure of this vogue can be traced to his patriotism and devoted service in the cause of the country. The patriotic nature of his poetry overshadows its literary value. As literature his songs do not rank very high with the pundits. He is quickly disposed of by them as one who introduced into Tamil poetry a simple diction and a few easy metres. Mr. K. Subramanya Pillai, the author of a fair-sized volume on Tamil literature devotes just half a page to Bharathi ! Though the poet died nearly a quarter of a century ago a full life and estimate has yet to appear. His importance in the development of modern Tamil literature is hardly realised, much less established. It will not be, then, quite unprofitable to consider the place of Bharathi in the development of Tamil poetry.

## I

To place Bharathi in modern Tamil literature it is necessary to glance back a little. For the past three centuries the Tamil Muse was singularly unproductive. There appeared but two or three poets of any lasting value, and one

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of them a foreigner, the Italian Jesuit, Fr. Beschi. Not that there was any dearth of literary activity of a sort. Accomplished versification continued unabated, and Mr. K. Subramanya Pillai's history lists a few dozen names of "poets" belonging to this period. A typical instance is that of Mr. Minakshi Sundaram Pillai hailed about the end of last century as a great poet. His name has become immortalised by a life written by the late Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar. His poetry however awaits readers.

Criticism — what criticism Tamil can boast of — has attempted to enquire into the reasons for this extinction of inspired poetry. Various causes have been suggested. Dr. Pope, the great Tamil scholar, wrote at the beginning of this century: "Many reasons may be assigned for this comparative failure (of Tamil literature to enter into the hearts and minds of the people), — if the fact of failure be conceded. Among these we venture, very humbly as foreigners, to express our opinion that Tamil verse, with all its incomparable ingenuity and elegance, generally fails in simplicity, intelligibility and adaptation... Whether simplicity of diction, limitation of sandhi, separation of words, a freer system of rhythm, and a general adaptation of thought are possible to the Tamil poets is not for us to say." (i) Bharathi, in the Introduction to his "The Oath of Panjali" says: "The poet who writes an epic poem in simple style and an easily intelligible rhythm will alone give a new life to our mother tongue." An undue stress on external form, a vocabulary, exclusive, diffuse and often obscure, intricate schemes of metre and rhyme, the repetition of jaded sentiments and an extravagant fancy have all contributed their share. An extreme artificiality of form and matter has stifled poetry at the very source.

The diagnosis given above is true to a great extent. But does it go far enough? Extremely stylised form and lack of originality are the manifestations, not the causes, of decadent poetry. The origin of the evil must be traced further back. Neither the adoption of new forms and a popular diction, nor the expression of simple sentiments will by themselves effect the genuine poetic touch. A combination of

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(1) *Tamil Sonnets*: Suryanarayana Sastry, Preface by Dr. Pope, p. XII,

these elements may result in what may be passed for true poetry. But the unmistakeable note of genuine poetic vision will be lacking, — that perfect blending of thought and music in such a way as to inspire life.

To illustrate the point. *Manonmanyam*, the drama written by Sundaram Pillai, was an attempt to vivify Tamil literature with western form. Though the language is heavily influenced by the classics, there is a brave attempt to introduce prose rhythm and easy rhyming, and the spirit is modern. Yet on the whole the drama is a failure. The note of real poetry, absent from the drama proper, is, curiously enough, more traceable in the digressive anecdotes written in the traditional style. *The Story of Sivagami* in the third act, and Vani's prayer in the fifth breaths more of true poetry than any other part of the drama.

And again, take Suryanarayana Sastry. His sonnets, which appeared in 1901, were hailed by Dr. Pope as "a clear indication of a new departure in Tamil poetry." And yet, even after a most sympathetic perusal, they fail to inspire, though his stray verses, dispersed through the novel *Mathivanan*, written in a most traditional vein, leave a better impression. For instance, the poem beginning with the lines,

*"Knowing the nature of Him who forever exists,  
Come, friend, let us dance every day without fail,  
Come, friend, let us sing with love in sweet Tamil."*

To restate the case. These two pioneers of modern Tamil poetry realised the required change, and were well equipped from the point of technique to effect it. Withal they failed to strike gold whenever they attempted anything new, but met with a relative success when they followed tradition. We are not unaware of the inherent difficulties of introducing a radical change in a field where conservatism reigns supreme. But these do not account for the entire failure. For, two decades later appears another poet, even less prepared than either of them, makes the same effort, meets with much the same difficulties, — but succeeds so well that his poetry had become the lasting heritage of his people. An attempt to answer this question may reveal interesting points.

## II

Born towards the end of 1882 in Ettiyapuram, Subramanya Bharathi was early initiated in Tamil classics by his father Mr. Chinnasamy Aiyar. After his marriage at the age of fifteen, he joined the Hindu College, Tirunelveli, and studied till the fifth form. He continued his studies in Benares, and passed first in the Allahabad Entrance examination. He had to discontinue his studies after one year of the old F. A. course as the Madras University would not recognize the Allahabad Entrance examination. After serving three years in Ettiyapuram Zamin, he became a Tamil Pundit at the Sethupathy High School, Madura—which post he threw up in three months to become in 1904 an assistant editor of the Tamil daily *Swadesamitran*. With this appointment begins his literary career.

Even the role of an assistant editor of a national daily did not furnish enough outlet for his ardent nationalism. He started his own organ, the weekly *India*, and the fiery articles and poems which appeared in it regularly brought his name to front ranks of Tamil nationalism. The political situation of 1908 drove him to take refuge in Pondicherry, and till 1918 he remained there in self-imposed exile. These were years of constant worry and abject misery. Yet they form the longest and the most fruitful period of his literary career. His undaunted spirit, breaking through all external fetters, asserted itself in some of the most eloquent and moving poetry Tamil had witnessed for centuries.

Bharathi returned in 1918 to Kadayam his ancestral village in the Tirunelveli district. Two years later his services were once again enlisted in editing the *Swadesamitran*. But he was not to live long. In September 1921 he met with an unfortunate accident and passed away soon at the early age of thirty nine.

The main theme of most of Bharathi's poems, as may be expected, is an ardent patriotism which manifests itself in love for his motherland, admiration for her natural beauty and cultural heritage, and devotedness in her service.

*"Honey to our ears are the words :  
The land of Sweet Tamil ;  
When we hear, it is the land of our fathers,  
A sakthi is born in us." (p. 4)<sup>1</sup>*

*"This the land our fathers and mothers lived in happy  
wedlock ;  
Where their forefathers lived for countless ages ;  
A land made dear by a thousand remembrances,  
— Shall I not cherish it in my heart.  
And praise it in my words ?  
Shall I not bow my head uttering 'Vande Matharam' ?*

*This the land that bore and brought us up ;  
Where our mothers uttered their first prattling sounds ;  
Where as young maidens they played in moon-lit nights,  
And bathed in streams in merry sport,  
—Shall I not bow my head uttering 'Vande  
Matharam' ? (p. 4.)*

Bharathi like every true patriot longs for the freedom of his country, political, cultural and economic.

*"The land we dwell in, we know, is ours ;  
We know we have every right over it ;  
We will not serve henceforth and on earth  
But Him who is all perfection.*

*Everywhere the cry for Freedom is gone forth,  
That all are equal has been established ;  
We shall sound the conch of victory,  
We shall announce this triumph to all the world."  
(P. 67)*

National liberty has as its counterpart individual liberty, the suppression of all tyranny of class and caste. Personal freedom and the fundamental equality of all men finds reiterated expression in his verses.

<sup>1</sup> The numbers refer to the second edition of his collected works.  
I Vol. 1937.

*"There will be neither poor nor rich,  
Nor low-born among India's millions ;  
But prospering in knowledge and wealth,  
In happy union we will live as equals." (p. 72)*

*All are of the same race, all of the same caste,  
For all are India's children ;  
All are of the same weight, all of the same price,  
All together are the rulers of this land —  
We all are the rulers of this land —  
Aye, all are the rulers of this land." (p. 74)*

Passionate is his appeal to drown all division and discord, and unite in one national consciousness.

*"If we unite we shall live  
Disunion but leads to lowliness ;  
This we must realise, if this wisdom  
We attain to, we need nothing else.....  
If we rise, we thirty crores, shall rise ;  
If we fall, all the thirty crores shall fall. (p. 1)*

Bharathi's love of his people did not blind him to their short-comings — their ignorance and disunion, superstition and cowardice.

*My heart doth not bear  
To think of the sad lot of my people ;  
Through fear they die a thousand deaths,  
In constant dread their days are spent.  
They see demons in tree and tank...  
The sight of the sepoy sets them trembling,  
The policeman's arrival strikes terror in their hearts...  
(p. 74)*

Who has ever read without tears Bharathi's description of the sufferings of Tamil coolies in the plantations overseas?

*"Even a demon would be moved to pity,  
They say, at the words it is a woman. —  
Hast thou lost all pity, O God ?*



*Shall their tears run to waste on sand ?  
Among the southern seas, in a blind island,  
Midst lonely forests, our women writhe in agony*

*Do they remember their country ? Do they hope  
Some distant day to visit their ancestral homes ?  
Thou wilt have heard their sobs, O Wind —  
Wilt thou not repeat to us the words  
Of our women when they cried in helpless sorrow ?  
They have lost strength  
Even to weep away their sorrows. (p. 80)*

Bharathi's poetry divides itself into two broad groups : national poems, and poems of religion and philosophy. The former are concerned with the revival of the nation in all spheres. But Bhārathi was not content to sing of the new forces that have been awakened in the life of the people. He sought their inspiration and mainstay in the past. He interpreted them in terms of the traditional culture and religious philosophy of the country. Her gods and goddesses, legends and Philosophies became instinct with new meaning. They became the symbols of the nation's revival, the embodiment of the new forces that were agitating her.

His songs on Krishna are some of the most beautiful he ever wrote. Like the religious poets of an earlier age he sings of Krishna under different forms — as his mother and father, king and slave; master and disciple, lover and beloved.

*“ When thou comest running towards me,  
Kannamma, my heart warms up ;  
When I see you playing,  
My heart goes out to embrace thee.  
By thy childish prattle, Kannamma,  
Thou wilt remove my sorrows ;  
By thy Mullai-like laughter,  
Thou wilt vanquish my anger.”*

The manifestation of *parasakthi* in every form and being of the universe fires his poetic ardour.

*"The sight of the morning sun  
Is a sparkle of her eyes ;  
In the blue heaven, at night,  
She reigns as an ocean of light. Ap. 201.)*

Bharathi's most ambitious effort was "The Oath of Panjali", a short epic running to a little more than 2500 lines. It elaborates a single episode of the Mahabharatha as a symbol of the nation's struggle for freedom. He adopts the same simple language and metres as in the shorter poems. Though we may not subscribe to the opinion of a critic who calls it "a great modern epic", we cannot deny its real poetic merit. It abounds in short descriptive passages that are modern and true to life. It presses into service the work-a-day idiom for poetic purpose. Its vigorous lilt carries you forward in bated breath. If as an epic poem it is not much of a success, the blame is not all Bharathi's.

Bharathi died in 1921. Though his poems were already the cherished possession of the people, and were heard throughout the land, his literary greatness remained in an unsettled condition. Conservative pundits would have nothing to do with this upstart, who had scant respect for time-hallowed traditions. Others, more benevolent, thought that Bharathi's poems, treating of ephemeral themes, would prove of little lasting value. The absence of literary criticism in Tamil did not help Bharathi's cause. But from the beginning the *vox populi* was on his side. Forced by it, opinion of late has been veering round in his favour even in the most conservative circles.

Bharathi's real achievement is not that he has employed a more intelligible and popular diction, or metres considered till now below the dignity of the Tamil muse to woo. He has had forerunners in the field in both the aspects. Ramachandra Kavirayer and Vedanayagam Pillai, Sundaram Pillai and Suryanarayana Sastry have attempted innovations in both the directions.

Poetic technique can have little meaning when considered by itself. Language and imagery, rhyme and rhythm are not the external garb of a poet's sentiments, which he may discard at will. They are essential to the poetic vision, form so intimately one with it that their differences are to be traced ultimately to the nature of the poet's experience. In other words external communication is indispensable to realise and complete the inner experience.

The matter with Tamil literature for the last three centuries or so was not that the poets did not adapt their technique to the needs of the time, but that they had no experience to communicate. Poetic experience is of the real and concrete, and the real and concrete changes with the lapse of time. The poet feels and interprets the culture and ideals, hopes and longing of a people. He is, as has been said, at the conscious point of the age. His vision gets modified as these ideals and aspirations tend to change. During the last three centuries Tamil poets clung to a technique long past its usefulness, because they had no genuine vision to recapture, no personal experience to convey. They reproduced slavishly the melody and sentiment of the past because they themselves were living on an experience, social and religious, borrowed secondhand from literature, not felt by them directly.

Bharathi realised that poetic techniques are of value only so far as they are born of an inner experience, the very outcome and completion of a poetic experience. Hence he had no difficulty in discarding a particular rhythm or diction when it came in the way of his experience. Or rather he had to adapt them as he did, as that was the only way of expressing and completing his inspiration. Literature, he knew, springs from life ; and to life he went for his inspiration. He felt with his countrymen the new forces that were coming into their lives ; only he felt it more fully, more compellingly. In so far as his vision was real concrete and compelling, it found the very language and rhythm that were its only adequate expression.

But Bharathi's "reach was beyond his grasp." He sought to integrate the present forces into the nation's past. He would see the people's present ideals and aspirations as the

legitimate outcome of their traditional culture and religion and philosophy. Pantheism was the emotive force behind his appeal for universal brotherhood, the cult of *parasakthi* behind the national struggle for freedom. His epic "The Oath of Panjali", we said, was a failure ; but it was a significant failure. Has the nation's past heritage by itself sufficient force to energise the people, or have we to seek its completion and complement elsewhere ? To resolve this would have required a greater poetic vision and synthesis than was vouchsafed to Bharathi.

# *A Naturalists Similes in Cankam Literature*

P. LOURDUSWAMY, B. Sc.

THE ANCIENT Tamil poets divided the land into five conventional regions and the flora and fauna pertaining to those regions were closely studied. Some of these regions are not conventional as they seem to be but are really typical special habitats such as the seashore with its swamps and lagoons and ponds and rivers with irrigated and cultivated lands. There is also the dry semi-desert regions and the regions with forests and small mountain. Every student of Botany knows that plants group themselves according to habitats into definite types. The ancient Tamil poet-naturalists have studied the association of plants in their special environments and they are never tired of describing the fauna and flora associated with these regions. Thus we come across many apt and happy similes used in describing the various parts of plants. The similes have not only aesthetic beauty but often have scientific interest.

The roots of plants have given rise to a few apt similes. The following is a simile very common in Cankam and later poetry: Here is a free translation of the relevant passage from Purananuru :—

“As the prop root supports the banyan tree when the main trunk is eaten away so also even when the elders died, he supported the family like a prop.” This simile has passed on to common usage in the shape of a proverb. Neville Cardus in his recently published book “Second Innings” speaks of ‘a family tree branching like banyan’.

The flattened, whitish aerial root of a species of *Ficus* called “Irri” spreading on the rocks is described as looking like shallow rivulets running over rocks.

“*Pullvīzh irri kallivar velvēr*  
*Varaiyizhi aruviyil thōnru nādan*”

— Kurunthogai 109.

The roots become flattened because they cannot pierce the hard rock. The fibrous roots of a species of bamboo are said to appear like the thick hairs of a wild boar.<sup>1</sup>

The outer surface of the trunk in plants forms the subject of similes in many poems. The patches of white and brown black caused by the cracking and falling of barks on the trunk of the tree Elephant Apple, looks like the skin of "Udumbu", a reptile belonging to the lizard family.

*"Pārpada vīzhnda verudai vizhukkōttu  
Udumbadainthu anna nedumbori vilavin"*

— Narrinai.

The trunk of the tree is said to look like a trunk full of the reptiles attaching themselves to it. The reptile "Udumbu" has got a skin mottled with yellow and black patches. Alan Butterworth speaks about the bark of the tree 'as dark brown or black, longitudinally cracked or channelled'. It also falls leaving light yellow or white patches.

The surface of the tree 'Omai' with its channelled, irregular bark is described as looking like the black, scaly surface of the crocodile.<sup>2</sup> The smooth surface of the coconut tree having slightly ridged scars is compared to the smooth wrinkled skin of the elephant.<sup>3</sup>

The scaly surfaces of Screwpine and also the Turmeric are spoken of as having the appearance of the scaly prawn.<sup>4</sup> The comparisons here are about the shape, the surface and the colour.

The red stem of the black gram is said to look like the feet of the sandgrouse. The few branch roots coming out of the earth and going inwards are said to be like the toes of the bird.

*"Pūzhkkāl anna sengāl uzhundin  
Uzhppadu muthukai uzhaiyinam kavaram"*

— Kurunthogai 98.

<sup>1</sup> Agananuru 397

<sup>2</sup> Agam

<sup>3</sup> Perumpānārruppadai 352-3.

<sup>4</sup> Narrinai 19 and 101.



One should have seen both the objects of comparison in order to get a true appreciation of this simile.

The description of the leaves and the similes employed for them are often very apt. *Ipomea biloba* is a creeper found near the seashore. It has got a bilobed leaf. This leaf is compared to the footprint left by the deer. In English it is called goat's feet.

"*Mānadi anna kavattilai adumbin*" — Agananuru 80.

The cleft, the shape and size of the leaf are clearly brought out by means of the simile.

The leaves of water plants are often broad and dark. The leaf of the lotus is said to be like the broad swinging ear of the elephant.

"*Kalirruḥ cheviyanna pāsadaḥ thayanga*"

— Narrinai 310.

The smoothness, the broadness and the shape are the comparisons there.

Another clever simile is about the undersurface of the leaf in Water Lily. The undersurface of the leaf has got prominent veins and is also darker than the upper surface in order to absorb heat. The leaf with its protruding veins, starting from the base is compared to the dark ribbed wings of the bat.

"*Nedunīr āmbal adaippurathu anna*

*Kodumen ciraiya kūrugirp paravai*

— Kurunthogai 352.

The description of the veins are also one of the comparisons here.

The leaf of screwpine has sharp thorns on its sides. It is said to look like a double edged saw and like the elongated daggerlike nose of the shark with teeth on the sides.

"*Aravuvāl vāya mullilaith thāzhai*" — Narrinai 237.

"*Suravukkōttu anna mullilaithu thāzhai*" — Narrinai 19.

The sharp thorns of *Hygrophila spinosa* (Mundakam) are described as looking like the sharp teeth of the squirrel<sup>5</sup> and of the sharp spiny vertebrae of the fish.<sup>6</sup> Again the curved

<sup>5</sup> Agam 26

<sup>6</sup> Kurunthogai 49.

spines of the Rattan are said to be just like the curved sharp teeth of the snake.<sup>7</sup>

The greatest number of similes are used in describing flowers. The descriptions are often scientific. The different similes used for different flowers often bring out the dissimilarity among them.

The buds of the plants 'Pida' and scarlet ixora (vetchi) look as the thorn-like back toe of the fighting game partridge.<sup>8</sup> The slender long bud of *Webera korymbosa* (Kura) looks similar to the poison fangs of the snake.

*"Araveyirru anna arumbumuthir kuravin"*

— Agananuru 237.

The bud of the plants 'Paganrai' with its twisted and overlapping petals is said to resemble the twisted squeezed wet cloth in the hands of the washerman.

*"Nirir piriyaṁ paruthiri kadukkum"*

*Pērilaiṁ paganrai pothiyavizh vāṇpu"*

— Kurunthogai 330.

The bud also looks like the front portion of the conch-shell.<sup>9</sup>

The long bud of the white waterlily looks like the beak of a crow.

*" - - - - - Ambal"*

*Chiruvēn kākkai Avithu anna*

*Velīya viriyum - - - - -"*

— Narrinai 345.

The buds of 'Athiral'<sup>10</sup> and 'Thalavu'<sup>11</sup> look like the beaks of the cuckoo and the blue kingfisher. The slightly opened bud of Indian laburnum is said to be just like a jewel called 'Kingini'.<sup>12</sup> One should have seen the bud and the jewel in order to appreciate the beauty of the simile.

The long curved blood red buds of *Butea Frondosa* is described as looking like blood dripping nails of the tiger.

<sup>7</sup> Agam 96

<sup>8</sup> Agam 24.

<sup>11</sup> Narrinai 61.

<sup>8</sup> Agam 23

<sup>10</sup> Puram 269

<sup>12</sup> Agam 146.

"*Uthiram thuvariya vengai ugirpōl*  
*Ethiri Murukkarumba.....*"

— Einthinai Eimbathu.

Alan Butterworth says that it looks like a lobster's claw.

The scarlet flowers of plants are often described as flames of fire. The flowers of the lotus, *Bomba Malabaricum*, Coral tree, and Indian Laburnum are often said to resemble leaping tongues of fire. Tennyson also describes the laburnum as "Laburnums, dropping well of fire." The inflorescence (Group of flowers) of screwpine is variously described as looking like the elongated conchshell,<sup>13</sup> the tusk of the elephant,<sup>14</sup> the heron sitting on it<sup>15</sup> and the "Kudamuzha,"<sup>16</sup> a musical instrument.

The inflorescence of *memecylon Edue* with its clusters of bright blue flowers is said to look like the violet neck of the peacock.<sup>17</sup> The blue white veined flowers in the dark green leaves of the creeper *clitoria Ternata* is compared to that of the eyes of a peacock on its feathery train.

"*Thanpunak karuvilai kanpōn māmalar*  
*Ādumayil Piliyin vādaiyōdu thuyalvara*"

—Narrinai 262.

This is a very beautiful simile. The long green prominent stamens of *Albizzia lebeck* look like the crest of the peacock.

*Kumari vāgaik kōludai naruvee*  
*Madamāth thōgai kudumiyil thōnrum*"

—Kurunthogai 347.

The flower of goat's feet resembles the bell<sup>18</sup> attached to the neck of the horse. The flower is almost bellshaped. In botany it is termed as 'complanate'. The flower of *Mimusops Elenghi* (vagulam) is said to look like a wheel.<sup>19</sup> The front part of the flower of *Bassia longifolia* is described as resembling the head of the prawn and also the feet of the

<sup>13</sup> Narrinai 203.

<sup>14</sup> Narrinai 19.

<sup>15</sup> Karunthogai.

<sup>16</sup> Mathurai-Kanchi 114-5.

<sup>17</sup> Kurunthogai 183.

<sup>18</sup> Agam 80.

<sup>19</sup> Chintamani 1650.

wild cat. The recently opened flower of *Calophyllum Inophyllum* is said to look like the broken egg of the house sparrow. The golden pollen in the milkwhite petals look like the yellow in the white of the egg. The petals look like the broken white shell of the egg.

*"Ullürk kurik karuvudaithu anna  
Perumpōthu avizhnda karunthāl punnai"*

— Narrinai

The flower of Malabar glory lily<sup>20</sup> is said to be just like the upturned fingers of the palm. The petals here also are facing upwards. The flower of Coomb teak<sup>21</sup> (Kumizh) is said to look like the human nose. The shape of the flower when it is placed upside down looks exactly like the nose even to the side lobes. The flower of Coral tree<sup>22</sup> looks like the red crest of the cock.

The flower of "Nara" is said to resemble the white conch-shell with red lines drawn over it by means of red lac.

*"Avvalai verinin arakkārthu anna  
Sevvari ithazha senāru naravin"* — Narranai 25.

The black beetle emerging from that flower, smeared with golden pollen resembles the touchstone with streaks of gold on it.

*"Narunthāthu ādiya thumbi pasumkēzhp  
Ponnuraik kallin nanniram perum"* — Narrinai 25.

This is also a very striking simile. It also describes the external process of pollination.

The flowers of *pterocarpus Indicus* (Vengai) are found in bright yellow clusters. These vivid bright yellow flowers are often compared to the tongues of fire or sparks flying from the anvil. The leaves of this tree are dark green. The cluster of bright yellow flowers on the dark back ground of green leaves is said to resemble young tiger Cubs or tigers with their "black and gold hides"<sup>23</sup>. A strange incident about the elephant is often mentioned in many poems. An

<sup>20</sup> Sirupanarruppadai 167.

<sup>21</sup> Manimekalai 20 : 48.

<sup>22</sup> Puram 326.

<sup>23</sup> Narrinai 389, Agam 228, Kurunthogai 47, Kalithogai 46.

elephant was sleeping soundly and it was disturbed all of a sudden. It awoke and charged the fully blossomed 'Vengai' tree thinking it to be the tiger with which it had a fierce encounter on the previous day.

*"Koduvāri thākki venra varuthamodu  
Neduvārai marungil thunḡum yānai  
Nanavil thanseythathu āgalin  
Kanavil kandu kathumena verip  
Puthuvathāga malernda vengaiyai  
Athuvēna unarnthathan anīnalam murukki"*

— Kalithogai 38.

The scientists say that elephants have long memory. They nurse grievances and never lose a chance of taking revenge. They even dream. In the above instance the elephant was dreaming about the tiger. Even among scientists there is a difference of opinion about the function of the tigers' hide.

The older school of Scientists thought that the stripes of colours on the tiger's coat is for duping the animals by hiding its identity in their surroundings. In another Tamil poem<sup>24</sup> it is mentioned that the shadow of the tree with spots of sunlight playing under the tree looked like the hide of the tiger. Some modern scientists think that "it is not the stripes but daring contrast of white and fulvous red on a tiger's coat that makes it burn so bright." Though the Tamil poets have mentioned the stripes of tigers, yet they very often speak of the patches of bright yellow or red on the tiger's coat. The incident about the elephant also shows that the Tamil Poets considered the colour of the tiger's coat as a warning one at least as far as the elephant is concerned. They have noted that elephants associate bright yellow patches of colour on a dark background with that of the tiger's coat. It is also significant that the Tamils called the tiger as well as the elephant by one and the same name "Vengai."

A creeper is said to possess a flower resembling the hood of the Cobra. This fact is mentioned only in three Poems.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Narrinai 391,

<sup>25</sup> Agam 288, 309.

“*Venkottu yānai vilipada thuzhavum*  
*Agalvāy pāndhal padār.....*”

—Agam 68.

These plants are said to exist in mountains. The elephants and monkeys are said to mistake them for snakes. This kind of mimicry in plants is mentioned by some Botanists “For instance there are certain Aroids which resemble multi-coloured and variously spotted snakes . . . . In another Aroid called snake plant (*Arisaema*) common in Shillong, the spathe is greenish purple in colour and expand over the spadix like the hood of a Cobra — Duitā.

The Screwpine is pollinated by means of wind. In the Cankam Poems also the dispersal of the pollen of the Screwpine by wind is mentioned,<sup>26</sup> but the pollination by wind is not mentioned.

The spiked inflorescence of the grass ‘ūgam’ is said to look like the tail of the squirrel.

“*Venal variyanil vālathu anna*

*Kana ūgin kazhandrugu muthuvee*” — Puram 307.

The pink fruit of *Emblica officinalis* (Nelli) is aptly described as looking like the eyes of the hare.<sup>28</sup> The pink fruit of *Abrus Precatoris* is sometimes used as an artificial eye for small animals and birds in museums. This fruit is described as looking like the eyes of the white rat.<sup>29</sup> In the above instances the size, the shape and the colour are aptly compared. In English *Abrus Precatoris* is called Crab’s eye but the crustacean’s stalked eye is usually compared in Cankam Poems to the Neem’s stalked small flower.<sup>30</sup> The long black curved pod of ‘Palas’<sup>31</sup> is described as looking like the fingers of the devil.

The red face of a species of monkey is compared to the red fruit of the fig.<sup>32</sup> The fruit of *Melia Indica* (Neem) is said to resemble the Globular Golden Coin that was in use at that time.<sup>33</sup> The grey flat pod of *Acacia Arabica* (Vagai)

<sup>26</sup> Narrinai 266.

<sup>27</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Agam 284.

<sup>29</sup> Agam 133.

<sup>30</sup> Agam 176.

<sup>31</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Narrinai 95.

<sup>33</sup> Kurunthogal 67.



breaks into bits and each bit has a round seen and there is a little space between the two compartments. Any two compartments taken together with the embedded shining black seeds look like the two eyes of the Cuckoo.<sup>34</sup> The fruit of Bowstring Hemp (Maral) is compared to the bud of the "Punnai"<sup>35</sup> and the bubble on the water.<sup>36</sup>

The fruit of *Wrightia Tinctoria* (Palai) is a very peculiar one. Alan Butterworth<sup>37</sup> says that 'the distinguishing feature of the tree is the curious fruit.' He compares it to a narrow horse collar. The Cankam Poet has compared it to the tongs used in tinning copper vessels.

"Kodiru pōl kaya vālinarp pālai" — Narrinai 107.

The fruit has two follicles joined at the tips and bears white protrubences at the end. The comparison is not only about the shape and the length but also about the tip. The little white protrubences at the end look like the white metallic tinge of tin at the tip of the used iron tongs.

The long leaf sheath of the bamboo resembles the ear of the deer.<sup>38</sup> The paleness of the girl pining over her lover in the far off country is compared to the etiolated plant.

"Nīnizhal thalirpōl ūzhththal arivēnum"

— Kalithogai 20.

Even in English a person who is pale due to ill-health is said to be 'etiolated.'

The innumerable similes used in Cankam literature form a very stimulating study. They are all the more interesting when we look into the scientific basis of most of the similes. A study of the similes and descriptions of the fauna and flora in Cankam literature shows that those Poets were not only poets but were naturalists as well.

<sup>34</sup> Agam 293.

<sup>35</sup> Narrinai

<sup>36</sup> Porunar Arruppadai.

<sup>37</sup> 'Some Madras Trees.'

<sup>38</sup> Kalithogai 43.

# *Linguistic Evidence for the Common Origin of the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans*

NALLUR SWAMI S. GNANA PRAKASAR O. M. I.

When a copy of the first issue of "Tamil Culture" was sent to His Lordship, Dr. Edmund Piries O. M. I., Bishop of Chilaw, Ceylon, he has very graciously in thanking the editor with the gift of this unpublished study written by the late Swami Gnana Prakasar. His Lordship wrote saying: "The enclosed article is by the late Nallur Swami Gnana Prakasar. It was prepared by him in 1945 and sent to the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch) to be read at its annual general meeting of 1946. As the theories expounded in it are open to violent controversy, the Society wished to be present in order to answer any criticism. Unfortunately, at the time he was ill and was not able to go to Colombo. So, the paper was not read. During one of my visits to him, he showed it to me. I undertook to go over the article carefully and after that discuss every controvertible point with him, and, thus armed, to read it myself at a meeting of the society. But a month before the date arranged for us to meet, he died."

This article represents the basis on which the great scholar compiled his "*Etymological and Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language*." No student of Tamil can read this article to the end without feeling that the science of Comparative Philology would stand to profit if the author's line of research were continued. Only a few fascicles of the Lexicon have been published. It is regrettable that so far the Government of Ceylon and the University of Ceylon have taken no steps to see that the Lexicon is completed.

*Editor.*

SINCE THE time of Bishop Caldwell, who published the first edition of his scholarly "Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages" in 1856, the people who have spoken Tamil, Kanarese, Telugu, Malayalam, Tulu and other less cultivated South Indian tongues from pre-historic times, are known as Dravidians. It was Franz Bopp who, for the first time (1833-35), drew attention to the members of the Indo-European (then spoken of as Indo-Germanic) family of people whose ancestors used languages derived from the same primeval stock. He first pointed out the original speakers of Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Old Slavonic, Gothic and Old German as belonging to one and the same family, and later added the aboriginal users of Celtic and Russian, Albanian and Armenian to the number. But the two language groups, Dravidian and Indo-European, were then considered poles apart. There was nothing found common between them in vocabulary or syntax. Also the two families of people who spoke them were taken to be without any point of contact. The Dravidians and Indo-Europeans were so widely different in customs, habits and colour that it was deemed a fruitless task to search for any connection between them. There was especially the conclusion brought about by language. Although it is admitted that language cannot be a test of race in all cases, the fact that the Dravidians had been speaking, from the very beginning, a language which had no affinity whatever with that spoken by the Indo-Europeans forced the conclusion on our pioneer philologists that the two peoples were as different racially as they were linguistically.

This was the general opinion of European scholars in the nineteenth century till H. Gundert and F. Kittel entered the field of Comparative Philology and made researches in Dravidian, the former taking his stand on Malayalam and the latter on Kanarese. They were the first to point out that if the Dravidian languages had, at a late period, borrowed a large number of terms mostly technical, from Sanskrit, this Aryan tongue also was indebted to the former for many words even in the vedic period. Kittel published, in his Kanarese-English Dictionary, a tentative list of more than four hundred Sanskrit loan-words from Dravidian. This fact of mutual borrowing, even in very early times, would indeed

testify to the two peoples having had inter-communication at a given time and leave the matter there. But Caldwell, who worked independently and made his own additions to the list, perceived a new ray of light that opened to him a far away vista, and he thought he was justified in saying that "the Dravidian idioms exhibit traces of an ancient deep-seated connexion with Prae-Sanskrit—the assumed archaic mother tongue of the Indo-European family."<sup>1</sup> In Caldwell's time Sanskrit was supposed to be the mother tongue of Greek, Latin &c., but later investigations showed that the former was only an elder sister of the others. His remarks, therefore, should apply to a more primitive and elementary form of speech than the most archaic form of Sanskrit. He had a light dawning on him but in his days, facilities were not offered him to pursue that light. The "ancient deep-seated connexion" suspected by him could be discovered only among the most elementary forms or roots of the two language-groups, Dravidian and Indo-European, now seemingly so far apart. For, during the course of ages words have undergone bewildering changes both in form and in sense: changes induced by phonetic laws i.e., by the transformation of sound in the mouth of different individuals; changes brought on by accretions of formative elements such as suffixes, prefixes and infixes; changes through corruption of word-forms inevitable in the long run and changes due to the operation of semantic laws making the original sense of a word to fluctuate even to its contrary. We have, in other words, to find "the ancient deep-seated connexion" mainly in the roots of the two linguistic families.

### ELEMENTARY WORD-FORMS

These roots had to identified, then, for both Indo-European and Dravidian. In the case of the former, the work of patiently comparing the various linguistic forms within the family and artificially constructing roots for them had been started by Bopp himself and was continued vigorously with the result that we have now comparative word-books for several Indo-European languages. To cite some of them only: C. C. Uhlenbeck's "Etymologisches Wörterbuch der alti-

† "Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages," 3rd Ed. p. 565

dischen Sprache" for Sanskrit ; E. Boisacq's "Dictionaire Etymologique de la Langue Greque" for Greek ; A Walde's "Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch" for Latin ; F. Kluge's "Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache" for German ; Franck's "Etymologisch Woordenbuek der Nederlandische Taal" for Dutch ; W. W. Skeat's "Etymological Dictionary" for English &c. More comprehensive and valuable than all the above is the "Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der Indo-germanishchen Sprachen" of A. Walde edited by J. Pokorny in three volumes. This work presents artificially constructed roots from all common forms in the many languages of the Indo-European family. Add to these the new light thrown on linguistic studies by Sumerian in such works as P. A. Deimel's "Sumerisches Lexikon," and by Hittite in E. H. Sturtevant's "Hittite Glossary and Comparative Grammar." There have been also various up-to-date dictionaries published, like the Pali Text Society's Pali Dictionary, the new edition of Liddel and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon, &c.

Similar studies for the Dravidian languages were needed. The Dravidian elementary forms had first to be ascertained if one wanted to institute a comparison between them and the "roots" of Indo-European languages. Happily this work is now in progress and the results of it are being made known to the public through the annual instalments of the "Etymological and Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language"<sup>2</sup> a work subsidized by the Government of Ceylon. Taking Tamil as the most representative branch of the Dravidian group, this work traces Tamil words back to their most elementary forms with the help of the variations found in the other branches of the group the chief of which are Kanarese, Telugu, Malayalam and Tulu. Thanks to the remarkably conservative nature of Tamil, and its perspicuity as regards etymology, the formative elements of its words were separated easily enough, when, the residue revealed the roots common to all the branches of the group. These roots had by no means to be artificially constructed, but were there, as the most ancient word-types representing very

<sup>2</sup> By Rev. S. Gnana Prakasar O. M. I. Nallur, Jaffna. (The work on the Lexicon has been suspended after Father Gnana Prakasar's death.)

elementary sensuous ideas. One could clearly see how this handful of word-types, originally signifying undefined material notions, began to multiply, first with the help of one another functioning as formative elements, then, with that of vowel gradation and other devices — and ended by differentiating their sense gradually up to the most spiritual and metaphysical ideas.

The roots of Dravidian were found to be real elementary word-types, some of which are in daily use as separate words to the present day, while others are, of course, imbedded in the vocabulary, to be discerned by those who endeavour to seek them in the correct way. On the other hand, the "roots" of Indo-European, which philologists have constructed with the aid of interlinguistic comparison, are not found as words in any of the languages compared. They are only fictitious or hypothetical "roots". But one remarkable fact showing how scientifically correct European philologists were, on the whole, is, that a good number of "roots" presented in Walde-Pokorny, for instance, are very near approaches to Dravidian root-words and are phonetically identical. (This will be found abundantly in the "Etymological and Comparative Tamil Lexicon" above referred to). In Indo-European they are meaningless abstractions, but in Dravidian they are embodiments of unmistakable, if unspecified, ideas, indicating the trend of the sense of fully developed words of which they are as it were the living germs. They threw a flood of light on and infuse life into the gloomy and meaningless jumble of sounds which Indo-European "roots" would continue to be without them.

### LINGUISTIC PALAEONTOLOGY

Now, how shall we account for the fact that two linguistic groups, seemingly poles apart in vocabulary and syntax, are found to show an intimate affinity as regards the roots which represent their earliest stage of development. What we find for Dravidian and Indo-European others have found for other groups of languages. We may instance the modern advocates of monogenism in language who were headed, in his life-time, by the Italian savant, Alfredo Trombetti. Such being the case, an increasing volume of scholarly opinion is agreed that the peoples now inhabiting the world must have,



in pro-ethnic times, lived together somewhere. The Dravidians and Indo-Europeans, at any rate, seem to have had once a common abode and to have started from a central point in their emigrations east and west. With the modern scientific theory that those of the early mankind who went to live near the arctic regions became permanently "albinoised"<sup>3</sup>, it would seem that the ancestors of the white Indo-Europeans had lived together somewhere in the north for a good long time before they were differentiated into various races.

The idea of the separation of the white races from a common abode in Asia was started with the discovery of Sanskrit by Europeans through Roman Catholic Missionaries, who first pointed out a resemblance between it and Greek and Latin. It was especially the work of Frater Paulinus a S. Bartholomew published in 1798, which made European scholarship consider the possible affinity of the principal white nations of east and west. Joham Christoph Adelung's work perhaps was the first (1806 - 1816) which boldly argued from linguistic affinity to that of the European races such as the Iberians, Celts, Teutons, Thracians (including Greeks and the Latin races) Finns and Slavs. He also practically included in his enumeration the northern Sanskrit-speaking people of India and Persia, together with those who speak Hebrew, Syriac and Turkish, by bringing their languages into comparison with Sanskrit. Others who followed him, made further research into the subject — Fr Bopp, A. Kuhn and especially, J. Grimm who laid the foundations for a methodical investigation of Indo-European antiquities by means of comparative philology. Among other eminent scholars who worked in the same field we may mention J. H. Mommesen, W. Jones, Max Müller, V. Hehn, A. Fick and Th. Benfy.

This new science, which some have named Linguistic Palaeontology, seeks to reconstruct the ancient history of the undivided Indo-European family at a period when they had their home in some part of Asia — in Mesopotamia, according to some, or in central Asia, according to others — and the stages of the civilization of the various members of the family, by a diligent study of the original stock of native words they

<sup>3</sup> A. H. Sayce: "Races of the Old Testament," p. 41.

had for various objects. The life of a people is indeed disclosed by its language which is a true mirror of its vicissitudes. Other monuments of a nation may crumble and fall but its language persists as a living, imperishable monument. Scientific investigation can yet discover its earliest forms even under the incrustations of countless ages.

By comparing the earliest words of the Indo-European group representing archaic civilization, such as words for the then known metals, weapons, domesticated animals, the more common objects of daily use and words for expressing fundamental kinship, it has been ascertained that the peoples who possessed common native words for them had once had a common home from which they radiated to distant lands and became crystallized into various nations. Now that the Dravidian languages may be presumed to have had some early connection with the Indo-European ones, can it be shown, by means of a similar investigation, that the original speakers of the former languages had once a common home with those who spoke the latter ?

### AN EARLY WORD FOR COPPER

It is one of the well established conclusions of Palaeontology that copper was the first metal known to the people of Europe and Asia. This metal was often found in a pure state and attracted notice by its red colour. The Sumerians named it *urudu*, a name written with an uncompounded single ideogram and thereby indicating great antiquity. *Urudu* is very probably connected with the Tamil *eri* (Kanarese *uri*), 'fire', and the Dravidian derivatives *arattam*, *irattam* &c. Compare Latin *raudus*, 'copper'. The Sanskrit *lōha*, from the same root as that of the Tamil *eri* originally designated copper. It is noteworthy that there is an old Tamil word *eruvai* for this metal, presumably akin to *urudu*, which has an Akkadian equivalent *eru*. Basque has *urraida* for copper, whereas the Armenian for brass is *aroir*.

We thus see that only some languages have retained the name for copper used by the Sumerians. There was another name for it among the Sumero-Akkadians representing it, again, by its red colour. This was *Zabar*, probably for bronze, a mixture of tin and copper. This word became *siparru* in

Assyrian in early times and, later, *zift* in Arabic. What connection *zabar* has with the Egyptian *chomt* does not appear. At any rate, *zabar*, *siparru* and \**keppu*, the original of the Tamil *cembu*, seem to refer to the same "shining fiery red" metal. It is hardly necessary to state here that in Dravidian, as in all other languages, the palatalized *k*, i.e. the sound of *c*, is a later development. Greek does not possess this sound. Latin introduced it in later times. Among Dravidian languages, Kanarese still retains the initial *k* in many words, Tamil only in some. So, for red, *kem* is the form mostly used in Kanarese. *Kembu* is redness, ruby. Tamil also has *kembu* in the sense of ruby. For copper Kanarese has *cembu*, like the Tamil *cembu*. *Cembige* is a copper or brass vessel for drinking from. Another form of it is *tambige* where *c* has changed into *t*. So too *tambala*, Tamil *tampalam*, which means scarlet moth and red spittle caused by chewing betel. The latter has become *tāmbūlam* in Sanskrit for betel and arecanut. The transition from original *k* to *t* through *c* is seen well in the Tamil *kevuli* (*kem* + *ilanir*) which became *cevvilai* and in Sinhalese *tāmbili*, 'yellow-red kind of coconut' commonly called king-coconut. The Sinhalese for *cembu* likewise is *tamba*. The phonetic law of *k* becoming *c* and *c* becoming *t* will explain how the Dravidian *cembu* became *tāmram* in post-vedic Sanskrit. The Aryans, on coming to India, seem to have used the name *ayas* (Latin *aes*, Gothic *aiz*, Old High German *er*. Cf. Tamil *ehku*) for any metal, and to have got their distinctive name for copper from the Dravidians. *Tām-ra* has no other derivation but *cem*, 'red' with the suffix *-ra*. Another name in Sanskrit for it is *mlēccha-mukham*, 'face of the foreigner' i.e. the brown complexion of the Dravidians — which hints at the source from which the Aryans got the red metal.

*Zabar*=*siparru*=*keppu* this equation suggests Greek *kupros*, Latin *cuprum*, Anglo-Saxon *copor*, German *kupfer*, Dutch *koper*, Danish *cobber*, Irish *copar*, French *cuivre*, English copper. It has been asserted that the names *kupros* &c were derived from the name of the island of Cyprus which was the chief source of copper for Europe; and that the island's name had come from the cypresses (Greek, *kuparissos*) abounding in it. But how did the name *kuparissos* come? *-ssos*, or *-issos* is a termination in Greek, and when that is

removed, we have *kupar*=*kupros*, the name for the metal. It is, therefore, more likely that the island's name originated from the copper obtained there, and the cypresses received their name from the island. The name of the metal found already in the equation *zabar-siparru-keppu* is certainly not due to the island but the other way about. *Keppu*, now *cempu*, seems to have been the original name for copper among the Dravidians as *zabar-siparru* was among the people with whom they had lived in primeval times. They were able to retain the name when they emigrated to India, as copper was easily found there in many localities. On the contrary, the Indo-Europeans who had started from the same common home and had gone into regions where the metal was not readily met with, lost the name at first, and began to use the derivatives of *aes* for any metal they came later in contact with, till some of the wandering nations obtained the metal and its original name from the island which became famous for it and had got its own name from it.

### OFFENSIVE WEAPONS

The weapon most in use in primitive times for offensive purposes was the bow and arrow. An ancient word in Dravidian for arrow is the Tamil *ey*; Kanarese *ey*, *eyya*; Malayalam, *eyya*; Tulu, *ezi*. Telugu has *ēdu*, Kanarese *ēdu* for porcupine, a name derived from *ey*, the arrow-like spine-peculiar to the animal. In Tamil *ey* also means porcupine. This word is here in its root form, being composed of the deictic *e* and formative *y*. All Dravidian primary roots, it might be noted here, are thus composed of one of the four deictics (*a*, *u*, *i* and *e*) 'pointing out' spatial relation, and a consonant as the differentiating element.<sup>4</sup> Words that begin with a consonant are not primary but secondary roots, the consonants having been prefixed as a further differentiating element. Such are termed Initial intensive consonants. *Ey*, being a primary root, is in its most ancient form.

<sup>4</sup> "Once we grant that all knowledge begins by distinguishing things, it follows that this distinguishing of objects one from another, or according to their qualities in themselves, resolves itself into the act of noting whether a thing is far or near, above or beneath another thing; or again, whether a thing is long or short, straight or crooked, high or low, hard or soft &c., &c. This is what we call Spatial Re-

Now, to turn to Indo-European, the earliest word for arrow in Sanskrit is *ishus*, with its equivalent in Zend *ishu* and in Greek *ios*. As these words do not look like loans of a later period, it is presumable that this name for arrow was in use among the Dravidians and at least a section of the Indo-Europeans before they separated. It is noteworthy at least that the porcupine is named from the root *ey* in some of the Indo-European languages as in Dravidian. Thus Greek *echinos*; Old High German *igil*; Lithuanian *ezys*; Armenian *ozni*, etc.

There is also a similarity of names for the bow-string in both the language groups. Tamil has *nān* or *nan* akin to *nār*, 'string'. Sanskrit *jyā*, Zend *jya*, Greek *bios*. Also, with a prothetic sibilant, Sanskrit has *snāvan*, Zend *snāvare*. Compare Greek *neuron* with Tamil *nār* (and *narampu*, a later formation), 'nerve'.

The original name for the bow seems to have been a derivative from the secondary root *val* (primary *ul*) 'to bend' like the Dravidian *vil*, 'bow'. The English *bow* itself (Anglo-Saxon *boga*) is derived from a hypothetical root *\*bheug*, true root *ul*, through the Dravidian derivative *vanku*, 'what is bent'. In Sumerian the bow was *pañ* (= *van*, as in the Tamil *van-ai*, *van-ar*, *van-anku*, 'to bend') 'the thing that

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lation. Spiritual and metaphysical distinctions themselves follow the analogy of material and sensible things. Now, early man could have easily signified to his fellows the distinction of one object from another, or its relative dimensions, by gesticulations, just as we see people doing in a pantomime. We know that gesticulations are demonstrative or pointing-out signs, made by various movements of the limbs, the face &c. But by his superior intelligence, man was able to devise a more perfect medium for pointing out the distinctions in things, than his limbs would have furnished him with. This was articulate voice. He adopted his voice to the marking of the different aspects of things, and this resulted in the use of the four deictics or demonstrative vowels: *a*, *u*, *i* and *e* for representing Proximity, Remoteness, Depth and Height and the correlated ideas, respectively. The Deictics, however, were too vague by themselves, and therefore other sounds, more emphatic because of their various degrees of obstruction in the organs of speech, were dexterously harnessed. These were the consonants which served to render those vague vowel sounds more definite, thus forming the first words of language. This, in brief, is the theory of Dravidian primary roots." See "Anthropos" Band XXXIV for 1939.

is bent'. The pictograph for it was a clear arch-like thing. Compare Latin *pando*, 'to bend' and Tamil *pan-i*, 'to bow'. In Tamil also we have *pan-i* 'what coils up, snake' (for which Sanskrit has the form *phanin*), *paniyal*, 'worship' and *pan-ilam*, 'what is spiral, conch'. The Sumerian *pan* (*ban*, *van*)<sup>5</sup> is possibly found in the second member of the Sanskrit compound *dhan-van*, Zend *than-vare*, 'bow of fir' as suggested by O. Schrader.<sup>6</sup> The same is seen in the Sanskrit *bānas* or *vānas* and Tamil *pānam* and *vāli* meaning not the bow but an arrow. It is a well known fact that the names for bow and arrow have been interchanged in many cases. For instance, the Latin *arcus* originally meaning 'arrow' (root *ar*, akin to Gothic *arhvazna*, Anglo-Saxon *earh*, and English *arrow*) later became the names for the bow. On the contrary, the Greek *belos*, Middle High German *vliz*, *flitsch*, Low German *flitz*, French *fleche*, etc., probably designated the bow at first as counterparts of the Dravidian *vil*, and, by transition of sense, came later to signify the arrow.

Another ancient weapon used, also as a missile, is known in Tamil as *pārai*, Kanarese *hāre*, Malayalam *pāra* and Tulu *pārengi*. Originally this is the same as the Sanskrit *parasus* or *parsus*. In Greek it is *pelekus* (battle axe). All these forms are very probably from the Sumerian *balag* which gave Assyrian the form *pilaggu*. Some think that this is a loan word in Indo-European languages. For Dravidian this may not be the case, as the word *pārai* as compared with its cognate *pālai*, 'what splits, a spathe' which is from the secondary root *pil-a* 'to split.' The Sanskrit *p̥hal*, 'to burst' cannot be maintained, as it is seen to have been invented to furnish an etymology for the noun *phalam-palam* 'fruit', a Dravidian word. Hence we may presume that the Dravidian *pārai* and Sumerian *balag* belong to the primeval times. Inter-borrowing of cultural terms cannot be easily established in the case of intimately related languages such as these two seem to be.

<sup>5</sup> This *pan* for the bow occurs also "in a multitude of Austro-oceanic dialects ("Anthropos": XXX, 722).

<sup>6</sup> "Prehistoric Antiquities of the Aryan Peoples," p. 232.

<sup>7</sup> See "Anthropos" *ibid.* p. 719.



According to savants like C. Autran\* Indo-European itself is not unrelated to Sumerian.

The *balag-parasu-pārai* was probably of stone in the early ages and was wielded habitually at close quarters. For hurling stone at a distance the sling was devised. The Dravidian word for it is : Tamil *kavan*, *kavanai* ; Kanarese, Tulu, *kavane* ; Malayalam, *kavana*. In Sumerian the sling is known as *ir*, *irru*. The Egyptian *ayr* means the same. These may be connected with the Dravidian root word *er*, 'to throw, fasten'. The Sumerian pictograph for *ir*, 'sling' is probably that of the central part of it without the strings.<sup>8</sup> It would seem that the sling began to be known by what is thrown, i.e., a stone, instead of the act of throwing. We have probably an equation of the Dravidian *kavan* in Slavonic *kameni* 'stone' with which Old Norse *hamarr*, Anglo-Saxon *hamor*, Old High German *hamar* are said to be connected. Some adduce also the Greek *akmōn* and Sanskrit *asman*.

We know that the earliest weapons were of stone and wood. If *kavan* was a stone weapon we have *katai*, originally a wooden as well as stone one. The Sanskrit *gadā* is of doubtful origin. In Sumerian *khat* was a club or mace and battle axe. Perhaps it was connected with our *kaddai*, 'piece of wood'. Compare also *tandam* or *tadi*, synonyms for it which mean 'stick'. Sanskrit has taken over the Dravidian *tandam* as *dandam*. But when axes began to be made of bronze and later, of iron, there was an evolution of this word and of its meaning in Indo-European. The Iranians made of it *kareta* while the Indo-Aryans called it *kritti* from which the Dravidians got their *katti*, 'knife'. The Iranian word took several forms in other languages, e.g. New Persian, *kard* ; Ossetic, *khard* ; Servian, *korda* ; Lithuanian, *kardas* ; Polish *kord* ; Albanian *kordu*, etc., meaning surgical knife, dagger, etc.<sup>10</sup>

Another ancient weapon is in Tamil *iddi* or *iddi*, 'spear' Malayalam *itti*, Kanarese *itti*, *iti* ; Tulu *itti*, Telugu *ite* ; Sinhalese *isatiya*, *itiya* all probably from the root *id*, 'to dislodge, attack'. The Vedic Sanskrit *rishti*, 'spear' in Zend

<sup>8</sup> "Sumerien et Indo European," Paul Geuthner 1925.

<sup>9</sup> Barton : Origin and Development of Babylonian Writing No. 229.

<sup>10</sup> Schrader, op. cit. p. 224.

*arshti*, may be compared with this. Also Sanskrit *yashtis*, 'mace, club'.

### DOMESTICATED ANIMALS

It is a fact recognized by historians that, in earliest days of antiquity, the dwellers of the fertile plain between the Euphrates and the Tigris (now called Mesopotamia, 'between the rivers') and those of the valley of the Nile were in possession of domesticated animals such as cow, sheep and goat. The Sumerians had named the cow or *ox gud* (contracted into *gu*) from the fact of its having prominent horns, as will be seen from the pictograph of the word which is "clearly the head and horns of an ox."<sup>11</sup> This original name is seen used in its contracted form among many races of the Indo-European stock. Thus Sanskrit has *gō*, Zend *gav*, Armenian *kow*, German *kuh*, Anglo-Saxon *cu*, English *cow*, Greek *bous*, Latin *bos*. The ancient Dravidian name for the cow is *kud-am*. That this should phonetically approach the Sumerian *gud* nearest is only to be expected, since modern research tends to show that the Dravidians of old were with the ancestors of the Sumerians in Mesopotamia and had spread East and West from there. Etymologically the Tamil *kud-am* means 'anything bent, spherical', then 'horn' (= *kōdu*), and hence a horned animal, particularly the cow or ox. Compare the Malayalam *kompī*, 'horned animal' a name for the cow. Similarly in Tamil *kampan* means any horned animal. The original *kudam* has become *kodī*, 'cow or ox' in Kui, a Dravidian dialect, and *gonā*, 'ox' in Sinhalese. It may be remarked in passing that Sinhalese, holding a very old Tamil element as its background, furnishes excellent side-lights on the evolution of Dravidian. A form similar to the Sinhalese *gonā* was taken over by Pali as *gōṇa*, 'an ox' and was given to Sanskrit. In Kanarese *kōṇa* is a male buffalo, *gōṇa*, an ox.

But in Tamil the original *kudam* as a name for cow became obsolete and is now found only in the nighantus. Its other sense of (a spherical thing) 'pot', however, is in popular use. Hence commentators have mistaken the real sense of the word as found in some comparatively late classics

<sup>11</sup> Barton, op. cit. No. 259.

(Kalittokai 109, 3,—Purapporul-venpā-mālai I, 18) which also seem to have used this word ambiguously. The expression is *kudam-cuddu-inam*, “the kind (of animals) known by the name of *kudam*”. But commentators would render it cows “which are known by the number of pots of milk they yield”. They were obsessed with the idea that *kudam* meant only pot. They might have compared the expression *makkad-cuddu* for ‘mankind’ in Tolkāppiyam (Col. 1) where *cuddu* means ‘what is pointed out as’.

The equation *gud=kudam=gonā=cow*, etc., takes us back to a time when the Sumerians, Dravidians and Indo-Europeans lived together and possessed the cow as their chief wealth. As it would be travelling too far afield to go into the many other old words connected with the cow, we now pass on to sheep and goat, also domesticated by man in the earliest period.

The Tamil word *eli* means ‘rat’ in modern speech ; but, as found in some old writings in connection with *eli-mayir-pōrvai*, ‘cloak made of the hair of *eli*’ it has puzzled commentators not a little. How could any sort of garment be woven of hair which the rat has not? A recent writer referring to this sort of textile says: “rats have no hair and therefore the reference cannot be to the hair of Indian rats.”<sup>12</sup> Another suggested that the Indian rat referred to was a sort of beaver.<sup>13</sup> But the fact is that in ancient Dravidian the word *eli* meant ‘a white animal’—the white kind of sheep or goat. In Tamil *vellai*, a derivative of this, is still a name for goat. The same name *eli* was applied to another little white animal, rat, a species of which is still known as *vel-eli*, ‘the white rat.’ Some Dravidian dialects have differentiated the name *eli* into other forms for denoting the rat : e.g., Telugu, *elika* ; Kui, *ōdri* and Sinhalese *undurā*, Sanskrit also having adopted this form as *unduras*, etc. Others, on the contrary, have kept *eli* for rat and differentiated that form in various ways for denoting sheep. This will be seen presently with the many variations the word has undergone in Dravidian and Indo-European.

<sup>12</sup> “The Śilappadikāram,” Engl. Trans. by V. R. R. Dikshitar M. A.

<sup>13</sup> Devanesan in “Studies in Comparative Philology” (Tamil) p. 62.

Turning now to Sumerian, we find that the oldest name it had for sheep is *elim*, for, the picture-writing for this word is doubtless the figure of the head of a ram.<sup>14</sup> *Elim* is evidently from *el*, 'white.' The Semites who succeeded the Sumerians in Mesopotamia also adopted the same name. They called sheep *eyal*. In Sumerian there is another name for this animal, *udu* (*us*) which may have been derived from the original *elim* as the sequel will show. A remarkable thing here is that most of the Dravidian and Indo-European terms denoting sheep, goat and similar quadrupeds, by transference are modifications of *eli* or *elim*. Thus : Telugu has *ēta*, *ēdika* (differentiating into *elika* for rat); Kurukh, *ērā*; Malto, *ēre*; Kui, *ōda* (which has the differentiated form *ōdri* for rat); Tulu, *yēdu*; Gondi, *yēti*, 'the she-goat'; Brahui *hēt*; Malayalam and Tamil *ādu* which is the present name for sheep and goat. Sinhalese kept the original form more faithfully as *elu-vā*, 'goat', and *ela* both 'goat' and 'white'.

For the many transformations *eli* underwent in Indo-European we may first notice the Greek *ellos*, *elaphos* in the transferred sense of 'hind' with which, according to Boisacq,<sup>15</sup> the Gothic and English *lamb* are connected. The same is to be said of the Old High German *elaho*, Latin *alces*, Greek *alkē*, English *elk*. The Sanskrit *risyas*, 'antelope' and Latin *aries*, 'ram' are other forms. By the side of the Telugu *ēdika*, formed from the original *eli*, we have Pali *ēlaka*, Sanskrit *ēlakas*, *ēdakas* *ēdas*, 'sheep' and *ēnakas* *ēnas*, 'a kind of deer'. The names *kambalas*, 'a sort of deer' and *kambalam*, 'a woolen blanket' are also from *eli* compounded with *kem*, 'red', and refer to a red kind of sheep. The modern Tamil word for sheep, *cemmari*, is but a transformation *kem-eli*. The author of *Cintāmani*, who was doubtful, like all moderns, in regard to the word *eli* meaning sheep interprets *kampalam* as made "with the fiery red hair of the red *eli* (*cev-eli*) which feeds on fibre" (2686). Had he said *kem-eli* instead of *cev-eli* he would have hit the mark. *Kampalam* in fact is *kem-eli* with the epenthetic *p* infixed. In another place (1898) he tries to guess what the *eli* which gave the red shining hair for

<sup>14</sup> Barton *ibid.* No. 374.

<sup>15</sup> "Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Grecque."

textiles was like, and says they were bigger things than wild cats and roamed about hill tops.

*Udu* another Tamil name for sheep, which has its equivalent in Sumerian as *udu* and *us*, is probably another form of *eli* through Kui *ōda*. Sanskrit has *hudus* for ram referring back to the Tamil *udu*. With this we may compare the Latin *haedrus* and the Tulu *yēdu*. In Tamil *udu* has become *utal*, 'ram' and also has the forms *uru* and *oruvu* for sheep. With them we may compare the Latin *ovis*, Greek *ois*, Lithuanian *awis*, Gothic *avi*, Old High German *ouwi*, English *ewe*. The Sanskrit *avis* 'sheep, rat' is also connected.<sup>16</sup>

The earliest clothing next to hides of animals seems to have been made of wool, first by felting and later by planting or weaving. That the ancestors of the Indo-Europeans had knowledge of wool before they left their common abode is evidenced by the name for wool in all the chief languages of the family being phonetically identical with the Dravidian *vellai*, 'sheep or goat', a derivative from *eli*. Thus the Latin *vellus lana* for *vl(i)na*; Greek *lanos*; Gothic *oulos*, *vulla*; Lithuanian *wilna*; Old Slavonic *vluna*; Sanskrit *ūrnā*; Armenian *gelman*; Old High German *wolla*; English *wool*. The Dravidians have not kept any single word for wool in their dialects for the very plausible reason that, on arriving in India, they soon began to use *pancu* or *koddai* for their clothing. (The word *pancu* was taken over by Sanskrit as *panji* and *picu*, and *koddai* went to all the countries of Europe in the form of *cotton*, etc.<sup>17</sup>

### LIGHT, AIR, WATER, OIL

Having seen the primeval agreement of names in respect of two of the most useful animals domesticated by man, let us briefly examine if there be any similar connection between words used for the elements most necessary to him. The generality of words for light among Indo-Europeans and among the Dravidians is found to be variations of *el*. This word is regularly derived from the root *el-u*, (Sumerian *elamu* = Tamil *elu-mpu*), 'to rise'. In Dravidian it originally denoted the sun as the daily riser—*oriens*. From the sun, the brightest

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Schrader op. cit. p. 332.

<sup>17</sup> See "Hobson—Jobson" s. v. Cotton.

heavenly body, the name was transferred to God. Sumerian *el* is the moon-goddess.<sup>18</sup> For the Semitics it was the name for the Supreme God : *El* in Hebrew, *Ilah*, *Allah* in Arabic. The Sumerian or Akkadian *ilu*, as a name for God, might be, according to Prince,<sup>19</sup> a Semitic loan. It might as well be a form of the primitive *el* common to most languages.

*El*, as the orb of day, has given rise to such Indo-European forms as the Greek *ēlis* or *hēlios*, Latin *sol*, Breton Gothic *sauil*, Lithuanian *saule*, English *sun*, Sanskrit *svar*, *surah*, *sūrya*, etc. Some analyse these forms as *sau-el* *suv-el*, etc., in which the original root-element *el* is made a stem-suffix.<sup>20</sup> This is an error due to not considering the vowel gradations or ablaut which the deictic *e* of *el* undergoes in its development. Thus, in Dravidian *el* becomes *ul*, *ol*, *kel*, *tel*, *col*, *pol*, etc., as in *ul-ar* 'to be dried', *ol-i* 'to be white', *kel-u*, 'bright colour' *tel-i* 'to become clear', *col-i* 'to be resplendent', *pol-i*, 'to shine'. Viewed in connection with these transmutations, the initial *s* in the Indo-European forms given above is seen to be an instance of the many sibilated collateral forms in those languages, and the transformed vowels to be instances of vowel gradation. Brugmann<sup>21</sup> is more correct in postulating a hypothetical *\*sauel* or *sauol* as the root which the true root *el* could have become by prothesis and ablaut.

In Tamil *el* has lost its primitive sense of sun and God, and we find only the secondary meaning 'light' in classical literature. In this sense alone the sun is termed *ellavan*, 'the source of light' and gods *ellār*, 'those who dwell in the light'. Indo-European has, in addition to the above forms of *el* designating the sun, a large number of words derived from it to denote light and brightness. Thus Latin *lux*, *lumen*, 'light'; Greek *Leukos*, 'brilliant'; Sanskrit *rocate* 'to shine'; Latin and Old Slavonic *luna*, 'moon'; Lithuanian *lauks*; Irish *lauch*; German *licht*, *blitz*; English *light*, *blaze*, *bleak*, etc. In *lux* etc. the initial *e* is elided and what should be *elux* is found as *lux* etc. In *blitz* etc. an additional consonant is

<sup>18</sup> Barton, op. cit. No. 507.

<sup>19</sup> "Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon" by J. D. Prince.

<sup>20</sup> Walde Pokorny II 446.

<sup>21</sup> "Vergl. Gramm. der Indogerm. Spr." I p. 318.



found prefixed. This will be explained by the Dravidian *veliccam*, 'light', a development from *el* by prefixing *v* and suffixing *-ccam* (= *kk-am*). Most words in modern Tamil are similar derivatives but Sinhalese, which is a repository of early Dravidian forms, has *eliya*, *eli*, *alu*, etc., for 'light'.

With regard to prefixing consonants to original root-words it will be opportune to give an explanation here. An important law of language, not so far animadverted to by European philologists, I believe, is the one of initial intensive consonants. Primary roots, which always begin with a vowel, become secondary by prefixing a consonant which serves generally to emphasize and thus differentiate their sense. As an example, we may take the already cited word *vellai*, 'white' or 'a white thing', from *el*, with *v* prefixed. The final *ai* is, of course, a stem-suffix. *El* with *v* prefixed becomes also *vil* by ablaut, as in *vil-ar*, *vil-anku*, 'to shine'. With a new initial intensive *m* we have *mīl-ir* which becomes *min*, 'to glitter' as the former becomes also *vin* and *vān*, the shining 'sky'. From *min* there is a further derivative *mīn* 'the glittering thing, star or fish' (Compare with this the Sumerian *mul* or *mulu*, 'star'). Akin to the Tamil *mīn* is the Greek *mēn*, *mēnē*, 'the moon' another name for which is *selēnē* from the original *el* by a different line of development. Compare the Latin *luna*, 'moon', Armenian *lusin*, where the initial *e* is elided whereas in *selēnē* it is retained and sibilated as *se*. In Gothic the orb of the night is *mena*, Lithuanian *menu*, Old High German *mano*, Anglo-Saxon *mona*, English *moon*, Sanskrit *mas*, 'a month', but originally meaning moon as in the pleonastic *candra-mas*. The Latin *mensis*, 'belonging to the moon' contains the element *men*, 'moon'.

The equation *mīn*=*mēn*=*moon* is presented here for pointing out that the true root of the Indo-European equivalents is not *mā*, 'to measure' as has been generally supposed. The history of the Tamil *mīn* and the analogy of the names of the sun, etc., show that the moon has been named from its brilliancy. This is the most obvious way names were given to objects in primitive times. To consider the luminary of the night as 'the measure of time' can only occur in the second place, after the object had been named. This is of a piece

with "the idyllic interpretation" of the word '*mātri*, 'mother' as 'measurer of food' to her children, about which later. The idea of this luminary marking time as "the golden hand in the dark dial of heaven" would have been suggested only in course of time by observing the phases of the moon.

But does not the Dravidian *mīn* indicate a star while the Indo-European *mēn*, etc., denote the moon? Such transference of sense is by no means an unfamiliar feature in the history of language and is not therefore a serious objection. An instance in point is the word *tinkal* from *tikal* / *teli* < *el* which designates the moon in Tamil. The same word in Sumerian is *dingir* which originally meant a star as its pictograph of a star clearly demonstrates.<sup>22</sup> Later, it was applied to God, king, etc., and was also used as a determinative before names of gods. Compare also Gothic *tuggl*, Anglo-Saxon *tungel*, *tungol*, 'star'. But Old Norse has *tungl*, 'moon'.

There is, however, an ancient Tamil word for moon that has come down in popular speech from the earliest times although not clearly found in literature,—which offers an equation with the Indo-European names of the luminary. It is *am-puli-mān*, a designation for the moon in a nursery song of every Tamil household. The first two members of this compound are *am*, 'beautiful' and *puli* (for *pulli*), 'spots' and the last member *mān*, 'moon' (in Dutch *maan*). The derivation of *mān* from the secondary root *min*, 'to shine', is not phonetically impossible since we have *vān*, 'the shining thing : sky' from the same root, as already indicated. The whole compound means 'the beautiful moon with spots'. There is a literary word *mān-kalankam* which properly means 'spots of the moon' and not "spot on the moon fancied to resemble a deer" as the Madras Laxicon has it, by taking *mān* to designate deer only.

Now, to proceed to examine words for air, considered as something which blows. It was known in ancient Dravidian as *ūtai*. (originally *ūta*) from the verb *ūt-u*, 'to blow' (root *unt*, earlier *ut*, 'to push'). This *ūtai* with the initial intensive *k* becomes *kūtai* and has the same sense intensified. With

<sup>22</sup> Barton, op. cit. No. 13.

a new suffix *-al* it becomes *kūtal* and means 'chill'; and *kūtīr*, with still another suffix *-ir*, stands for the cold wind or cold season. This group of words, offering a good illustration of secondary word-formation, is purely Dravidian and we have also the root form *ūtu* in all its chief dialects. The cognates of *ūtai* (= *ūta*) can be easily recognized in the Sanskrit *vātas*, Persian *bād*, Latin *ventus*, Old High German *wint*, Icelandic *vindr*, English *wind*. Compare Russian *vieter*, 'wind', and *vieiate*, 'to blow', Greek *aētēs*. All these forms will be seen to be akin when we bear in mind the phonetic law of *ū* being often changed into *vā*. Again, in Sanskrit the stem *vā*, contracted from *vāta*, is treated as a denominative verb from which are derived *vāyus*, 'wind' and other forms. European philologists constructed for these words an artificial "root" *\*wento* (Uhlenbeck), but the true root is *unt-u*, or *ūt-u* which are real words in Dravidian, meaning 'to push, to blow'. It may, therefore, be concluded that all the above forms among the Indo-Europeans for wind hark back to a time when their ancestors were one with those of the Dravidians and named that element by its conspicuous quality of being in motion.

For water also there was a common word among the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans. It has already been remarked that Tamil has, as a rule, preserved very early forms of words intact. And such is the case with *ōt-am* the ancient Dravidian name for water. It is as transparent, so to say, as the element of which it is the name. Its etymology is easily traced from the primitive root *ul*, 'far away, hidden from view, inside' from which comes *ullu*, 'to get inside', and from this, *ōdu*, 'to flow into a hole, to run'. From *ōdu*, 'to run', three derivatives are differentiated by means of suffixes in two cases and in one by modification of the formative. Thus *ōd-ai* is the canal through which water runs; *ōd-am*, 'the thing on which people run over a canal', i.e., a bark; and *ōt-am*, 'the running thing' i.e., water. The last word is now used only in the sense of inundation, wave and sea, while *nīr*, also meaning 'a running thing' (and taken over by Sanskrit as *nīram* and *nāram*) is the ordinary word for water. But in Indo-European it is the cognates of *ōtam* that are mostly in use. Thus Sanskrit *udan*, *udam*, *udakam*; Gothic *wato*; Anglo-Saxon *waeter*; Greek *hudōr*; German *wasser*, Latin

*unda* ; Lithuanian *wandu*, etc. The main phonetic laws of all languages have so much in common that Sinhalese has turned the original *ōtam* into *watura* in line with the Anglo-Saxon *wæer* !

There is another old name for water, sea, etc., which is common to many languages. The Sumerian form of it is *ab*, *abba*. Vedic Sanskrit has *ap*, later *āpas* in the plural. Zend *afs*, singular ; New Persian *ab* ; Greek *apos*, 'sap' ; Lithuanian *upe*, 'water' ; Old Prussian *ape* 'river' ; Greek *aphros*, 'scum' ; Sanskrit *abhram*, 'cloud' ; Greek *ombros* ; Latin *imber*, 'rain', *amnis*, 'river' ; Sanskrit *ambu*. All these forms seem to be explained by the Dravidian root *am*, 'to immerse', and their original would be *ammu* which became *ampu* taking an epenthetic *p* as infix. Possibly the Sanskrit form *ambu* (for *abhmas*) is a loan from Dravidian, for Telugu, Kanarese and Malayalam have *ambu* and Tamil *ampu*. The Dravidian dialect Kurukh seems to possess the original *amm* for water.

A common name for oil among the ancients is another patent fact. The English word *oil* comes from the Latin *oleum* through Old French *oile*. But it goes further back into pre-ethnic times Sumerian had *li* for it, represented in pictograph by what is interpreted as an oil-lamp.<sup>23</sup> The etymology for this word is offered by the Dravidian *ilu*, 'to be sticky', which is an extended form of the root *il* 'to pull down'. From this root Dravidian has *ilutu*, 'any sticky liquid' fat, grease, ghee, and *el* the name for oil and the oil-plant sesame. *Iluppai*, the name of the oil tree, the South Indian mahua, comes from the same. *El* is now not used alone for oil in Tamil, but combined with another word *ney*, meaning 'unctuous substance' (from *neku*, 'to melt') as *el-ney*. Another name for it is *tailam*, borrowed from Sanskrit which derives it from *tilas*, sesame. This looks suspiciously like the Dravidian *el* with the initial intensive consonant *t*. The name for sesame in Pali and all Prakrits is the same but none has an explanation to offer. Nor has *tilas* any Indo-European parallels (so Uhlenbeck). The inference that Sanskrit borrowed it from Dravidian, even from Vedic times, may therefore be entertained.

<sup>23</sup> Barton, op. cit. No. 228.

The Greek *elaion* for oil is radically one with *el* and the name in that language for the oil-tree is *elaia*. The Latin *aliva*, 'the oil-tree', and *oleum* (for *olevum*) are akin to this: Boisacq correctly gives the more original form of *elaia* as *elei(F)a* which falls in so well with the Dravidian *iluppai*. Sanskrit has a curious word *ilpas*, 'a wonderful tree in the other world'. Does it represent the Dravidian *iluppai*? This form indeed explains the other Greek names of the oil-tree, viz., *elpos*, *elphos*, etc. Also *olpe*, 'oil-flask', *lipos*, 'grease'. Hittite has *lip*, 'to smear'. With these compare Sanskrit *sarpis*, 'ghee'; Albanian *gulpe* 'butter'; Anglo-Saxon *sealf*; Old High German *salba*; Gothic *salbon*, English *salve*, etc. There is no doubt that the oldest names for oil bring the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans together in a remarkable way.

### NAMES OF KINSHIP

We should expect to find traces of pro-ethnic connection also in names of kinship between the two families of peoples we have been so far considering. But, on the hypothesis that the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans separated very early, and each family developed the primitive language in its own way, we should be satisfied with the names of the most prominent relationship, as father, mother and child. As regards Indo-European names of parents it is admitted on all hands that Sanskrit *pitri*, *mātri*, Greek *patēr*, *mētēr*, English *father*, *mother*, Armenian *hair*, *mair*, French *père*, *mère*, etc., are variants, in the different languages of the group, of the same pair of words. Has Dravidian to show any connection with these sets of words? Some European philologists of the last generation like Max Müller and A. Fick imagined, indeed, that they could draw pictures of archaic civilization from an equation of these words making the word *pitri* come from a root *pā*, 'to protect', hence meaning one who protects the family and *mātri* from *mā*, 'to measure', hence the managing house-wife, etc. All this is beautiful but not consonant with facts. On the one hand, forms like *pā* and *mā* cannot be called primitive roots, i.e., most elementary word-forms, for such roots are always composed of one of the deictics and a consonant, as already stated in an earlier part of this paper. Even

as secondary roots, *pā* and *mā* are mere abstractions conveying no meaning by themselves, whereas a real root has its own meaning although in a general, unspecified way. On the other hand, we find the sounds *pā* and *mā* as second member in words for father and mother in all ancient languages. Thus : for father Sumerian has *ab*, *ap*, *abba* ; Akkadian, *abu* ; Syriac, *abba* ; Hebrew, *ab* ; Greek, *appa*, *apha*, *pappa* ; Gothic, *aba* ; Middle English, *abbod*. With this compare the Tamil *appan*, Brahuī *aba*, Sinhalese *appā* ; Prakrit *appa*. For mother, Sumerian, Hittite, Basque and Old High German have *ama*, Sanskrit *ambā* ; Greek *mamma*, 'grand mother'. With these compare the forms *amma*, *ammā* in all Dravidian languages. It seems probable therefore that the later *pātri* and *mātri* were corrupted or developed, if you will, from forms like *appā* and *ammā* by eliding the unstressed first syllable—a frequent phenomenon in word-building, and adding *tri*, *-tēr*, or *-tār* as in *dhā-tri*, *gno-tēr*, *pak-tār*, etc. Schrader, commenting on this, rightly observes : "If one takes into consideration the probability that names for father and mother existed in all stages of language, and reflects on the extraordinary accordance of the sonorous and significant Indo-Germanic *p(e)tēr* and *mā-ter* with the more onomatopoeic *papa* and *mama* of nearly every language of the globe, it is hard to suppress the suspicion that the Indo-Germanic words are only fuller and more developed forms of immeasurably earlier names for father and mother." <sup>24</sup> We may not follow the learned author where he speaks of *papa* and *mama* as "more onomatopoeic". They have something of that character indeed as child language had so rendered *appā* and *ammā*, but these original forms are words full of sense duly derived from the roots *ap* and *am* meaning 'to be near'.

This will appear more clearly from another set of words which is represented by *attan*, *accan ajje*, etc. in Dravidian. These words are certainly not onomatopoeic but are derived from the root *at*, also 'to be near'. Thus we have the Sumerian *ad*, *at*, *adda*, 'father' also 'mother' ; Hittite *attas* ; Etruscan *attume*, 'relationship' ; Greek, Latin, Gothic, *atta*, 'father' ; Albanian *at*, *tate* ; Greek *tata*, *tetta* Sanskrit *tāta*, 'father, child, dear one', Lithuanian *teta*, *tētis*, Old High German *toto*, English *dad* etc. So, mother represented as a dear one is *annai* (from root *an* 'to be near'). For this



Hittite has *annas* ; Hungarian *anya* ; Turkish *ana* ; Persian *nana* ; Sanskrit *nanā* 'mother' ; Albanian *nene* ; Greek *nanna nenna*, 'aunt' ; Latin *nonna*, 'nun', *anus*, 'old woman'. Compare also the root *av* 'to be near, dear' from which Dravidian has *avvai* 'mother, old woman' and from which also the Latin *avia*, 'grand mother' and *avus*, *avunculus*, 'grandfather', etc., were very likely derived.<sup>24</sup>

There are some common names for offspring too in ancient Dravidian and Indo-European languages. The Tamil *pill-ai* (properly *pull-ai*), 'what bursts out' (from primary root *ul*) is a name for a child male or female also for the offspring of fauna as *anil-pillai* 'young squirrel', *kili-pillai*, 'young parrot' and of flora as *tennam-pillai*, 'young coconut plant'. We may compare with this the Latin *pullus*, *puer*, *puella* ; Greek *pōlos*, 'young of an animal, little boy or girl', etc. ; Gothic *fula* ; Old High German *folo* ; English foal ; French *poulain*, 'a young horse,' etc.

From the same primitive root *ul* there is a secondary root *put* (from *pud*) which gives such Dravidian forms as *potti*, 'sheath of grains, etc., as shooting forth', *pōttu*, 'young shoot of a tree, sapling, male of animals and some of birds', *pōtu* 'flower', etc. Compare Sanskrit *pōtas* 'young tree, animal ; Lithuanian *pautas* 'egg, testicle' ; Sanskrit *putras*, Zend *puthro*, 'son, child' ; Latin *putus*, *putillus*, 'boy' ; Old Slavonic *puta*, *putica*, 'bird' ; Lithuanian *putytis* 'young bird or animal, etc.

*Maka* is another word in Dravidian for young of animals, son or daughter. Its primary root is *ak(al)* 'to separate, to get out, increase'. This root has taken the initial intensive consonant *m*. It is akin to Sumerian *mah* or *mag* 'elevated, great', Greek *megas* ; Sanskrit *mahā* ; Latin *magnus* ; Gothic *mikils* ; English *much*, etc. The Dravidian *maka* becomes *makan* for masculine and *makal* for feminine. Now, we find this *maka* as *mac*, 'son', in Gaelic. In Gothic *magus*, 'boy' Icelandic *mogr*. For the feminine we have Gothic *magaths*, *mawi*, German *magd*, Dutch *maagd* ; Old English *may*, English *maid*.

<sup>24</sup> See Etymological and Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language s.v. *attan* and *avvai*. Schrader op. cit. p. 379.

Many more parallesims could be adduced, but what we have briefly seen above is enough to show a doubtless pro-ethnic connection between the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans. The question examined here in terms of Linguistic Paleontology would be only doubtfully solved if Archaeology and Anthropology did not point to the same conclusion. For we are not absolutely certain that all the equations given above deal with original native words of the several peoples, and that some of them at least may not be loans made by one people from another at a later period. But recent study of archaeological material brought out by excavations in the various old sites of ancient civilization in Western Asia and in India, as well as the study of archaic races by eminent scholars tend more and more to support the view that the progenitors of the Sumerians, Dravidians and Indo-Europeans were one and the same stock of mankind with a common early culture and a common primitive language.

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# TAMILIANA-NEWS & NOTES

## ORIGIN OF THE DRAVIDIANS

VIENNA, Sept. 20.

At the IVth Session of the International Congress for Anthropology and Ethnology held in Vienna between September 1 and 8, Dr. Furer-Haimendorf of the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, spoke to the Congress on "New Aspects of the Dravidian Problems".

In his interesting lecture, based on recent archaeological finds in the Mysore State, Dr. Furer-Haimendorf indicated that (1) the Dravidians, a highly cultured people, brought the iron age to South India from Central Iran; (2) they travelled by land from Iran through Baluchistan and along the West Coast till they came to the Mysore Plateau, and (3) to the period of Dravidian arrival in South India should be approximately 300 B.C. and not much earlier.

Nearly 800 delegates from all parts of the world attended the Congress. There were six from India, viz., Prof. Chattopadhyaya of Calcutta, Prof. Biswas of Delhi, Prof. Dubey and Dr. Sachchidananda of Lucknow, Dr. Fuchs and Mr. P. G. Shah of Bombay. Prince Peter of Greece also attended and spoke on Polyandry in Tibet, Ceylon and South India.

In the discussions which followed, well-known archaeologists including Prof. Childe supported Dr. Furer-Haimendorf's hypothesis. Dr. K. V. Ramaswamy, who participated in the discussions as a special delegate suggested that it would be necessary to take into consideration the results of research conducted by South Indian scholars, particularly on internal evidence in ancient Tamil literature before the hypothesis could be accepted. Though no definite conclusions have been reached in regard to the period of the Second Sangam, *Tholkappiyam* and *Thirukkural* belonged to the pre-Christian era and the development of the literature of that period showed a high level of civilization in South India. It would, there-

fore, be rash to consider, he argued, that the Dravidians came to South India only about 300 B.C. Prof. Heine-Geldern, who was in the Chair, expressed the view that the claim of the Tamil scholars was exaggerated and that he was disposed to agree with Dr. Furer-Haimendorf.

It was unfortunate that none of our South Indian scholars was present at this important Congress, which brought home to all present the inadequacy of our research work in South India and the importance of the problem.

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## GLORY OF TAMIL CULTURE

RAMNAD, Sept. 18.

Presiding over the anniversary of the Raja's High School Old Boys' Association, Ramnad on September 15, the Raja of Ramnad said that associations of this nature should engage themselves more in cultural activities promoting the renaissance of Tamil Culture and learning than in mere sports.

In the course of his address, he said that there was no use abusing the language of the North as was done by some so-called reformists here in the South, while being ignorant of their own Tamil Culture and learning. The Rajah Sahib deplored that beautiful Tamil names of several sacred places in Tamilnad were appearing in Government records and Railway guides with mutilated versions and assured the gathering that he would do everything constructive in his power to propagate Tamil learning.

Mr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, Professor of Tamil, Madras University, unveiled a portrait of Mr. P. Pandithuraiswami Thevar, founder of the Fourth Tamil Academy in Madurai and of the Pandyan Secondary School, the nucleus of the present Rajah's High School. He said that it was a privilege for him to be asked to unveil the portrait of a scion of the Sethupathy family, who had done yeoman service to the growth of ancient Tamil literature in Pandyanad. Pandithuraiswami Thevar was a good scholar and able speaker in Tamil. Mr. Sethu Pillai still remembered his presidential

addresses for three consecutive years at the Saiva Sidhantha Samajam in Palamcottah, which were a lucid exposition of the spiritual value of Tamil literature.

Tamil literary erudition had, he continued, preserved the memory of the three Sanghams which flourished in the Tamil Country and patronised Tamil learning and culture. It ~~was~~ the special glory of the Pandya Kings to be associated with the Sanghams. The Tamil language became rich on account of these Academies. After the Pandya power ceased to exist, there was naturally a lull in the activity of the Sangham. Pandithuraiswami Thever, the Zamindar of Palavanatham, a scion of the Ramnad family revived the Tamil Academy in Madurai which led to a renaissance of Tamil classical learning. His patronage of Tamil poets and scholars and his scholarship earned for him the grateful praise of the Tamil country. The Sangham started by him was rightly styled the Fourth Tamil Sangham and attracted a galaxy of scholars from all over the Tamil country.

The circumstances that led to the starting of the Sangham in Madurai was that Mr. Pandithuraiswami Thever, while engaged in a literary discussion on the excellence of Kamban's poetry at Madurai, asked his friends to get for him a copy of Kamba Ramayanam for reference. None was available at time. Mr. Thever was greatly shocked to find that the famous seat of Tamil learning was devoid of a work like 'Kamba Ramayanam'. A thought struck him that a literary association with a fully equipped library should be instituted in Madurai. He contributed a large sum of money for the purchase of old manuscripts and classical books and brought into existence the Sangham which was hailed as the Fourth Tamil Sangham in Madurai.

A research journal called "Senthamil" was started under its auspices, and valuable contributions were made to it by the eminent scholars of the last century. The Sangham still continued to exist at Madurai, and its services were well known to all lovers of Tamil. It was appropriate, he said, that the Rajah's High School in Ramnad with which Pandithuraiswami Thever—the illustrious patron of learning was

associated, should perpetuate his memory by having his portrait in the institution.

He was sure that the portrait would serve as an inspiration to the successive generations of students to devote themselves to the study of Tamil language and literature and serve the country by following his noble example.

The speaker appealed to the Madras Government through the Rajah of Ramnad, to take immediate steps to see that the beautiful Tamil names of several sacred places in Tamilnad appearing in Government records and Railway guides with mutilated versions, were restored to the original.

### CONCORDANCE OF TIRUKURAL

MADRAS, Sept. 29.

A function to mark the publication of the book, *Tirukural Concordance*, written by Mr. Velayudham Pillai, a retired teacher came off last evening at Rajaji Hall before a large gathering. Mr. C. Subramaniam, Finance Minister, presided.

Mr. T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar said though the Tirukural was a great and immortal work his own feeling was it was not being sufficiently honoured. After quoting Mr. C. Rajagopalachari's reference at a recent function to the need for a curriculum to deal with the science of happiness in the home, Mr. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar said the best literature they had on the subject was the Kural. There should be a separate library in the University for the works relating to the Kural just as they had one in England for Shakespeare's works. He regretted that such valuable works as that written by Mr. Velayudham Pillai were not being published by the Universities.



## ANTI-HINDI AGITATION

MADRAS, Oct. 10.

Mr. Nehru, addressing a public meeting on the Island grounds, referred to the talk in the South about North Indian imperialism and presumed that the chief element of it was that the Hindi language was being "forced down your throats" If they went to Delhi, they would hear of the invasion of the North by the South because a vast number of senior and junior Secretariat officers came from the South.

The need for a common language for India had been recognised long ago, and the only possible common tie that could be suggested was Hindi. It had nothing to do with any kind of domination.

"For my part, I should like to make one or the other Southern languages compulsory in the North Indian Universities, so that there should be more of the understanding between each other. Any how, I referred to this because there seems to be a lot of misunderstanding about it here."



# Mohenjo-daro

SIR MORTIMER WHEELER

**B**ETWEEN THE years 2500 and 1500 B. C. it would have been possible to travel from remote Sutkagen-dor, near the shores of the Arabian Sea over 300 miles west of Karachi, to the village of Rupar at the foot of the Simla Hills — a distance of 1,000 miles — and to see on all sides men living in various degrees the same mode of life, making the same kind of pots and too's and ornaments, and possibly administrated by the same government. There was a widespread unity, widespread alike in time and in space. This unity is emphasized and partly explained when our travels take us past two great cities of a kind hitheto unparalleled in these parts. One of them lies beside the Indus 200 miles north-east of Karachi, at a spot which came to be known later as Mohenjo-daro, the Hill of the dead; the other 400 miles further on, stands near the little Punjab town of Harappa, beside a former course of the Ravi, tributary of the Indus. Here the art of living in cities, in other words *Civilization* had come into being and had co-ordinated human effort on a geographical scale unapproached in prehistoric times. Since its discovery in 1921, the now-famous Indus Civilization has rightly ranked amongst the great civilizations of the ancient world.

Almost all the known remains of this civilization lie within the limits of West Pakistan. That is a circumstance of which the new Dominion may be proud. It gives, indeed, a sort of basic unity to Pakistan itself in our historic consciousness. At the same time it presents the Pakistan Government with a special responsibility, of which it is well aware, as the custodian of the relics of an outstanding epoch of human endeavour. Mohenjo-daro is today one of the most spectacular

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Sir Mortimer Wheeler was formerly Director-General of Archaeology in India, and Archaeological Adviser to the Government of Pakistan. He is now Secretary of the British Academy, London. It is by his courtesy that this description is reproduced.

Deity and doing obeisance before the *sanctum sanctorum*, can easily understand the depth of the feeling that found expression in the following song. (Some three hundred or four hundred years ago).

*Why art thou restless, my heart ?  
 Peace be with you :  
 The Lord's feet are there  
 and there are the Sage's Songs in praise of them.  
 And there is the mouth to sing  
 and the hands are there to strew flowers  
 And, to bow homage to the twin feet  
 there is the head :  
 Why art thou restless, my heart ?  
 Peace be with you.*

மா லுண்டு நெஞ்சே  
 வருந்துவதென், பால்வண்ணன்  
 காலுண்டு அடியார்  
 கனிந்திசைத்த — நூ லுண்டு  
 வாழ்த்திட நம் வாயுண்டு  
 அலர் செரியக் கையுண்டு  
 தாழ்த்திடவும் உண்டே  
 தலை.

2

## NO GOD WHATEVER

We know that the eye reaches the very stars ; but not the ear and the other senses.

We know also that, for a girl who is married, the husband is the only one, in the world of relations, to be taken into account. When the youth goes to a distant land, perhaps never again to return, the young wife has only to follow him, bidding farewell to her dear father, mother and other kindred.

Again a man may have abounding wealth. Is there any worth in all that if, in the evening of his life, he has to see his

sons playing ducks and drakes with his property, thus giving him endless worry and anxiety ?

Now as for the mother's affection for her child, it is something incomprehensible.

It really transcends all considerations of self—nay, reason itself. Now the song : (1st Century A.D.)

*There is no member, precious as the eye ;  
No kindred close as the husband ;  
No wealth covetable as wise sons ;  
And, to compare unto the mother,  
there is no God whatever.*

சுண்ணிற் சிறந்த  
உருப்பிச்கை, கொண்டானில்த்  
துன்னிய கேளிர்  
பிறரில்கை, மைந்தரில்  
ஒன்மையவாய்ச் சான்ற  
பொருளில்கை, ஈன்ருளோ(டு)  
எண்ணக் கடவுளும்  
இல்.

3

BIRTH IS COVETABLE

The image of Nataraja, its transcendent beauty, and the interpretative art enshrined therein are now familiar to the entire Art-world. Through the dancing pose of the Deity at Chidambaram, we have to see a vast figure, filling the very heavens, dancing and whirling in ecstatic joy : and again, through this cosmic image, one has to perceive the oneness and harmony that governs the whole universe, and thus realise the joy infinite. Here is a glimpse of such a realisation :

*Thy matted locks waving in the skies,  
Thy complexion resplendent ;  
The milk-white ashes besmeared thereon,*

*Thy arched brow, Thy ruddy lips,  
Thy smile mysterious,  
And, above all, Thy lifted foot  
dripping as though with honey,  
These, O Lord ! if one could have a vision of,  
Even the birth, on this earth, as a human mortal is  
Worth striving for.*

(Found in the Hymns of Appar, 7th Century A.D.)

பனித்த சடையும்  
பவளம் போல் மேனியும்  
பால் வெண்ணீ றும்  
குனித்த புருவமும்  
கொவ்வைச் செவ் வாயும்  
குமின் சிரிப் பும்  
இனித்தம் கசிய  
எடுத்த பொற் பாதமும்,  
காணப் பெற் ருள்  
மனித்தப் பிறவியும்  
வேண்டுவதே இந்த  
மானிதைதே.

## 4

## THE THREE WORLDS DO HEAR

Man's life on this earth has never been an easy one. From Adam down to the present-day coolie, man had to live by the sweat of his brow. The land of plenty and the land of drought are often things far apart. The rich and the poor seem to be also eternal entities. Under these circumstances the bountiful heart feels the need of giving relief to the poor, and out of true charity, gives. This gift finds response in the grateful hearts of thousands. No wonder when people go from place to place, (pilgrimage was such a common thing in those ancient days) from Cape Comorin to the very Mount Kailas, they found an inexhaustible theme in the acts of charity they witnessed or heard of. Even today a munificent gift made in this country



finds recognition in the columns of a New-York newspaper the next morning. Now let us see how the poet sings of this grateful appreciation of a gift. Here is an old song. (1st. Century A.D.).

*The beat of the Drum is heard miles afar ;  
The thunder in the clouds is heard for tens of miles  
But all the three worlds do hear  
The praise that a gift was made  
Though, on this earth.*

கடிப்படி கண்முரசம்  
காதத்தோர் கேட்பர்  
இடித்து முழங்கியது  
யோசனையோர் கேட்பர்.  
அடுக்கிய முவுகும்  
கேட்குமே — ஈண்டு  
கொடுத்தார் எனப்படும்  
சொல்.

5

HINGES WEAR OUT

Here is a love-song of the twelfth century (A.D.). The lady-love expects her lover to return in the evening. She is alone in the house and is waiting till it is almost midnight. Then she goes to bed. But she is restless, walks to the door and opens it to see if her lover is coming. The lover is not seen. She closes the door and returns to her bed. Again in a few minutes she goes to the door, and in despair returns to the bed. This going and returning goes on incessantly till sunrise. All this is expressed in a couplet :

*Expectancy opens and Despair shuts  
And thus swings the door from eve to morn  
Thereby wearing out the hinges.*

வருவார் கொழுநர்  
எனத்திறந் தும்  
வாரார் கொழுநர்  
என அடைத் தும்

திருகு குடுமி  
விடியன வும்  
தேயும் கபாடம்  
திறமி னே.

6

### SON'S DUTY

It is indeed difficult to realise fully all the psychological implications of war, as it ~~was~~ a couple of thousand years ago. People never had the long periods of peace which have been prevailing of late. In the present-day warfare, it is not any soul force but only a mechanical force operating against the one on the other side.

The operative force being mechanical, war has only a depressing effect upon the people. Whereas, in those ancient days war brought out the innate heroism in men and also women. We will see how a woman felt the supreme need of war-like spirit in a land subject to constant attacks from neighbouring states. It would almost seem as though her attitude to her son was unmotherly :

*My duty as mother is to bring forth and to bring up ;  
To educate is the father's duty ;  
To make manful is the King's duty ;  
To give the spear is the duty of the blacksmith ;  
And my son's duty is —  
To plunge into the battle-field,  
To pierce the elephant in the enemy's line,  
And return triumphant.*

ஈன்று புரந்தருதல்  
என்தலைக் கடனே  
சான்றோன் ஆக்குதல்  
தந்தைக்குக் கடனே ;

நன்னடை நல்கல்  
வேந்தற்குக் கடனே ;  
வேல்வடித்துக் கொடுத்தல்  
கொல்லற்குக் கடனே ;—

ஒளிறுவாள் வெம்சமம்  
முருக்கிக்  
களிதெறிந்து பெயர்தல்  
காளைக்குக் கடனே.

7

### NO MORE LEARNING

Till very recently, Art and Poetry had to be fostered, practically all the world over, by patrons. For thousands of years the Tamil Country was fortunate enough to have munificent patrons. But for such patronage, the poet's lot would have been a melancholy one, and "chill penury" would have frozen "the genial current of his soul".

In one of the eastern ports of Tamilnad (Kayalpatnam) some two hundred years back, there was a merchant prince, Seyd Khadar by name. He had such a fine sense of poetry that he had always about him poets and scholars of taste and learning, and his munificent gifts to the poets was the talk of everybody in the land. A number of poets as a result of his patronage put forth their best endeavours in bringing out poems. In the midst of all this bounty and poetic adventure, the patron died, and that suddenly. The despair that must have overtaken those patronized, may easily be imagined. Now—for the voice of despair.

*The goddess of wealth is there ;  
The goddess of Earth with all her bounty is there ;  
The goddess of the Muses also is there ;  
We ourselves are, O Poets, all alive here ;  
What avails all this  
When our patron Lord is now no more ?—  
Learning, O brethren, is dead, dead, for ever dead.*

பூமா(து) இருந்தென்  
 புவிமா(து) இருந்தென் இ  
 பூதமத் திம்  
 தாமா(து) இருந்தென்  
 தாரும் இருந்தென்  
 தாமன்க்கு  
 கோமார், அழகன்  
 காம்தேக் காதி,  
 கோமடக் கர்த்து  
 சோன் திரத்திட்ட  
 கோதே முகையுள்  
 செத்தது வே.

## 8

## GOD'S INHABITATION

It would be no exaggeration to say that thousands of years ago, why tens of thousands of years ago, some great souls had discovered the truth that God was all-pervasive, and that in the inmost heart of every human being the spirit of God was present.

We will see how a Tamil song sung by a woman saint (Karaikal Ammaiyar—5th Century A.D.) bursts with that very joy of realisation.

*There are those who say that Lord God is with the  
 celestials, let them say so ;*

*There are again people to say that he is with the king  
 of the celestials, by all means let them too say so ;*

*But "God is within me," say I.*

The song is simple but profound.

வானத்தான் என்பாரும்  
 என்க, மந்(து) உம்பர்கோன்  
 தானத்தான் என்பாரும்  
 தாமென்க — ஞானத்தான்

முந்தஞ்சத் தாவிருண்ட  
 மொய்யொலிசேர் கண்டத்தான்  
 என் தெஞ்சத் தான் என்பன்  
 யான்.

# *New Aspects of the Dravidian Problem*

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THE question of the place of the Dravidian languages and their speakers in the early history of the Indian sub-continent has remained for long one of the unsolved problems of ethnology.

In the past, various attempts have been made to link the Dravidian language-group with other language families of Asia, such as Uralo-Altaic and Elamic. But none of these attempts, which are connected with the names of such scholars as O. F. Schrader and G. Hüsing, has led to convincing conclusions, and for many years historians, archaeologists and anthropologists have been content with the assumption that Dravidian-speaking populations were in occupation of large parts of India long before the Aryan invasion. The present distribution of the Dravidian peoples was attributed to the pressure exerted on them by the invading Aryans, who were supposed to have gradually pushed the "older" population southwards, until at the dawn of historical times the Dravidians were able to maintain themselves only in the southern half of the Peninsula.

The fact that a broad belt of country stretching across the middle of India was, and still is, inhabited by primitive peoples, distinct in race and in some cases also in language from the Indians of both the North and the South, was not considered sufficient grounds on which to exclude a great north-south movement of the Dravidian speakers; and the relations

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<sup>1</sup> This article represents the substance of a paper read at the International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnology in Vienna in September, 1952.

of the representatives of the Dravidian high civilisations with the primitive aboriginals, some of whom also speak Dravidian dialects, have never been closely scrutinized. True, anthropologists have spoken of pre-Dravidian populations, and certain scholars have believed in the possibility of finding pre-Munda and pre-Dravidian elements in some of the unwritten tribal languages. But the question which populations were the original speakers of the Dravidian languages remained unresolved, and it is only recently that new light has been thrown on the problem from an unexpected quarter.

Archaeological excavations conducted by Sir Mortimer Wheeler in Mysore, led to a stratigraphy comprising neolithic, iron-age and historical layers, and this stratigraphy has an important bearing on our problem. For here, in the heart of Dravidian India, we now have a clear sequence of cultures which compels us to revise many of our ideas on the prehistory of Southern India. In the present context I shall confine myself to discussing the ethnological implications of these important and already famous excavations. At Brahmagiri, a site bearing numerous stone-circles of the type characteristic of many parts of the Deccan, the lowest of the implementiferous strata dates clearly from neolithic times. Its distinctive artefact is the axe of the pointed-butt type with polished cutting-edge and oval section. This pointed-butt axe is distributed widely over the Deccan, but has never before been found in a well-documented stratum. Here it is accompanied by pottery of a very crude, hand-made type, and it would seem that the makers of this pottery and the neolithic axes were primitive shifting cultivators who kept pigs and fowls but lacked domesticated cattle. They thus stood on a level of economy and of material culture comparable to that of certain Indian tribes practising slash-and-burn cultivation, such as the Baigas and Kamars of Madhya Pradesh, the Hill Reddis and Kolams of Hyderabad, or the Uralis of Malabar.

The stone-axe culture was overlaid by an entirely different civilisation which is characterised by the use of iron, a distinctive wheel-turned, brown and black pottery, and above all by megalithic tombs containing stone-cists with 'portholes'. From the excavations at Brahmagiri as well as from a site ex-

cavated by Dr. Subha Rao in Bellary District it would appear that this megalithic, iron-using culture, did not grow out of the earlier neolithic culture, but had its roots elsewhere, and as far as we can see at present, not in Peninsular India.

Here we are not concerned with the neolithic culture, except for the fact that at Brahmagiri it seems to have persisted until about 300 B.C., and, dovetailing with the megalithic civilisation, perhaps even longer. Sir Mortimer Wheeler has suggested a date as late as 200 B.C. for the final phase of the neolithic culture, but it seems doubtful whether the Asokan inscriptions of the vicinity would have been put up amidst primitive folk living in a neolithic style of life. It must be taken as certain, however, that the new megalithic civilisation did not make its appearance in the Deccan much before the middle of the first millenium B.C. Then it seems to have spread over the Deccan and large parts of Southern India with amazing speed, and the dynamic force characteristic of a superior civilisation. Megalithic monuments in the shape of grave circles, dolmens and menhirs situated in Mysore, Hyderabad and the adjoining areas, can be counted by the thousand, and such implements as have been found in megalithic tombs were invariably of iron.

The northern border of their distribution runs through Madhya Pradesh, the former Central Provinces, but from the whole of Northern India this type of megalithic monuments, with the one exception of some little-known groups of stone-cists near Karachi, seems to be absent.

What bearing has all this on the Dravidian problem? We now know that not earlier than the middle of the first millenium B.C. an iron-using population, in possession of a material culture vastly superior to anything South India had seen before, spread over large parts of the Peninsula. The archaeological evidence indicates that the older neolithic culture was partly displaced, but persisted for some time, side by side with the new iron-using civilisation. But there can be no doubt that ultimately the iron-using people prevailed and extended their civilisation through the length and breadth of the Deccan, where it flourished until the early centuries of the Christian era.



While we have no direct evidence as to the language spoken by this megalithic people, circumstantial evidence would seem to point to the conclusion that it must have been Dravidian. For there are only two possibilities ; either the earlier stone-axe people, shifting-cultivators of very primitive material equipment, were the original Dravidian speakers, or the intruding megalith-builders with their developed iron-industry, brought the Dravidian languages and imposed them ultimately on the whole of Southern India. It is highly improbable that the speech of the more primitive neolithic population, whose culture was superseded by a more advanced population, could have persisted, while that of the populous and dynamic megalith-builders disappeared without leaving any trace. In other words : if the megalith-builders did *not* speak Dravidian languages, what languages did they speak ? The interval between the time of their expansion over the Deccan and early historic times is so brief that the complete disappearance of the language of so large and advanced a population is beyond the realms of possibility. Indeed the coincidence between the distribution of megalithic tombs of the South Indian type and the Dravidian languages speaks clearly for the correlation : Iron-age megalith-builders — Dravidian speakers.

Only this hypothesis fits the known facts of the South Indian situation. The loss of the languages of the primitive pre-iron-age stone-axe people is not difficult to explain. Even today we see how one primitive tribal dialect after the other disappears as the result of contact with more advanced populations of different language.

If we admit the validity of the correlation : South Indian iron-age megalith-builders—Dravidians, we cannot escape the question as to the origin of the people who brought to South India both the knowledge of iron and the languages still spoken throughout the southern half of the Peninsula. One circumstance can be considered certain : the iron-using civilisation in South India was an intrusion. It did not develop from local roots, but superimposed itself on the much more primitive indigenous cultures. Archaeological evidence excludes, as Col.

D. H. Gordon<sup>1</sup> has convincingly demonstrated, a gradual spread of an iron-using culture from Northern India through Middle India towards the South. For in most parts of Northern India, iron occurs later than in the South, and any people coming from Northern India, where bronze ~~axe~~ cultures flourished, would also have brought some copper and bronze implements, and not exclusively iron.

Thus there remains only the possibility of either an immigration by sea or a southward movement along the western coast of India. The similarity of the megalithic tombs of Southern India and those of the Mediterranean area—a similarity extending to so characteristic a feature as the 'porthole' in the stone-cists—certainly suggests western connections, but there remains the chronological difficulty of linking Indian megaliths of the first millenium B.C. with those of the west, none of which can be dated later than the second millenium B.C. The existence of a Dravidian language, the Brahui, in Baluchistan can be explained by either a migration on land or by sea along the coast, for in the course of their migration the megalith-builders may well have founded colonies at suitable sites on the West coast. Isolated megalithic stone-cists in the vicinity of Karachi may represent another trace of this migration. That after the movement of the main body of Dravidians to the South, most of such colonies would ultimately have been absorbed by the surrounding Aryan-speaking populations is only to be expected.

D. H. Gordon favours an immigration of the megalith-builders by sea. "It is tempting", he writes, "to associate them with the people whose ships plied between the Indian coast and southern Arabia in the first half of the first millenium B.C. and through them in some way with the megalith-builders of the West.\*"

While in Brahmagiri the arrival of the iron-using megalith-builders cannot have been earlier than 300 B.C., their establishment in localities closer to the west coast may well have occurred several centuries earlier, and on the ground of a

<sup>1</sup> "The Early Use of Metals in India and Pakistan", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LXXX, 1950, p. 67.

\* Loc. cit., pp. 65, 66.

typology of implements and weapons, D. H. Gordon considers the time between 700 B.C. and 400 B.C. as the most likely period of the immigration of an iron-using people into Southern India.

Having established an approximate chronology, we must leave it to the archaeologists to trace the migration of the iron-using megalith-builders to their roots in Western Asia. As anthropologists, however, we have to reassess the Dravidian problem in the light of present-day archaeological knowledge. Many old-established ideas will have to be abandoned. It appears now extremely unlikely that in Northern India there was ever a Dravidian-speaking population, though small colonies may have existed on the coast of what is now Western Pakistan. The Dravidian high civilisations of Southern India seem to be far younger than it has so far been assumed, and the Middle Indian tribal belt is likely to have constituted an effective barrier between the Aryan and the Dravidian sphere, the gradual reduction of which began both from the north and the south at about the same time.

The racial map of India still reflects this process. There are two great areas of progressive, mediterraneanoid populations. One covers the whole of Northern India, while the other extends over Western India and parts of the Deccan. In between these two areas there is a broad belt of more primitive populations, in whose racial make-up a Veddoid element predominates. The southern progressive block would seem to represent the Dravidian expansion, and the northern block the Aryan invasions and other racial influences from the North-west.

By such a view of the respective positions of Aryan speaking and Dravidian speaking populations, the many fundamental differences between Aryan and Dravidian cultures are more readily explained than by the older view of the gradual displacement of Dravidians from the northern parts of India. I may mention here only the North Indian and South Indian kinship and marriage-systems which are diametrically opposed, and reflect two entirely different principles. The northern system forbids the marriage of persons related by blood, the southern favours cross-cousin marriage; the northern sys-

tem—through the rule of village-exogamy—leads to the spread of agnatic lineages over large areas, the southern system keeps kinsmen together and works for the self-sufficiency of the village. Had Dravidian populations lived in the north and mingled with the Aryan invaders, an overlapping of the two systems, resulting presumably in compromise, would have been inevitable, but as it is, we find a combination of the two principles only among the Marathi-speaking populations, whose kinship system, with its tolerance of cross-cousin marriage, represents a compromise between the Northern and the Southern patterns. And it is also in Maharashtra that the megalithic iron-age civilisation must have clashed with the southward movement of the first Aryan people to invade the Deccan. In the eastern part of the Peninsula, direct contact between Aryans and Dravidians seems to have occurred much later.

Here a large block of tribal populations, many of whom spoke and still speak Munda languages, formed a buffer between the two great population groups and the aborigines' assimilation to the one or the other remains even now incomplete. Such tribes as the Kolams, Gonds and Oraons were dravidianised, while others, such as the Baigas, adopted Aryan languages.

The comparatively late date of the Dravidian expansion over South India which seems to have reached its height just before the Christian era, explains also the long resistance of very primitive indigenous cultures in some of the more secluded hill-tracts. Archaeological data suggest that mesolithic industries, largely of microlithic character, survived in some parts far into historic times, and the present-day food-gathering forest dwellers, such as the Chenchus and Kadars, are very probably direct descendants of the makers of the microlithic implements at one time so widespread over many parts of India.

But these primitive semi-nomadic foodgatherers were undoubtedly not the only predecessors of the iron-using megalith builders. The neolithic stone-axe people, whose characteristic implements, though as yet rarely found *in situ*, had a wide distribution, must have formed primitive farming com-

munities comparable to some of the present-day tribes of shifting-cultivators. To what an extent they were absorbed and assimilated by the more advanced Dravidian-speaking people is difficult to say. It is problematic, for instance, whether the system of exogamous clans, each of which has its own cult-centre and clan-priest, so characteristic of many of the South Indian tribes as well as certain lower Hindu castes, has its roots in Dravidian culture or in an earlier indigenous stratum. It certainly is absent in areas under predominantly Aryan influence.

I am not competent to voice an opinion on linguistic matters of a technical nature, but it appears to me that the close integration and compactness of the Dravidian language group fits the assumption of a comparatively recent Dravidian expansion. If the Dravidians of today were the remnants of ancient Dravidian populations, which once occupied the whole of India and in the course of a process of attrition were gradually pushed southwards by victorious Aryans, one would expect their languages to comprise a large number of splinter groups and to show secondary amalgamations of fragments thrown together in the general southward retreat. But nothing of the kind is to be seen ; all the Dravidian languages are closely akin, and appear rather as the branches of a group still in a state of organic growth than the remnants of a once larger complex.

Protagonists of the great antiquity of Dravidian speech and culture on Indian soil, have based their argument on what they consider the internal evidence in ancient Tamil literature. But the exaggerated antiquity previously ascribed to Vedic literature should serve as a warning against countering the evidence of archaeological stratigraphy with literary data preserved only in late transcriptions and commentaries. Recent research in ancient Tamil literature has moreover made it probable that the literary efflorescence of the Sangam age occurred not earlier than the second or even the first century B.C. and lasted until the fourth or fifth century A.D. An immigration of Dravidian speakers about 500 B.C. would allow sufficient time for the development of such a literature, particularly if we consider that the iron-using and culturally advanced megalith-builders must have arrived with a fairly well

developed language and that influence of Sanskrit literature are discernible even in the earliest Sangam works.<sup>1</sup>

In this context it is not possible to discuss all the problems raised by the proposed correlation : Iron-using megalith-builders—Dravidian speakers. For the time being it should be considered as no more than a working hypothesis formulated in an attempt to interpret from an anthropological point of view the epoch-making stratigraphic discoveries in Brahmagiri. All too long have the students of Indian culture concentrated on Aryan languages, literatures and cultures. It is time that a comparable combination of archaeological, ethnological and linguistic research is devoted to the study of the Dravidian problem.

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<sup>1</sup> For information on recent developments in the study of the Sangam literature I am indebted to Mr. K. R. Venkataraman.



# *Koravai.*

An ancient custom prevailing in the villages of the Eastern Province of Ceylon, is the sounding of the *Koravai*. On all occasions of rejoicing such as puberty and wedding ceremonies, as at reception to important personages visiting the village, the *Koravai* is sounded. It is sounded both when a guest arrives, as when he departs. It is a mark of respect and honour paid to the guests. It is not quite easy to convey the idea of *Koravai*, without hearing it, as it was my privilege to hear it on the occasion of my visits to the villages in the environs of Batticaloa and Kalmunai when I was received with the sounding of the *Koravai*. Women assemble, standing with the mouth covered by the right palm, and the sound bursts forth from all assembled. It is a rolling sound and not the single note that is produced when one whistles with the breath forced through the lips forming a small orifice. The technology of the *Koravai* is not quite easy to explain. The difference between an ordinary whistling sound and the *Koravai* seems to lie in the manipulation of the tongue which rolls in the mouth producing the rhythmic wavy sound that is the peculiarity of the *Koravai*. How far back the custom goes one is left to imagine. *Koravai* as a dance of the hill maidens of the early days finds mention in Silappadikaram. But the term as used in the latter does not seem to have application to the ceremonial call, as it now prevails with the village women of the Eastern Province of Ceylon. I shall be glad to know of any reference in Tamil literature to the sounding of the *Koravai* in the context of the social life of the peasantry of early days.

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# *Bharata Natyam, the South Indian Classical Dance*

RUKMINI DEVI

**I**N INDIA today, Art has taken a very definite hold on the imagination of the people, for the whole of India is interested in every art, and particularly in the art of dancing. In different waves of civilisation a nation's thoughts turn first into one channel and then into another, and consequently the life in each waxes and wanes. Today we view an approaching flood-tide of artistic life.

My own interest in the arts has always been a part of me. I have never cared for any other education but the artistic and the spiritual, but does not that include all other education? In whatever country I have travelled, I have tried not to waste my time but have endeavoured to learn something of the arts of the nation, particularly music, painting and drama.

Later when I saw for the first time two well-known Bharata Natya exponents, I was surprised by their technique, their grace and the essential spirituality of the dance-form though I discovered that all such professionals had a certain element in their dance which I knew was not part of Bharata Natyam but was part of their own interpretation of the dance. I have always felt and have since known for myself that the dance is a philosophy of life and a spiritual expression.

Many dancers take their forms from sculpture but I feel that ancient Indian sculpture has taken its form from the dance. In India the very soul of the dance is spirituality. All the arts have derived their inspiration from our great Teachers and they produce an atmosphere of uniqueness which devoid of devotion, becomes dull and uninteresting. It has been quoted by many learned scholars that the Dance is a philosophy

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in itself, that through the dance may be given to the world true life and understanding of life, and through the dance can come Moksha or salvation both to the audience and to the dancer if they are properly attuned to it. Though this may sound very exaggerated to many who know only the modern dance, it is my own experience that during the moment of Dance can come a spiritual Light as great as though any worship in a Temple or Church.

Indian art has always been impersonal, and has never been for the onlooker either to praise or to criticize, but to feel. In modern days unfortunately art has become merely a matter of fame. There are many true and great artists who are old-fashioned, who belong to the village, and who are still unconscious of publicity or fame ; and there is something very spiritual and simple in that one-pointed devotion to art—a devotion which is not concerned with the outside world.

It is also sad that combined with the revival in the arts has come a very grave danger to India—the danger of ugliness masquerading as beauty. Perhaps people do not know enough about art, particularly the dance, to be able to distinguish the real from the unreal, for anyone with even a few months' learning and with very little knowledge, by the aid of costumes and orchestra, is able to win an audience.

Besides real knowledge of the dance, belief is a most essential requisite for the dancer. I know that this is an opinion with which many people will not agree, but there is a certain something a dancer can produce when he or she believes, which is never possible otherwise.

Bharata Natyam in South India has been degraded not only by the professional dancer but mostly by the audiences who were willing to encourage vulgarity. But the dance itself is such, and its form is such, that in the hands of the right person, it can easily assume its rightful and original place.

I have seen practically all types of dances throughout India ; but the classical style, the beauty, the dignity and the obvious grandeur of Bharata Natyam, in my opinion, cannot be equalled by what I might call her daughters. While every form

of dance, whether it be folk, semi-classical, or classical must have a place in the nation, just as there must be a place for all types of peoples Bharata Natyam is satisfying to every type of person for to the untutored it may be enjoyable; to the learned it may be beautiful; and to the intuitive it reveals oceans of happiness. Yet it must be emphasised that its technique is so difficult, that I feel Bharata Natyam is meant only for the few to learn, as it needs many qualifications before the dancer can really be called an artist and not a mere technician.

Few dancers either know the true meaning of the mudras, the mandalas, etc., but learn the poses for the sake of effect. Like everything in ancient Indian art and science every detail is thought out, every detail is well conceived, every detail has a place and meaning. Just as the ancient South India bronzes were made to the correct proportion according to the Shastras, given for the helping of those who wished to attain the best results, so were rules and regulations made for the position of the body and the mudras in Bharata Natyam.

In modern days sculptors are copying these bronzes and attempting to follow the Shastras, but they are not able to produce the beauty that was achieved by the artists of ancient days, because, though they follow the rules they have lost the spirit. Rules in themselves are not enough. Words are not enough. Knowledge is not enough. There must be a spirit which one might almost call "a Deva of Movement". This spirit is intangible and can never be described, as indeed nothing great in the world can be described. But this spirit is most easily and profoundly available through the art of Bharata Natyam when it is properly mastered and understood.

Bharata Natyam is obviously an art meant for the Temple. It is surprising to feel the perfect harmony between Temple architecture, bronze sculpture, the Temple dance—Bharata Natyam, Temple music and Temple musical instruments like the Nathaswaram.

In India the arts have never been separated from life. The arts were taken from life and life was given by the arts. This is a very important principle that should always be remembered by the artists who desire a renaissance of the arts,

In my own School and Art Centre, Kalakshetra, at Adyar, I very specially emphasise this Indian spirit in which the daily life and mind of the dancer or artist is consecrated to the Highest, in which the artist will think of no reward of public opinion, for public opinion changes from time to time while true art never changes. I am more interested in making artists than creating technicians, though it can never be possible to produce many great geniuses. In the same spirit in Kalakshetra we have classes in literature, in drama, in music, in sculpture, in painting, in Kathakali and Bharata Natyam, for I feel that no artist can ever be a fine one unless he learns more than the one art in which he is most deeply interested. A background in which the emotions and the mind expand and become cultured will directly affect the art. Therefore, there is needed a profound knowledge of literature in the Students' mother-tongue, in English and particularly in Sanskrit, for Sanskrit gives an atmosphere which is unique and essential for all arts. So our dance pupils must have a general education, as well as a knowledge of the stage, of costume, of colour, etc.

How sad it is that in these modern days people treat the dance so lightly that they think anyone can learn to dance in a few months. A chemist is not allowed to compound medicines without full knowledge and experience, so how can a dancer manage with a mere smattering of knowledge ?

Many people ask me whether I believe in the blending of many forms of the Indian dance. I am myself on the principle opposed to it. I do not say that this is impossible ; but I do say that those who have attempted to blend the various types of dance have, so far as I have seen, blended them more because they know little of each art rather than because they know much of all. Each dance-form has its own special and unique emphasis. For example, though Kathakali greatly resembles Bharata Natyam in the mudras, Kathakali is Natya or the Dance Drama in which various dancers take the different characters in the drama. It emphasises Abhinaya, but its emotions are portrayed in conventional facial expressions achieved through very clever muscular training. In Bharata Natyam, it is the story teller who portrays the many characters, and the emotions are expressed by a spontaneous and

natural feeling without much technicality of facial expression. Therefore were the Bharata Natyam dancer to have little feeling it would be most difficult for her to be expert at Abhinaya ; and if she has no feeling there can be no Abhinaya at all. So, even with so many likenesses, it is difficult to blend the arts of Bharata Natyam and Kathakali.

I know definitely, so far as these two dance forms are concerned, many modern dancers, after seeing one or two performances, carry away an impression of one or two movements that they like, and then they incorporate them in their own dances without fully learning the best way of expressing those movements. To those who have specialised in any of the arts, the result comes as a shock. Many Manipuri teachers of the dance have expressed the same opinion, for each exponent of a dance-form discovers a mutilation of his own art, introduced for the sake of building up what is called the "modern dance".

Is the modern dance to be a creation purely from lack of knowledge and a blending of the ugly, or is to be the result of a deep and life-long study and experience with a wise-blending if there is to be a blending at all ? In my own dancing there are certain expressions which I have changed—I have attempted to create a costume and stage-setting which is both simple and direct ; I have introduced many great and beautiful songs of South India which had never in the past been used as themes for the dance. But I have tried to do this in the spirit of India and her glorious traditions, so that I could go further along that road towards which the great signpost of ancient India has ever pointed.

# *The Political Philosophy of Tiruvalluvar*

D. I. JESUDOSS, M.A., M.LITT.

POLITICAL theory, Sabine writes, has always been a part of philosophy ; it is a reflection upon morals, economics, government, religion and law. Bosanquet says that political life of man has a nature of its own, which is worthy of investigation on its own merits and for its own sake. Bertrand Russel points out that philosophers are both effects and causes : effects of their social circumstances and of the politics and institutions of their time ; causes (if they are fortunate) of beliefs which mould the politics and institutions of later ages. Cook holds the view that the political philosopher desires to transcend the environment as well as to remove the defects of political organisation. Coker remarks that political philosophy is not abstract speculation but it is practical reflection concerning our expectations from political action. Tiruvalluvar, the Tamil sage of yore, writes as though he had been conversant with all these views of our contemporary political writers.

Political philosophy deals with many a problem of perennial interest to the ruler as well as the ruled. The purpose and end of the state, the problem of human values, the basis of sovereignty, the scope of authority, the rights to freedom and revolt, the question of property, the justification for waging war and the necessity for a good foreign policy are some of the problems discussed today. Few of these vital problems escape the eyes of Tiruvalluvar. Further, he is fully aware of the fact that the problem of any government is the basic question of organisation of man as a social animal for the good life, however differently that life may be interpreted in different periods of history.

Tiruvalluvar is said to have lived about 2,000 years ago. His is the immortal Tamil work, Tirukkural. It has been



translated into various languages. Among them Father Beschi's translation into Latin, Graul's into German, Ariel's into French and the English translations of Pope, Drew, Lazarus, V. V. S. Ayyar\* and Rajaji are the very familiar ones. There are also many commentaries in Tamil on the Kural. Recently an anthology of five of these commentaries (by Parimelalakar, Manakkudavar, Parithiperumal, Parithiyar and Kalingar) has been published by a learned Tamil scholar S. Dandhapani Desikar by name. This work has been acclaimed the greatest Tamil publication of the 20th century, by Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaram.

The entire book of Tiruvalluvar is usually divided into three parts—aram<sup>1</sup>, porul and inbam. These correspond to dharma, artha and kama. Out of these three the second part is a treatise on political philosophy and practice as well as on political economy. It is addressed to a prince or ruler. Regarding this second division of Tirukkural V. V. S. Ayyar writes that "The fact that this part is about twice the size of the first and thrice that of the third shows what importance the sage gives to Politics in his scheme of life."<sup>2</sup> This part consists of 700 couplets. All these are further classified into three units<sup>3</sup>, the first of which deals with the prince, the second with members of the body politic and the third discusses miscellaneous subjects.

Though the second book of Tirukkural discusses the statesman's art, the following are some of Tiruvalluvar's ideas which are equally applicable to the statesman and the layman as well: One must not only learn with precision but also should translate into practice what has been learnt (391). Letters and Numbers are the two eyes of human life (392). The words of the good are like a staff in the slippery place

\* In the preparation of this paper, the translations of Drew, Lazarus and V. V. S. Ayyar were consulted. (D. I. Jesudoss is Lecturer in Philosophy, Annamalai University.)

<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes said that aram is justice and it should not be confused with the dharma in Sanskrit vide p. 200 "Tamil Culture" (Journal).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. preface p. 32 of his translation of Tirukkural.

<sup>3</sup> This division is according to the well-known commentator Parimelalakar. Some other scholars have divided it into six and seven sections. Vide Tirukkural oorai-valam p. 7.



(415). True knowledge consists in the capacity to discriminate the true from the false in every utterance, no matter who makes it (423). Those who have foresight will not be bowled over by calamity (429). It is ten times more foolishness to abandon the friendship of the good than to invite the hatred of the many (450). Purity of heart and action result when one is in association with chaste company (455). Even though the income is limited it will not be bad if the expenditure is not large (478). A man's deeds are the touch-stone of his greatness and littleness (505). Self-complacency is a greater danger than excessive rage (531). They who are able to show kindness and consideration without adversely interfering with their duties will inherit the world (578). Those who love procrastination, forgetfulness, idleness and sleep are bound to perish (605). The proud pleasure of being able to serve others belongs to any one who is ready to exert (613). Since prosperity and ruin are caused by the words of one's mouth one should guard one's tongue (642). Even if one is mentally as sharp as a file, if one is devoid of culture fitting a human being one is comparable only to a piece of wood (997). Besides these stray pieces the whole of certain chapters such as the ones on greatness (ch. 98), worth (ch. 99) and culture (ch. 100) are equally applicable to the politicians and the public.

Tiruvalluvar's political philosophy has morality for its back-ground. Tiruvalluvar is moral to the core. He is essentially a moralist and makes morality the basis of all aspects of life including politics, economics and private family life. In this he resembles Ruskin, Carlyle and Gandhiji. He never compromises the means on the ground that the end justifies the means. Even a cursory perusal of his 99th chapter, which deals with goodness, will justify this opinion. The same spirit is reflected in his political philosophy. He writes for instance that "The prince shall not fail in virtue and shall abolish unrighteousness : he shall guard his honour jealously but shall not sin against the laws of valour" (384). In short it can be said that the basic principle of Valluvar's political philosophy is that all men are born equal and that virtue is universal ; politics and economics should not be cut off from ethics.

Like most other Indian writers on the science of politics, he divides the members of the body politic into six in the very

first stanza of the Porul adhikaram. They are fighting forces, population, wealth, ministers, allies and fortresses (381). Exclusive chapters are devoted to each one of these and the treatment reveals Valluvar's political acumen and precision.

Chapter 39 deals with the qualifications of the prince. He is said to have the fighting forces, subjects, riches, ministers, friends and fortifications mentioned just above. He is the custodian of virtues such as courage, liberality, intelligence, industry (382), alertness, learning, bravado and quickness of decision (383). He should be able to develop the resources, to preserve and to spend it worthily (385).<sup>\*</sup> He should be easily accessible and should be devoid of harsh words (386). He should give with affability, and rule with love (387). He should have beneficence, benevolence and rectitude, and should take loving care of his people. In chapter 44 it is said that avarice, the undignified pride and low pleasures are faults in a prince (432). If he corrects his own faults and then corrects those of others he will not be blame-worthy (436). In chapter 45 it is pointed out that the king should choose his courtiers with due discretion as they serve as his eyes (445). The ruler will ruin himself if he has no one to reprove him when he goes wrong (448). In chapter 47 it is indicated that to wage a war without careful preplanning will amount to transplanting the enemy on carefully prepared soil beneficial to him only (465). It is further stated in chapter 48 before actual warfare one should take stock of the difficulties to be surmounted, one's own strength, that of the enemy, and that of the allies (471). Again it is pointed out that the wheel of a bandy even though it be loaded only with peacock's feathers will give in, due to overload (475). By this analogy Tiruvalluvar hints that "even the most powerful king will succumb if he makes war with too many enemies at a time, even if each of them should be despicable when alone".

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\* Strive, save and serve—these ideals found in the 385th stanza of Tirukkural have been the guiding stars of the late lamented merchant prince, Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the founder of the Tamil seat of learning and culture at Annamalai Nagar. He has proclaimed this in a letter (written on 25-3-1944) the facimile of which can be seen in a book entitled *Tamil Peruvallal*, by M. Arunachalam Pillai of the Staff of the Annamalai University.

In chapter 49 the prince is advised to do the right thing at the right moment. A crow, it is pointed out, will overcome an owl in the day ; so also the king who would conquer his enemy must have an opportune moment (481). In chapter 50 the prince is advised not to provoke an operation without proper reconnaissance (491). Chapters 51 and 52 deal with the principles to be applied in choosing ministers and other servants. The king is advised to supervise them daily (520). Chapter 53 deals with the mode of moving with one's relatives. They should not be treated alike but according to their merits (528). In chapter 55 the king is enjoined to rule with love. For sovereignty will not depart from the king who rules with love (544). However, Tiruvalluvar sanctions punitive measures for wrong doers. He makes it the duty of a king to punish (549). Capital punishment, according to him, is necessary for purging out the weeds of society (550). But he advocates the deterrent theory of punishment. Moreover punishment should fit the crime and the criminal (561). He further adds if the government is to last long the rod should be brandished smartly but should be laid softly (562).

Tiruvalluvar devotes chapter 56 to tyranny. Tiruvalluvar, like St. Augustine, equates unjust government to a highway robbery (551 and 552). Like the Bible, Tirukkural says the tears of the oppressed form the weapon which will unseat the tyrant. Tiruvalluvar opines that the earth bears up no greater burden than a cruel sceptre which attaches to itself ignorant men (570). However, Valluvar does not give to the suppressed any right to tyrannicide as does John of Salisbury or Mariana. Nor does he suggest to the downtrodden to rise in revolt. Nor does he want any leader to rise "to be a dangerous salt or a dangerous leaven" on this account. He thinks the rule of the tyrant will automatically wither away (554, 563, 564 & 566).

Tiruvalluvar sees the necessity for a secret intelligence department for a successful government. Chapter 59 deals with this topic. He wants spies to go about in the guise of ascetics (586). He advises the prince that he should see that members of the C.I.D. should not know one another (589) and advises the ruler not to honour them in public (590). He fur-

ther asks the prince to take action only when there is corroboration in the accounts given by the secret agents. At least three reports should agree, says Valluvar, for the ruler to give credence to them (589). This passage is one of those pieces which give the lie direct to the statement that Tiruvalluvar is a vague generaliser and the thoughts of the Tamils are sterile abstractions.\*

The qualities of the minister are described in chapter 64. He should be a good judge of ways, means, time and manner of doing things (631). He should possess firmness, loving kindness toward people, clear learning and perseverance (632). He should be able to play the political game of dissolving allies, forming allies and uniting enemies (633). He should be ready to offer opinions (634). He should combine in himself book learning and practical experience (637).

Chapter 69 deals with the qualities of the ambassador. These consist of loving nature, high birth, pleasing manners (681), loyalty, discriminating capacity (682), scholarship, attractive bearing (683 and 684), sweetness of tongue, capacity to eschew disagreeable words (685), timeliness (687), firm-mindedness, purity of heart (688), and fearlessness of death (690). Chapter 70 discusses the qualities that are becoming for the Courtiers such as keeping neither too near nor too far off from the prince (691), not arousing suspicion (693) and avoiding inquisitiveness (695))

Chapters 72 and 73 give suggestions regarding platform manners and audiences. The question what is a real kingdom is analysed in chapter 74. Chapter 75 deals with the details of fortresses. Chapter 76 extols the importance of wealth. Chapters 77 and 78 enumerate the characteristics of a good army. Chapters 79 to 83 form a section by themselves. Herein the problem of friendship is thrashed out. Chapters 87 to 89 form yet another unit devoted to enemies, internal and external. In chapter 91 those who run the government are warned against falling a prey to the petticoat government. When one goes through this chapter one is reminded of the Czar Nicholas III who was ruled by his wife which ultimately

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\* Cf. "Tamil Culture", p. 202.

led to the Communist revolution. Chapters 92, 93, 94 and 95 give a warning against women, wine, gambling and over eating.

Thus we find that Tiruvalluvar does not write on an ideal state like Plato, Augustine and More but writes like Aristotle on the ideals of the state. He speaks about the physical and mental conditions required for good life. He outlines both political ideals and political practice. But he never suggests that expediency should be the consideration in matters political. His views regarding the qualities of the ruler, law, political and economic life are clear cut just as his specifications regarding the national army, fortresses and agricultural operations.

Tiruvalluvar's concepts of education are both edifying and practical. Chapters 40 to 43 deal with learning. In the opinion of Valluvar learning is the only imperishable wealth (400). Knowledge is comparable to a sand-spring (396). The learning of one birth will be of avail for seven births (398). "As beasts by the side of men, so are other men by the side of those who are learned in celebrated works" (410). Out of several ways of instruction Valluvar prefers learning by hearing. This method is more personal than the other ones and is also highly suitable for adult education. Valluvar exclaims, "Behold the men who have listened to much instruction : they are very gods on earth" (413). Even the unlettered man will be benefitted at the time of distress if he has acquired learning by hearing (414). True understanding is the capacity to discriminate the right from the wrongs and the true from the false (423).

Regarding family, Tiruvalluvar says that the pure family life is preferable to that of the life of a brahmachari. He cautions that those who want to establish an illustrious family should abstain from sloth (602). If laziness takes up its abode in a family, the family will soon be in bondage to its foes (608). Chapter 96 gives a vivid description of a typical noble family and details regarding the demeanour of the members of such a family. Chapter 103 tackles the problem of rearing a family. Manual labour and perseverance are pointed out to be the secrets of success here.



Tiruvalluvar is not against private property. The rich should hold their wealth as mere trustees and make it useful for others. Tiruvalluvar compares the wealth in the hands of the intelligent capitalist to the lake full of water in the midst of the town (215). He further points out that whether any piece of property will turn out real wealth or illth depends upon the mind and culture of its owner (1,000).

In chapter 101 Tiruvalluvar preaches his doctrines of socialism. He refers here in detail both to miserliness and the wealth that is not put to good use. The treatment of the subject is characteristic of Tiruvalluvar, the moral and social philosopher. The man who has hoarded riches and does not use it for his own benefit is a dead man (1001), and if he does not share it with others he is a demon (1002). Such a one will go to his grave unhonoured, unwept and unsung. Positively his existence is a burden to the earth (1003). He is comparable to the damsel who wastes her youth in loneliness (1007). His prosperity is poison in the midst of the town (1008). But "the distress of the man of wealth who hath emptied his resources by benefactions is only like the exhaustion of the rain cloud : it will not continue for long " (1010). When one studies these pieces one is reminded of Bradley's exhortations to live as an infinite whole.

The subsequent chapter 102 on the sensitivity to shame clearly points out that Tiruvalluvar is not a materialist as the modern Marxist. Further while the modern schools of socialism extol the various industries, Tiruvalluvar makes agriculture the main stay of the world (104). He vividly pictures the misery that is caused by poverty (ch. 105). He points out that even one's own mother will disown one if one suffers from abject penury (1047). Poverty is worse than consuming fire; one can even sleep while surrounded by flames but sleep will completely desert one in penury (1049). Further Valluvar preaches liberality in chapter 106 and brings out the evils of begging in the next chapter. Finally he cautions people to have some scruples and breadth of vision in judging others for it is the vile man who always discovers vices in a neighbour well clothed and well fed (1079).

While Plato's communism is political, Apostolic communism is spiritual, Franseiscan communism is based on poverty, the communism of the Diggers is based on land reform and Marxian communism is based on economic consideration, that of Tiruvalluvar is ethical. Using the terminology of Harrington, the 17th century political thinker, it can be said Tiruvalluvar stood for "ancient prudence" or the art of governing by law for the common good, and Marxian communism is "Modern prudence" which consists of exploiting the community in the interest of an individual or a class.

Tiruvalluvar shows also the relationship between the Two Swords, the sacerdotium and the imperium. In the 55th chapter, which deals with upright government he says :

அந்தணர் நூற்கு மறத்திற்கு மாதியாய்  
நின்றது மன்னவன் கோல்

This means the sceptre of the king is the mainstay of the books of the Brahmans and also of rectitude (543). He makes imperium the foundation of religious and ethical life. In the next chapter he adds :

ஆபயன் குன்று மறுதொழிலோர் நான்மறப்பர்  
காவலன் காவா னெனின்

This means that if the ruler neglects to guard the country the produce of the cows will fall and the men of six duties (Brahmans) will forget their sacred books (560). These pieces give the lie direct to the charge laid against Indian thought that it is only otherworldly.

Scholars have pointed out that "Kural combines the Confucian mundane wisdom with Taoian high thinking without the humdrumness of the one or the chronic mysticism of the other, and shares with the Republic its utopian odour to create an order, and lacks both the detailed concreteness and the smug michiavellism of the Arthsastra."<sup>1</sup> It has also been argued that Valluvar is not the Plato of Tamilians, but analysed the components of a good state fully and systematically that he can be called the Tamil Aristotle.

<sup>1</sup> "Tamil Culture", p. 100.



The codification of the writings of Tiruvalluvar is attributed to Parimelalakar. One modern Tamil scholar<sup>1</sup> has expressed the opinion that the proper arrangement of the three books of Tirukkural is the reverse of what is given to us by Parimelalakar. Chapters on love should come first, then those on Politics and finally the rest on dharma. It is pointed out that this is not only the proper arrangement according to the genius of the Tamils, who had always made the sentiment of love the master-sentiment, but also is proved by the internal evidence. The whole of this argument turns on the 757th stanza of Tirukkural as the pivot which runs thus : Grace which is the child of Love grows under the care of the rich nurse of Wealth. On the same trend it can be argued that even the arrangement of the three sections of the porul 'adhi-karam, which has been so far engaging our attention, may be revised. First the chapters on people (ozhipiyal), then those on the immediate officers (angaviyal) and finally the rest on the Prince (arasiyal) can be given. In that case this would make Tirukkural as the book on Republicanism. In this connection it is significant that those chapters which are held to constitute ozhipiyal are given the generic name of Kudi-iyal by Mannakkudavar and Pariperumal.

A few scholars have written in English about the political philosophy of Tiruvalluvar. Among them K. V. Rangaswamy Ayyangar, V. V. S. Ayyar, V. R. R. Dikshidar, A. C. Paul Nadar and R. R. Pakrisankar are worth mentioning here. Some traditional commentators of Tirukkural and some modern scholars suggest that Tiruvalluvar wrote mainly due to the inspiration he had from Arthsastra, sukraneedhi and kamandhaka. They do not however go to the extent of saying that Tiruvalluvar copied or translated from these and other sources. There are others who hold that Tiruvalluvar never had anything to do with Sanskrit sources.<sup>2</sup> Still others point out that Tirukkural represents in certain definite places

<sup>1</sup> Dr. M. Varadarajan in his *Tiruvalluvar or Explanation of Life* (a Tamil book).

<sup>2</sup> Some of the scholars who spoke on the 8th and 9th of November, 1952, in the Purasawalkam Kural Neri Kazhagam hold this view : Vide the Tamil Dailies of Madras of these dates.

Dravidian culture and in certain other places Aryan culture.\* But it can be definitely said that parallel ideas or opinions occur in many of the great books of Political philosophy ; Tirukkural is one of the greatest guides to morals and politics, and what is more it is a hand book of these two together harmoniously blended.

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\* Cf. "Tamil Culture", p. 116.

# *The Cult of Mariamman or the Goddess of Rain*

M. AROKIASWAMI, M.A., Ph.D.

**N** EITHER the Indologist nor the student of South Indian culture seems to have thought of enquiring into the origin of the widely-spread cult of Māriamman in the Tamil country. An attempt is made in this paper to suggest a classical origin to this cult.

In the first place it is to be noted that the worship of this deity is common only in the Tamil speaking area of South India and the name of the deity itself is purely Tamil in origin. This ought to furnish a clue to its beginnings and nature. The second is the meaning conveyed by the name—Māriamman—*itself*. It seems to refer to some rain god, the term, 'Māri' obviously meaning 'rain'. Looking up our ancient records we find a reference to the setting up of a deity for rain in Sangam times, *i.e.*, as early as the II century A.D. The reference is to be found in the well-known work of Ilango, the *Silappadikāram*. In what is a kind of introduction to his work, the *Uraiperukatturai*, the poet gives a prose account of what happened after the heroine Kannaki had finished her earthly career. It is a strange way of telling a tale, a kind of putting the cart before the horse ; but he seems to have adopted this method with a view to emphasise the divine nature of his story. In any event the poet obviously attaches a great importance to this final apotheosis of the Pattini, as Kannagi has now become known all over South India and beyond ; and gives primacy to this by putting this at the outset of his narration, though it offends against the conventional way of telling a tale or narrating an event.

The passage in question has four parts and would read as below in a free English translation :

(a) From that time the Pāndyan kingdom suffered from drought, poverty, and excessive heat leading to small-pox. Unable to bear the suffering the Pāndyan King at Korkai offered a sacrifice of a thousand goldsmiths to the Pattini and also made a festival in her honour, whereupon rain came in abundance and there was a cessation of famine and pestilence.

(b) The Kōsar of Kongu on coming to know of this celebrated a festival in her honour in their own kingdom and there also an abundance of rain followed.

(c) Gajabahu of the sea-girt Ceylon hearing of this set up an altar for daily sacrifice for the deity in his kingdom and there also there was rain and plenty.

(d) The Cola King Perunkilli followed and built a temple for Pattini in his capital at Uraiyr.

It will be clear from this that as early as the II century A.D., to which time the epic *Silappadikāram* is generally referred, a rain deity had been expressly set up in all the kingdoms of South India and even in far-off Ceylon in the person of the well-known Pattini-devi. The *Uraiperukatturai* here referred to has the virtue of being the work of Ilangō himself unlike the *padigam* about whose authorship some doubt still exists. There is therefore no doubt as to the antiquity of the rain god conception in the Tamil country.

Is it possible to identify the Pattini-devi of the *Silappadikāram* with the Māriamman of the modern day? In my view there seems to be every reason in support of this identification. Rain is so fundamentally necessary for life particularly in an agricultural country like ours that there is no reason for the cessation of this cult at any time. We have reason, therefore, to look for this in the accepted forms of worships now extant and we have no other cult but the one of Māriamman which answers the description of a rain god. On the other hand, the apparent absence of the worship of the Pattini-dēvi in South India of the present-day needs to be explained, especially when it still persists in Ceylon. Is it possible that a cult that originated in the Tamil country and in every one of its several

kingdoms has died in the land of its origin, while it still lives in Ceylon? For obvious reasons it cannot be so. It must still be found thriving in the Tamil land though in some other guise : and the cult of Māriamman seems to be this same cult in the form of rain-god-worship. If further proof is necessary, that is found in the special devotion in South India for the same Māriamman as the deity that cures one from pox. If the reader recollects what is mentioned in the above quoted *Uraiperukatturai* of *Silappadikāram*, in which reference is made to the severe pox that affected the Pāndyan kingdom for which cure was sought and obtained from the sacrifice offered to the Pattini, the connection between Māriamman and pox-cure would indicate the identification between the two cults—the cult of Pattini and that of Māriamman.

The cult of Māriamman, though it is prevalent all over South India, seems to have a special attraction to the region of Kongu, whose early kings—the Kōsar—are said to have followed the Pāndyan first in setting up the worship of Kannagi in their kingdom. Lines 159-60 of the last canto of the epic *Silappadikāram* also mention the fact that the Kongar were among the first to worship the Pattini. This gives further proof in support of our identification. Surprisingly enough, there is a place about ten miles south-east of Dhārāpuram in the district of Coimbatore (within the region of old Kongu) known as Korkai (in common parlance Korrai) where the village deity is called as Korkaimāri. This seems to recall what is said to have happened at another Korkai nearly 2,000 years ago when the Pandyan king Verrivelceliyan was ruling and the sacrifice of 1,000 goldsmiths which he is said to have offered to the Pattini. It is said that at the place referred to in Kongu one goldsmith was offered in sacrifice to the deity Māri, every year during the feast of the Māriamman and that this practice had continued for long undisturbed and uninterrupted. In the vicinity of this place is another called to this day as Mulanūr, where the *amman* worshipped for rain is called Vanjiamman. The reference seems to be clearly to Kannagiamman, for whom the first temple was built by the Cera King Senguttuvan at his capital, Vanjimanagar. The *amman* at Kāngayam in the same area is called Ayecamman and was worshipped for long to get cure from pox. In another place

called Kiranūr close to Kāngayam the *amman* is known as Kiranūrselvi. Its historical antiquity seems to take it as far back as the Sangam times ; and tradition has it that the Cerā king Antuvan Cēral once worshipped the *amman* in this place. The place was also called for this reason as Ceranūr and Adiyūr. In a fifth place in the same region called Udiyūr, situated twelve miles away from Kāngayam on the road to Dhārāpuram is the temple of Udiyūrselvi, which is the name of the Māriamman of this place. There is every reason to believe that this place also is of great antiquity and seems to have been a centre of the Cerā Kings, when they were ruling Kongu as a part of their kingdom. The very name Udiyur seems to have been given to it on account of the connection of the Cerā line called the Udiyar with it in early times. The small hill of the place called Ponnūthimalai seems to have been famous for its gold deposits once upon a time. The same is borne out by a line in one of the local songs called "*nāttuppādal*" referring to this place as "sempon ūthinagar". The deity of the place mentioned as Udiyūrselvi is known in common parlance here and all over the district of Coimbatore as Sellāndiamman. The names Selvi and Sellāndiamman, which latter is only the colloquial form of the former, are strongly reminiscent of the description of Kannagi in *Silappadikāram* as "Konguselvi" in lines reading as

..... "*Ivalō Kongaselvi Kudamalaiātti*

.....*Thentamilpāvai seithavakolunthu*"

(Sil. XII, 11, 47-48)

The same description also gives an unmistakable connection between Kongu and Kannagi.

The cult of Māriamman, which, as we have shown, is to be identified with the Pattini cult of ancient times, is found to exist all over Kongu in the modern districts of Salem and Coimbatore. The very fact of the prominence given to the worship of this deity in this region is a proof in favour of its identification with the Pattini, who is described in the very epic of *Silappadikāram* with special connection to this region, as has been already shown. Even in Kongu it would appear that it is most generally prevalent in the modern region of Kāngayam. There is a reason for this. In ancient times it



was this region more than any other that was famous in Kongu history. The Ratttās and the Gangā rulers who followed the Cerās as rulers of Kongu seem to have had their very capital in this region—in Dhārāpuram (what the *Kongudēsarājākkal* calls Scandapurā).<sup>\*</sup> These rulers would appear to have themselves taken an interest in the spread of this devotion and set up several places of worship for the Pattini worshipped as Māriamman in their kingdom. Naturally enough a large number of such worshipping centres sprang up in the Kāngayam region. Two centres of Māriamman worship which are famous to this day are found in Pāriyur two miles from Gobichettipālayam and Pannārai on the way to Mysore. The deity in the first place is known as Kondathu-Kāli and the one in the second place is known as Māri. But in either place the form which the worship takes is the same. Every year during the feast a big fire is kindled (called in Tamil as *kundam* ; hence the name Kundathu or Kondathukkāli) and those who have prepared themselves for the feast by prayer and penance get into the fire and are supposed to emerge unhurt, reminding one of the prayer of Kannagi when she cursed Madurai to be swallowed by fire that good people be saved from it :

“*Parppār Aravōr* .....

..... *ivarai kaivittu*

*Thithārathār pakkamē sēr* .....”

(Sil. XXI, 11, 53-55)

But is Pattini to be identified with Kāli ? There seems to be every reason for doing so. In many places in South India where Māriamman is worshipped the deity is also called Kāli, Mākāli and in common parlance as Mākāliyathal. That Kannagi was considered as a form of Durgā or Kāli is indicated by the earlier commentator of the epic *Silappadikāram*, the Arum-pathavuraiāsiriyar, whose date is placed as early as the IX century A.D. in his comment of the lines 47-48 of Canto XII already cited. The Māriamman of Pannārai indicates the importance given by the later rulers of Kongu—the Rattas and the Gongās—to the deity of this region. Even to this day all people going to Mysore stop or get down from their vehicles to pay their homage to this deity of Pannārai.

<sup>\*</sup> See my article on *Viraraya Cakravarti* in JBBRAS.

# *Trends in Modern Tamil Prose*

SM. L. LAKSHMANAN CHETTIAR, B.A.

**E**VEN THOUGH Tamil is one of the oldest of languages, its prose, in the sense in which the word is understood today—is of recent origin. In the Sangam age and soon after, anything that was not poetry passed for prose and the word denoted commentary, explanation, interpretation, exposition and gloss.

The concept of prose as understood now came into popular vogue only after the coming of Europeans to South India and their attempts to convey in Tamil the knowledge they had already acquired through the European languages. Of these pioneers, especial mention must be made of Robert de Nobili and Fr. Beschi. The latter's style may be illustrated by this quotation :

பரமார்த்த குருவும், ஐந்து சீஷர்களும் மடத்துக்குச் சென்ற பின்பு, ஆற்றிலே தாங்கள் பட்ட அவதியைப் பலகாலும் சொல்லிச் சொல்லி விசனப்பட்டார்கள். அப்பொழுது மடத்தைப் பெருக்கிக் கொண்டிருந்த ஒரு கண் குருட்டுக் கிழவி நடந்தவைகளையெல்லாம் விவரமாய்க் கேட்டுக் கை கொட்டி நகைத்து.... “தன்னையாகிலும் வேறொருவனையாகிலும் தப்பவிட்டெண்ணிறை கணக்குந் தப்புத்தான்” ... என்றான்.

Fr. Beschi's contemporary, Ananda Rangam Pillai, an influential merchant of Pondicherry, has made a record of his day-to-day activities ; this revealing diary has been published very recently and it throws light not only on one of the ill-known periods of Tamil history but also on the type of prose-style employed in the mid-18th century. Similarly, the book of Law (Desa Valamai) published in 1862 gives us an insight into the Tamil style adopted in Jaffna in the late-19th century. I do not propose to burden the reader with too many quotations and so let me pass on to Arumuga Navalar.

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Sm. L. Lakshmanan Chettiar, B.A., is a journalist and author, and has written a number of books of travel in Tamil.

Arumuga Navalar is to Tamil what Dryden is to English—the father of modern Prose. He began his literary activities as the translator of the Bible ; his works include “Saiva Vina Vidai” which is based on the Methodist Catechism, the prose renderings of Peria Puranam and the Bala Paadams. The last-mentioned are a series of school text-books and have benefitted students to a great extent. Navalar’s style is a mixture of sweet Tamil words and some Sanskrit ones ; it has been criticised on this score ; but we do not propose to enter into the controversy for the simple reason that a writer’s style must be judged by the conditions of the times and the knowledge of the particular generation to which he catered. The following passage is typical of Navalar’s style :

அன்னதானம் முதலிய தானங்களைச் சற்பாத்திரத்திலே செய்வது புண்ணியம் ; அசற் பாத்திரத்திலே செய்வது பாவம். சற்பாத்திரங்களுள்ளும், கரும் யாகஞ் செய்வோர்க்குக் கொடுத்தது ஒரு பிறப்பளவு நிற்கும் ; தபேயாகஞ் செய்வோர்க்குக் கொடுத்தது துற பிறப்பளவு நிற்கும் ; செப யாகஞ் செய்வோர்க்குக் கொடுத்தது ஆயிரம் பிறப்பளவு நிற்கும் ; தியான யாகஞ் செய்வோர்க்குக் கொடுத்தது கற்பமளவும் நிற்கும் ; ஞான யாகஞ் செய்வோர்க் கொடுத்தது மகா சங்கரா காலமளவும் நிற்கும்.

The 19th century will be remembered as the era of another great person who contributed to the development of Tamil prose. We refer to Mayavaram Vedanayagam Pillai, the distinguished author of “Prathapa Mudaliar Charitram”, which is perhaps the first novel ever written in Tamil. This is a work of very great importance and deserves to be read by all those who evince a genuine interest in Tamil literature. The thanks of Tamil readers is due to the Tamil Literature Society of Tuticorin for bringing out a reprint of the original book, without any alteration whatsoever. Vedanayagam Pillai’s direct, simple and conversational style adds flavour to the narrative which abounds in several proverbs.

And so, we come to the twentieth century, the renaissance movement announced by the trumpets of national insurrections, the decreasing emphasis on grammar, the puritan movement and the various schools of Tamil prose-writing. The general trend has been determined by Western contacts. First, it was an imitation of and later, a hostility to everything Wes-

tern. The present phase is one of correct perspective based on intrinsic worth.

As the editor of Tamil classics, Dr. Swaminatha Iyer deserves an unique place in our literary history. He will be remembered as the first Tamil scholar to edit his works on the English model with annotations, reference citations, biographical notes of the authors and the commentators, descriptive notes, etc. Dr. Swaminatha Iyer wrote in a clear and concise style as will be evident from the following quotation from his autobiography :

முதலில் உத்தமநாதபுரத்தில் எனக்கு உபாத்தியாயராக இருந்த நாராயணய்யர் சற்றேறக்குறைய முப்பத்தைந்து பிராயம் கொண்டவர் ; நல்ல வடிவம் உடையவர் ; அவரைக் காணும் போது எனக்கும் மற்றப் பிள்ளைகளுக்கும் பயம் உண்டாகும். பிரம்பை அதிகமாக அவர் உபயோகிப்பார்... பிள்ளைகளுக்கு மணல்தான் சிலேட்டின் ஸ்தானத்தில் இருந்தது. பனையெடுத்தான் புஸ்தகம். எழுத்தாணியே பேனா.

The Renaissance movement in literature came into being as a result of the political conditions of the times ; Poet Subramanya Barathi and, to some extent, V. O. Chidambaram Pillai wrote in a vein that did not find much favour with the Pundits. Here is a typical instance of the poet's prose-style :

### சிட்டுக் குருவி

சிறிய தானியம் போன்ற மூக்கு ; சின்னக் கண்கள் ; சின்னத் தலை ; வெள்ளைக் கழுத்து ; அழகிய மங்கல-வெண்மை நிறம் உடைய பட்டுப் போர்த்த வயிறு ; கருமையும் வெண்மையும் இவை கலந்த சாம்பல் நிறத்தாலாகிய பட்டிற் போர்த்த முதுகு ; சிறிய தோகை ; துளித் துளிக் கால்கள். இத்தனையும் சேர்த்து ஒரு பச்சைக் குழந்தையின் கைப்பிடியிலே பிடித்துவிடலாம். இவ்விதமான உடலைச், சுமந்துகொண்டு என் வீட்டிலேயே இரண்டு உயிர்கள் வாழ்கின்றன.

One of the best exponents of this school of popular writing was Va Ra. He was able to influence a score of important writers of his day, Kalki, Pudumaipithan and Ku Pa Ra not excluded. Va Ra wrote in a vigorous style and employed many a telling word used only in spoken Tamil until then. As an example of his characteristic style, let us look at this clipping from the first number of the magazine, "Manikkodi" ;

பாரதி பாடியது மணிக்கொடி; காந்தி எத்தியது மணிக் கொடி; சுதந்திரப் போராட்டத்தில் பல்லாயிரம் வீரர்களை ஈடுபடச் செய்தது மணிக்கொடி. மணிக்கொடி பாரத மக்களின் மனத்திடை ஒங்கி வளரும் அரசியல் வட்சியத்தில் நுனி, முனை, கொழுந்து.

All this is not to say that there has not been any scholarly writing either. Thiru Vi Ka, who is generally acknowledged as the greatest living writer in Tamil, is well-known to all lovers of Tamil through his many books. Of these, we may particularly mention "Murugan alladhu Alagu", "Tamil Thenral", "Pennin Perumai", "Gandhi-adigalum Manitha Vazhkaiyum" and "Thiru Vi Ka Vazkai Kurippugal". He is known for his excessive use of the exclamation-mark. There is a humorous remark about him that the printers who print his books must be adequately stocked with type-cases of the exclamation mark! He has successfully used the question-and-answer method. Thiru Vi Ka—unlike other scholars—has written on almost every conceivable subject under the sun—on religion, politics, literature, economics, natural scenery, etc. His style is arresting; it is full of short sentences; he is fond of using words like

அந்தோ, எங்கணும், ஒல்லும்வகை, யா? கூர்தல், பொலிவு, கொல், பூத்து-காய்த்து-கனிந்து.

The following passage is from one of Thiru Vi Ka's works:

உலகம் சிலகாலம் குருமார் அடிவருடி நின்றது; சில காலம் மன்னர் வாள்வழி நடைபெற்றது; இப்போது வாணிபருக்கு இறையாகி வருகிறது; இனித் தொழிலாளர் வயப்பட்டு நலம் பெறப் போகிறது. தொழிலாளர் புரட்சி இதுகாலை உலகத்தைச் சூழ்ந்து முற்றுகை செய்திருக்கிறது. இனி, அப் புரட்சி "கொடுமை" "அடக்குமுறை" என்னும் அரண்களைப் பொசுக்கி "சமத்துவம்" என்னும் கோட்டையைக் கைப்பற்றிச் "சுதந்திரம்" என்னும் அரியாசனமேறி, "சகோதரத்துவம்" என்னும் கொடியைப் பறக்கவிடும்.

Of other scholars, for want of space, we shall limit our observations to Professors Somasundara Barathiar, Sethu Pillai and Dr. M. Varadarajan.

Somasundara Barathiar has a style, all his own. Critics have pronounced it as "the unpronounceable style"; admirers

have hailed as quite in keeping with the traditions of Sangam school. Here is his message to a special number of a periodical :

அரிய புதிய சுருத்துக்களை எளிய இனிய தமிழ் நடையில்  
சுவை மலியச் சொற் சுருங்கச் சொல்லுந் திறலுடையாரைத்  
தேடிப் பல துறையிற் பயனெடு நயனுதவும் நல்ல உரைகளைத்  
திரட்டிச் சுரத் தொகுத்த நலமும் வினைத்திறமும் வியத்தற்கு  
உரியன.

Sethu Pillai's style may be compared to that of W. H. Hudson : his deep study of Kamba Ramayanam comes to him handy when others are at a loss to find the apt words. His writings—fancied by the public and envied by his colleagues—often remind me of R. L. Stevenson's views on some technical elements of style :

“First the phrases should be rhythmical and pleasing to the ear ; secondly, the phrases should be musical in the mouth ; thirdly, the writer should weave the argument into a pattern, both beautiful and logical and lastly, he should master the art of choosing apt, explicit and communicative words.”

Dr. Varadarajan has made his mark as an eminent writer, thanks to his numerous books. He has been highly successful in his attempts to portray classical Tamil thought. His works reveal his vigour, insight and distinct literary character. In brief sentences and a simple, chaste and grammatical style, he has demonstrated that the Tamil language lends itself to the expression of all modern ideas.

This brings us to the so-called Puritan movement and its great founder Maraimalai Adigal. By insisting on the need to use pure Tamil words only, he has helped the preservation of ancient Tamil words which would otherwise have died unsung, unwept, unhonoured. Thanks mainly to him, fewer and fewer foreign words are now used by Tamil authors. Of course, there is a school of thought which feels that written Tamil must be synonymous with spoken Tamil ; it sees no harm in using foreign words in place of Tamil words. This section has received powerful support from press-barons, film-magnates, and their followers. The other section—led by Maraimalai Adigal—insists on the purity of Tamil. It also desires to keep up



grammar, syntax, and sentence-construction. It views the penetration of foreign words with suspicion. While strong views are held by both the groups, the puritans gain increasing public support. We shall content ourselves with drawing the reader's attention to the views of such an independent authority as Winslow. He says in the preface to *A Comprehensive Tamil and English Dictionary of High and Low Tamil* :

“Within certain ranges of thought, omitting terms of art, science, religion in a great measure and certain abstract forms, we may write in pure Tamil, as in English we may in pure Saxon. In fact the nearer we approach the Shen Tamil the less we need Sanskrit”.

And Dr. Caldwell has well said :

“The Tamil, the most cultivated, ab intra, of all the Dravidian idioms, can dispense with Sanskrit altogether, if need be, and not only stand alone, but flourish without its aid.”

To conclude this preliminary survey of the trends in modern Tamil prose writing, let us summarise our observations :

“Good Tamil Prose began with the commentators. The present-day printing facilities have added to the quantity of prose-literature in Tamil while its quality has gone down very appreciably. In the name of intelligent prose, the crime of diffusing ungrammatical Tamil and spoiling the sweetness and euphony of Tamil by writing foreign words phonetically without their being Tamilised is ruthlessly perpetrated. The attempt to write pure and unmixed Tamil is condemned by those who are unequal to the task as ‘PURISM’.” (The late M. S. Puranalingam Pillai in his *TAMIL INDIA*).

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# *The Tamils said it all with Flowers*

DR. XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM

## I

A LOVE of Nature cannot but be engendered in a people that come often in touch with Nature. The influence in fostering an appreciation and love of Nature is mutual between poets and people. The Tamil poets came from the people who as a nation were intimate with Nature, and the people were encouraged in their enthusiasm for Nature by what the poets wrote.

The Tamil learnt to love flowers and plants even from his very childhood. The eldest sons of warriors when they set their eyes on their fathers for the first time, saw them in the panoply of war adorned with the garlands of warfare. It was the custom then that a few days after the birth of the heir, the king, dressed in battle-array which included also garlands of flowers, should show himself to his son, so that the child's first sight of his father might be that of his father as warrior. Such was the love of bravery among the ancient Tamils.<sup>1</sup>

Even infants had a few flowers tied to their forelocks which were brushed back to a side above the forehead. The fifth poem in the *Agam* collection speaks of a heroine who went up to her husband about to depart for another country. She was silent ; a forced smile broke the pressure of her lips ; tears welled up in her eyes. Her entire countenance bespoke a pleading that he should desist from parting. She pressed her child to her bosom and smelt daintily the fragrant flowers adorning the boy's hair. She breathed a sigh and the flowers faded—so warm was her breath of anguish.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Puram*, 100.

<sup>2</sup> *Agam*, 5.

The younger children, counted among their toys, little dolls, made out of the petals or pollen-bed of flowers. Children young and old, played games under the shades of trees, games in which the seeds of fruits or dried fruits themselves formed the indispensable materials of the games.<sup>3</sup> Their leisure was spent in the gardens and groves gathering flowers and leaves of the region, weaving garlands out of them, or preparing the leafy dresses with which they adorned themselves. The garlands were either of one kind of flowers or of diverse flowers or of flowers interspersed with leaves.<sup>4</sup> Bathing in the sea, the river, the lake and tanks, was one of the most pleasurable pastimes of outdoor life seen in Cangam literature. Young and old of both sexes dived and swam and played merrily with the surf or with the waves and eddies in rivers and tanks. Even in places of religious pilgrimage, there were large tanks where bathing for sport and pleasure was common.<sup>5</sup> The *Kurinjippattu* of Kapilar mentions the many ways in which girls delight themselves on the hills, their sitting on an eminence prepared as an ambush to drive away the parrots, their raising such cries as frighten the birds in their nests, their sporting in the river whose waters flow from the mountain heights "like white linen," and their having dried themselves and their hair, gathering flowers on the hillsides. Such pleasurable distractions, sometimes in the company of the hero, were not confined to the hillsides.<sup>6</sup> In the other regions, except obviously in the *palai*, the young enjoyed themselves in like manner. The *Pattinapalai* gives an account of the *neydal* regions, how the fisher-folk on full-moon days, adorned themselves with the flowers of their own region, played on the beach with crabs and the waves, built castles on the sand, and thus passed the live-long day.<sup>7</sup> The *Kali odes* give many an indication of the festive dance under *mullai* bowers and the gay life of the shepherds in the open air.<sup>8</sup> *Marudam* was known for its aquatic sports. Not only the long descriptions in *Paripadal*, but also other verses reveal a keen appreciation of

<sup>3</sup> *Kur.* 48 ; *Nar.* 3, 2-4 ; 79, 2-3 ; Cfr. *Nar.* 68, 155 ; *Puram*, 176.

<sup>4</sup> The leafy-dress also had flowers interwoven with leaves.

<sup>5</sup> *Paripadal*, 9, 61.

<sup>6</sup> *Kurinjippattu*, *Passim*, 259.

<sup>7</sup> *Pattinappalai*, 11 ; 85 ; 105.

<sup>8</sup> *Kali*, 1 ; 49 ; 3 ; 75 ; 6 ; 47.

public baths.<sup>9</sup> The *Pattinappalai* says that the ritual bathing in the tanks of Puhar were productive of happiness in both worlds.<sup>10</sup>

The Tamils had their houses built in beautiful surroundings, in the centre of a garden. Pergolated paths led to the central entrance. It is under these bowers that the young heroine is often pictured as engaged in play. Here too the heroine plants a creeper or plant (often an அயலை) and waters it daily with her own hands.<sup>11</sup> Sometimes, it is a plant that is grown in an earthen jar or flower pot.<sup>12</sup> When the heroine has left home with her lover, these plants that she has nurtured are among the constant reminders to the nurse of the child now lost to her.<sup>13</sup>

Natural beauty and flowers entered on a preponderant scale in the story of Tamil love. The poets idealize the spots on which lovers meet. The first meeting as developed in *Iraiyanar Agaporul* where Nature's setting is the most picturesque that one can imagine for the drama of love, is but a development of or a composition of several such scenes in Cangam literature. One of the conventional situations in which lovers meet is when the heroine is out in the open gathering *vengai* flowers together with her young companions. It was the custom among children to shout out "Tiger, tiger" in the childish belief that the *vengai* would lower its branches within reach for them to pluck its flowers. The colour of the *vengai* flower which resembles that of the tiger was the cause of the origin of this cry. A heroine, with her companions, plays about the *vengai* with shouts of "Tiger, tiger." A young chief who is out hunting hears the cry and hastens to the place of the cry in the belief that a real tiger has given cause for alarm. "Where has fled the tiger?" he queries in anxiety. The girls hide one behind the other in shyness. 'Is it possible that falsehood emanates even from such lips as

<sup>9</sup> *Aing*; "புனலாட்டுப் பத்து" 71-80; *Paripadal*; Poems on Valai.

<sup>10</sup> *Pattinappalai*, 1; 39: "இருகாமத் தினை யேரி"

<sup>11</sup> *Nar.* 179, 1: "இல்லெழு வயலை"; '305,4' "வாடிய வயலை"  
*Agam* 89, 21.

<sup>12</sup> *Agam*, 165, 11: "தாழிக் குவளை வாடு மலர் சூட்டி"

<sup>13</sup> *Nar.* 110; 305.

yours ? " he pointedly remarks and hastens away, but not before his eyes have met and spoken with the eyes of the heroine.<sup>14</sup>

The *vengai* tree is closely associated in poetry with love in the mountain region. It presents a very pleasing aspect when in bloom with its golden bunches of blossoms "as finely wrought as the workmanship of the cleverest jeweller." Often its flowers are compared to flames of fire. Its petals strewn on a rock below the tree remind the poet, because of their colour, of a tiger asleep.<sup>15</sup> Its flowering season was considered to be auspicious and was set apart for the public celebration of weddings, and betrothed couples awaited eagerly for it to burst into flower.<sup>16</sup> There is room to believe that, at first, marriages were celebrated under the flowering *vengai*, because it was the shadiest and loveliest tree of the region. Hence its flowering was understood to introduce auspicious days for lovers.

In many a poem the maid urges the hero to get married now that the *vengai* has bloomed, or she consoles her mistress saying now that the *vengai* has flowered her lover will soon return and they will be united forever after ceremonial wedlock.<sup>17</sup> This association of the *vengai* with weddings led to the custom of new brides adorning their hair with these red flowers, and of parents carrying out deliberations regarding their children's espousals, and of the festive dances taking place on the marriage day, under a flowering *vengai*.<sup>18</sup> A touching poem in the *Kuruntogai* collection speaks of a heroine weeping almost unconsciously as soon as she adverted the *vengai* had flowered, for she realised that of her lover there was as yet no sign.<sup>19</sup>

*Vengai* flowers were among those which lovers preferred to give their beloveds, especially during the period of courtship. They exchanged garlands among themselves.<sup>20</sup> The

<sup>14</sup> *Agam*, 48 ; 52.

<sup>15</sup> *Puram*, 202, 18-21 "இரும் புலிவரிப் புறம் கடுக்கும்" Cfr: *Kur.* 47.

<sup>16</sup> *Pari*, 14, 11-12 ; *Agam*, 12.

<sup>17</sup> *Agam*, 2 ; *Kali*, 38 ; *Nar.* 206. Cfr. *Agam*, 378.

<sup>18</sup> *Nar.* 313 ; *Kali*, 42 ; Cfr. *Kur.* 241.

<sup>19</sup> *Nar.* 241.

<sup>20</sup> *Nar.* 313.

hero himself adorns the heroine's tresses with the flowers he has brought for her.<sup>21</sup> The chiefs made presents of bouquets of flowers and of leafy-dresses or leafy-girdles to be worn as ornaments around the waist.<sup>22</sup> Another flower commonly presented by lovers of the hills was the *gloriosa superba*. In the first poem of *Kuruntogai*, the maid rebukes a chief mildly when he hands bunches of *gloriosa superba* that he has brought from his own hills to be presented to the heroine. She implies by the rebuke that the chief ought to marry the heroine, and thus end the courtship which has been the occasion for gossip in the vicinity. Her laconic statement is in effect, "On our own hill sacred to Murugan, flowers also this clustered blood-red flower," meaning that she rejects his offer of flowers to her lady.<sup>23</sup>

The heroine on the other hand, once in love with a chief, is desperately in love with all the natural objects connected with her lover, with the hills which are his possession, with the clouds that sail over them, with the river or stream that brings the waters of the hills, with the plants and flowers that these waters wash down from the chief's mountainous abode. To a maid sorrowful because of her mistress languishing for her lover, the mistress says :—

"Hitherto I consoled myself by gazing at his hill. But now that it is evening, his hill seems to disappear gradually like a ship that sinks at sea. Hence I am inconsolable."<sup>24</sup>

Again to a maid who wonders if her mistress would be able to support the grief of separation, the mistress says :—

"Look at my forehead. The effect of sorrow is no more there. The reason is that I have beheld his hill washed by heavy rain, where groups of peacocks cry in the thick groves, and where the pale-faced-monkeys and their little ones shiver with cold."<sup>25</sup>

Nature has the objects with which the heroine consoles herself during the absence of her lover. There is another little stanza of *Avvai*, which is significant in its suggestion regarding the love a heroine has for the hill associated with her lover.

<sup>21</sup> Kur. 312, 5 : "கூந்தல் வேய்ந்த விரவு மலர் உடுத்தது"

<sup>22</sup> Kur. 214. Cfr. Kur. 333, 342 ; Pari, 6, 66.

<sup>23</sup> Kur. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Kur. 240.

<sup>25</sup> Kur. 249.



The heroine is found to be of poor health by her parents. The mother seeks a woman-diviner to find out the cause. The diviner divines with grains of paddy, and with the help of prayer to the gods announces the cause of her illness, namely, that it comes from Murugan, the god of the hills, and that he must be appeased with the dance sacred to him. To such a diviner occupied in her divination with the grains of paddy, the maid says, "sing not of the gods, but sing the song of *his hill* that you have been singing," so that the parents might understand that she is love-sick.

“அகவன் மகனே அகவன் மகனே  
மனவுக் கோப் பன்ன நன்னெடுங் கூந்தல்  
அகவன் மகனே பாடுக பாட்டே  
இன்னும் பாடுக பாட்டே அவர்  
நன்னெடுங் குன்றம் பாடிய பாட்டே”

(Kur; 23)

While arrangements are being made for the heroine's wedding, the maid observes to the heroine that she has bravely borne the pangs of separation. To her the heroine replies that she was able to do so because of the comfort she has derived from a *gloriosa superba* plant washed down stream from the hill of her lover by the night's rain. She took it in her hands, fondly kissed it many times because it came from her lover's hill, and planted it in her own garden. The sight of that plant gave her joy enough to await with resignation such time as would bring the nuptial day. The mother saw her fetching the plant from the stream and planting it, but said nothing. Even the highest heaven would not be adequate reward for her goodness, was the opinion of the heroine.

“Listen, maid dear. The highest heaven would be small reward for mother. I fetched the kantal tuber that arrived one morning brought by the fragrant stream fed by the evening rain on his hill. I kissed the tender leaves so often that they withered; and I planted it at home. Mother watched my actions but breathed not a word.”

(Kur. 361).

The wedding ritual itself included the use of petals of flowers and paddy grains. Before the bride was taken to her chamber, four ladies who already had given birth to children, were appointed to strew flowers and paddy grains on the bride and pronounce this greeting :—

“May you never swerve from chastity and thus do good, and may you be a partner in life that loves her husband.”<sup>26</sup>

Disappointed lovers too said their disappointment with flowers in the later developments of love poetry. They wore garlands of the most uncared for flowers (*e.g.*, *erukkalai* எருக்கலை) and mounting palmyrah stocks made after the fashion of a horse, they went about proclaiming their grief.<sup>27</sup>

In daily life too garlands were profusely used, especially when men and women went on their social or religious visits. In the *Paripadal* occurs a statement that the entire road from Madura to Tirupparangkunram, a distance of about four miles, seemed to be one long garland to an onlooker from the hill, so many were the pilgrims and so profusely had they decorated themselves with garlands.<sup>28</sup>

The Tamils said it with flowers not only in love but also in friendship, in hospitality and even in relief of poverty and want. When strangers passed through a village they were offered flowers as a sign of friendliness.<sup>29</sup> When poets and minstrels went to kings and chiefs to sing their praises and obtain relief in want, they were not only given elephants and lands and silks, but lotuses made of gold. It was the custom for the patron to present the head of the band of minstrels or dancers with a lotus of gold. Sometimes the gift consisted of flowers made of gold fastened together by bands of silver.<sup>30</sup> These musicians adorned even their musical instruments with garlands of flowers.<sup>31</sup>

During periods of mourning, flowers and garlands were not used by the Tamils in adorning themselves or the other

<sup>26</sup> *Agam*, 86. Even the image of the god which was used for the marriage ceremony was made of petals of flowers, and laid on the tender Vahai-flowers and grass. See *Agam*, 136.

<sup>27</sup> *Kur.* 17; 182; *Nar.* 220; *H. T.* p. 170, 171.

<sup>28</sup> *Pari*, 19, 15-18.

<sup>29</sup> *Malaipadu*, 428 ff.

<sup>30</sup> *Porun*, 159-60; “எரியகைந் தன்ன வேடி ருமரை  
கரியிரும் பித்தை பொலியச் சூட்டி”

*Perumban*; 481-482; *Malaipadu*, 568-569; *Puram*, 12, 1; 29, 1; 69; 4-21; 126, 1-3; *Kali*, 55, 2; 85, 2; *Puram*, 11, 18.

<sup>31</sup> *Puram*, 242, 2-3. “வெள்ளி நாராற் பூப் பெற்றிசினே”; 153, 7-8.

objects which they were wont to decorate with flowers. Poverty and suffering too were causes for abstaining from the use of flowers. Among the many poems rich in pathos is an elegy on the death of a chief in which the poet turns to the blooming jasmine with pity and asks, "Wherefore bloomest thou when none will wear thee?" The poem, incidentally, mentions the many occasions on which flowers were worn :—

*"The youths will have thee not. The bangled-damsels will gather thee not. The bard, to adorn his lyre's handle will receive thee not. The songstress will wear thee not. After Sattan of the strong bow who killed many a foe and showed his prowess, is no more—O mullai dost thou bloom yet in Olliyur's land?"*

(Puram, 242).

Society, at the time of the composition of these poems, was hard on widows. They had to sleep on a bed of stones, and eat the rice of the white water-lily (ஆம்பல்) and fast and mourn their lot, or burn themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands. A royal poetess says that it were better to die on the same pyre as her lord than to lead such a life, so different from the one she led with her lord. To her, he says, after her lord's death, the cool waters of the lake where lotuses bloom and the raging fires of the pyre are the same. She will throw herself into the fire with as little concern as she would into a bathing pool.<sup>32</sup> Another widow, a poetess herself, who leads this penitential life prescribed by social convention, has a quatrain of simple beauty in which she addresses the water-lily. The poem is so fragile in its tender suggestiveness that I dare not risk a translation. It means, however, that it is sad indeed that the water-lily which in the youthful days of the poetess served for her leafy ornaments, now that her husband is no more, should offer the grain which recalls to her a life of abnegation and loneliness.

*"அனிய தாமே சிறுவென் னாம்பல்  
இனைய மாகத் தழையா யினவே, இனியே,  
பெருவளக் கொழுநன் மாய்த்தெனப் பொழுது மறுத்  
தினா வைக லுண்ணும்  
அல்லிப் படுதம் புல்லா யினவே"*

(Puram; 248)

<sup>32</sup> Puram, 246.

## II

We have seen the use made of garlands and flowers in warfare, and the different flowers that signified different strategic movements. It remains to sum up briefly those customs connected with Nature which have not been mentioned so far.

Each king and chief had a tree which symbolized him and was called his guardian tree (*காவல் மரம்*). He seems to have planted his outer defences with many trees of that species, and any king waging war against another was supposed to score a great victory over his enemy and disgrace him if he could penetrate into the forest defences of his enemy, and cut down his symbolic tree. Thus the margosa tree was the "guardian tree" of Palayan and the punnai of Titian. It was also counted an act of defiance and bravery, if a king tied one of his elephants to the "guardian tree" in the forest defences of his enemy.<sup>33</sup> The story is narrated of the poet Satanar who went to receive a poet's gifts by singing the praises of a chief Veliman by name. Since Veliman was resting, he refused to see the poet but ordered his younger brother to give a few gifts to the poet. The latter was niggardly in his giving. The poet refused his gifts, went to the chief Kumanan and having received ample presents which included one or more elephants, he brought one of them, and tied it to the "guardian tree" of Veliman, and harangued him thus in his presence :—

*"You are not one that gives or protects those who seek help ; but neither are patrons wanting to those in need of succour. Learn then that there are those in want, and that there are those who meet their wants. The mighty elephant that I have tried to your "guardian trees" in the defence outside your castle, is a gift. O chief of the swift horse thus do I return."*<sup>34</sup>

To spite an enemy king, there was also the custom among victors of making use of the timber of the "guardian trees" of their enemy chiefs or kings, for the wooden part of the drums that were used by their armies in proclaiming their victories.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> *Patir*, 33, 3 ; *Puram*, 57, 10-11 ; 162, 5-6 ; 336, 4.

<sup>34</sup> *Puram*, 162.

<sup>35</sup> *Patir*, 11, 12-14 ; 17, 5 ; *Agam*, 347, 4-5.

Besides these "guardian trees," the three kings of Tamil Nad, the Cera, the Cola, and the Pandiya had a flower each as his own emblem, just as the lily, the rose, and other flowers have been taken as emblems of royal houses in the West. The *atti* flower was the emblem of the Colas, the *palmyrah* flower of the Cera, and the *margosa* flower of the Pandiya. A poet in addressing two of the Cola family who were fighting among themselves for the Cola throne, appeals to them thus with the hope of offering a reconciliation :

*"You are not one who wears the white garland of the lofty palmyrah's flowers (Cera), nor wear you the dark-branched margosa's garland (Pandyan). You wear the atti's garland; so does he who faces you in battle. I one of you is defeated, it is the House of Cola that is defeated."*<sup>36</sup>

When a king went to war, he wore garlands made of his royal flowers, as well as the flower that signified the particular kind of warfare in which his troops and he were going to engage.

Garlands of the flowers emblematic of the royal houses were used also to decorate the royal standards. In the graphic account of Pandiyan Nedunjelian visiting the wounded at mid-night, it is said that the general who preceded him pointing out the wounded soldiers one by one, carried a halberd around which was wound a garland of *margosa* flowers.<sup>37</sup>

Further, certain stories that gradually formed part of the folklore of the Tamil people were such as to fire the imagination of poets and people in favour of a love of Nature and animals and birds.<sup>38</sup> There is the story of Pari, one of the seven chieftains renowned in Tamil history for his liberality. He found one day a jasmine creeper lying athwart his chariot path. He would not ride his chariot over it, nor would he allow it to grow unsupported across the path. He abandoned his chariot so that the plant might creep on it for support. This tender munificence towards a plant was the subject of poetic praise as the most characteristic act of his life.<sup>39</sup> There was Pehen who came in for equal praise because he found a peacock shivering with cold, and with gesture more gracious

<sup>36</sup> *Puram*, 45, 1-5.

<sup>37</sup> *Nedunalvadaï*, 176 f :

<sup>38</sup> See introductions to texts.

<sup>39</sup> *Puram*, 200, 9-11 ; 201, 2-3 ; *Sirupan*, 87-91.

than that of Sir Walter Raleigh, covered the peacock with the silk mantle with which he was himself covered.<sup>40</sup> A story is recounted of birds in the person of *Ay Einan*. He was so much a lover of birds and their protector, that when he fell in the field of battle, all the birds formed a canopy with their outstretched wings to protect him from the rays of the sun. And, it is added in the poems, that the owl was struck with grief at its own want of vision during the day for it could neither see Ay and his wounds, nor join the other birds in providing shelter.<sup>41</sup>

There is an anecdote concerning Kapilar, a poet who has written many a beautiful line of *Kurinji* poetry. His great patron and friend was Pari, the chieftain who lent his chariot to a jasmine creeper. Pari's liberality was such that he gave away the revenue and ownership of the three hundred villages of his chieftaincy to poets and minstrels that had gone to him for help. The Parambu hill region alone remained for his own income. Such was the fame and prowess of Pari that it excited the rivalry of the three kings of Tamil Nad who besieged his rock fortress. Kapilar was with Pari within the fortifications when the siege took place. The poets narrate how Kapilar trained birds to go out of the fortifications and harvest the paddy in the fields. They brought the sheaves in their beaks, and thus helped those who were besieged to tide over the scarcity of food that the siege had caused.<sup>42</sup>

A love for the ideal in Nature was fostered by art and handicraft. Ori's hill, Kollimalai (கொல்லிமலை) had on its western slope the sculpture of a goddess which was so lovely to behold that persons who viewed it were entranced by its beauty. The beauty of a heroine was compared by poets to the beauty of the statue on Ori's hill.<sup>43</sup>

There are many indications in Cangam literature of the highly developed state of the Fine Arts among the ancient

<sup>40</sup> *Puram*, 141, 10-12 ; 145, 1-3 ; *Sirupan*, 85-87.

<sup>41</sup> *Agam*, 142, 181, 208.

<sup>42</sup> *Agam*, 78, 303.

<sup>43</sup> *Kur.* 89, 100 ; *Agam*, 62, 13-16, 209, 15-17 ; *Nar.* 185, 6-11.



Tamils, and these include several references to the influence which a love of Nature exerted on the architecture, painting and music of the Tamils. It is on these references that P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar based his conclusion : "This same love of Nature was the cause why they beautified their tools, their houses, their furniture, and their vessels with carvings imitative of creepers, leaves, flowers and animals."<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> H. T. P. 69.

# *Trincomalie Bronzes*

DR. W. BALENDRA

ON JULY 3, 1950, at 10 a.m., on a bright sunny morning with the smooth blue sea around, a public meeting was held at Swami Rock in Fort Frederick. The Office Assistant to the Assistant Government Agent, Trincomalie, the Member of Parliament for Trincomalie, Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Urban Council, Trincomalie, District Engineer, P.W.D., the Town Overseers, School Teachers and officiating Hindu priests had assembled, there to consider a motion to rebuild Konesar Temple which was destroyed by the Portuguese Captain General, Constantine de Saa on the Hindu New Year Day in 1624. The question was raised by the then Member of Parliament for Trincomalie Town as to what image the temple would be dedicated in case it was rebuilt. As this question could not be answered at once, a committee was appointed and the members of this body decided to meet on August 6, 1950, to report on the proposal to rebuild Konesar Temple and also to examine a method of procuring a Lingam (the phallic emblem of Siva worship) from Benares, India. Whilst workmen, employed by the Urban Council, were digging a well for the use of the tenements on North Coast Road of the Town on July 27, 1950 one of them struck a metal object at a depth of three feet from the ground. All the workmen were informed and they excavated three objects. These statues of Somaskander Siva, consort of Somaskanda Murthi Siva and Chandrasekara were given in charge of the Chairman, Urban Council, Trincomalie, who reported this find to the Archaeological Commissioner. A find of two more of these bronze statues had taken place some months previously (date unknown) but the objects were not handed over either to

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the Chairman, Urban Council, or to the Archaeological Commissioner. Persistent search was made for these finds and it was proved that a bronze figure of Ganesha, Pārvati in a seated position, one Trisulam (Trident) and a figure of a bird were excavated, when the roots of a coconut tree were being dug out on the North Coast Road. These bronze articles were entwined amongst the roots of the tree. These were ultimately handed over to the Chairman of the Committee, appointed to restore the Temple. These metal articles comprise the largest find ever since H. C. P. Bell unearthed 16 bronzes at Polonnaruwa in 1908. Previous to Bell's discovery at Polonnaruwa of the Hindu bronzes, a large bronze Maitriya was dug up in 1898, south of the Thūpārāma Dagoba near Basawakkulam. Hugh Nevil, a Civil Servant, discovered many Buddhist bronzes which are at present in the British Museum, but the date and sites of discovery are unknown. In 1830 a large bronze of Tāra was found in the Trincomalie District and was presented to the British Museum by Governor Brownrigg in 1830. More than a century later in 1940 another remarkable statue of Tāra was found at Kurunegale District and was secured for the Colombo Museum. It was described by P. E. P. Deraniyagala in 1951. The study of the bronzes gives an insight to the civilization of the period ; these rock inscriptions and written records aid the study of the history of Ceylon.

Investigations were conducted to ascertain (a) the origin of these seven articles, (b) the purpose for which they were used, (c) the date (if possible) of their manufacture, (d) the country of their origin and (e) the temple or temples to which they originally belonged. The authorities on this subject, were consulted and local legends were examined to ascertain how these bronzes happened to be located at the site they were found. Historical References to Trincomalie and its surroundings within a radius of 40 miles in Sanskrit, Tamil, Sinhalese, Portuguese and English were examined in consultation with the acknowledged scholars in these languages.

The measurement and weights of these articles are as follows :—

Siva in seated pose .	1' 8½" x 10"	—70 lbs. (more gold and copper)
Parvati in seated pose	1' 4" x 8"	—30 lbs. (gold and copper)
Siva standing .	1' 8" x 7"	—25 lbs. (more white lead)
Parvati standing .	1' 8" x 5"	—30 lbs. (gold and copper)
Ganesha .	1' 8" x 10½"	—65 lbs. (more gold and copper)
Trisulam .	1' 7" x 1' 0"	— 8 lbs. (more brass)
Lamp Top .	1' 5" x 1' 2"	— 7 lbs. (more brass)
Annam		

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235 lbs.

Unlike the Polonnaruva bronzes, the seated Siva and the consort are on two separate cushions. Provision had been made for carrying these images in procession. The seated Siva is four armed—holding an axe in his right hand, and a deer in his left ; the axe and deer were sent against him by his enemies and subdued by him in accordance with the legend that Siva had to fight the deceptions and fraud of human nature. The right lower hand is in the fear-not pose assuring protection. The left lower hand is in the Kataha pose. Siva is represented with three eyes. The third eye is located between the eye-brows and is known as the eye of wisdom. Images of the Buddha are seen with the third eye of wisdom. All men are said to possess this eye which is probably connected with the pineal gland. Arunachalam stated before the R.A.S. on December 1, 1916, that physiologists regard this as the vestige of an aborted eye and quotes Descartes who placed the seat of Soul in the pineal gland. Modern physiological research does not confirm either Arunachalam or Descartes' inference. Siva wears in his right ear a Hindu man's ear-ring and on his left a Hindu woman's todū (ear-ring). The beauty mark, placed by Hindu men and women between the eyes, owes its origin to the theory of the eye of wisdom depicted in the Siva Statues. Siva wears a necklace of berries, symbols of his piety. This is explained by Arunachalam as solidified tears wept by him for the woes of his devotees. Rosaries of these beads are worn to this day by all Hindus. Siva wears the sacred thread which runs over the left shoulder and under the right arm. The thread consists of 96 strands representing 96 forces which are the constituents of the Universe, according to Hindu shastras.



Somaskander Siva



Parvathi — The Consort of Siva Nadarajah



This thread together with a type of modern jewellery is present in the Trincomalie seated Siva. The latter is commonly seen in Ceylon both among the Sinhalese and Tamil women and is used as a decorative emblem. The hair of Siva's head is braided and the upper part is tied together to form a crown terminating in a crest. The Trincomalie seated Siva lacks the traditional crescent moon, symbol of Siva's grace and glory. The abdominal bracelet is prominent in the Trincomalie Siva but less conspicuous in the Polonnaruva Siva.

H. C. P. Bell, Ananda Coomaraswamy and Arunachlam have been silent as to the origin and the ornamental covering the shoulders present in Polonnaruva bronzes. The shoulder decorative chains are more conspicuous in the Polonnaruva specimen but the Trincomalie types are more artistically designed. The chain of beads is present in the Polonnaruva find but absent in the Trincomalie one. The abdominal bracelet, the leg and ankle decorations and the loin cloth decorative motif are similar in both. The most conspicuous chest decoration in the Trincomalie Siva is the "padakam", worn to this day by most women of Ceylon, although it has ceased to be a decorative emblem with men. Only wealthy bridegrooms of today wear this "padakam" during the thali ceremony on their wedding day. The anatomy of the Polonnaruva bronze is incorrect and the abdomen is out of all proportion to the chest measurements. The Polonnaruva seated Siva ignores rules of anatomical proportions. The Trincomalie specimen is one of the most outstanding examples of Hindu bronze sculpture existent in the whole world. Whoever designed this figure, is a master artist. Perhaps he was influenced by the exquisite images of the Buddha of the fifth century in Ceylon, found by Horsfall at Badulla and the Toluvila Buddha of the same period. The Trincomalie seated Siva distinctly shows non-Indian influence. This sculpture may have been designed by Hindu workmen resident in Ceylon who were influenced by Buddhist art. The possibility the Polonnaruva bronzes have been cast in Ceylon has not been entirely ruled out by Ananda Coomarasamy, Gravelly and Ramachandran in their treatises on "Bronze Art in India and Ceylon". In addition to the Polonnaruva seated Siva,

two similar specimens at the Madras Museum were found and these were adjudged by Chintamani Kar as superb specimens of Hindu metal art. For anatomical proportions, the Trincomalie seated Siva excels the Madras Museum specimens. It is one of the most outstanding examples of Hindu metal art available today according to Dr. Paranavitana in a press interview in 1950.

If the Trincomlie Siva image in the sitting posture is the most outstanding example of Hindu metal casting, the standing Siva (Chandrasekera) is the crudest example of metal art and, perhaps, one of the oldest examples existent. The approximate date of its origin is the tenth century. The face is Mongolian in appearance with prominent malar bone and oblique eyes. The limbs appear wooden, lifeless and inartistic. All canons of human anatomy have been ignored. The beads over the neck and the loin cloth over the pelvis are primitive. The decorations around the ankle and the shoulder ornamentation are crude.

One of the female figures is in the sitting position and the other is in the standing position. The seated Parvati is resting on a cushion and the figure is exquisitely poised. Anatomical proportions are scrupulously observed but the shoulder, neck and chest ornamentations are not elegantly featured. The head dress is artistically designed.

The standing Parvati is an outstanding example of the artist in the whole range of Hindu metal sculpture of the female figure. The pose, the jewellery and the dresses have been copied by modern Indian ballet dancers. The necklace (thali) had been tied with a gold thread and the locket was shining when it was excavated from the ground. The "pada-kam" has been beautifully designed, the jewellery on the hands and feet are modern and the dress is an advance of the type of dress worn in the Polonnaruva bronzes. The Polonnaruva Parvati wears an improvised type of bifurcated drapery whilst the Trincomalie specimen has developed a garment corresponding to a modern skirt. The hair is collected at the back with a "kondapu" and ends in tassels running over the shoulders. The sash which is tied around the waist ends in tassels on either side. The sculptor, who designed Parvati, is

requested by Hindu law to meditate and repeat the verse, which reads in English as follows :—

“Part of three, two eyed, two armed, three curved, left foot planted and right slightly raised, blue lily in left hand, possessed of golden breasts, the other hand pendant, the supreme goddess (Parameswari Parvati).” The right hand is in the pose called “Kataha Hasta”—the tips of the fingers are in contact with the thumb and forming a circle, in which a fresh flower may be inserted daily. The left hand hangs down loosely by the side “lol-hasta” or “lambe-hasta”, as it is called. The figure stands on the pedestal, resting mainly on the left foot, and bending at the hips. The position or sway is that known as “tri-bhanga”, so called because it has three bends at the hips, the shoulder and the neck. Parvati portrays the female principle—the divine energy—and is the consort of Siva, the dancer. The bronze, depicting Siva the cosmic force in the rhythm of life is missing in the Trincomalie excavations but was found in Polonnaruwa by Bell in 1906.

Three other articles in the Trincomalie finds are the Ganapathi bronze, the Trident and the figure of the annam. The Ganapathi or Ganesh is one of the most unique finds of recent times in either Ceylon or South India. The Polonnaruwa find had not unearthed a Ganesh of this type and the Ganesh described by Gravely and Ramachandran in the Madras Government Museum Bulletin is unimpressive compared to the Trincomalie specimen. The artist has skilfully portrayed his idea of Ganesh, the elephant-headed deity, as having the strength of an elephant and wisdom of a man. Comparing the four Ganeshas, studied by Gravely and Chintamani Kar, I am of opinion that the Trincomalie Ganesh is the most outstanding bronze casting of its type available today. The gold content is high and this bronze is certain to attract the world wide attention of students of Hindu art in metal, owing to the superb technique adopted in casting the sixty-five pound weight of gold and copper in one piece. It is a work of skill on the part of the sculptor who performed the casting.

*Trisulam (Siva's Trident)* :—One of the interesting finds of the Trincomalie treasure is Siva's Trident (Trisulam). It

is one foot seven inches long and one foot broad and weighs eight pounds. It is made of brass. A broken trident made of copper of height 10.5 cm. and of the tenth century design was excavated at the Topawewa Dagoba. A double Trisulam in copper (height 5.3 cm.) has been reported by Ananda Coomarasamy in the Colombo Museum series.

*Annam* :—The Figure of a Bird. This was excavated along with six other objects. This gives a definite clue to the temple to which it belongs. This brass object is the figure of a bird used for the top of a brass lamp. The fitting rims are seen distinctively. A similar find is reported by Ananda Coomarasamy in his work on the Museum bronzes. He calls it Hamsa—probably finials of lamps—Muniseram—Mediaeval—Brass—Height 30 cm.

## II

The next step in these investigations is to collect, sift and evaluate evidence on the probable temple to which these articles might belong. The articles may belong to a temple which is nearest the site of their discovery. This is called Konesar Temple and the references in Tamil were supplied by Mudlr. Sabanathan of the Government Information Office, Colombo.

1. Sambanthar—7th century A.D.—refers to Konamamalai in one of his Padikams.

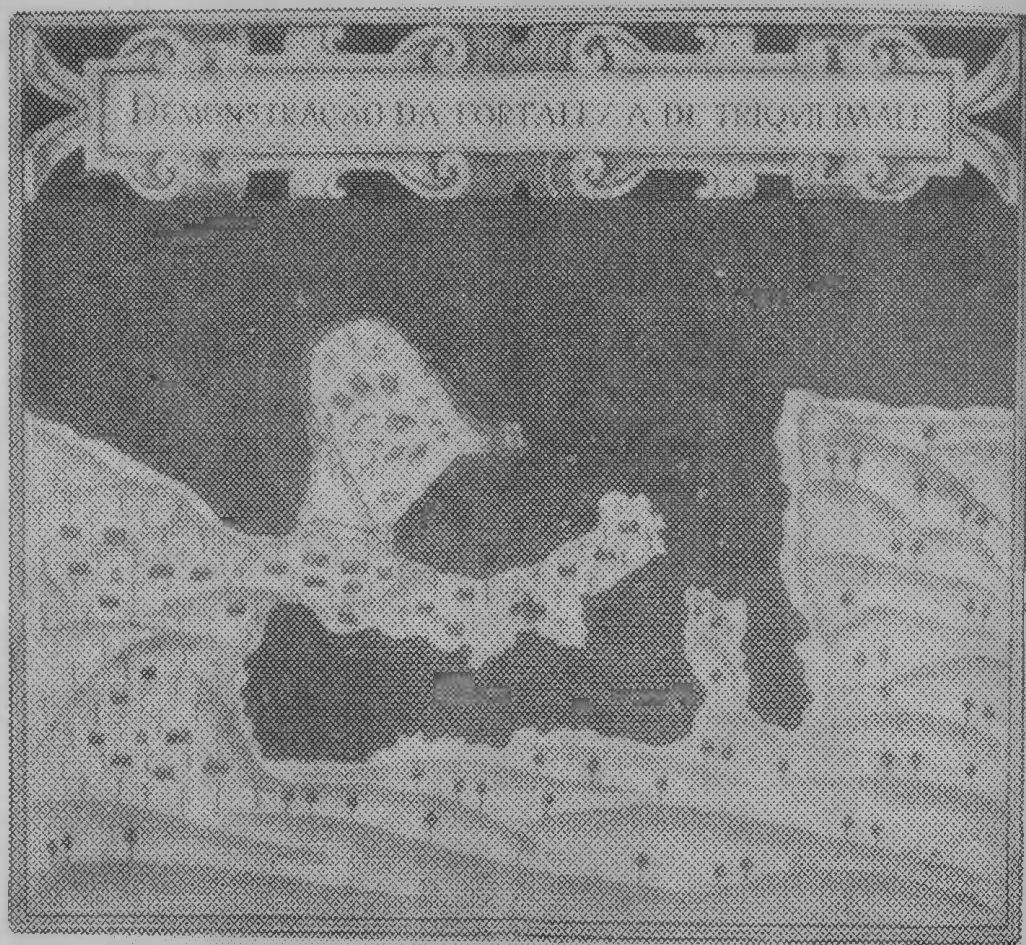
“He who dwelleth on Konamamalai — where the roaring ocean replete with the sandalwood that are found on its banks and bits of black Akhil, and precious stones and pearls, splashes,—is the peerless one who is accompanied by the sounds of the rows of Kalal and the anklets and half of whose body is shared by the maid of the mountain and who rides a sacred bull.”

2. Arunagirinather in his Thiruppugal (15th century) refers to Thirukonamalai :—

“Konnamamalai, whose population was vast and where the waves were dashing against the shores furiously.”



Chandrasekera  
A Thousand Year Old Example of Metal Art



A 16th century Map of Trincomalie — showing Swami Rock  
and the site of the Konesar Temple.



3. Konesar Kalvettu by Kavirayar : Composed partly in verse and part in prose :—

“A. King, named Manu Neethi Kanda Cholan, who ruled over the country of Cholamandalam learning from the Kailasapuram the wonders of Thirika-yalai (Trincomalie) came over to the place. His son, Kulakkodu Maharajah, who followed him later raised the temple, Gopuram, Mandapam, Pavanasa spring and the sacred tank in 512 of Kaliyuga on Monday the 10th day of the month of Vaikasi.”

4. Thakshinakailasapuram by Paditharasar : This is more or less Isthapuram. According to the Colophon this appears to have been composed in the reign of Sekarajasekaram (Aryan King of Jaffna) i.e., 14th century A.D.

“Konamamalai, where the huge sonorous waves carried on their crest pearls, gold and shells from the treasure troves of the sea-bed, and heaped them on the beach.”

5. Yalapana Vaipavamalai by Mylavaganapulavar — 18th century. He mentions that Kulakkoddu Maharajah came to Ceylon in Salivahana Saka year 358 or (436 A.D. ?) and repaired the Konesar Temple.

“Konamamalai where a temple with a pond (spring) was surrounded by the sea.”

6. Thirikonasalapuranam by Masilamanipillai Muttukumar (19th century—Exact period is not known). The dates mentioned in the Puranas cannot be taken as correct.

“Konamamalai where in the garden luxuriant creepers tall and spreading jasmine bush “Madavi”, “Pumnali”, “Vengai,” champuk trees interspersed with “Mullai” were in abundance.

7. Konamamalai, surrounded by the shimmering beach strewn with jasmine and the garden on the shore.

Codrington, in a note to the R.A.S. in 1927, quotes the Kalveddu and states that the Kaliyuga year 512 corresponds to

2590 B.C. *i.e.*, 4542 years ago. This is long before Vijaya landed in Ceylon. Local tradition states that Ravana worshipped at the Konesar Temple. To this day there is an indentation in the Rock called the "Ravanan Kalveddu", the cut of Ravana. There are several stories regarding this Ravan Kalveddu. These stories may be dismissed as being primitive and childish. At the entrance of Fort Frederick, on either side of the arch, is a rock inscription with the insignia (two fish) of the Pandyan kings. These rock inscriptions have miraculously escaped the stone-breakers' hammer. The Dutch engineers, unwittingly fixed them on either side of the archway of the Fort. These inscriptions are referred to by Portuguese writers and replica of the original is available in the Adjuda Library. Valentyn the Dutch Historian studied the inscriptions. Codrington, Rasanayagam of Ceylon and Krishna Sastri of Madras have given their interpretations of these inscriptions.

The Portuguese account is found at the Adjuda Library—Codes x 51—Chapter 7—paragraph 40. This translation into English reads as follows :—

"Constantine de Sa de Menezes destroyed these Pagodas, and with the stones thereof made a fortress to close that Port to the Chingala, and as it was not large enough for a battery it also came to have a small garrison. The event of the destruction of this pagoda was found engraved on a stone and being, authenticated by the Ouvidor of Ceylon after it had been translated by those most learned in ancient letters of the Chingalas, it was sent to His Majesty, and it said as follows :—

Manica Raju Bau Emperor of this Lancae erected this pagoda to the god Vidia-mal-manda in the year . . . . (according to the reckoning it comes to be 1300 years before the coming of Christ). There will come a nation called the Franks who will destroy it, and there will be no Kings in this Island to rebuild it once more.

This stone was placed at the gate of the fortress ; and there is no doubt that it is the Portuguese who are called Franks ; because the French in past ages were so well known in Syria and thence their name resounded.

in all this Asia, they called therein every European with some corrupted Franguis, as though they were all French; and it suffices to be white folk and not to wear a cabaya to be called Franguis by them. Nor can I give any account who it was who foretold this truth so distant in futurity to a heathen king; for if the dedication of the Pagoda implies idolatry; the prediction of its destruction so far implies prophecy, the author of which cannot be manifest to us in the obscure date of the traditions of India. And though Constantine de Sa destroyed these pagodas, their worship continued until the time of the General Dom Nuno Alurez Pereira, when the last Ganes and Jedacas who carried it on were beheaded."

The Portuguese version dates the origin of the temple to 1300 B. C., Codrington puts it as 2590 B. C.

Constantine de Sa, who gave orders for the destruction of the temple, writes as follows:—

"When I went there to make this Fort, I found this written on the pagoda among many writings which were there, one which ran thus:—

.....has caused the pagoda to be built. Nevertheless the time shall come when the nation of the Frangis shall destroy it, and there shall be no king in the Island of Ceylon who shall rebuild it anew.

The Frangis are the enemy whom we in the whole of the East have."

Search was made for evidence of further inscriptions by examining the rocks used for building the ramparts. None was found. Father Queyroz states in his "The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon" that these inscriptions were examined by a committee of investigators and translations were sent to the King of Portugal. A search is now being organised with the assistance of the Indian Envoy at Lisbon for evidence of further inscriptions. It is impossible to state the period to which these inscriptions belonged and whether these were in Sanskrit, Pali, Singhalese or Tamil. The rock inscriptions now available are three in number. Two slabs with the Pandyan insignia with Tamil letters at the

arch way of Fort Frederick and a fragment of an inscribed door jamb found in 1944 by the British Army Service Corps, whilst digging a reservoir in Fort Frederick.

Codrington and Rasanayagam give the following translation of the Tamil inscriptions at the entrance of the Fort:—

“O King! the Portuguese shall later break down the holy edifice built by Kulakkodan in ancient times, and it shall not be rebuilt nor will future kings think of doing so.”

Krishna Sastri, the Madras Government Epigraphist, examined these inscriptions and stated that the record might belong to the sixteenth century A.D. to judge from the palaeography. The photograph produced cannot substantiate Sastri's opinion. The pair of fish, the accepted insignia of the Pandyan Kings, is of an earlier date than the sixteenth century, by which time the Pandyan Kingdom had ceased to exist. Codrington disagrees with Sastri. He states that they were carved in the thirteenth century, when Patawaruman Vira Pandyan II planted the Pandyan flag and insignia at Konamalai.

The fragment of the door jamb was examined by Dr. Parnavitane in 1946, who states :—

A fragment of an inscribed door jamb found in excavation within the Fort at Trincomalie was copied. Two stone images of Hindu deities (Luximi and Vishnu) were also found in the same place . . . . . The preserved portion of the record contains the first two lines of a Sanskrit verse in the Sragdhara metre and its beginning of the third line. It states that in the year Saka 1145 (Sambhu-puspa), when the sun was in the house of Aries, on the day of the constellation Hasta and at a time when the Mesa Lagna was in the ascendant, a prince named Codaganga came to Ceylon and had something to do (missing portion) at Gokarma. The details of the date point to Friday, the 14th of April, 1223 A.D. The Mesa Lagna was prevailing in the early hours of the morning. Codaganga of this inscription cannot be identified with any prince of that name known to us from other historical records of Ceylon or India. The name suggests that

he was a scion of the Eastern Ganga dynasty of KALINGA, Gokarna figuring in the inscription must be the ancient name of Trincomalie. We know from the Mahavamsa (Chapter 37 v. 41) that a place of this name in Pali Gokarna existed on the eastern seaboard of Ceylon in ancient times. *Sanskrit* Gokarna and Pali Gokarna correspond to Singhalese Gona, in which form the name must have been in the use among the Sinhalese population of the area before they were displaced by the Tamils who adopted the old Sinhalese name and pronounced it in their own way. In the Tamil form of the place name, Tirrukonamalai, Tiru (meaning auspicious) may be prefixed to any name which one wants to honour. Malai means "hill" and the essential part of the name is Kona which is merely the transliteration in Tamil characters of the Sinhalese Gona. The old Sinhalese population of the area must have referred to Trincomalie as Congala." —(Ceylon Administration Report—1946. Archaeological Survey of Ceylon).

Paravavitana's interpretation of Kona Malai may explain the origin of the Konesar—the present name of the temple at Swami Rock. Francois Valentyn, the Dutch Historian, refers to a rock inscription. The Dutch would have learnt and have studied this inscription with their usual thoroughness. Valentyn's reference to this inscription was translated by the Ceylon Government Archivist and reads as follows :—

"The ancient Emperors of Ceylon had built at Trincomalie (which name signifies the equivalent of Tricun's Hill or the Hill of the Three Temples), a temple of unusual size and splendour which was renowned through the whole of India. But in the year 1622 it was destroyed and the stones thereof were used by Constantine de Saa or some other Portuguese towards the building of a fine fortress there. In regard to this temple and the destruction thereof, an ancient prophecy was known among the Singhalese and this was found inscribed on a very old stone in their archaic language. By command of the authorities of Ceylon, it was sent to the King of Kandy and translated as follows by certain learned men—Manica Raja has reared this temple in honour of the

God Vidomal in the year 1300 ; but a certain nation called the Franks will come and destroy it ; but there shall come a king who will build it up again."

*(The Dutch version differs from the Portuguese.)*

In addition to the search for rock inscriptions, local sayings, traditional tales and recent books on this subject were examined and docketed. A large majority were of recent origin and are of no historical value. Codrington (R.A.S. Vol. XXX) in 1927 cites a rock inscription and translates it as follows :—

" O King ! Harken. After a cat's eyed one, the red eyed one, and the smoke eyed one have gone, the figure will be that of the Northener."

This translation has been queried by Tamil scholars. The words "thane" vaduanu Codrington translated "vadu" as meaning "vadukan"—a man of Telugu origin. This is incorrect. It means "it will thrive again."

Besides the inscription slabs, six pillars of the original temple are found on the grounds of Fort Frederick. One is on Swami Rock while the other lies on the compound of the Fort.

Apart from the inscriptions seen by the Portuguese and the Dutch and the writings of the Kalveddu (which takes the origin of the temple as far as the pre-Vijaya period—1600 B.C.) the first reference to the temple is by the Hindu psalmist, Sambandam, who lived in the seventh century. A temple of immense proportions dedicated to Siva was said to have existed thence. This was before the rise of the Chola civilization. The inscription seen at Tiriyaya, twenty-nine miles to the north of Trincomalie, are also helpful in this study. There stands a hill 210 ft. above sea-level and known to the Tamils as Kandasamimalai. This is the hill of God Skanda and near this hill are scattered the debris of an ancient Buddhist monastery. On the slopes of the hill are some rock caves. Brahmi inscriptions, covering an area of 20 feet by 5 feet of the rock surface, are seen in eleven lines of writing. These writings have been made available to the public by Dr. Paranavitana in the *Epigraphia Zeylanica* Vol. IV, page 151-160. The script, states Dr. Paranavitana, resembles



the Pallava Grantha of about the seventh century and it contains a few Sanskrit inscriptions of this period. Sanskrit inscriptions at Kuccaveli, six miles south of Tiriyay, were translated by Dr. Paranavitana. The inscriptions reveal the Pallava influence in the development of the Sinhalese alphabet in Ceylon during the sixth and seventh centuries. The political history of Ceylon in the seventh century was profoundly influenced by the Pallavas as seen from the account of Manavamma (668-703) which is published in the Mahavansa. It is thus conclusive that there was then cultural intercourse between the two countries, though we have no recorded details. Indications of these available inscriptions point to the influence of South India under Parameswara Varuam during the latter half of the seventh century. The documents refer to the skill of merchants in navigating the sea, and engaging themselves in the bartering of goods, besides possessing a variety of goods laden in sea-faring vessels of diverse sorts.

The Pallavas, a South Indian race, who flourished between the fourth and the ninth century, were noted for their architecture in granite and their sea-faring propensities. They were famous for their trading capabilities and travelled by sea to Java and Indo-China. Therefore, the conclusion that Trincomalie was an intermediate port can be definitely established. The Pallavas were mainly Buddhists, but some were Hindus. The Hindu section worshipped Siva at the Konesar Temple and showered their wealth in their zeal and religious emotion. The Buddhist section on the other hand enclosed the relics of the Buddha at Giri Kanda Chaitiya at Teriaye a few miles north. On the arrival of the Portuguese, the Buddhists and Hindus practised their religious rituals side by side. Constantine de Sa used the words "Manica Raj Bau", the Emperor of Lancava. The words have a Sinhalese rather than a Tamil tone. The statues of Vishnu and Luximi excavated inside the Fort near the site of the original tank in 1944 show Pallava sculpture. The pillars available for inspection today are definitely of Pallava style. Tradition, oral and written, states that the Konesar Temple had a thousand pillared hall and a bathing tank. This tank can be discerned on descending into the well by the side of the present Tennis Court inside Fort Frederick. The tales of Sambasivam in Tamil utilised for a

serial story in English by Isaac Thambiah, give details of the temple ceremonies during the time when the Portuguese were preparing to loot and destroy the temple. Eleven brass lamps were lit on New Year Day in 1624, when a Fifth Column form attack was engineered by the Portuguese. Emissaries and soldiers dressed as Hindu priests entered the colossal temple during New Year Day ceremonies in the year 1624. The precessional statues of Siva and Parvati, in a chariot, (perhaps, the one which you see now), came down the hill on its way to the town. The temple was deserted by the crowd who flocked to the town to see the chariot. Portuguese pirates started their plunder. All the available gold, brass, copper, silks and jewels were looted. The priests and serfs, who remained in the temple premises, were mercilessly slaughtered. Pandemonium resulted. Some priests escaped, carrying with them whatever images and temple ornaments they could save. The seven articles under survey may have either been thrown into the sea or carried down the hill for a distance of 500 yards and buried for safety. The theory of burial is more likely because, when the workmen discovered these statues of standing and seated Siva and standing Parvati, they were buried with the base upwards and face and head downwards. If these articles were thrown into the sea and drifted towards the shore, the statues would have embedded themselves with the base down and head upwards. A site plan of the temple was discovered in July, 1952, after an intense search, at the National Library at Lisbon. This is the work of Robert Assende and shows three temples at this summit. These three temples have been described by Rodrigo de Sa, the son of Constantino de Sa. An English translation is available in the R.A.S. Journal of 1889 and the translation runs as follows :—

“On the first rise to the summit of the rock was a pagoda, another at mid ascent, and the most famous of them all on the highest eminence, which was looked upon and worshipped with great superstition by crowds of wondering pilgrims, and for this reason was more celebrated than for the building itself and the beauties of its architecture.”

Rodrigo de Sa himself never visited Ceylon and therefore this information must have been conveyed to him by eye



Inscription on Fort Frederick

witnesses. The destruction of the Konesar Temple was the biggest loot of one of the richest temples in South East Asia. Gold, pearls, precious stones and silks collected for more than thousand five hundred years were robbed within a few hours. But the Axe of Siva and the Deer of Deception fell on the head of Constantine de Sa. The map by Resende of the town of Trincomalie may have been drawn in 1620 before Constantino de Sa arrived in the town. St. Stephen's Church built by the Portuguese and the Konesar Temple still survives. This proves the belief that the Catholic clergy at this time strongly repudiated the conduct of the Portuguese soldiers and sailors. The Church warned the Portuguese against destruction and plunder. Fr. Queyroz laments in his book "The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon" the morals and the behaviour of the Portuguese militia. But the advice of the Catholic Church was unheeded by Constantino de Sa. De Sa gave orders for the destruction and loot of the temple. The stern hands of Siva fell on de Sa's career who was then the Viceroy Designate of Portuguese India. The Hindu artist portrayed Siva as a stern task master. There are seen the Battle Axe in one hand and the deer of deception in the other. Mercy is shown to those who crave for mercy and act righteously and prudence is advised when it is necessary in life. The law of cause and effect must be worked out. The fifth column methods adopted by the Portuguese for destruction and loot were practised immediately by the Sinhalese and Tamils. Hindus and Buddhists joined hands to avenge the destruction of Konesar Temple. Those who escaped slaughter at the hands of Constantino de Sa's army, joined his force and acted as fifth columnists within the Portuguese militia. Within six years of the destruction of Konesar Temple, de Sa and his army were enticed to enter the jungles around Badulla under the pretext of conquering the Kandyan Kingdom. De Sa's Ceylonese fifth columnists turned on every Portuguese soldier and slaughtered the entire army to a man. The number thus slaughtered including Constantine de Sa was estimated at 2900.

"It is true that the philosophers do not condemn nor pronounce judgment on things by their results, but only by the causes and beginnings, because the former are due

to fortune, or rather to Providence, which governs and disposes all things according to Its Will ; but the latter are formed by man's own reason, and begun according to the care he takes ~~as~~ to the best means to bring about success." (Journal of the C.B.R.A.S. Vol. XI 1889-90. 1894 page 607).

Thus writes his son, Rodrigo de Sa. as an apologia for his father's indiscretions. The red-eyed Portuguese domination of Ceylon began to totter after the destruction of the Konesar Temple and the regime gave way to the cat's eyed Dutch.

As long as the Dutch were in possession of Trincomalie, no ceremonial of any kind was permitted to take place at Swami Rock. When the British displaced the Dutch in 1795 the cat's eyed people disappeared and the smoke-eyed people became the masters of Trincomalie. From the writings of Gunner Alexander, a British Soldier of the Royal Artillery in 1803, stationed at Trincomalie, it is evident that the Hindus were permitted to perform the religious ceremonies at Swami Rock although their temple was razed to the ground. The British never interfered with the religious rituals although the British gun emplacements were only a few yards away from the site of worship. Sir Emerson Tennent with his characteristic genius for observation and description writes forty years later :—

"In the earlier portion of their career in Ceylon the Portuguese showed the utmost indifference to the possession of Trincomalie ; but after the appearance of the Dutch on the coast and the conclusion of an alliance between them and the Emperor of Kandy, Constantino de Sa, in 1622 alarmed at the possibility of these dangerous rivals forming establishments in the Island, took possession of the two ports of Batticaloa and Trincomalie, and ruthlessly demolished the "Temple of a Thousand Columns", in order to employ its material in fortifying the heights in which it stood. Some of the idols were rescued from this desecration, and conveyed to the Pagoda of Tamblegam ; but fragments of carved stone-work and slab bearing inscriptions in ancient character, are still to be discerned in the walls of the Fort, and on the platform for the guns.



The scene of this sacrilege is still held in the profoundest veneration by the Hindus. Once in each year, a procession, attended by crowds of devotees, who bring offerings of fruits and flowers, repairs, at sunset, to a spot where the rock projects above the ocean—a series of ceremonies is performed, including the mysterious breaking of a cocoanut against the cliff ; and the officiating Brahmin concludes his invocation by elevating a brazen censer above his head filled with inflammable materials, the light of which, as it burns, is reflected far over the sea.”—(Tennents' Ceylon II p. 484-485).

In 1940—nearly a century later—Lt. Col. C. P. Thomas of the Royal Artillery, Commandant of Fort Frederick, states in his book on Trincomalie, published by the “Times of Ceylon” :—

“The story of Trincomalie begins as far back in the dim ages that much of it is lost, and what remains is in the form of poetry and legends. It is not surprising, therefore, that some of them are hard to believe, but like all great stories the world over they are founded on facts. There is a legend hereabouts that a European soldier defiled by his presence the temple on the Rock. It is said that the soldier can be seen by the faithful, who still hold their ceremonies on Swami Rock. He can be seen in the ruins of the old temple down under the sea when the Priest, sacrificing holds the torch over the edge of the precipice at dusk.”

Spiritualists, European and Asian, who visit Fort Frederick, explain this phenomenon easily. The European soldier's spirit is that of Constantino de Sa mourning the destiny of the Portuguese Empire.

The bronzes which were excavated in 1950 were taken in procession to every town and village in Ceylon. A million people came to see them, some through faith and many through curiosity. Rs. 35,000 was collected towards re-building the 3500 year-old temple. The contributions came in one cent and five cent pieces from the poorest and lowliest. They came in thousands to look at Siva, who had disappeared for



three hundred and twenty-five years and re-appeared according to a prophecy when the smoke-eyed people returned the Island to their rightful owners. Ceylon was granted independence in 1947 and the statues appeared in 1950. In February, 1952, the island-wide tour of Siva was coming to an end and a hastily built shrine inside Fort Frederick at the summit of Swami Rock was ready to house the statues. The commandant of the Fort and the British Garrison were ready to welcome the pilgrims, when suddenly a gloom was cast over Fort Frederick. King George VI passed away peacefully in his sleep and when the statues were enshrined on the auspicious date, 23, February, 1952, there was no King in the Island of Ceylon. "And there shall be no king in the Island of Ceylon who shall rebuild it anew."—thus this very sentence of the prophecy was fulfilled. It may be a coincidence or it may be ordained. This depends on the person who interprets these words and examines this prophecy. Prophecies foretold in other parts of the world have a strange similarity to the Trincomalie inscriptions. The art of prophecy cannot be entirely ruled out as meaningless. It is a phenomenon that science cannot explain.

### III

From authorities quoted the following conclusions may be formulated :—

1. The bronzes excavated belong to the Konesar Temple at Swami Rock.
2. The probable explanation is that they have been buried by the priests during the massacre and loot of the temple on Hindu New Year Day of 1624.
3. The approximate age of the temple—from the study of Tamil, Portuguese, Dutch and British investigators—is 3541 years.
4. It can be inferred that some sort of civilised religion existed in Ceylon before the birth of Buddha and the arrival of the Buddhist missionaries in the Island.
5. The standing Siva (Chandrasekera) is one of the oldest examples of the earliest Chola metal casting

in the world belonging to probably early tenth century period A.D. The seated Siva and the seated female figure, the standing Parvati and Ganapathi, are examples of the latest Chola and Vijayanagar art of the fifteenth century. The Trisulam is of the Pallava style and is the oldest example existent of this type, perhaps, belonging to the early tenth century. The age of the lamp top and the figure of the bird cannot be determined. There is definite Vijayanagar influence in the sculpture of the seated Siva and Parvati. The artists have been influenced by the sculpture of Buddhist art in Ceylon. The possibility that these bronzes were cast in Ceylon cannot be ruled out.

6. The jewellery in the fifteenth century bronzes has set a standard for the modern jewellery worn by the people of Ceylon.
7. Every race in the world, ever since the Egyptians, has contributed its views on God in the field of art. The Konesar Temple being one of the oldest sites of worship in the world, contemporary with the Mohenjodaro Civilization has been the source of many forms of religious ritual. Definite historical evidence points to that of the Pallavas date from the 4th century. These bronzes were probably installed by the Cholas who worshipped God Siva in the early tenth century. The trident is definitely very early Cholian in type with Pallava influence and belongs to the early tenth century. The temple with different period bronzes was expanded by the Pandyaans and later by the merchants who traded between India, Java and China. Trincomalie, at the advent of the Portuguese, had a local Chieftain who owed allegiance to the King of Kandy and who was a Hindu by religion. He was captured by Constantino de Sa and sent to Goa. The Trincomalie finds have not yet revealed the metal art of Siva Nadarajah—the cosmic wheel of life—portraying the drum of creation, the joy of life and movement, the pang of destruction, the triumph of

the righteous and the defeat of evil. A search for this is still being conducted. The Polonnaruwa finds have given an example of it. The intense search in Trincomalie is bound to reveal this bronze. This one piece casting is universally acclaimed as a masterpiece of metal art the world had produced.

As observed by Ananda Coomarasamy "the Natarajah type is one of the great creations of Indian art, a perfect visual image of Becoming, an adequate complement and contrast to the Buddha type of Pure Being. The movement of the dancing figure is so admirably balanced that while it fills all space, it seems nevertheless to be at rest, in the sense that a spinning top or a gyrostat is at rest."

According to the prophecy, the red-eye, the cat's eye and smoke-eyed people have made their contribution. A new Konesar Temple of the twentieth century artistic genius is rising from its ashes to inspire the people of Ceylon again to contribute their share to human welfare and civilization.

### THE KALVEDDU

(From Yalapana Vaipawa Malai by C. Brito 1879)

Translated by Brito from Tamil written by Mailvaganam in 1739.

Kalveddu literally means an inscription upon a rock. It is now applied to all records of remarkable events whether carved on stone or written on less durable substance. There is one relating to the temple of Isvaran of Trincomalie which is unquestionably a work of great antiquity, but it bears evident marks of having received additions from time to time up to a very recent dates. The following is a brief summary of its contents.

"This work is composed partly in poetry and partly in prose by the poet Kavi-rasa-varothyan. It relates how Rama Deva, the son of Manu-nithikanda-Cholan of the solar race, visited Trincomalie, and after him his son Kulak-koddan came

and repaired the temple and its towers, built the terraced halls, and made the sin-dispelling well. For the continuance of the service of Isvaran he brought 51 families from Karai and Marungkar in Chola ; and invited Thani-yunnappupalan of the lunar race (a Vanniyan from Madura) and appointed him king over the new colony. These he finished on Monday the 10th of Idapam in the year of Kali-yukam 512. And four years afterward he built the never failing tank and filled it with the water of the Mahavali ganga sufficient to irrigate a paddy-sowing-extent of 17,000 amunams”.

*Kulakkoddan lays down the duties of the temple and assigns a portion to each of the 51 families. His injunction to the Vanniyan is given thus :*

“Take life for life, for less heinous offences, imprisonment, stocks and lashes. If dancing girls commit an offence, exact a penalty of conoanuts ; in the case of other women, lash them, or make them carry loads of sand according to rank. Forsake not the law of Manu. Anger is sin. Your neighbour’s wife is your mother. Follow truth, eschew falsehood. Do no evil, help the poor, do not give way to pride. Beside the tax of the lands which I have planted and given to the people, I assign the customs-due also to the temple.”

#### KULAKKODDAN’S PROPHECY

“A time will come in the distant future when the services of the temple will be neglected. But Gajabahu from Anurajapuram will dedicate more lands to the temple and restore its services to their original glory. After a long interval, the services will be transferred to Kalanimalai owing to the incursions of the Parangkis. The Parangkis will be overcome by the Hollander. The leonine solar dynasty of Ceylon will then be dismissed. The Vadukan (Tamil) will reign over all Ceylon, but the Hollanders will snatch a small portion of his territory from him. A new power will overthrow the Hollanders and befriend the Vadukar, and the two friendly powers will restore the worship of the temple. After this, will come Singkam to govern the whole Ceylon. [Here follows a description of the various works which Kulakkoddan executed.]

## DEATH OF KULAKKODDAN

After the most solemn warning to the people to keep up the services of the *temple*, he went into the *holy of holies* and was absorbed into the deity.

Whether this is a prophecy or a shrewd guess the events foretold have happened. The last three kings of Kandy were Tamils. The power referred to in the prophecy, the English have granted independence to Ceylon and the Lion Flag is flying to-day.

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10. Indian Art—Edited by Sir Richard Winsted.
11. Indian Metal Sculpture—by Chintamani Kar.

# TAMILIANA-NEWS & NOTES

## MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

(Here is one view on the medium of instruction at University level).

What should be the medium of instruction in the University of Madras and its Colleges? This is the subject-matter of many a heated discussion among college teachers.

Those in favour of *English* point out :—

that a thorough knowledge of English is important as a “window” towards the world outside India ;

that it is more important to study English than Tamil, because Tamilians “know Tamil anyhow” ;

that there are not enough textbooks in Tamil ; that Tamil lacks certain technical terms ;

that Tamil is a language that has not kept pace with the development of science, etc., so that many things simply cannot be expressed in Tamil at all.

Those in favour of *Tamil* say :—

that Tamil is the mother-tongue of the majority of the people within the area of the University of Madras and that the mother-tongue should always have the first place, before any other language ;

that Tamil is a highly developed language, in which everything can be expressed ; when necessary, new technical terms can be invented, or international terms be “borrowed” ;

that in certain aspects Tamil has not kept pace with modern development, it is exactly because English has been the medium of instruction ; English has been allowed to stifle Tamil ; the only remedy is to introduce Tamil as the medium of instruction :

that enough books can be translated into Tamil in a short time ;



that the introduction of Tamil as the medium of instruction would inspire the writing of original textbooks in Tamil.

Some of the arguments on both sides are good, but some are not so good. Let me give the view-points of a "non-English-speaking" foreigner.

To me it is self-evident that the mother-tongue should be the *natural* medium of expression. There must be something definitely wrong with the self-respect of a nation where many educated people express themselves *better* in a foreign language than in their own mother-tongue. The mother-tongue is one of a people's most precious possessions.

It is a mistake that we "know our mother-tongue anyhow". Every educated person should *cultivate* and develop his mother-tongue through eager and hard study and practice. The English, the French, etc., do not neglect *their* language. That great master of French prose, Voltaire, once said about French : "C'est une chienne de langue ; je ne l'apprendrai jamais". (It is a very difficult language ; I shall never learn it.)

A civilized language must be capable of expressing anything. If Tamil is not, it is a sign that it is half dead, and that it is not a minute too early to revive it ; not so much to revive the ancient Tamil learning as to put life into the modern language and make it develop.

There is no harm in incorporating a few international technical terms in Tamil, if necessary. Only there is no reason to use the *English* form, which sounds definitely *strange* to the Tamil context. The origin of most technical term is Greek or Latin. Why not use transliteration of the original word, with Tamil endings etc. ? I felt quite happy some weeks ago, when in a church I heard the pastor speak about மிசியோனாரிகள் instead of மிஷினேரிகள். It is more true both to the Latin "missionarius" and to the genius of Tamil itself.

I hope that the day will never come, when college teachers and students will be satisfied with *only* Tamil books. It is impossible to translate everything of importance into the language of a fairly small group of people. Who would meet

the expenses? And where get enough people for that super-human task?

There is no reason why Tamil as the medium of instruction should hinder people from learning English *also*. European university students are taught in their own mother-tongue, but they also read books in at least English, German and French. A good passive (hearing and reading) and writing knowledge of English is all that is necessary for most educated people in India. Fluent speech is necessary only for the few who go abroad, and they will then easily acquire it. When in Tamilnad, it is the duty of the foreigners to learn to speak Tamil, and not of the Tamilians to speak English; and we would all have learnt it, if the Tamilians had taken a firmer attitude in the matter and had at the same time shown greater willingness to help us by encouraging us to speak Tamil, correcting our mistakes.

A change that could very easily be introduced immediately is to allow students to write their examinations in their mother-tongue, if they want to do so. After all, that is their birth-right. That does not mean that they should not study textbooks in English also. (But there should be at least one textbook in Tamil in each subject, to help the students to acquire the suitable vocabulary and the habit of expressing themselves in Tamil.) Teachers in colleges within their own language area should also be *allowed to lecture* in their mother-tongue. But it should be regarded as an advantage to have other teachers *also* (from other parts of India and from foreign countries), lecturing in English.

Some people here say that if students hear English lectures and read English books, they cannot afterwards express the same things in Tamil. That is very revealing. It shows *either* that Tamil is a backward language (in which case it is urgent to develop it *or* that people are too lazy to try to find adequate expressions in their own mother-tongue (which is all but criminal), *or* that students are used to learning the *words*, not the *contents*, of books (which is probably the correct explanation, and the saddest one).

Because the medium of instruction in schools is Tamil and in colleges English, most students find themselves in the

position of not really knowing *any* language at all. And nobody who knows how intimately thought and language are related to each other, will be surprised at the disastrous effects that such a state of affairs has on the *thinking* of the students. *Either* the medium of instruction should be English also in schools (which I hope no Indian patriot will wish), *or* the medium must continue to be Tamil also in colleges.

I. W.

## INDIAN NATIONAL ACADEMY OF LETTERS

NEW DELHI, DEC. 20.

The Government of India have decided to establish a National Academy of Letters, it was officially announced here tonight.

The academy, which will be known as "Sahitya Akadami", is being established, the announcement added, "to work actively for the development of Indian letters and to set high literary standards, to foster and co-ordinate literary activities in all the Indian languages and to promote through them all the cultural unity of the country".

The academy will have a chairman appointed by the President of the Republic. He will hold office for a term of five years.

The academy will have its headquarters in New Delhi, but it might be shifted to another place by a resolution supported by three-fourths of the total membership of the general council.

The "Sahitya Akadami" will, the announcement stated, be a corporate body. Its powers and functions will among other, be :

(1) To promote co-operation between literary associations, Universities and cultural organisations and to encourage the establishment and development of representative

literary associations concerned with the development of language and literature ;

(2) To encourage or, if necessary, to arrange translations of literary works from one Indian languages into others and also from foreign into Indian languages and vice versa ;

(3) To assist associations and individuals in publishing literary works, including bibliographies, dictionaries, encyclopaedias ;

(4) To sponsor or hold literary conferences, seminars and exhibitions ;

(5) To promote research in Indian languages and literature.

(6) To encourage the propagation and study of literature among the masses and for that purpose the use of mass-communication media ;

(7) To promote the study and teaching of regional languages and literatures in areas where they are not used ;

(8) To improve and develop the various scripts in which the languages of the country are written, to promote the use of the Devanagari script and to encourage publication of select books in regional languages in that script ;

(9) To promote cultural exchanges with other countries and to correspond and keep liaison with international organisations in the field of letters.

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## LINGUISTIC IMPERIALISM

The Government of India, it is reported, has decided to establish a National Academy of Letters. The purposes of this National Academy of Letters will be, we are told, to promote high literary standards all over the country, to co-ordinate literary activity, and generally to promote the cultural unity of the country.

It has been quite clear throughout these few years that the Union Government has a passion for nationalising everything. Their early ill-considered pronouncements on nationalisation of industries having proved unfortunate in response at home and abroad, they quickly changed their policy into *nationalised economic planning*, with a *mixed economy*. National Laboratories of various kinds, National Academies of Arts and Dance, Drama and Music, a determined attempt to nationalise University Education, and now we also have the attempted nationalisation of letters and of literary genius.

All this is "for the co-ordination of effort and for the promotion of the cultural unity of the country."

While we, along with the rest of India, fully appreciate the value of promoting high standards in the fine arts and in literature, we confess we are at a loss to appreciate the meaning given by the Union Government to the word, "culture". What is the kind of cultural promotion which the many nations of this sub-continent really desire? We thought that the Government could clearly read the necessary lesson from recent happenings in Andhra Desa and in Tamil Nad, and from the atmosphere which they can feel, in Maharashtra, in Karnataka, and in Kerala. None of these linguistic areas desire to possess a nationalised and co-ordinated "culture" which does not exist in reality, and which has now to be cooked up, like esperanto, the so-called international language.

The cultures and traditions of Tamilnad, Andhradesa, Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra remain distinct and separate, and any intelligent observer will realise that these cultural and linguistic groups will not lend themselves to be levelled down to so-called national standards. Suspicions regarding the real purposes of the Sahitya Academy are enhanced by a study of its proposed functions, which includes bibliographies, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, the popularisation of Devanagari script, cultural associations and conferences, all of which can easily lend themselves also to the work of trying to superimpose certain preferred languages over other indigenous tongues.

We may warn the Government of India that if their ultimate purpose in establishing a Sahitya Akademi is merely to

assist in the propagation of Hindi as the all India language, with the Devanagari script the Government will shortly come across the most unbending resistance to its efforts from every self-respecting region in this country. We love our own mother tongues well enough to fight any attempts on their purity and integrity. Though we do not know what definition of culture, other than "totalitarianism", the Union Government has got, we ourselves have no doubt that culture consists in the cultivation and conservation of desirable local and individual differences, and not in the establishment of Linguistic Imperialism. The best way of securing true co-ordination and unity at the centre, we are certain, is to grant the fullest possible free play for the different cultural traditions in different parts of the country, uniting them, at the same time, by a spontaneous bond of patriotic unity to the country as a whole.

(*Democracy*, Dec. 28th, 1952)

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### HISTORY BOOKS USED IN CEYLON

The need for a Commission of experts, including teachers, historians and others, to examine the history books used in Ceylon, and lay down principles on which the revision of existing books and the writing of new ones should be undertaken, is emphasised by a sub-committee of the UNESCO National Commission for Ceylon.

The sub-committee which was appointed by the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education, Mr. L. J. de S. Seneviratne, to consider the improvement of history textbooks, with regard to the fostering of international understanding has stated that it should be the function of the proposed Commission to initiate lines of action similar to those underlying UNESCO's Report on the Mutual Revision of History Text Books in the Nordic countries.

"International understanding begins at home," says the report which deals with the two major themes :



(1) "An exploration of those tensions within Ceylon, which are of importance in the search for national unity," and

(2) "An examination of those points, which relate to mutual understanding between Ceylon and the world at large."

The sub-committee expresses the view that there is as yet no book that might be called "The History of Ceylon", similar to histories which many other countries possess. Not that the raw material was wholly lacking, but rather that only a portion of available material has as yet been scientifically examined.

It considers that a number of text-books in Ceylon are unsatisfactory in that they do not present the whole history of Ceylon from the earliest times to the present, that they stress political history and wars, and neglect social and economic aspects, and that they afford "at least some slender" justification for the grievance that Ceylon history is represented as synonymous with Sinhalese history.

Referring to the General Report on the Census of Ceylon the sub-committee questions validity of the 'race' categories mentioned in the Census, and calls attention to the use of "Aryan" and "Dravidian" in certain extracts from the Census.

Regarding the Census Report's "excursion into legend and mythology", the sub-committee says: "Not only is the Aryan-Dravidian race myth exploited but even legends are reconstructed in the best traditions of the Third Reich! It is this uncalled for racialism and misleading history which creates the tensions which demand that History be re-written."

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## TRIBUTES TO EMINENT DRAMATIST

MADRAS, FEB. 1.

Citizens of Tamil Nad assembled in large numbers today to honour Mr. P. Sambanda Mudaliar, the well-known playwright and actor, on the occasion of his eighty-first birthday at the Kala Mandapam of the National Girls' High School, Triplicane.

People of different political persuasions participated in the function and congratulated the playwright and paid tributes to his services in the cause of dramatic art in general and Tamil drama and literature in particular.

As Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar entered the grounds, he was given a tremendous ovation and garlanded by a number of persons.

Amidst cheers, Mr. Rajagopalachari presented a gold embroidered shawl to the playwright and unfolding it put it round his shoulders.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Rajagopalachari said that they had met on the occasion to do honour to Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar for "the great services he has done to our land," and to record our appreciation of his great work in the cause of drama and literature of the country. "It has, therefore, given me," he said, "the greatest amount of joy to have been called upon to present him the shawl on your behalf. It is a great privilege and I am happy that I have thus got some reflected glory on this occasion. You see before you on this occasion Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar and myself. We are all men of the old times. Compared to us, the oldest among you will be young ones. But young and old, all of us are united in doing honour to our friend, Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar, because

of the services he has done to our country and to our literature."

"Mr. Sambandam," Mr. Rajagopalachari continued, "first started acting in dramas in the Suguna Vilasa Sabha. The name stood for joy through good and healthy art. An emphasis in that respect became necessary because of the unhealthy things which had come into being in professional dramas and dramatic institutions of the time. Public odium was attached to performing in dramas or writing dramas. The S.V.S. pulled the art of drama from out of this sad state. Many leading citizens, lawyers, educationists, businessmen, teachers and others participated in their dramas. Today, everyone knows about the dramas enacted in the Sabha and how they have set a great example in this respect. And the part that Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar played in this great reform is remarkable.

"Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar enters on his 81st year today. It is something to our credit," Mr. Rajagopalachari said, "that we are honouring him at least at this late stage. He is a good man and he has kept good health also. We wish him continued good health and many more years of active and useful life. Old and good men who keep good health are becoming rare as herbs nowadays. Here is one such in addition to his other qualities, and let us cherish such men."

Mr. Rajagopalachari then proposed Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar to preside on the occasion and said it was quite appropriate that an old friend of Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar and one who had been associated with him for so many years, should preside over the occasion.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar said that he had known Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar for many years now, and had been asso-

ciated with him in the S.V.S. for the past 25 years as President of the Sabha. Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar had studied literature, —Sanskrit, English and Tamil. When he started his work, he did so with a great reaction against Tamil drama, as he himself mentioned in his reminiscences *Natakamedai Ninavugal*. He wanted at first to translate only English dramas. But, to him, soon came the inspiration from Andhradesa—from Bellary Krishnamachari and the Sarasa Vinodha Sabha. Stimulated by that example, Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar wrote over 60 plays. He said in his book that he had acted over 520 times in 109 different characters. He wrote serious dramas, and light comedies ; he translated Shakespeare's plays and also some Sanskrit dramas. He wrote many original plays.

“Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar has been a progenitor and inspirer” Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar said, “not only of a simple dramatic style, but of a revolution in dramatic taste. Formerly, there was a great deal that was vulgar, cheap and bizarre in contemporary drama. From the time of *Silappadhikaram*, drama remained mainly a professional matter ; so far as women were concerned, it was only women of a certain type that performed in dramas. With a tremendous genius for friendship and comradeship, which is one of his characteristics, he inspired many men to play women's roles. They inspired and refined the Tamil stage.”

“If there is one man in our country who may be said to have revived a new literary form, refined literary taste and brought drama to a stage in which it is not only an accurate portraiture of daily life, but an instrument of social and other kinds of reform,” Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar said, “it is Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar. He is a great reformer. He is a good literary artist. He is a man who has made a great study of life, because the greatest drama that a person can portray

is the drama of life. He has lived a simple and a great, a refined and exemplary life. To him all honour is due." (applause).

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### LIBRARY OPENED

Mr. T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar then declared open a new Tamil Library to commemorate the occasion. He said that art and literature in Tamil Nad owed a great debt to Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar. He was a scholar and a religious man, strict and punctilious in every detail of his conduct, and he lived a very simple and disciplined life. He was "the Father of Tamil Drama", and as playwright and actor he upheld very high standards. Thanks to his example and work, dramatic art in Tamil Nad had now come into its own. If actors and the art itself had come to occupy a high position in the cultural life of the people of Tamil Nad today, it was in no small measure due to the contribution of Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar through his plays, on the stage and through the Sabha with which he was connected all these years. It was quite fitting that the occasion should be marked by the opening of a library.

Replying to the felicitations, Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar said he was overwhelmed by the honour and kindness shown to him. He said he was beholden to God, his parents, to friends and to the public for whatever part he had been enabled to play in life. It was the encouragement of his parents that gave him the opportunity to write plays and act in dramas. His gratitude was due to Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar who always guided him and spurred him on in his efforts. He

looked upon Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar as his friend, philosopher and guide. To friends like Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar and Mr. Rajagopalachari he owed a deep debt for the encouragement they had extended to him. It was at the suggestion of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar that he began studying Sanskrit dramas. He studied them with the aid of a pandit for over 18 years. It was this study which helped him greatly in writing Tamil dramas.

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### REVIVAL OF THE STAGE

On this occasion, Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar said, he could not but remember those friends who had helped him in staging his dramas. None of those who participated in the dramas which were staged early in his dramatic career was alive today. With tears in his eyes and in a quivering voice, Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar mentioned the name of Mr. T. Rangavadi-velu Mudaliar who was associated with him on the stage for over 28 years. In those days, Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar said, acting on the stage was looked down upon as abnoxious and disreputable. It was the co-operation of many friends and the encouragement of men like Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar that helped him and others in the Suguna Vilasa Sabha to do something for reforming the stage and drama. "And today, if I were asked to name three boons which I should like to enjoy in my next birth," Mr. Sambanda Mudaliar said, "I would ask only for these : to be born again of the same parents ; to be born again with the same set of friends ; and, to be born again to serve the dramatic art." (applause).

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## THIRUVALLUVAR DAY

Thirukkural is undoubtedly the finest and the most highly esteemed product of the genius of the Tamils. It holds a unique position in the realm of world literature. It has attracted many a scholar the world over by virtue of its high ideals and moral teachings. It has also been translated into many languages both western and oriental.

Yet, it cannot be said that this work and its author Thiruvalluvar are sufficiently honoured by the world or even by the Tamil speaking people. Therefore we welcome gladly the action already taken by the Thamiz Marai Kalakam (Sacred Kural Society) to exhort the people to do their duty by this great work and its author. In a leaflet issued recently Pandit K. P. Ratnam, the President of the Kalakam, has requested all the people in the Tamil speaking area to observe Thiruvalluvar Day annually as a national festival and celebrate it in their homes too. To avoid confusion he has, after ascertaining the views of some Tamil scholars and Tamil associations, come to the conclusion that the Thiruvalluvar Day should be "Vaikasi Anudam" (வைகாசி-அனுடம்). This year it falls on 28-5-53.

Will all the associations, the press, schools, mutts and similar institutions of the Tamil speaking areas do their best to make the Thiruvalluvar Day celebrations a success? (*Communicated.*)

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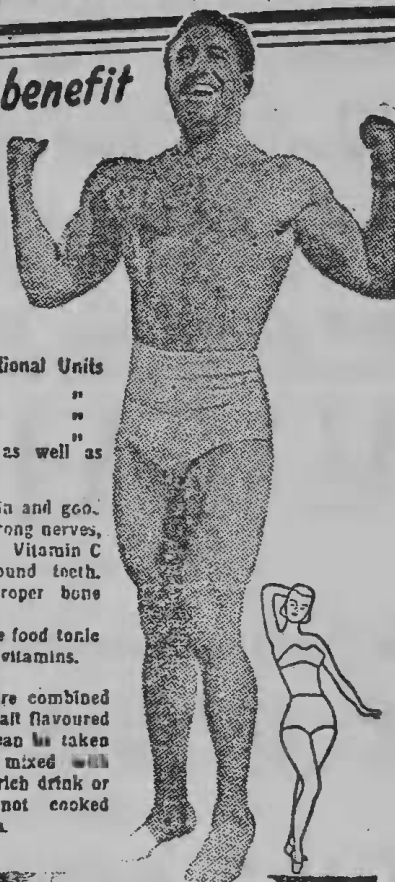


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# *Readers' Forum*

## FROM GERMANY

I have received two issues of "Tamil Culture" Nos. 1 and 2 and have read the contents with a great deal of interest. For a self-exiled Tamilian the information contained in some of the articles is a source of pride and pleasure. I do hope that you will continue to fulfil the mission of carrying Tamil Culture, through the medium of English, for the benefit of the non-Tamil world.

During the course of my stay in Europe, I have often found that ancient Indian literature means to many only Sanskrit, Pali or Prakrit literature. Very few in Europe have had the opportunity of knowing the ancient Tamil language or the great treasures of its literature. I am sure therefore that your labour of love will bring forth fruits which we all desire.

May I also request you to send a copy of your future issues to the following :—

Prof. Dr. Heine-Geldern, Prof. of Anthropology  
Institut für Volkerkunde  
Vienna I, Neue Hofburg.

Prof. Heine-Geldern is a very famous anthropologist of this country and has a deep knowledge of Indian culture. He will be very grateful if you will kindly send him your periodical in return for which the publications of the Institute of Volkerkunde will be sent to you.

DR. K. V. RAMASAMY.

36 Hasenauerstrasse,  
Vienna XIX.

## LADIES HOME JOURNAL

"A young woman from Madras wrote the Ladies Home Journal Magazine praising their information etc., etc., and she told how she translated it all to her friends in Tamil, her spoken tongue. I can honestly say there wasn't one college student here who knew Tamil existed."

Glendale, California,

ANNE E. FIELD.

CULTURAL LIBERALITY

I feel that your periodical should be brought to the notice of not only as many Tamil lovers as possible but also to non-Tamil speaking persons and institutions who are in a position to influence public opinion in our country at the moment. I send herewith a cheque for Rs. 100 which please treat as my anonymous contribution towards Annual Subscription for 1953 for 20 such persons whom you may choose. You may include the following persons if they are not already on your list of subscribers. ....

BAND OF WRITERS

I was very glad to get the second number of your paper. It contains a good many very useful articles. I greatly enjoyed reading them. The articles on Kamban and on Mohenjo-Daro, and on the Tamil script were very good. I also enjoyed the article on Barathi. It is a good magazine and one that should have wide circulation in the Tamilnad and also all over India. You have got together a band of good contributors.

"Sunbeam",  
Coonoor, Nilgris.

H. C. POPLEY.

RESEARCH IN THE GOLDEN STATE

It has been a great pleasure to hear that the journal *Tamil Culture* has been started to publish scholarly studies in the things concerning Tamilnad. I have read through the issue that you sent me, Vol. 1, Nos. 3 and 4; and am greatly impressed by the quality of the articles that it contains. The university library has or will subscribe to this new journal.

I am flattered also to be invited to contribute an article to the journal, but regret that at the moment I have so many commitments for scholarly work that it is impossible to meet your request. The chief work on which I am at present engaged is a collaborative work with Professor T. Burrow of Oxford University, a dictionary of all Dravidian etymologies that we can identify from the published grammars and dictionaries of the dozen or so languages involved. This work has been carried on a small way and will undoubtedly require another four or five years to complete. It engages most of my energies at the moment.

E. W. Tuttle, who was interested in Dravidian languages, died at least fifteen years ago.



I send all best wishes for the future of your valuable journal and hope that it will provide a stimulus to learned studies in South India.

University of California,  
Berkeley 4, Calif.

M. B. EMENEAU,  
*Professor of Sanskrit and  
General Linguistics.*

### GOOD IMPRESSION

English is still the most effective medium of intercourse ■■ between the linguistic areas. To acquaint India, therefore, not to speak of the wider world, with Tamil thought, history and achievements, an English journal is appropriate. *Tamil Culture*, now in its fourth issue, has this object. ....

The subjects discussed are distributed among archaeology, history, anthropology, philology, literary criticism, and philosophy. *The defensive or apologetic note is not too obtrusive.* The papers are not severely learned, but are appropriately serious and in almost all cases informative. ....

*Tamil Culture* makes a good impression. It will spread abroad valuable knowledge about this most interesting people, and it ought to stimulate Tamilians to look into their philological, literary, archaeological, epigraphical and historical records for more material wherewith to enlighten the foreigner, and perhaps themselves too.

*Mysindia, Bangalore.*

### INTRINSIC GREATNESS

This is a quarterly which is well-written, finely printed and attractively got-up. The publishers and contributors are convinced that enough justice has not been done to the undoubted greatness of Tamil Culture. The editor in this issue, Volume II, Number one, is full of this sense of injustice and warns against "linguistic chauvinism or regional patriotism or a mythical Aryan superiority". The Editors and publishers, too, would do well to bear in mind that Tamil greatness needs no chauvinism or regional patriotism to bolster it up. Its greatness is intrinsic and will secure recognition by sheer merit. Nor will good be done to the country and the nation by emphasising cultural diversities rather than cultural unity.

Sir Mortimer Wheeler's description of Mohenjodaro is included in this issue. P. Minakshisundaram writes about Tamil Script reforms and A. A. Varagunapan on Tamil music. F. Morais, s.j., P. Lourdu-swami, S. Gnanaprakasam and E. T. Rajeswari are among the other contributors. Some of the points raised by the contributors offer room for discussion and debate. But all through, this quarterly is always stimulating.

*The Hindu, Madras.*

### SAD NEGLECT

In view of the lead that you have given to the revival of the Tamil Language and Culture, I thought I would write to you about two things, the importance of which the Tamil public have, so far, failed to realise. I am referring to the late Father Gnanaprakasam's Etymological and Comparative Lexicon of the Tamil Language and the late Rev. Father Clossett's Dravidian Origin and Philosophy of Human Speech. Although to our great misfortune, and to the misfortune of the literary world, they are both dead and gone, their unpublished works are still available in some form or other. From enquiries I am told that practically the whole of the remaining portion of the Lexicon is in manuscript form and could be published if finances are available and provided a suitable editor could be found. Out of the original 20 sections intended for publication, only 7 sections have been published.

As regards Father Clossett, what has yet to be published is Part II of his work, which I read in the papers as having been completed just before his death at Kegalle in July 1949. If this work could also be published, along with Father Gnanaprakasam's remaining portion of the Lexicon, both of them will, I am sure, revolutionise the existing theory of the science of linguistics and would give Tamil a pre-eminent position among the languages of the world.

Colombo 6.

M. S. SEEVARATNAM.

### SUGGESTIONS

I have great pleasure in expressing my appreciation of your efforts in publishing a Quarterly which is very much interesting and instructive. Students and well-wishers of Tamil are obliged to you for your noble undertaking. I am very much impressed by your Quarterly review and I admire your attempt to draw the attention of Westerners to the study of Tamil and the Tamils.

May I put forth some suggestions.

FIRST. A comprehensive treatise on the Geography of Tamillana be published in your Quarterly. The treatise on Geography should in-

clude portions of Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, South Africa, Fiji Islands, Singapore, Indo-China, etc., where Tamils are in (i) majority (ii) minority. The completion of such a volume may require the services of many scholars but such a publication is a long-felt want.

**SECOND.** A fluent rendering of modern Tamil Literature into English be undertaken. The novels and short stories of eminent modern writers like Kalki (otherwise known as R. Krishnamoorthy), and Mayavi (மயவி), (e.g., Sivakamiyin Sabatham—சிவகாமியின் சபatham) Parthipan Kanavu — பர்திபன் கனவு) (Kathaiyum Karpanaiyum — (கதையும் கர்ப்பநையும்) the series of books by K. V. Jegannathan serving as an exposition to Sangam Classics; the literary works of Dr. M. Varadarajan and the poetical works of Namakkal Ramalingam Pillai, Kavimani Thesikavinayakampillai, Yogi Shudhananda Bharathiar and Bharitidasan are worth translation.

**LAST.** Lessons on Tamil in English be published in your quarterly enabling Western students and other non-Tamil students to learn Tamil easily.

Also I humbly and earnestly ask you to publish in your Quarterly Review one request;—

The University of London has not approved Tamil as a Classical Language for purposes of examination. It is unfortunate that the scholars and well-wishers of Tamil do not take interest in this important problem. I, therefore, request the scholars and well-wishers of Tamil to answer the challenge to our Classical Language.

Point Pedro, Ceylon.

V. K. SIVAPRAKASAM.

#### WHERE READERS DISAGREE

Your latest number (Vol. II No. 2) is the most interesting issue you have so far published. ....

S. R.

Your latest issue (Vol. II No. 2) did not have as much matter as your previous issues.

S. J.

#### NOSTALGIA

You cannot imagine how much I long for the arts of India, and would give anything to have a glimpse of a Pallava sculpture or a Chola bronze.

Toronto, Canada.

KAY AMBROSE.

# TAMIL CULTURE

*A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study of Tamiliana*

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## *Statesmen and Scholarship*

THE EDITOR

THIS YEAR we have had occasion to remember two great personalities who were the embodiments of Tamil Culture. One died in South India four months ago at the age of sixty -one leaving behind a sense of loss and regret that will take many years to diminish. The other died in Ceylon — twenty years ago, and the Tamils in Ceylon are not yet reconciled to the loss they have sustained in his death.

The late Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar, and the late Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam the centenary of whose birth a grateful people celebrate this year, were both statesmen-scholars, both parliamentarians, both patriots and the finest fruits of the ever ancient and ever new culture that is the most precious heritage of the Tamil speaking peoples. Both had by birth, by education, and by circumstance abundant opportunity to serve the cause of the Tamils and to promote their learning and their cultural heritage, and both used their opportunities so well that today they deserve to be the luminous examples that will alter the attitudes of this lethargic and unimpressible generation. Both considered the causes they represented greater than their own personal interests. Both played their parts in a world context not usually the privilege of those who speak the Tamil tongue. And their understanding of the fundamentals of Tamil Culture was such that both of them, far from being communal, offered their very best to the country and to the common national cause.

The late Dr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty, or R. K. S. as he was so affectionately referred to by high and low in the Tamil country, devoted himself unstintedly to the cause of Tamil Culture. Tamil Nad has cause to remember him for many brilliant achievements and for a life dedicated to causes dear to his people. As member of the Madras Legislative Council, as a member of the Central Legislative Assembly, as Secretary of the Swarajya party, as Dewan of Cochin, as first Finance Minister of the Republic of India, he so distinguished himself by his ability as a parliamentarian, speaker and debater that he was the pride of the Tamil South. In his visits to the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia and other countries as member of India's special delegations and missions, he was at the same time an ambassador of Tamil Culture. He gave such leadership and he was so synonymous with everything Tamil that the news of his death threw every lover of Tamil Culture into consternation, for the south had lost its most powerful representative.

There was no branch of Tamil learning or no aspect of the life of the Tamil peoples in which he was not interested. He sought to encourage Tamil studies not only in the universities of the South, but also in the traditional Tamil manner by a patronage of individual poets, writers and journalists. Even during his last days, he was engaged in a prayerful study of the *Periappuranam* in the company of the veteran scholar and commentator, C. K. Subramaniya Mudaliyar.

He was aware that the Tamil Revival required a renaissance in creative writing, in sound scholarship and in the Fine Arts if it was to be of lasting benefit to the inheritors of Tamil Culture. He was not only a patron of literary enterprise but himself showed the way of a new, easy and fresh interpretation to the classics with his annotated edition of the *Silappadikaram*. One of his greatest desires towards the fulfilment of which he took steps as soon as he accepted the Vice-Chancellorship of the Annamalai University was to see a critical edition of *Kamba Ramayanam*. He identified himself with the Tamil Isai Movement from its very inception, and

his patronage of the Tamil Arts inspired enthusiasm and co-operation among all sections and communities.

He was a great lover of his native city, renowned in Tamil history and Tamil literature, Coimbatore, the present status and dignity of which are not a little due to his civic sense and his local patriotism. Above all as a man, he was known for his interest in all communities and persons of every caste and creed, for his fairness, for his tolerance, and for the serene and unruffled equanimity he brought to bear on all controversial questions. Tamil Nad has bred few men in our generation that deserved the praise and tribute of our people as Dr. Shanmukham Chetty. It has been said that he was the only minister, who like the ideal ministers outlined in our gnostic verses, could stand up to, advise or admonish the uncrowned king that is the present Prime Minister of India. It cannot be regretted enough that men and man-made circumstances did not permit him to serve longer in the interests of the Republic of India. He was the one who with the advent of a Tamil State would have been its undisputed leader. His premature demise is tragic for Tamil Nad.

\*       \*       \*

Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam was one of those few refined scholars of this century to whom it has been given to sound the depths of Tamil wisdom and enjoy the heights of beauty attained by Tamil literature and the Tamil Fine Arts. With the background of his Western education and with the aid of his knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit, not to mention English and French, Sir Arunachalam had the enviable advantage of appraising the value and place of Tamil Culture in the context of World Culture.

His Tamil learning was not in a little measure responsible for the deep-seated love he had for the progress and prosperity of Ceylon and the Tamil speaking peoples of Ceylon. While his brilliant career as a statesman and patriot is familiar to the people of Ceylon, they are not so familiar with the aspect of his life that represents his scholarship and his devotion to Tamil studies. Many of his speeches reveal a mind steeped



in the traditional Tamil lore, and the classicism of his language and the brevity, precision and unction characteristic of his style, were not a little due to his familiarity with Tamil poets. As President of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch) and as President of the Ceylon University Association, he contributed greatly to the cultural life of the island and to creating interest in Tamiliana.

There is no better evidence of his scholarship, of his vast erudition and of his interest in his mother tongue than the volume from his pen modestly entitled "*Studies and Translations, Philosophical and Religious*", (The Colombo Apothecaries Co. Ltd. 1937). The studies unfold a variety of topics but in each one of them the reader will note a thorough and critical examination of the subject matter. Whether he speaks of Eastern ideals in education or finds Hellenic memories in the purity of line and the perfection of proportion in the Siva temple of Polonaruwa or traces the history of the worship of Muruka in Ceylon, Sir. P. Arunachalam is endowed with an erudition and poise that even professional scholars may envy. His translations of poems from the *Purananuru*, of Nakkirar, of Manikka Vachakar, Tayumanavar, are classical renderings of poems that influenced his life and fired his imagination.

For the benefit of readers who may not have an occasion to read Sir P. Arunachalam's book, we give below a few paragraphs of his commentary on the second poem of *Purananuru*, while apologising on behalf of our printers who regret that just now they are unable to reproduce passages in the original Greek. The poem is a panegyric addressed to the munificent Cera king, Utiyancheralatan who is said to have fed the armies of the Pandavas and Kauravas of the Mahabharatha war.

"It is interesting to compare the poem" says Sir Arunachalam, "with similar odes of a nearly contemporary Latin poet, Horace, who, in the opinion of Quintilian, "almost alone of lyrists is worthy to be read", and whose odes, more than

any other of his writings, display, as a later critic has said, the charm of "exquisite aptness of language and a style perfect for fulness of suggestion, combined with brevity and grace." Take, *e.g.*, the panegyrics addressed to the Emperor Augustus (Odes 14 and 15 of Book IV). Compare :-

நின்கடற் பிறந்த ஞாயிறு பெயர்த்துநின்  
வெண்டலைப் புணரிக் குடகடற் குளிக்கும்  
யாணர் வைப்பி னன்னாட்டுப் பொருந்

"Warrior-king of the good land of wealth ever new in whose western sea of the white-headed ocean the sun born in thy sea laves," with

Latinum nomen et Italae  
Crevere vires famaue et imperi  
Porrecta majestas ad ortus  
Solis ab Hesperio cubili.

"The glory of Latinum and the might of Italy grew and the renown and majesty of the empire was extended to the rising of the sun from his chamber in the west."

"Wealth ever new," an allusion to the wealth yielded by the sea (pearls, fish, salt, &c.) and by commerce with foreign nations whose vessels frequented the king's ports.

"The 'white' headed ocean" flashes on the mind some such scene as described in the *Iliad* (IV, 422 et seq.).

"As when on the echoing beach the sea-wave lifteth up itself in close array before the driving of the west wind, out on the deep does it first raise its head, and then breaketh upon the land and belloweth loud and goeth with arching crest about the promontories and speweth the foaming brine afar."

"அலங்குரைப் புரளி யைவரோடு கிணை." "Wroth with the Five (heroes) of the horses of tossing mane", suggests horsemen in battle with a vividness combining that of Homer's—

"Speedeth at the gallop across the plain exulting, and holdeth his head on high and his mane is tossed about his shoulders" (*Iliad* VI, 510), with Horace's

Impiger hostium  
Vexare turmas et frementem  
Mittere equum medios per ignes.

"Swift to overthrow the enemy's squadrons and drive the neighing charger through the midst of the fires."

The "large-eyed does" with their "wee-headed fawns" slumbering peacefully on the mountains by the light and warmth of the hermit's fires — exquisitely beautiful as a picture — are suggestive of the confidence and security with which the king's subjects live under his rule.

The Tamil poet, moreover, strikes a higher spiritual note than Horace. While the Roman dwells on the glories of Augustus gained in the battle field and by the extension of his empire, and on his achievements as civil administrator and guardian of the public peace and morals, the other poet, touching on these, passes on to nobler graces of character, forgiveness of injuries and steadfastness in the pursuit of high ideals."

Every commemoration of such illustrious embodiments of Tamil Culture cannot but remind us of the pitiful state of Tamil leadership of lack of leadership that we experience to-day. Though students and scholars ought to develop an attitude of disinterestedness in politics yet the course of culture is so bound up with political conditions and trends that even a quarterly journal such as ours cannot but regret the poor leadership that is so marked in Tamildom. In the political, educational, economic and social fields, the Tamils seem to show a remarkable aptitude to be camp-followers and opportunists. Our students show a painful disregard for excelling in studies; and exhibit a want of initiative and courage, two compelling qualities necessary for progress. Statesmanship and scholarship that formed a delightful combination in the two distinguished Tamils about whom we have written seem conspicuously absent in most of those who aspire to leadership among the

Tamils. Our leaders should be endowed with the vision that is the result of travel and a study of history, with the experience that is the gift of a knowledge of men and books, with the outlook that is the result of learning and wisdom. Leadership and mediocrity seem to have joined hands to the great detriment of Tamil culture.

It is necessary at this juncture of our history that our statesmen be scholars as well for it is then that they will realise the greatness of their calling and the role they are expected to play in passing on to the next generation the accumulation of our past cultural achievements. The world of the present does go on changing, the culture of our time progresses ; yet the role played in this evolution by what was accomplished through generations which have gone before, is severely under-estimated. Unless our leaders are aware of the heritage that is theirs and the heritage of which they are the custodians, they will hardly play fair by the people they represent. In Sir Shanmukam Chetty and in Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam they have inspiring examples. May we continue to have such statesmen-scholars. *Exoriare aliquis.*

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# *Tamil Catholic Literature in Ceylon*

FROM THE 16TH TO THE 18TH CENTURY

RT. REV. DR. EDMUND PEIRIS, O.M.I.

IN 1505, eight years after Vasco da Gama had doubled the Cape of Good Hope, a Portuguese fleet under a young nobleman, called Lourenço de Almeida, the son of the first Viceroy of India, cast anchor in the roadstead of Colombo. With the permission of the King of Kotte, then the Western Kingdom of Ceylon, he built near the harbour a trading place or factory and, leaving a few soldiers there, departed to India. In 1518, the Portuguese returned to Colombo, and, this time, they erected a fortress. A Franciscan Friar looked after the spiritual interests of this little colony. Six years later they abandoned the fort, on account of the opposition of the inhabitants; some soldiers however went with their chaplain to live with the friendly king of Kotte. This Friar and a priest, sent by the king of Portugal to minister to the Portuguese who still lived in Colombo, began to speak to the people about Christianity and made the first converts. But organized missionary work did not start until 1543, when four Franciscans under Friar Joao de Villa de Conde came to Ceylon, on the invitation of the Sinhalese King. Such were the beginnings of Christianity on the western coast of Ceylon, where the Sinhalese predominate.

There is, however, evidence to show that Franciscan missionaries had carried the Gospel message to the northern districts of the Island as early as 1520. Here again, the mass movement towards Christianity did not begin till 1543. The

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The Rt. Rev. Dr. Edmund Peiris, O.M.I., literary critic and historian, is Bishop of Chilaw, Ceylon.



people of the island of Mannar embraced Christianity under the influence of St. Francis Xavier and proved their constancy by laying down their lives for the Faith. Their blood spoke and the inhabitants of the Jaffna peninsula listened to the message of Christ. The people of the North of Ceylon are Tamils and belong, both racially and culturally, to the great Dravidian block of South India. Christianity found them adherents of an ancient religious system, sprung from the soil, and deeply rooted in the allegiance of millions, enriched with a literature venerable and vast and well developed, observed in a minute daily ritual and hallowed by every form of art.

The missionary, who came among such a people had to know their language not only to converse with them but also to announce and explain and defend the doctrines of Christianity. It is easy enough nowadays for a new comer to learn the languages of a missionary country ; but in those pioneer days there were no books and he had to learn by the slow and painful direct method. He had also to discover or invent suitable terms to express accurately the ideas, often intricate, of Christian philosophy and theology. Then, there was the problem of harnessing for the service of the Church all that was best and noblest in the existing culture. Among the missionaries, however, there were not a few whose culture and spirit of critical study and scientific research, enabled them to master the vernaculars.

The first European missionary in Ceylon to grasp the intricacies of Tamil grammar was Fr. Anrrique Anrriques, S.J., sometimes called Henry Henriquez. He was born in 1520, entered the Society of Jesus on the 8th of October 1545 and set out for India in 1546. He began the study of Tamil on the recommendation of St. Francis Xavier and the encouragement of St. Ignatius Loyola. From 1561 to 1564, he was in Mannar, and, in 1566 became the head of the Tamil University set up at Punnaikayal, where he had as assistant Brother Pero Luis, a Brahmin convert of his, the first Indian to be received into the Society of Jesus. This Brother had been

with him for a time at Mannar, helping him in his literary work. In the midst of his missionary labours, Fr. Anriquez wrote a Tamil Grammar and Vocabulary for the use of Missionaries and translated into Tamil a Method for Confession, a Life of Saints and the Christian Doctrine of Marcos Jorge adding to it a method of instruction by question and answer. A copy in Tamil of his "Vitae Christi Domini, Beatissimae Virginis et aliorum Sanctorum", sent to Rome in 1602, is now in the Bibliotheca Vaticana. (rf. *The Jesuits in Ceylon* by Fr. S. G. Perera, S.J., pp. 18, 19, 156, 157; *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London, Vol. 3, Pt. I, p. 144*). To print his works, a Spanish Jesuit Lay Brother, called Joao Gon-salves, set up at Cochin in 1577 a printing press, which was later perfected by Fr. Joao de Faria, a distinguished name in Indo-Portuguese architecture. (rf. *Missionary Pioneers and Indian Languages* by Dahlmann, S.J., p. 7).

In a letter written from Mannar on the 19th of December 1561, Fr. Anriquez speaks of an attempt made by him to provide his converts with canticles, composed by a Tamil Christian in Colombo under the inspiration of Friar Joao de Villa de Conde. "In Ceylon," he says, "there is a Malabar (i.e., Tamil) singer, a Christian, with whom a Franciscan Friar, named Friar Joao de Vila de Conde, has some dealings with regard to a prose catechism in the manner of canticles, which they are wont to learn in schools, and also other Canticles, in praise of GOD and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which they are accustomed to sing like what our orphans sing. It is some time since this singer had composed them, and knowing that Pearl Fishery is taking place here, he sent to the Pattangâtins and the chief men what he had composed and for which he had already been rewarded by the said Friar Joao. The Christians were very pleased to hear of such a Catechism and Canticles, which are now being sung throughout this place, and they fixed 50 cruzados (gold coins). Moreover, some young men with good voices, who learnt these canticles sing them in certain parts where the Christians assemble . . . The said Friar Joao himself wrote to me to see

whether there were errors and whether they could be printed, for which reason, I think there are errors in the canticles which I cannot find, because of the obscure Malabar, which I do not understand nor is commonly spoken ; and, as there was with the said Friar Joao a Priest of the country who knew Latin well and something of the making of canticles, I wrote to ask him to come here, so that we might amend them together. The Malabar Father wrote to me that, if I sent him a message to this effect, he would see about the Catechism and that, after the corrections, it would be excellent and should be printed." But there is no further information available on this interesting work.

We are, however, more fortunate with regard to two other Tamil poetical works of the Portuguese period ; one is the *Gnānap-Pallu* (ஞானப்பள்ளு) and the other *Santiōgu Māior Ammānai* (சந்தியோகு மாயோர் அம்மாளை). They are in print, although the copies are somewhat rare.

The *Santiōgu Māior Ammānai* is perhaps the oldest Catholic vernacular literary work extant in Ceylon. It was composed in 1647 by "the learned Pedro of the race of the Aryas", who had been converted to Christianity by Fr. Joao Carvalho, S.J., and baptised in the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul at Tellipalai, in the Jaffna peninsula. The purpose of the poem is to celebrate the famous shrine of St. James the Great at Kilali. All this is stated in the Preface to the poem, written by a pupil of the author. In the body of the poem the author gives his sources and a glimpse of the fame of the shrine in his time. The relevant passage is worth reproducing here, especially as a specimen of the poet's craft.

பாண்டிக் கரையதனிற் பாதர்கள் கோத்திரத்தோர்  
வேண்டு சந்தியோகு கதை விருத்தப் பாவாய் உரைத்தார்  
வேறும் இதுவன்றி வேண்டும் பெரியோர்கள்  
கூறினார் மெத்தக் குறிப்பான காரியங்கள்  
ஆனதெல்லாங் கற்றுணர்ந்து அற்ப புத்தியோடுல்கர்  
தானறிய விக்கதையைச் சாற்றுகிறேன் கேட்டருளீர்.

வாம்பரிமேல் ஏறி மகிமைச் சுவட்ணிந்து  
நாம் பணிய நீதி நடத்து சந்தியாகுவுக்கு  
எச்சரிக்கையாக விளங்கிய யாழ்ப்பாண மதில்  
பச்சிலைப் பள்ளியெனும் பற்றிற கிழாவியிலே  
கொம்பாஞ்ஞ தே சேசுக் கூட்டத்திலுள்ளவர்கள்  
நம்பிச் சமைத்து வைத்த நல்லாலயத்திருந்து  
ஆருந்தமைத் தேடி அஞ்சலிக்க வாறவர்க்குத்  
தேறும் அனந்த நவம் செய்தேயிருப்பது மெய் ;  
செய் நவத்தினுற் கோடி செனங்கலிங்கே வாறார்கள்  
ஐயமற விங்கு வந்தோர் ஆசையுற்றுக் கேட்பதற்கு

... ..

துங்கக் கவிதை செய்யத் துணிந்தேனே அம்மான்.

The translation : "Gentle readers, the descendants of the Parathar living in Pandik-karai have composed the story of the worshipful Santiago in the *viruttam* metre. And many other learned people have also written important notices on the same subject. Having made a study of all these works, I am relating this story for the sake of the public at large in a manner that will be easily understood. Santiago who mounted on a bounding steed and wearing a glorious coat of armour, protects us his worshippers, works indeed innumerable miracles for the comfort of all those who go to honour him in the excellent church reverently built for him by the faith of the members of the 'Companha de Jesus' at Kilali in the Pachilaipaly Pattu of illustrious Jaffna. Crores of people are coming here on account of the wonders wrought in this place. I have endeavoured to recount this choice story to satisfy the desire of those who hopefully flock to this place." (rf. *Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register*, vol. 3, pt. iii, pp. 187-192).

The work is divided into 55 sections each headed by one or more *viruttam*, a species of quatrain in various forms. The work was in manuscript until 1894, when it was printed for the first time at the "Atchuvelli Gnana-prakasa Press", Jaffna. The text, without any comment or critical notes, was printed again in 1930.

The *Gnānap-pallu* belongs to the same period. Rev. Fr. S. Gnana Prakasaṁ, O.M.I., gives the following description of this poem. "The author's name is not known. The date of the composition, however, is made out to be between 1644 and 1650 or a little later. For the author says he composed the poem with the help and at the instance of the Jesuit Father Sebastiao Fonseca, who is known from other sources to have been in Ceylon between 1644 and 1650. (rf. *Catalogus Operariorum S. J. Qui in Ceylana . . . by Fr. L. Besse, S.J., p. 21*). *Pallu* or *Ulatipāddu* (உலத்திபாட்டு) is one of the 96 conventional kinds of literary composition in Tamil called *Pirabandam*. It is a species of pastoral in two sorts of verse, the *cintu* or lyric songs and *viruttam* (விருத்தம்) or quatrains. It has to comprise some 40 items which are detailed in Beschi's *Tonnūl* iii, 283. In *Gnānap-pallu* or 'spiritual pastoral' we have (1) Invocation to GOD, (2) Enter Pallan, representing Jesus Christ, and the older and younger Pallis, representing Jerusalem and Rome respectively, (3) Eulogy of Jerusalem and of Rome, (4) Fertility of the two lands eulogised, (5) the praises of the Triune GOD and of the Incarnate Word, (6) Prayer for rain, (7) Description of clouds and of rain . . ., (8) The song of the *koil* or Indian cuckoo, (9) Enter the Proprietor of the fields — GOD, the Father, (10) The Proprietor finds fault with the Pallis, (11) Enter the Pallan, (12) Inquiry into the cultivation and calling to account, (13) The older Palli complains, (14) The Pallan replies, (15) The Pallan accuses the older Palli, (16) She is put in stocks, (17) Her lament, (18) She is liberated, (19) The ploughing of the field, (20) The oxen fall on the Pallan and bruise him, (21) He is helped to arise by the Pallis, who lament him over his sufferings, (22) The planting of paddy, (23) The harvesting, (24) Heaping up the sheaves, (25) Dispute between the two Pallis finally settled by the Proprietor. The poem is brimful of interest to the lover of Tamil, as it is couched in elegant classical language and abounds in poetical fancies. The only printed edition is of 1904, but full of errors and misprints. 16 mo, pp. 50."

## TAMIL CATHOLIC LITERATURE IN CEYLON 235

This work may be considered the earliest specimen of Tamil Catholic dramatic poetry we possess, although there is a record of a Catholic drama in Tamil acted at Kammala in 1612, the subject of which was the Creation of the World and the Incarnation of Christ. (*Letter of Emm. Barradas, S.J., 15 Dec. 1613*).

In spite of the wars and strifes that agitated the Jaffna peninsula during the days of the Portuguese and notwithstanding the meagre information available at present about the literary activities of those pioneering days, it is clear that an effort was made by clergymen and laymen alike to produce a Tamil Catholic literature. In India, it was the period when Fr. Robert de Nobili and his brother Jesuits, Frs. Emmanuel Martinez and Anthony de Proenza wrote Catholic works in elegant Tamil and even had them printed. Their noble example had its followers in Ceylon, and would perhaps have had its rivals too, but for the abrupt ending of all missionary work on the conquest of Jaffna by the Dutch in 1658. That same year on the 19th September, the new rulers issued a proclamation forbidding, on pain of death, the harbouring or concealing of Catholic priests : all acts of Catholic worship were declared to be crimes ; Catholics were compelled to baptize, marry and bury, according to the rites of the Dutch Reformed Church and to send their children to the proselytizing schools set up by the Dutch. The Catholics were thus deprived of their priests and all spiritual aid. This state of affairs lasted about four decades when GOD inspired a holy Priest, the Venerable Father Joseph Vaz, to come of his own accord to the rescue of the Catholics of Ceylon. He arrived in Jaffna in 1687 and worked alone for nine years, when the Congregation of the Oratory of Goa, which he had himself founded, sent him fellow workers. Their combined effort saved the Church in Ceylon from utter destruction.

At the time Father Vaz arrived in Ceylon all traces of works written in Tamil by the Portuguese missionaries had almost vanished ; there were no books giving a settled form



of prayers or catechism, while such books were badly needed, as the Priests were not able to stay long enough in any single place to give adequate instruction. Fr. Vaz had, therefore, himself composed in Tamil with great labour a catechism of the Christian doctrine, a manual of prayers and litanies, and translated the meditations of the Way of the Cross, first written by him in Konkani at Goa. They were afterwards revised by Fr. Gonsalvez, whom Fr. Vaz had commissioned to provide the Catholics in Ceylon with books of instruction and edification. (*Oratorian Mission* p. 74 ; *Vida by Do Rego*, 2nd. edit. V, 57, n. 14).

• When the Bishop of Cochin, under whose jurisdiction Ceylon then was, came to hear that a new Tamil version of such common prayers as the Our Father, the Angelical Salutation and the Creed, was in use among the Catholics, he disapproved it on the score that his sanction had not been obtained previously and that it was improper to discard the version which already prevailed in South India. Fr. Gonsalvez' defence was that the Indian version was defective. But his Ordinary was not satisfied with this explanation. Therefore, on the 12th of February, 1735, Fr. Gonsalvez wrote to his Bishop, in all humility and submission, begging pardon for his fault and requesting him to impose on the offender "a rigorous penance". The people, however, persisted in using the new version. The whole episode is found in a number of letters, now in the State archives of Goa. (cf. *Ven. Fr. Joseph Vaz*, Vol. I, Series 3, July 1942, pp. 11-15). In view of the revision of these prayers recently undertaken by a board of Catholic writers in the Tamil Nad, Fr. Gonsalvez' version of the *Hail Mary*, will be of much interest. It is taken from a manuscript of his *Christiyāni Alayam*.

தேவ தூதன் மங்களம்

மங்களம் மரியே பிரிய பிரசாத பூரணியே கர்த்தர்  
உம்மண்டையே ஸ்திரிகளில் ஆசீர்வதிக்கப்பட்டவள்  
நீரே, உமது திருவுதரத்தின் பலனாகிய யேசுவும் ஆசீர்  
வதிக்கப்பட்டவராமே.

ஆராதிஷ்ட மரியே தேவமாதாவே பாவிளான எங்களுக்காக இப்போதும் எங்கள் சாங்காலத்திலும் பிரார்த்தியும். ஆமென் யேசு.

The Priest, whose writings had the profoundest influence on the Catholics of Ceylon, was Fr. Jacome Gonsalvez. Like Fr. Joseph Vaz, he was a Konkani Brahmin of Goa and a member of the Oratory of the Holy Cross of Miracles. After a brilliant career in the Jesuit College of Goa and the Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas, he entered the Oratory in 1700, and left for the Ceylon missions in 1705. He had to wait three months on the southern coast of India to get a boat to cross over to Ceylon. This period he turned into good account by studying Tamil. Fr. Vaz, aware of the intellectual abilities of the new missionary, set him apart to study Sinhalese and Tamil and produce the books necessary for the instruction and edification of the Catholics ; and, nobly did he rise to the occasion not only by supplying the pressing need of the time but also by composing a large number of elegant works in the two languages spoken in the country. A list of his Tamil books is given below, with their descriptions culled mostly from the writings of the late Fr. Gnana Prakasar, O.M.I. of Nallur, Jaffna.

*Christiyāni Alayam* (the Christian's treasure-house) is, perhaps, his earliest work in Tamil. The sub-titles are : "What a Christian ought to believe ; how he should worship and what he ought to practise". It gives the common prayers, a short Catechism of Christian doctrine, an examination of conscience, a method of reciting the rosary, with brief meditations, which are very popular to this day, the Litany of Loretto, meditations for Mass, explanation of the ceremonies of baptism, counsels and prayers for the sick, the ceremonies of Christian burial and translations of some of the prayers of the Roman Ritual to ward off the influence of evil spirits and various other calamities and sicknesses. It is the oldest prayer book in Tamil now extant, and, although it has never been printed, a good part of it has found its way into printed books.

*Dēva Arulveda Pūrānam* (1725) is in two parts, *Puran-tima Kāndam* and *Paccima Kāndam*, i.e., the Old and the New Testament. This is a compendium of sacred history, from the book of Genesis to the Apocalypse, interspersed with dissertations on Christian doctrine and refutation of heresy and paganism. The two parts were printed separately in 1886, the first part consisting of 197 pages and the second 130 pages.

*Sattiya Vēdāgama Sanshēpam* (1736) is more or less a summary of the *Pūrana*, in catechetical form. It is divided into eight eras or *yugams*, a *yugam* being subdivided into sections; the last *yugam* is that of Christ and is given in 21 sections. The work was printed in Madras in 1875.

*Suvisēsha Viritturai* (1728) is an explanation of the Gospels of Sundays and Feast days and is yet very popular in Ceylon. In a letter to the Bishop of Cochin, Fr. Gonsalvez informs him how the work came to be written. "There was in use here (Ceylon) a version of the Gospels which the Father Censor says was done by a Father of the Society (of Jesus), who first showed the people the way to love the Gospels in the Malabar tongue, which work not being fruitful to the people, because it had no explanations and contained so many errors that it was not possible to correct them (a thing which I cannot ascribe to the author but to the copyists), I was forced by the people's request to do this with its explanation and doctrine." (rf. *Ven. Fr. Joseph Váz, loc. cit. p. 15*). It was first printed in 1848. Although its style is rich in its Sanskrit turn of sentences, similar to the *mani-pravāla* of the Jains, there is a charm in its majestic diction which captivates the reader.

*Viyākula Pirasangam* (1730) consists of nine sermons on the Passion of Our Lord. It is the most popular and soul-stirring of Fr. Gonsalvez' works. These sermons are always chanted to a mournful tune and are still used in many a Catholic home during Lent and at Passion plays in Holy Week. It was printed in Colombo in 1844. Fr. Gonsalvez

wrote Passion chants or *Oppari* to supplement the sermons. He says in the letter quoted above, "There existed here some ancient hymns of sorrow about Christ, which the women singing over the dead, the heretics began to speak ill ; for this reason, the people asked me to compose for them others suitable for occasions of mourning." The sermons as well as the chants bear witness to the author's tender devotion to the Passion of Christ. They have a pathos seldom met with in prose or verse in any language.

In order to acquaint Catholics with the life and virtues of the Saints, he composed the *Tarma Uttiyānam* (Garden of Virtues), where he deals with the lives of 30 Saints. It was written in 1736 but was never printed. *Aṭputa Varalāru* (Miraculous Legends) is attributed to Fr. Gonsalvez, for very good reasons, although it is not found in the list given in the Oratorian records. (cf. *Oratorian Mission*, pp. 251-2). The purpose of this work is given in its sub-title : "to confirm the Faith and enforce pious conduct." It contains 53 legends on the Commandments of GOD and of the Church, 23 on the devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and a few on the souls in Purgatory. A part of it was printed in 1918, the rest of it is still in manuscript. It is not unlikely that Fr. Gonsalvez used two works, well known at the time, in the composition of the two books just mentioned : the *Flos Sanctorum*, a Tamil translation of which was printed about the year 1580, and the "Tratado dos Milagres", printed at Rachol in 1655. (cf. *Queyroz*, p. 688 ; *Miss. Pioneers and Ind. Languages*, p. 7 ; *Bulletin of the Sch. of Oriental Studies*, loc. cit. p. 142).

The *Gnāna Unartchy* (*Spiritual Exhortation*) and the *Sukirta Tarpanam* (*Mirror of Virtues*), were designed by the author, to assist Catholics in making their Spiritual Exercises. The *Unartchy* was written in 1734 and the *Tarpanam* in the following year. The former contains 14 vigorous exhortations, dealing with the soul, the end of man, malice of sin, vanity of life, death, judgement, hell and heaven ; the latter, in 15 chapters, leads the repentant soul in the path of virtue.

For wealth of illustration, graphic details and directness of appeal, these two works are hard to beat. They were printed, one in 1844, the other in 1914. Some writers have attributed the *Unartchy* to Fr. Constantine Beschi, S.J., but, as Fr. Gnana Prakasar has shown, it is clearly the work of Fr. Gonsalvez.

Among the controversial works of Fr. Gonsalvez, *Vattiyārum Kudiyānavanum Tarkittukonda Tarkam*, in defence of Catholic doctrines which are generally attacked by Protestants, was written in 1715 and printed in 1923. Four other works, *Nava Tarkam* (1732), a comparison between the Catholic Church and the Reformed Churches, *Musalman Vēdam* (1734), on the origin and errors of Mohammedanism, *Kadavul Nirnayam* (1720) a refutation of paganism, and *Nālu Vēdam* (1738), the four religions, i.e., Hinduism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism and Calvinism, are listed in Oratorian records, but nothing more is known about them (*Orat. Mission*, p. 252).

From the time of their conquest of Jaffna, the Dutch set up an organization for the propagation of the Reformed religion. In 1690, they opened a Seminary at Jaffna for higher education, all clergymen were instructed by Government to learn the vernaculars and, from 1737, Tamil religious works were printed and circulated among the people. A Catechism, the Gospels and a set of sermons were brought out between 1739 and 1746; and in later years Philip de Mello, Native proponent and scholar, wrote in elegant Tamil several works against the Catholic Church. Under such circumstances, it was essential that the Catholics should be well instructed in their own Faith and equipped to meet the arguments of their adversaries. The service, which Fr. Gonsalvez rendered to the Catholics of his time, was, indeed, incalculable.

Five years before the arrival of Fr. Gonsalvez, a Catholic layman, named, Arulappa Poologasingha Mudaliyar, of Tellipalai, wrote a poem, known as *Tiruchchelvar Kāvīyam*, embodying the story of Barlaam and Josaphat. It has 1946

*viruttams*, divided into 23 *padalams*, beginning with *Naddu-padalam*, as required by the conventionalism of an epic. Simon Casie Chitty speaks also of a Catholic scholar, called Lorenzo Pulaver, born of a Catholic family, who traced their Faith to the time of the introduction of Christianity to Mannar in the days of St. Francis Xavier. He was a native of Pasikulam, in Mantotte, and is said to have flourished about the middle of the 18th century. Many excellent hymns in honour of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother are attributed to him. (rf. *Tamil Plutarch*, pp.57, 58).

The Oratorian contribution to Tamil Catholic literature did not end with Fr. Jacome Gonsalvez, for, about 36 years after him, there came to Ceylon another Goan Oratorian, who trod in his footsteps, both as a scholar and a missionary. (*Letter of Antonio Ribeiro, 3 May 1779*). "Father Master Gabriel Pacheco" says an Oratorian Report, "who went to the island of Ceylon with great eagerness and applied himself to the study of the languages with great diligence, is now so proficient that he has already composed a vocabulary of the Tamil language. He had also written seven meditations on the Seven Dolours of Our Lady, the origin of the Religious Order of the Servites, a method of saying the Rosary of the Dolours and a Catalogue of the obligations of those who have received the Scapular of the Seven Dolours. He has also written in Tamil a Catechism of Christian doctrine approved by the Bishop of Cochin. Father Superior writes that this catechism has done much good, that women and children of Colombo and Negombo know it by heart and that the children discuss the truths taught in it. He is also fairly well versed in the Hollander language and now preaches publicly in that language in Colombo to the great admiration of the people and even of the Reformados, many of whom come to hear his sermons. As the learned Reformados are now with their Bibles in their hands to confute Catholic truth, the Father has asked me for a work of Natal Alexander and another of Calmet and one of Pedro Anat, as Father Pacheco desires to translate them into Tamil. I have already sent II volumes



of Calmet and his dictionary, nine volumes of Natal Alexander and two of Pedro Anat, by a vessel that set sail from Cochin. I hope they have reached him safe." (*Report by Sebastian Mascarenhas, 20 Jan. 1787*).

The *magnum opus* of Fr. Pacheco is *Tēvappirasaiyṉ Tirukkatai* (தேவப்பிரசையின் திருக்கதை) or the history of the people of GOD : a history of Israel and of the Catholic Church. It was printed for the first time in 1880 at St. Joseph's Convent Press, Mannanam, by Fr. Cyriacus a S. Eliseo, T.O.C.D., after it had been "corrected" by one J. A. Vyakappapillai. The work ran into five volumes, each volume containing, on an average, about 500 pages. Copies of this work are now very rare.

Fr. Pacheco also translated into Tamil the Life of Ven. Fr. Joseph Vaz, written by Fr. Sebastian do Rego in 1742. It was abridged and published by the late Fr. S. Gnana Prakasar, O.M.I., of Jaffna. The popular catechism mentioned in the above report is *Gnāna-appam* (ஞானப்பம்) or Spiritual Bread, written about the year 1785. It was later translated into Sinhalese by another Oratorian Priest. Fr. Pacheco's tender devotion towards Our Lady shows itself in *Alukaiykkuravai* (அழுகைக்குரவை) meditations on her Seven Dolours, composed in 1787 and Novena of Meditations and Prayers on the Holy Rosary, called *Sebamālai Mādavin Navanāl* (செபமலை மாதாவின் நவநாள்). Both works were published in Jaffna, under the editorship of Fr. Gnana Prakasar. *Tiviya Pālanin Nava Tina Urtcavam* (திவ்விய பாலனின் நவதின உற்சவம்), nine days' preparation for Christmas, and *Tanitta Vāttrumākkaludaiya sallāpavakanin Nibandanam* (தனித்த வாற்றுமாக்களுடைய சல்லாபவகனின் நிபந்தனம்) or "elevations on the Mysteries of religion" are also from the pen of Fr. Pacheco. Of these two, the first has been published and is very popular ; but the second is yet in manuscript. Simon Casie Chitty attributes the following works to Fr. Pacheco : A life of St. Francis Xavier and a book on the Six Divine Attributes (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (C.B.), No. 4, p. 80 ; No. 5, p. 185).

The example of Fr. Pacheco inspired another Oratorian, Fr. Sebastian Pereira, to devote himself to the apostolate of the pen. He translated, among other works, the *Imitation of Christ*. But as he arrived in Ceylon only in 1818, his literary activities do not belong to the period under review. There is an *Ammānai* in honour of St. Nicholas, said to have been composed in "the days of Pedro Santo, a Goan Priest"; but of him we have no information at all. It was, however, printed in Jaffna about 45 years ago. In 1757, one Francis Pillai Pulaver wrote a set of verses, which, Fr. Gnana Prakassar, has described as "a conventional poem celebrating the different stages of the Infancy of Our Saviour." This, too, was printed in Jaffna in 1904.

Tamil Catholic literature in Ceylon, from its inception came under the influence of such eminent scholars as Frs. Robert de Nobili and Constantine Beschi, of the Society of Jesus. During the Dutch persecution, the two literary men, who dominated in the Ceylon missions, were Frs. Gonsalvez and Pacheco. They wrote not only doctrinal and devotional books, but also controversial tracts and treatises. Such works were very necessary at the time, because of the determined effort of the Protestants to discredit the doctrines of the Church, with a view to arresting its steady progress. For instance, in 1753, the Dutch Government Press in Colombo issued a work known as *Sattiyattin Jeyam*, (the Triumph of Truth) by Philip de Mello, scholar and preacher. It was a bitter attack on Catholic doctrine, served up in very good Tamil. The Catholic reply was a book called *Sattiya Virōda Sankāram* (the Annihilation of the Enemies of Truth), attributed to Fr. Pacheco by Simon Casie Chitty. (*op. cit.* No. 5, p. 185). As the Catholics of those days had not the luxury of a printing press, they circulated handwritten copies of it. The literary activity of the Clergy was encouraged and shared by the laity as well. The 16th, 17th and 18th centuries were a period of literary pioneers, novices and consummate craftsmen. No study of Tamil Catholic literature can be complete without a correct appreciation of their literary productions.

But — tell it not in Gath ! — much of their labour of love is yet in manuscript or in incunabula ; and, even of that, a good part would have perished but for the enterprise of the late Fr. Gnana Prakasar. It is fervently hoped that the literary movement of which *Tamil Culture* is the sign and symbol, will bend its energies to edit and publish the Catholic Tamil works of the pioneers, at least as a token of appreciation of the services of the greatest Tamil Catholic scholar of our age.

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# *When the Dravidian South led India*

A NEGLECTED PERIOD OF SOUTH INDIAN HISTORY

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IT IS generally admitted that there was in the south of India a flourishing Dravidian civilisation before Aryans ; or their pastoral culture came into the north. When, early in this century, Professor P. Sundram Pillai, claimed that the beginnings of Indian History have to be traced on the banks of the Vaigai and the Caveri, it received almost unanimous support from historians. But politics can dominate everything else ; great empires rose in the north, and largely because of geographical position, dominated the south also. This tradition which started with the Maurayas in the third century B. C., and which has continued to our own days, had however some forcible interruptions, although brief, during which the South, largely by its economic strength, consolidated itself under Dravidian Rulers, and carried its political influence into the north, as far as the Himalayas. This paper deals with one such interruption, which occurred during the first two centuries of the Christian Era.

It was South India, south of Tirupati, then called Tamilagam, that came into great prominence, 1700 years ago.<sup>(1)</sup> In Tamilagam were three chief kingdoms (*Muvareser*), Chera, Chola and Pandya. Each of these attained suzerainty over the other two (*Mummudi*) at various times, but during the period under notice, it was the turn of the Cheras, who had their capital at Musiri (Muziris of the

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<sup>1</sup> The rise of the Andhras about this time is also in point. )

Romans), also called Vanchi and Karur. That was India's principal port then, and here was centred India's foreign trade. Two of the Chera kings of the time, namely Imayavaramban-Cheraladan, and Chenkuttavan, are reported to have invaded the Gangetic plain and defeated Aryan kings and Yavana settlers. The former assumed his ambitious title by dominating the country as far as the Himalayas (*i.e.* made the Himalayas his boundary). Abundant archaeological data are yet lacking in support of this claim. But, the fact of these invasions is, perhaps better attested than the reputed conquests of Samudragupta, the so-called Indian Napoleon, in the 4th century A. D. Yet the exploits of South India have not been incorporated in the history of India. Perhaps this is due to the lethargy of the southerners, but the prejudice of the northerners has also played some part in this.

### *Historical Sources*

It may be that the sources for the history of the south are scrappy, but this period (1st to 3rd century, A. D.) is illuminated by many contemporary Tamil and Greek sources of rare value. In Pliny's *Natural History* (c. 50 A.D.), *Periplus Maris Aerithrae* (c. 70 A.D.), and in Ptolemy's *Geography* (c. 150 A. D.), we have detailed accounts of the Tamil kingdoms, and we know from these works that Rome's Eastern trade was centred in Chera, Chola and Pandya ports, because most of the goods required came from that part of the country. But these Greek writings throw little light on the political condition of the country. This void, however, is filled by important Tamil works of the time, which were written in or around Kerala, which was then at the helm of Tamilakam. *Padittuppathu*, *Chilappadikaram*, *Manimekalai*, *Akunanuru*, *Purananuru* — these classical Tamil works are not now familiar to Kerala people, but three of them were written by leading poets of Kerala, when Tamil was its language, and they deal largely with the exploits of the Cheraman kings of the time. The first work above named eulogises ten leading Chera kings. *Chilappadikaram* was written by the scholarly brother (Ilango-Adigal) of the greatest Chera king of the

age, Chenkuttavan, who also held hegemony over all Tamila-kam, as is generally admitted. Thus, what may be called the Augustan Age of Tamil Literature synchronised with the period during which the Tamils dominated the political life as well as the trade of the country.

Although such important historical sources, internal and external, are available for this early period of South Indian history, those have not been properly worked out, and this magnificent period of South Indian history still remains obscure. For one thing, the great epic *Chilappadikaram*, although available in English in the excellent work by Professor V. R. R. Dikshitar, has not been given its due place in Indian History. A reconstruction of the history of this period on proper lines is a great need. In the present paper, it is proposed to deal chiefly with trade and navigation, and also with the state of religion and culture.

### *Early Trade*

From very ancient times, South India had trade with China and Indonesia in the east, and Arabia, Abyssinia, Egypt, Greece and Rome in the west. Spices, precious stones, ivory and sandalwood were much in demand in those countries. This trade goes back to the Chaldaeans (3000 B. C.) and Phoenicians (1000 B. C.). Later, Arabs, Jews and Somalis took active part in this trade. Eventually it fell into the hands of Romans, and under them it flourished most.

This trade with the West formerly went on, partly by the Persian Gulf and the Euphrates valley, and partly by the Red Sea route. The latter ultimately became the principal route. Sailing ships took this cargo from Muziris or from Barygaza (Broach), to Myos Hormus on the Red Sea, and from there caravans took it to Alexandria on the Mediterranean Sea. Early Roman emperors, especially Augustus, valued this trade very much, and gave it every encouragement.



*Discovery of Monsoon Winds*

About the year 45 A.D., the trade through this route was revolutionized, as it were, by the discovery of the monsoon winds, by a navigator called Hippalus. This discovery made it possible for sailing vessels to cut across the Arabian Sea straight from Red Sea mouth to Muziris on the Malabar Coast. Thus was avoided the perilous coastal journey by the Arabian and the Persian coasts, which mariners dreaded. Perhaps the Phoenician and Arab mariners had known and used this route, but it was kept a closed secret by them.

The result of this discovery was to make Kerala, the western Tamil kingdom, the greatest centre of trade, not only of India, but of the whole eastern world. Muziris thus became a port of enviable position in all India, in all the world. The supremacy of Muziris was due, not only to the advantage of the Monsoon winds, but also to the fact that the articles of largest demand in the Roman Empire and China were the produce of Kerala or nearby. Not only beryl from Coimbatore but spikenard from Ganges, and Dacca muslins seem to have come to West Coast ports, mostly borne by bullocks or buffaloes through the overland routes. In other words, a large entrepot trade was carried on in these days at Muziris. In the matter of trade, at any rate, all roads then led to Muziris.

*Pepper Fleets from Malabar*

The chief article which brought Roman traders to Kerala was pepper. Fashionable Rome after her triumph over enemies, wanted all kinds of oriental luxuries—muslins, pearls and spices. And after the conquest of Carthage and other rich lands, there was plenty of gold in Rome to pay for these. The article that loomed largest in bulk and value was pepper ; this was the staple commodity of Roman trade, and formed the great bulk of the cargo of Roman ships. Further, all the pepper available to world trade at the time came from Malabar.

Pepper was from ancient times an important culinary spice in Europe and was used to season food and preserve

meat. It was also an unavoidable ingredient of medicines, and was prescribed by Hippocrates (who calls it the "Indian remedy") and by Galen, Pliny, Celsus and other Greek writers who deal with medicine. In Rome, the use of pepper seems to have become very popular from the time of Augustus, and according to Pliny (XII, 14), its price was as high as 15 denarii (about Rs. 7) per pound. Even higher prices were quoted. The prices in India must have been much lower and the profits realized were as high as 100 per cent according to Pliny. After the discovery of the monsoons and the consequent facilitation of transport the price of pepper fell but this made its demand elastic and such vast quantities had to be imported that about the year 192 A.D., special warehouses called *horrea piperatoria* had to be erected near the *Sacra-Via*. It was ground in pepper mills (*molae piperatoria*), or mortars, and sold in paper packets in *Campus Martius* and other market places. The pots or dishes (often of silver) in which pepper was brought to the table were called 'piperatoria.'

Many Roman writers, especially Pliny, attacked the atrocious tastes of those who needed pepper to whet their appetite. "It is quite surprising," wrote Pliny, "that the use pepper has come so much into fashion, seeing that it is sometimes their substance and sometimes their appearance that has attracted our notice ; whereas pepper has nothing in it that can plead as a recommendation to either fruit or berry, its only desirable quality being a certain pungency ; and yet it is for this that we import it all the way from India. Who was the first to make trial of it as an article of food ? And who, I wonder, was the man who was not content to prepare for himself by hunger only or satisfying of a greedy appetite." (XII, 14.)

In spite of such strictures, the import trade in pepper grew immensely, and Roman merchants made vast profits, at the cost of the poor pepper growers here. It may be that gold and specie, worth over 1·5 crores annually, was sent to India and China. But, Rome got in return a commodity of several times that value in world trade. The importance of pepper

as a trade staple then can be seen from the fact that in 408 A. D., when Alaric the Goth laid siege to Rome, the terms he offered for raising the siege included the immediate payment of 3000 pounds of pepper along with other similar valuables.

### *Muziris and Barake*

The chief centre of this trade ~~was~~ Muziris. In the first century A.D., this port grew to great dimensions. Its glory is recounted in Tamil as well as Roman writings of the time. Pliny calls it "primum emporium Indoi," the first port of India. According to contemporary Tamil works mentioned above, Muziris was an extremely busy place with a harbour crowded with ships and craft of all kinds, with large warehouses, and bazaars adjoining it, and with stately palaces and places of worship in the interior.

பேரியாற்று வெண்ணுரை கலங்க  
யவனர் தந்த வினோமா னன்கலம்  
பொன்னெடு வந்து கறியொடு பெயரும்  
வளங் கெழு முசிறி

(*Ahananuru*, 149.)

The great bulk of the cargo taken from there ~~was~~ pepper ; cinnamon leaf, beryl, pearls, ivory, silk-cloth, diamonds and tortoise-shell make up the rest. Imports were mostly gold and silver coin ; some wine, glass, metals like copper, tin and lead, were also imported. Not least important among the imports were singing boys and pretty maidens for the harem of the kings here. To guard this valuable trade, two Roman cohorts are said to have been stationed at Muziris.

Another important port, especially for pepper trade, was Barake (Purakad), which was at the mouth of river Baris (Pampayar). It was nearer to, and more accessible from, the chief pepper growing area in the interior, namely the forests at the upper reaches of Pampa river. Pepper from that area was taken by country boats to Nelcynda (Nakkida near Neranom), and from there it ~~was~~ taken in large boats to Barake. When Pliny wrote, Nelcynda and Barake had ap-

parently a large share in pepper trade, chiefly because the coastal area north of Muziris was invested by pirates. But in Ptolemy (c. 150 A.D.), we find Muziris in full control of pepper trade, evidently because piracy had been suppressed in the mean time ; we are also told that Nelcynda and Barake had ceased to be legal marts, and Muziris was the only authorised mart. According to the earlier writers, Nelcynda and Barake were in the Pandya Kingdom, but these had ceased to be the case, apparently because the Chera kings had got back the southern territory from Pandyas. This agrees remarkably with the narrative of Chera history in the 1st and 2nd centuries, A. D., as found in the Tamil works quoted above.

On the East Coast also there were several ports. Next only to Muziris was Puhar (Kauveri-pūm-pattinam), the Chola metropolis. Korkai (Tirunelvely) was also an important port in the Pandya territory. And there were others like Poduca (Puducherry) and Kayal.

### *A Great Age of Navigation*

The commerce of South Indian ports with Alexandria reached great heights, especially during the years 45—160 A. D. With growing prosperity in Rome, the demand for not only pepper but other spices and luxury goods rose to unknown proportions. To satisfy the craving of Roman women, Indian peacocks, parrots, monkeys and other pets were also taken, and Indian elephants were required for royal processions in Rome. The size of ships and their number had to be increased, to meet such growing needs. As such large imports had to be paid for in gold or specie, authorities in Rome had to face serious currency problems. After 218 A.D., copper coins had to be used to pay for imports.

With the increase in goods traffic, ships had also to carry numerous passengers to India. Some ships were equipped for carrying hundreds of passengers. Not all of them were merchants ; there were also builders and architects needed by South Indian kings. There came also women ; a first century

Greek letter of a woman called 'Indika' is preserved in papyrus. According to Warmington she was either the Indian wife of a Greek merchant resident in India, or daughter born to an Egyptian Greek while resident here. (*Commerce between Roman Empire and India*, pp. 67-8.) There are also references, in Tamil books, to Yavana men and women resident in India. Some of them were in the employ of kings to guard their palaces or grace their courts. Such large numbers of people from the Red Sea had never come to India before ; nor after 200 A.D., till about the middle of the 19th century. The contemporary work, *Periplus*, it is said, was written as a guide-book to help these numerous foreigners in South India.

### *A Glorious Period of South Indian History*

The importance in South Indian history of the period under review can only be realized when we remember that from the very beginning of history down to 1869 A. D., when the Suez Canal was opened, communication from the Mediterranean shores to India had never been so easy nor quick, as during this period. The Red Sea route was known and used before 45 A. D., but most ships pursued the perilous and prolonged coastal route touching Makran, as few except Somalis and Arabs had known the secret of the Mosnoon winds. Therefore the traffic was meagre. Nor did the colossal trade and navigation activity sketched above last long. The decline started in the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161-80 A.D.) was hastened by the cruel massacre carried out by Caracalla in Alexandria (212 A.D.). The demand for oriental luxuries gradually declined in Rome, and the traffic in these articles passed from Egyptian Greeks to Arabs and Axumites. Finally with the Islamic expansion into Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, about the middle of the seventh century, the access of the Mediterranean peoples to the Arabian Sea was blocked for a long time, i.e. until Suez Canal was opened (1868). In the result, the Portuguese, Dutch, British and other traders had to sail by the prolonged route round Africa to reach India. Clive and Warren Hastings had to take this route. This protracted journey took over twelve months, as against

the three months involved in the journey from Alexandria through Red Sea in Roman times. The Arabian Sea was crossed in 40 days, after 45 A. D. Thus the period 45 to 212 A. D., is really unique in the long history of navigation, as also in South Indian history as a whole. It was a period when the Tamil kingdoms figured most prominently in Indian and World history.

### *A Flourishing Civilization*

Judging from Chilappadikaram and other contemporary Tamil Works, South India was then a most prosperous part of India, of the world, and its civilization was of a high order. Particularly noteworthy is the state of the fine arts like dancing, then widely practised by men as well as women in South India. In fact, this was unique in all India. City life had advanced to magnificent proportions. Cities like Muziris and Puhar (Caveri-pum-pattinam) were in a most flourishing state, with magnificent thoroughfares and busy bazzars and with separate quarters set apart for different sections of people. Many merchants had amassed wealth and they lived in large houses, some of which were seven storeys high. For their enjoyment there were theatres and dancing-halls. The evening gatherings of pleasure-seekers at the seaside in Puhar, described in Chilappadikaram, remind one of Lido in Venice, rather than of anything elsewhere in India. There were schools, and learning was greatly valued. Even women became famous as poets. Women occupied a high place in society and did not at all form an inferior sex; they moved about freely. There were different castes, but hardly any caste exclusiveness. Varnasrama had not become as hard as it later became, especially in Kerala. Nor are these descriptions too fanciful; they are confirmed by independent sources and by foreign accounts. It does not appear that any other part of India, of Asia, was in such prosperous condition at that time. Only Rome and Alexandria had anything better to show, then, in the whole world.

### *State of Religion*

The Tamil works referred to above disclose a commendable state of religious toleration prevailing in the Tamil



kingdoms at the time. Vedic Hinduism had come with the Brahmins who apparently had already settled here, but their influence was very limited at the time. The common people worshipped Kāli and Murugan, following the Dravidian tradition. But Buddhism and Jainism were becoming popular with the intellectual classes, even in high society. And there were all over the country Buddhist viharas and Jain chaityas, frequented by devotees of both sexes. Ilengo-Adigal, brother of king Chenkuttavan, was a devout Buddhist, while the king himself practised Hinduism. The court-poet, Chathanar, was also a Buddhist. Nevertheless, all the three worked harmoniously. With the rise of Saiva Siddhanta zealots, like Manikkavacagar, Hinduism took a rather militant turn, and caste exclusiveness began to lift its head. This led to the decline of Buddhism and Jainism. Nor was the environment sketched above unfavourable for the influx of foreign religions like Christianity. The success of the Apostle Thomas in South India must be partly due to this unique situation.

### *Conclusion*

It is a great pity that the world knows so little of this magnificent South Indian civilization, and of the masterly epics and other unique writings which give such beautiful accounts of it. It is clear that South Indian universities and scholars have a bounden duty in this matter, and there is urgent need for making a thorough study of the literature and art of the age, and for making them widely known here and outside. The people that built magnificent temples like Madura and wrote such splendid epics like *Chilappadikaram* deserve to be ever honoured, and everywhere.

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# *Thiruvalluvar's Choice-form and Theme*

B. NATARAJAN, M.A., D.LITT.

EVER SINCE the great English savant Dr. G. U. Pope revealed to the western world the treasures of Thirukural through his epoch-making translation, a number of critical studies have been attempted, relating the teachings of Thiruvalluvar to those of the Buddha, the Christ and other seers and prophets of immortal fame. Yet in a sense the work of Thiruvalluvar is different from them all. With them how they lived as well as what they taught made up the sum total of their bequest to humanity. Their actions were as important in influencing the lives and destinies of nations as their sayings and preachings. About Valluvar we have no such authentic record of life. Such biography as has come down to us is the "concoction of some fertile Pandit-brain," as the late Mr. M. S. Purnalingam Pillai pointed out, probably helped by some Vakisar's account written about three centuries ago, but published for the first time in 1904. There is, therefore, nothing to show conclusively that Valluvar either dazed the contemporary generation or deflected the course of lives of their progeny by any act of arresting attention. He performed no miracles. Even the extant imaginative biography has not anything to mention approaching to a Royal Renunciation, or a Supreme Crucifixion. Nor does Valluvar appear to have been a preacher of note, or a philosopher of metaphysical and subtle argumentation. He built no school, gathered no disciples: His life appears to have run its even tenor, absorbed in scholarly pursuits of encyclopaedic dimensions, alternating with quiet discharge of daily domestic duties.

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Perhaps the duties were not so very domestic and quiet as are traditionally associated with a literary savant of his type. There is evidence to believe that the sage was in all probability caught for a time in the whirlpool and tumult of active politics and trying palace intrigues of the Pandyan Kingdom. That must have been in the active years of his life; and then in retirement, like a later day literary luminary, — Seikizhar of Periya Puranam fame, — must have sat down to collect the mellowed thoughts and ripe experiences of a stormy life to write an immortal classic—a classic not of adventure, romance, heroism or divinity such as was attempted by a Homer, a Milton, a Kamban or a Shakespeare — but a classic of the art of living (porul) through giving (Aram) and loving (Inbam).

A daring venture indeed, to essay a classic on the art of living-through-giving-and-loving; and that in pellucid poetry; and ever more the wonder grows when we see the poet choosing the short unvaried metrical couplet for the exposition of a vast range and an infinite variety of life's truths and experiences. It was a deliberate choice, a self-imposed handicap, a wholly unnecessary piece of creative sadism, as it were — this choice of a rigid austere metrical form for a theme which calls for the most diverse and deft manipulation of all forms available in the repertory of poetical composition. The seers and the prophets have had to use the comparatively native technique of the parable and the fable, to succeed; while, the poets always stretched their canvas wide and long to permit of an interminable combination of effects. But here comes a Tamilian who offers to hold up a tiny little mirror to life and reflect on it all that it contained, and nay more, all that it should contain too. He succeeds, and succeeds most amazingly. The reflection he catches is no pale shadow, but a rich techni-coloured reproduction of rapture and delight. Could it be that the contemporaneous scholars contended that it is form that sets the tone to poetry

and that Valluvar like a Walt Whitman disproved them all by showing that a good vintage can taste just as sweets, whatever the cup you put it in ? In any case, the experiment and the success are unique ; they have few parallels in the world of letters.

Perhaps it had no concern with the little triumphs of poetasters forms. Obviously there was more in the choice of form than meets the eye of poetical convenience. The poet was creating a work of art ; but that work was to be a unique work of art ; art that was purposive and beautiful, didactic and creative at once ; art that should have the universality of appeal to the elect and the masses alike ; that combined the delicacy of life and strength of eternity. And such in fact is Thirukkural ; poetry in ethics and ethics in poetry.

Perhaps there was even a greater consideration. Vishnuvarman, the author of the Panchatantra said :—

Since verbal science has no final end

Since life is short, and obstacles impend,

Let central facts be picked and firmly fixed :

As swans extract the milk with water mixed.

But the author of Panchatantra only said it : he did not wholly succeed in it. He had to spin such a maze of fables with all the denizens of the Zoo into it, that the longer he spun, the more obscure became central facts ; rather than extract the milk, often the young mind seemed to retain the water. The form was over-wrought, and the purpose often miscarried. If life is short and verbal science has no end, then picked truth is to be told in simple but elegant words, direct yet pleasing diction, and in a form which helps truth get "firmly fixed" ; in other words, in a form which permits of easy memorisation, essential to a pre-Caxton world that depended largely on word of mouth for transmission of knowledge. This appears to have been an all-important consideration with Valluvar, and presumably accounts also for the

mechanical assignment of ten couplets for every chapter, and the seeming repetition of ideas within the same chapter. But there certainly is no repetition of words ; if anything, there are skilful echoes : and in the sphere of ideas, the discerning critic can well defeat the nuances, and shades of thought.

When I began the study of Thirukkural years ago, I used to wonder at what appeared then as a strange piece of inconsistency in the poet's handling of themes. For instance, if he was discussing Destiny, he would say Destiny ~~was~~ all-powerful and naught availeth against it.

"What is there that is mightier than Destiny ? Plan we might, however well, it will ever forestall us."

But when he comes to discuss the virtues of exertion or effort he would say,

"Strive strenuously, strive strenuously  
And you ~~can~~ snap your fingers at Destiny."

Students of the Kural well know that this trick of the poet is being repeated in chapter after chapter. Does he expect us not to have read the earlier chapters, or not to read the later ones ? However, I had to wait for a good many years until I could find an answer to this poet's riddle. That happened when I was reading Thoreau's essay on Carlyle.

Then I landed on a passage which seemed to give me the answer to the doubts embedded in my mind regarding what I considered as Valluvar's inconsistency.

Says Thoreau, "No truth, we think, ~~was~~ ever expressed but with this sort of emphasis, that for the time there seemed to be no other." Yes ; to Valluvar for the time he wrote his particular chapter of truth, there seemed to be no other. That is but as it should be ; for if truth is one and indivisible, there cannot be degrees and shades in it. Every facet has to be true, if the whole is to be true,

*Choice of Theme*

So much for Valluvar's choice of technique. I shall close this, with a short examination of the poet's choice of theme. Why did the poet, of all the themes on heaven, earth and hell too (some poets have revelled and excelled in themes of hell), pitch on the theme of the art of living-through-loving-and-giving? I shall turn to a rhetorical passage in the book of a contemporary historian for a clue. In his book on "The Use of History," Prof. A. L. Rowse says :

"Underlying all the flux and change of history, the mutually contradictory claims of the religious, the parochial squabbles of the sects for our allegiance or our cash, the indisputable tendency of individual egoisms to assert itself as universal-underneath all change of circumstance and condition there is a continuum to which all standards may be related for their validity ; the nature of man qua man. It gives substances a real basis to our moral judgments, however conditioned by time, so that we may as historians condemn Nero for a bad man and acclaim Jesus Christ as a good man."

It is this "continuum to which all standards may be related for their validity" that Thiruvalluvar was seeking to discover and lay down in his Kural. Such a continuum, a valid standard of standards, has to transcend caste and creed, times and climes. It has to be universal and immutable. True, it would require to be interpreted for every period and rethought out for every generation, as all ethical values emerge from and rest upon the positive experience of man. No wonder, therefore, that Valluvar did not attempt to build a theory of morals from metaphysics as was then the fashion in India and continued to be so centuries after. He would have been wrong to have deduced a theory of morals from metaphysics. As Prof. Stebbings says in the book "Ideals and Illusions," "It is an illusion to find the value of our lives here and now in a life to come ; it



is an illusion to suppose that nothing is worthwhile for me unless I live for ever ; it is an illusion to suppose that there is no uncompensated loss, no sacrifice that is without requital, no grief that is unassuaged. But it is also no illusion but an uncontested fact that here and now we know that hatred, cruelty, intolerance and indifference to human misery are evil ; that love, kindness, tolerance, forgiveness and truth are good ; so unquestionably good that we do not need God or Heaven to assure us of their worth."

Valluvar did believe in a God and in a Heaven, but he did not require them for props to his ethical system. That has an existence all of its own — as the valid standard of continuum, mounted on the positive experience of man in history.

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# *Social Ethics in the 'Tirukkural'*

REV. H. A. POPLEY

I N the present phase of India's development as a free nation great emphasis is being rightly placed upon 'Social Ethics' and upon the need for the application to present-day conditions of the ethical values and principles found in ancient Indian polity. The conception of 'Dharma,' which is the fundamental truth of Indian Ethics, is concerned not merely with the ethical principles of the individual in his personal life, but also with the whole range of ethical theory for the citizen in his relationships with the State and with society.

The same thing is true of the idea of 'Aram,' the Tamil equivalent of the Sanskrit 'Dharma.' This is clearly shown in the 'Tirukkural,' the ethical source book of the Tamil peoples, and the second section of this work, called 'Porutpal' deals very thoroughly with the principles of Social Ethics. Says Sri C. Rajagopalachariar in his introduction to his translation of this section, "These seventy chapters (i.e. chs. 39-108) lay down, with characteristic terseness, the principles that should govern the conduct of wise and good men in the affairs of the world." So it behoves us to study them in these days in order to see what this Tamil sage has to tell us of the principles that should find expression in the life of our State and the society of our people in these days when the government and work of the State is entirely in our own hands.

The first section of the 'Tirukkural,' which is called 'Illaraviyal,' (chs 5-38) and may be translated 'Ethics of the

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Rev. H. A. Popley is well-known as a translator and interpreter of the *Kural*.

'Domestic State' deals especially with the principles that should govern the life and conduct of the individuals in their personal lives and in their families, though there is in this section also much which has application to the ethics of the citizen of a State. In this article, however, we shall deal especially with social ethics as they are set forth in the second section of the 'Tirukkural.'

Like the ethical teaching of the Bible and other such great books of 'dharma,' the ethical teaching of the 'Tirukkural' is applicable to present-day conditions and it is surprising to find how relevant much of it is with the needs of citizenship in free India today.

This is partly due to the fact that Tiruvalluvar was no sectarian in religion but was one who had taken the best from the various religions which he had come into contact with and had woven them all into a beautiful and many-coloured fabric of ethical teaching, in the same way that he wove yarns of different colour into the saris and dhotis that he made.

Most commentators consider that he had some knowledge of the *Artha Sastra* of Chanakya (Kautilya) and this is possible as Kanchi, the capital of the Pallava kingdom from the second to the fourth century, was the birthplace of Chanakya and he was the chief minister of Chandragupta, the Maurya Emperor, from 321 B. C. It is not likely that Tiruvalluvar knew Sanskrit, and one must therefore believe that a Brahmin of Kanchi who knew the *Artha Sastra* had explained a great deal of it to the poet. There are two matters in which the 'Kural' definitely departs from the *Artha Sastra*. One of these is that the end justifies the means. The 'Kural' never gives and support to this Nazi thesis. The *Artha Sastra*, however, justifies crooked politics for the good of the kingdom. Further, the *Artha Sastra* also regards the king as divine and as wielding divine power.. The furthest that the TIRUKKURAL goes is to say that the 'king who rules justly and guards his realm shall be considered as a god to men.' (39 : 8) So the divine name is given to a king because of his

qualities and not because of his position. Sri Rajagopalachariar in his translation of the verse above gives the following :

“It is only if the king acts according to the law and protects his people that he will be regarded truly as the Lord's deputy.”

Parimelalagar in his “urai” gives the following as the meaning of this stanza. ‘though he was born as a man, by his deeds he is considered as a god to men.’

We have to remember that Tiruvalluvar did not know the democratic state as it exists today. While there is ample evidence that in the Tamil kingdoms there were truly self-governing villages with a real democratic constitution, the over-all state was not democratic and the head of the state was a king who was a real ruler, assisted by his counsellors. But even though this was true we can understand from Tiruvalluvar's teaching much about the duties and qualities of leadership in a democratic state, and also learn a good deal about the citizen and his responsibilities. Thus, in studying the teaching of the TIRUKKURAL on Social Ethics we shall consider the stanzas on kingship as applicable to the ideal of leadership in modern days in a democratic state. In some cases the stanza refers to the state as such rather than to the individual leader.

First of all we shall consider the teaching of chapter 39, the first chapter of this section on the State. This chapter is called இறைமரட்சி in Tamil, which is usually translated as ‘kingly excellence,’ but which Sri Rajagopalachariar takes to mean ‘the prosperous state’, thus emphasising the totality of its rulers and citizens, rather than the one person set at the head of the state. The first stanza of this chapter gives the six essentials for a prosperous state, according to the translation of Sri Rajagopalachariar, as follows : ‘an adequate army, an industrious people, ample food resources, wise and alert ministers of state, alliance with foreign powers and dependable fortifications.’ This is a free translation of a terse

and succinct verse and is quite justified if we think of the state rather than of the ruler of the state. The stanza is as follows :

படைகுடி கூழ் அமைச்சு நட்பாளுறும்  
உடையான் அரசருள் ஏறு (39 : 1)

The next two stanzas give the qualities of leadership that are necessary if the state is to be rightly guided. The first of these is as follows :

எஞ்சாமை, ஈகை, அறிவூக்கம், இந்நான்கும்  
எஞ்சாமை வேந்தற்கியல்பு (39 : 2)

Courage, charity, wit and grit — these four unfailing the kingly nature make.

தூங்காமை கல்வி துணிவுடமை, — இம்மூன்றும்  
நீங்கா நிலன் ஆள்பவற்கு. (39 : 3)

‘Alertness, wisdom and decisiveness — these three should ne’er be lacking in rulers of the world.’

These are all qualities which we expect from our leaders in a democratic state, and unless men and women of such qualities come to leadership in the Indian states our country cannot be expected to progress. It is clear from these two stanzas how modern Tiruvalluvar is in his conception of leadership in a well-organised state. The next stanza sums all these up in a clear and convincing fashion :

அறன் இழுக்காதல்லவை நீக்கி, மறன் இழுக்கா  
மானமுடையது அரசு. (39 : 4)

‘From Dharma’s path ne’er swerving, adharma to remove,  
With courage sure, to keep one’s honour bright is  
kingship true.’

Then Tiruvalluvar goes on to speak of the duties and responsibilities of leadership.

இயற்றலும் ஈட்டலும் காத்தலும் காத்த  
வகுத்தலும் வல்லது அரசு (39 : 5)

‘He is a king, who is able to arrange for the production of wealth, the conservation of resources, the defence of the state and the right distribution of wealth.’

These are the aims of our leaders in the state today and the leader who is able to effect these is sure to win the support of the people.

Further in a democratic regime, the leader must be one who is easily accessible to all the citizens and who is not given to harsh language.

காட்சிக் கெளரியன், கடுஞ் சொல்லனல்லனேல்  
மீக்கறு மன்னனிலம்

(39 : 8)

A country which has such leaders will be acclaimed by all other countries as a great country. A leader must also be able to give with kindness and to protect those who follow him. Such a leader will be able to gain a wide influence and that not only in his own country. Then follows the stanza which compares the king who acts justly to a god. From this it is clear that the leader of the state must act according to the law and see that the people are protected from the various ills that may come upon them.

The next stanza is rather a striking one and shows the range of the vision of Tiruvalluvar. It says that the leader of the state who is able to listen calmly to the criticisms of his ministers and people will become more than a state leader, he will become a world leader. Gandhiji well illustrated this truth.

செவிகைப்பச் சொல் லொறுக்கும் பண்புடைவேந்தன்  
கவிகைக் கீழ்த் தங்கும் உலகு.

(39 : 9)

Rajaji translates this as follows :

‘The world will rest under the umbrella of the king who has the quality of listening to the bitter advice of his ministers.’

The last stanza of this chapter sums up the whole matter and says that four things are required in the supreme leader.



கொடை அளி செங்கோல் குடியோம்பல், — நான்கும்  
உடையாளும் வேந்தர்க் கொளி (39 : 10)

‘He is the light of kings who has these four things  
Beneficence, benevolence, rectitude and care for his  
people.’

Thus in this chapter we have clearly brought to our minds the qualities and capacities that should go with leadership in a state. These are especially necessary in a modern democratic state and it is the duty of the citizens to see that they elect to Parliament only those who possess these qualities and capacities and so will be able to guide the state aright.

In the next place we have to find out what Tiruvalluvar has to say about the qualities of citizenship and how far they are applicable to the needs of this day.

It is remarkable that immediately after this chapter on the ideal leader or ‘the progressive state’ as Rajaji calls it, there should come a chapter which emphasises the value of education in a state. This chapter and the next on ‘Ignorance’ show how greatly in those early days in the Tamil Nad, education was valued and how necessary this humble weaver considered it to be for all the citizens of a state if the state was to progress.

The responsibility of those who are educated to pass on to others the education they have received is clearly brought out by the metaphor of the well :

தொட்டனைத்தாறு மணற் கேணி, மாந்தர்க்குக்  
கற்றனைத்தாறும் — அறிவு (40 : 6)

‘Water will flow from a well in the sand in proportion to the depth it is dug, and knowledge will similarly flow from a man in proportion to his learning.’

In another stanza he shows the value of education especially for those who travel, incidentally making it clear that in those days the Tamils were great travellers.

யாதானு நாடாமால் ஊராமால், என் ஒருவன்  
சாத்துணையுங் கல்லாத வாறு. (40 : 7)

'All lands to learned men belong, all towns are home ;

How then can men remain unlearned till their dying day?"  
He values learning even more than wealth and says :

கேடில் விழுச் செல்வம் கல்வி ஒருவற்கு,  
மாடல்ல மற்றையவை. (40 : 10)

'Learning is the true imperishable riches for anyone ;  
All other things are not true wealth.'

In the next chapter on 'Ignorance' he shows the use-  
lessness of those who will not learn. They are not only poor  
in themselves, but they do not produce anything of value to  
the state.

உளர் என்று மாத்திரையால்லால், பயவாக்  
கனானையர் கல்லாதவர். (41 : 6)

'The ignorant are like useless brackish land ;

They are — and that is all that can be said.'  
Though Tiruvalluvar does not actually apply these stanzas to  
state policy it is clear enough that he expects the leaders of  
the state to foster and extend education.

There is a chapter on 'The Correction of faults' which  
shows up clearly the evils which can ruin good government  
and indeed the whole state. Three great faults of those in  
high position are mentioned, namely : greed, improper pride,  
and sensual pleasures ; and Tiruvalluvar states that these  
faults in the leaders will produce trouble in the state, and  
indeed are 'a deadly enemy.'

இவறலு மாண்பிறந்த மாணமு மாணு  
உவகையும் ஏதம் இறைக்கு. (44 : 2)

குற்றமே காக்க, பொருளாகக், குற்றமே  
அற்றம் தருஉம் பகை. (44 : 4)

'Avarice; improper pride and sensual pleasure  
Are serious faults in a king.'  
'Guard against such faults as a great matter ;  
For such faults are a deadly enemy.'

The TIRUKKURAL teaches that leaders should act with energy if the state is to flourish and the people also should copy this and show the same energy. This is shown very clearly in chapter 60. We are reminded of the emphasis that the Union and State ministers are placing today on the need for hard work by all the people if the state is to go forward.

உடையர் எனப்படுவதாக்கம், அஃதில்லார்  
உடையதுடையரோ மற்று

(60 : 1)

'Tis energy alone makes wealth worthwhile ;  
Who lack it own not even what they have.'

ஆக்கம் இழந்தே என்றல்லாவார் ; ஊக்கம்  
ஒருவந்தம் கைத்துடையார்.

(60 : 3)

'They who have not enduring energy will never trouble  
themselves, saying "We have lost our wealth."'

The ills that follow idleness both in the family and in the state are clearly shown in grim pictures.

குடி மடிந்து குற்றம் பெருகு மடி மடிந்து  
மாண்ட உருற்றில்வர்க்கு

(61 : 4)

'Family greatness will be destroyed and faults will increase in those who give way to laziness and who do not labour with dignity.

கெடுநீர் மறவி மடிதாயில் நான்கும்  
கெடுநீரார் காமக்கலன்

(61 : 5)

'Tardiness, forgetfulness, sloth and sleep —  
These four are pleasure boats of ruin grim.'

There is an important chapter on 'Righteous rule,' called செங்கோன்மை (ch. 55) and in the first stanza of this chapter the four important factors that go to make up such a righteous

rule are set forth. They are said to be first, the careful examination of all crimes against the state ; then second, the showing of no undue favour to any ; third, acting impartially at all times ; and fourth, the awarding of punishment in accord with justice. Again and again the need of acting with full justice is stressed.

அந்தணர் நூற்கும் அறத்திற்கும் ஆதியாய்  
நின்றது மன்னவன் கோல். (55 : 3)

'The authority of the state lies in the firm support  
of the laws of the wise and of the virtuous life.'

இயல்புளிக் கோலோச்ச மன்னவனாட்ட  
பெயலும் வினையுளும் தொக்கு (55 : 5)

'Even the elements will give their blessing  
to a state where justice rules.'

வேலன்று வென்றி தருவது, மன்னவன்  
கோலதூஉம் கோடாதெனின். (55 : 6)

'A state does not win victory through military might,  
But through righteousness.'

The negative side of this truth is put before us in the next chapter on 'Unjust rule.'

முறை கோடி மன்னவன் செய்யின், உரைகோடி  
ஒல்லாது வானம் பெயல் (56 : 9)

'If the king acts unjustly rain will be unseasonable,  
And the heavens will withhold their showers.'

There is a separate chapter on the State itself, which Tiruvalluvar calls 'நாடு' (ch. 74.). As Sri Rajagopalachariar says in his book, "This is something more than the land. It includes the inhabitants of the land and its resources. The requisites for a good state are industrious producers, good and learned men to form the intellectual class and high-minded men of wealth. Thus labour, knowledge and wealth are the elements that make a prosperous state."

தள்ளா வினையுளும் தக்காரும் தாழ்விலாச்  
செல்வரும் சேர்வது நாடு. (74 : 1)

Parimelalagar makes the second of these 'the virtuous' instead of 'the intellectuals' and that is probably the correct interpretation. So the three essential elements of a good State will be : production by labour, virtuous leaders, and merchants who produce wealth.

The following stanza reminds us of the ideal of the welfare state to which we are aiming today.

உறு பசியும் ஓவாப் பிணியும் செறுபகையும்  
சேராதியல்வது நாடு.

(74 : 4)

'The ideal state is one in which there is no unappeased hunger, no incurable diseases, no destructive enemies.'

Thus freedom from hunger, freedom from disease, and freedom from external aggression are the marks of the ideal state. There are also three other freedoms essential to an ideal state. It must be free from petty divisions, from internal evils and from destructive savages (74 : 5).

The ornaments of a good state are said to be the following five : freedom from disease, economic security, good produce, general happiness and peace.

பிணியின்மை, செல்வம், விளைவின்பம், ஏமம்  
அணியென்ப நாட்டிற்கிவ்வைந்து

(74 : 8)

These are very modern and presuppose a foundation of education as was emphasised in a previous chapter.

In a later chapter on the importance of wealth to the state it is clearly stated that unless such wealth is acquired by right means it is not to be desired.

அருளொடும் அன்பொடும் வாராப் பொருளாக்கம்  
புல்லார் புரளவிடல் -

(76 : 8)

'Let kings avoid the seeking of wealth which has not come with grace and love.'

The chapter on 'Citizenship' or குடிசெயல்வகை as it is called by Tiruvalluvar, (ch. 103) is a very important one for the right conception of the duty of the citizens. As Rajaji says it means 'how to develop the community.' The very first stanza of this chapter shows the need for every individual in the state to render service to the community.

கரும்ஞ் செய ஒருவன் கைதுவேன் என்னும்  
பெருமையின் பிடுடையதில் (103 : 1)

'There is no higher greatness for the individual than being ever ready to render service to the community.'

This is amplified in the next stanza.

ஆள்வினையும் ஆன்ற அறிவும் என இரண்டின்  
நீள்வினையாகி நீளும் குடி. (103 : 2)

'The community prospers through the untiring effort of those with industry and ripe knowledge.'

Even God Himself will come to the aid of those who endeavour to help the community. Tiruvalluvar clothes this idea in a picturesque simile.

குடி செய்வல் என்னும் ஒருவற்குத் தெய்வம்  
மடிதற்றுத் தான் முந்துறும் (103 : 3)

'God Himself will gird up His loins and go before to help one who is determined to help the community.'

Such a selfless worker for the community will be welcomed as a friend by the whole world.

குற்றமில்னாய்க் குடிசெய்து வாழ்வானைச்  
சுற்றமாச் சுற்றும் உலகு. (103 : 5)

'The world will befriend and gather round the man

Who lives a blameless life of service to his people.'  
There are heroes of peace as well as of war, who have to take up the burdens of the community.

அமாகத்து வன் கண்ணர்போலத் தமாகத்தும்  
ஆற்றுவார் மேற்றே பொறை (103 : 7)



‘Like heroes in the battlefield, the burden of service  
Falls upon those who are capable in the community.’

For the servants of the community there is no convenience of time. They must always be ready to serve.

குடி செய்வார்க்கில்லை பருவம், மடிசெய்து  
மானம் கருதக் கெடும்.

(103:8)

‘There is no special season for the servants of the  
community;  
If they think of laziness or false dignity all is lost.’

To the man who serves the community his body will be like  
a pot full of troubles.

இடும்பைக்கே கொள்கலம் கொல்லோ, குடும்பத்தைக்  
குற்ற மறைப்பான் உடம்பு.

(103:9)

‘His body is a pot of troubles,  
Who seeks to save the people from all ills.’

Rajaji has the following comment on this: “All reform is built on the consecrated suffering of reformers. That sorrow is the only immediate reward of public service.” No community can stand unless it has such selfless workers. This is brought out in the next stanza.

இடுக்கண் கால் கொன்றிட வீழும், அடுத்தான்றும்  
நல்லாள் இலாத குடி.

(103:10)

‘If there are none to support it,  
The community will fall at the stroke of the axe of  
misfortune.’

The next chapter of the KURAL deals with agriculture. So our weaver-poet recognised the important place of agriculture in the economy of the state and knew that the prosperity of a state depends on the farmer and his ability to produce. The very first stanza of this chapter makes this clear.

சுழன்றும் ஏர்ப்பின்னதுலகம், அதனால்  
உழந்தும் உழவே தலை.

(104:1)

'Roam where you will, the world must go behind the  
plough ;

Farming, though toilsome, is man's-supreme employ.  
The world lives at the grass roots and it is only as the farmer  
produces that the rest of men can prosper. This truth was  
clear in the days of Tiruvalluvar even as it is today.

உழுவார் உலகத்தார்க்காணி, அஃதாற்றாது  
எழுவாரை எல்லாம் பொறுத்து. (104 : 2)

'The linchpins of society the farmers are ;  
supporting other toilers all who do not plough.'

The tillers of the soil are the only ones who live in the full  
sense of the world. Others merely exist.

உழுதுண்டு வாழ்வாரே வாழ்வார், மற்றெல்லாம்  
தொழுதுண்டு பின் செல்பவர். (104 : 3)

'They only live who plough and eat ;  
The rest, as followers, just serve and eat.'

Even the ascetics will not be able to get on unless the tiller  
of the soil does his part well.

உழவினா கைமடங்கின் இல்லை, விழைவது உம்  
விட்டேம் என் பார்க்கு நிலை. (104 : 6)

'If the farmer's hands go slack,  
Even those who have left all will fail.'

Tiruvalluvar knows also the need for continuous work on the  
land. The fields cannot be left to look after themselves.

செல்லான் கிழவன் இரும்பின், நிலம் புலந்து  
இல்லாளின் ஊடிவிடும் (104 : 9)

'If farmers quiet sit and go not to their land,  
'Twill sulk and take the huff, like sulking wife.'

Rajaji in his remarks on this stanza says : Sellan (செல்லான்)  
denotes the need of daily personal attention ; irumbin  
(இரும்பின்) denotes the need for unceasing activity ; kizha-

van (கிழவன்) denotes that the duties of attention and care cannot be delegated ; The need for making use of all the land available is emphasised in the last stanza.

இலம் என்று அசைஇ யிருப்பாரைக் காணின்  
நிலம் என்னும் நல்லாள் நகும்.

(104 : 10)

'That kindly dame called Earth doth laugh  
When she sees idlers sitting still and saying  
'We have nought'.'

Thus we find in the stanzas of this humble weaver-poet of the second century A. D. a great deal of helpful teaching on Social Ethics as can be applied to the conditions of the people in this technological age of the twentieth century. This teaching is expressed in unforgettable stanzas of unexampled terseness and crystal clarity.

Tiruvalluvar did not set out to write a text book on Social Ethics but he was concerned with the needs and life of the common man and with the welfare of the state in his day. In his reflections upon these subjects he has given to us this timeless teaching on the life of a good citizen in a welfare state. He does not give us a picture far removed from the actual conditions of life in his day, but reveals to us in simple and striking language how we can overcome the perennial difficulties that face man in his upward path. He has made it clear that faith in God is part of the make-up of the good citizen. This is shown again and again by the references to Divine help that occur incidentally in many of these stanzas. It comes out very clearly in the first chapter of the KURAL. Here are two stanzas from that chapter :

அறவாழி அந்தணன்தான் சேர்த்தார்க்கல்லால்  
பிறவாழி நீந்தல் அரிது.

(1 : 8)

'Tis hard to swim this world's wide sea,  
Unless we cling to Him who is ocean of grace and good.

பிறவிப் பெருங்கடல் நீந்துவர், நீந்தார்  
இறைவன் அடி சேராதார்.

(1 : 10)

' Who then can swim this mighty sea of births ?  
Not they who cling not to our Lord's feet.

In these stanzas on the State and its citizens we have some simple practical precepts of a good state and a good citizen, which we shall do well to study carefully and to follow more closely these days.

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# Quotable Quotes on the *Tirukkural*

LIKE THE BUDDHA and the Bhagavad-Gita, the Kural desires inner freedom from the world and a mind free from hatred. Like them it stands for the commandment not to kill and not to damage. It has appropriated all the valuable ethical results of the thought of world and life negation. But in addition to this ethics of inwardness there appears in the Kural the living ethic of love.

With sure strokes the Kural draws the ideal of simple ethical humanity. On the most varied questions concerning the conduct of man to himself and to the world its utterances are characterised by nobility and good sense. *"There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom."*

Albert Schweitzer in "Indian thought and its development."

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"The compositions that are universally admitted to be the finest in the (Tamil) language, viz., the Kural and the Chintamani, are perfectly independent of Sanscrit and original in design as well as in execution."

—Robert Caldwell

"The Kural is the master-piece of Tamil literature — one of the highest and purest expressions of human thought."

"That which, above all, is wonderful in the Kural is the fact that its author addresses himself, without regard to castes, peoples or beliefs, to the whole community of the

mankind ; the fact that he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason ; that he proclaims in their very essence, in their eternal abstractedness, virtue and truth ; that he presents, as it were, in one group the highest laws of domestic and social life ; that he is equally perfect in thought, in language and in poetry, in the austere metaphysical contemplation of the great mysteries of their Divine Nature, as in the easy and graceful analysis of the tenderest emotions of the heart.'

—M. Ariel.

"No translation can convey an idea of its charming effect. It is truly apple of gold in a net-work of silver."

—Dr. Gaul.

"The weaver of Mylapore was undoubtedly one of the great geniuses of the world. Complete in itself, the sole work of its author (The Kural) has come down the stream of ages absolutely uninjured, hardly a single various reading of any importance being found."

"In value it (Kural) outweighs the whole of the remaining Tamil Literature and is one of the select number of great works which have entered into the very soul of a whole people and which can never die."

'Sir A. Grant says, "Humility, Charity, and Forgiveness of injuries are not described by Aristotle. Now these three are everywhere forcibly inculcated by this Tamil Moralist."

"The Kural owes much of its popularity to its exquisite poetic form. The brevity rendered necessary by the form gives an oracular effect to the utterances of the great Tamil "Master of Sentences." They are the choicest of moral epigrams. Their resemblance to gnomic poetry of Greece is remarkable as to their subjects, their sentiments and the state of society when they were uttered. Something of the same



kind is found in Greek epigrams, in Martial and the Latin elegiac verse. There is a beauty in the periodic character of the Tamil construction in many of these verses that reminds the reader of the happiest efforts of Propertius."

— Dr. G. U. Pope.

"The Kural is that admirable collection of stanzas in the Tamil language which is instinct with the purest and most elevated religious emotion."

"What philosophy he teaches seems to be of the eclectic school as represented by the Bhagavat Geeta."

— Dr. Barth.

"There are two books in India which have taken entire possession of the hearts and minds of the people; the first of these is the Ramayana of Tulasidas which is known to every peer and peasant in Northern India and the other is the Kural of Tiruvalluvar which is equally well-known throughout the South of the Indian Peninsula. It is the pride of both poets that their works are absolutely pure. Of the two, the Kural is much the older..... There is no doubt that no one can pretend to scholarship in Tamil unless he reads and understands this masterpiece of Tamil literature."

— Frederic Pincott.

"Will be read with pleasure as affording proof of the existence of the loftiest sentiments, the purest moral rules and equal power of conception and expression. Nothing certainly in the whole compass of human language can equal the force and terseness of the sententious distichs in which the author conveys the lesson of wisdom he utters."

— Rev. Percival.

“Tiruvalluvar’s Kural, the 1330 short sentences on the three aims of life — Dharma, Artha, Kama, is one of the gems of world literature. Buddhists, Jains, Vaishnavas and Saivas, have claimed the Pariah sage and poet of the Tamil land as their own. But he belongs to none of them or rather to all of them. For he stands above all races, castes and sects, and what he teaches is a general human morality and wisdom. No wonder that the Kural has not only been much read, studied and highly prized in the land of its origin for centuries, but has also found many admirers in the west, ever since it has become known. Already about 1730, Books I and II were translated by Father C. Joseph Beschi, into Latin. French, German and English translations followed one after another. A German translation from the Tamil by A. F. Cammerer appeared already in 1803. Better known is the German translation by Karl Graul 1856. A few couplets were also translated by the German poet and master-translator Friedrich Rückert in 1847. The finest English rendering of Tiruvalluvar’s verses known to me is that of G. U. Pope, who was not only a great Tamil scholar, but also a true lover of the Tamil people among whom he has lived for very many years.

Sage Tiruvalluvar should not be styled the unknown sage of Mylapore, for he has long been known far beyond the borders of his mother country.”

—Prof. M. Winternitz.

“It was one of the couplets in this part of the poem referring to the two looks of a maid — the one which kills and the other which cures the looker that led Dr. Graul to admire Tamil poetry and study the Kural.”

“The Kural is composed in the purest Tamil. In about 12,000 words which the Poet has employed to convey his thoughts there are scarcely fifty of Sanskrit origin. He throws the purity of Bunyan’s English completely into the share. No known Tamil work can even approach the purity of Kural. It is a standing rebuke to the modern Tamil. Tiru-

valluvar has clearly proved the richness, melody and power of his mother-tongue."

"The Kural cannot be improved nor its plan made more perfect. It is a perfect mosaic in itself. The slightest change in the size, shape or colour of a single stone would mar the beauty of the whole."

"It is refreshing to think that a nation which has produced so great a man and so unique a work cannot be a hopeless despicable race. The morality he preached could not have grown except on an essentially moral soil. To those, therefore, who labour for the salvation of the Tamil people, the Kural must be a work of peculiar nay, intense interest."

— Rev. Dr. J. Lazarus.

"Called the first of works from which whether for thought or language there is no appeal, the Kural has a strong claim upon our attention as a part of the literature of the country and as a work of intrinsic excellence. The author passing over what is peculiar to particular classes of society and introducing such ideas only as are common to all, has avoided the uninteresting details of observances found in Manu and the other shastras and thus in general maintains a dignified style."

— W. H. Drew.

"To those who know the Iliad, the AEnid, the Divine Comedy, Paradise Lost and the Nibelungen Leid as the epics of the great nations, it seems incredible that thirty millions of people should cling to a series of moral essays as their typical and honoured book. There is no doubt of the fact that the Kural is as essentially the literary treasure, the poetic mouth-piece, the highest type of verbal and moral excellence among the Tamil people as ever Homer was among the Greeks. We can only explain it by the principle that the whole aspect of the Dravidian mind is turned towards moral duty. May we

not imagine that it was this moral tendency of the masses, which prepared the way for and maintained the existence of Buddhism? The Brahmans frequently explain the tone of Tiruvalluvar, Sivavakyar, Cabilar, Ouvay, and the other early Dravidian poets by asserting that they were Jains. There is no proof of this; but it can hardly be doubted that both Buddhism and Jainism reflected the same popular tendency that we see in the early poets. The Brahmans extirpated Buddhism in India by fire, sword, and relentless persecution. They could not touch the fons et origo from which the rival religion derived its life. By careful avoidance of theological discussion, Tiruvalluvar saved his work from the flood that destroyed every avowed obstacle in its grievous course. The Brahmans could find no ground for persecution. No priest can openly condemn the poet who called upon wives to love their husbands, upon men to be truthful, benevolent and peaceful, who enjoined mildness and wisdom on those who governed and justice and obedience and willing aid on those who were ruled. . . . . Its (Kural(s) sentences are counted as binding as the Ten Commandments on the Jews. Its very language has become the test of literary excellence. It is no exaggeration to say that it is as important in Tamil literature, as influential on the Tamil mind, as Dante's great work on the language and thought of Italy."

— Charles E. Gover.  
in "*Folk Songs of Southern India.*"

"Mr. Gover may be right in saying that Valluvar uses no word against a priest. He certainly does not directly oppose the sacerdotal orders, but in such a work silence is significant. Brahmans are not necessarily priests, they are rather the patrons and employers of priests. A title of Brahman is Anthanar and the poet insinuates that they do not deserve to be so called. The epithet beautiful or cool-minded belongs to the self-controlled and unworldly. "The virtuous are truly called Anthanar, because in their conduct towards all creatures they are clothed in kindness." The whole work amounts to a

protest against religious pretence, imposition and oppression. There is a vein of Satire in it against the Gods of the Brahmans."

— E. J. Robinson.

in "*Tales and Poems of South India.*"

### THE TIRUKKURAL IN TRANSLATION

தனக்குவமை யில்லாதான் ழுள்சேர்ந்தார்க் கல்லான்  
மனக்கவலை மாற்ற லரிது.

Non adhaeseris pedibus illius, qui sibi  
Similem non habet, difficile erit animi  
anxietatem sedare

*Beschi* ( 7 )

தகுதி யெனவொன்று நன்றே பகுதியாற்  
பாற்பட் டொழுகப் பெறின்.

That virtue which in all relations holds  
Unchangeably its nature, that alone  
Deserves the name of Justice

*Ellis* (111)

துறந்தார்க்குத் துப்புரவு வேண்டி மறந்தார்கொன்  
மற்றை யவர்க டவம்.

Die Andern, den Andern Beizuspringen willens,  
haben wohl der Busse vergessen.

*Graul* (263)

கடிதோச்சி மெல்ல வெறிக நெடிதாக்க  
நீங்காமை வேண்டு பவர்.

Poursuivez rudement et frappez mollement, si vous  
désirez l'interruption d'une longue prospérité

*M. Ariel* (562)

# Verities of Tiruvacagam, a Study of Manickavacagar and Rumi

G. VANMIKANATHAN.

[When the writer of this article was introduced to Rumi last year, he found an amazing similarity of experience and expression between the Tiruvacagam of Manickavacagar and Rumi's poems. The eternal verities of a Mystic's life stood revealed with a clearness which the separate the study of either the Tiruvacagam or Rumi could not produce. Rumi elaborated and elucidated and authoritatively confirmed numerous passages in the Tiruvacagam in a manner which the various available commentaries in Tamil on our Saints work had not done — at last, to the writer of this article.

When the editor of "Tamil Culture" asked the writer for an article, he eagerly grasped the chance to share with a large group of readers the joy and enlightenment he had gained by his comparative study of the two mystics.]

LOVERS OF THE TIRUVASAGAM have always yearned for an elaborate and comprehensive commentary or *Bashyam* on the work. They point to the voluminous and learned commentaries on the *Nalaira-p-Prabandam* and grieve that the guardians of the Shaivite religion have not done similar service to the Tiruvacagam. When the writer of this article received six years ago a copy of a commentary on a hundred verses of the Tiruvacagam, he was told a story by the friend who sent him the book as a gift. The friend wrote that nearly twenty-five years ago he was present in Karaikal at a lecture arranged in connection with the *Mambala-t-tirunal*. The author

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(twenty-five years later) of the commentary was a speaker at the meeting ; the president was a learned *Swamigal*. Our author had quoted in the course of his lecture certain verses from the Tiruvacagam, and had explained their meaning to the audience. The president referred in his closing speech to the explanations given by the speaker and, declared that they were utterly incorrect. The speaker was and is held in high esteem by Tamil scholars and common people. The audience was, therefore, deeply hurt and demanded that, if it were so, the *Swamigal*, should himself explain the verses and show how the speaker was wrong. The *Swamigal*, it is said, swept a disdainful eye over the audience and declared that none among them was fit to receive the secrets of the verses.

The *Swamigal* was probably right, but he stated only half the side of the matter. It is also not everyone who can reveal the mysteries of the Tiruvacagam. Till the second quarter of this century, none dared to write a commentary thereto. The late Dr. Swaminatha Iyer has related how the great Tamil scholar Thiagaraja Chettiar of Worur threatened on one occasion to jump into the Cauvery if a friend who had been pressing him to write a commentary to the Thiruvacagam would not cease his importunities.

The *Swamigal* was right and Chettiar was also right. For, Rumi<sup>1</sup> says,

*"Nay, I will not tell, for thou art still unripe: thou are in thy springtime, thou has not seen the summer."*

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<sup>1</sup> JALALUL-DIN RUMI, the greatest mystical poet of Persia, was born in Khorasan in 1207. When he was twelve years old his family had to flee before the advancing Mongol hordes and settled in Turkey. After his marriage and the death of his father, said to be an eminent theologian and a great teacher and preacher, he took to the mystical life, to which the remainder of his days were devoted. He died in 1273. His literary output was large. All the quotations from Rumi in this article are taken from "*Rumi—Poet And Mystic*, Selections from his writings translated from the Persian with Introduction and Notes by Reynold A. Nicholson" published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London. Price 8 sh. 6 d. We are indebted to the publishers for their gracious permission to quote from the book.



*"This world is as the tree: we are like the half-ripened fruit upon it.*

*"The unripe fruits cling fast to the bough, because they are not fit for the palace ;<sup>2</sup>*

*"Better that the secret of the Friend should be disguised: do thou harken to it as implied in the contents of the tale.*

*"Better that the lovers' secret should be told (allegorically) in the talk of others.<sup>3</sup>*

*"But when they have ripened and become sweet and delicious*

*" the Holy Spirit will tell these without me as the medium.*

*"Nay, thou wilt tell it to thy own ear — neither I nor another, O thou who art one with me —*

*"Just as, when thou fallest asleep, thou goest from the presence of thyself into the presence of thyself.*

*"And hearest from thyself that which is told thee secretly by someone in a dream.<sup>4</sup>*

"Even to the elect, the mysteries of gnosis can only be communicated . . . . through a screen of symbolism", says Prof. Nicholson in a foot note. Mere learning, on the other hand, however vast and deep, will not by itself make a Pundit a spiritual Guru, — an interpreter of the mysteries of gnosis.

*Oj what avail, indeed, is knowledge,*

*If they (the scholars) adore not the blest feet of the Pure Knower ?*

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Nicholson has given titles of great insight to the several poems, just as some unknown ancient editor has done for the Tiruvacagam. This extract is from "Ripeness is all."

<sup>3</sup> from RUMI — THE DOCTRINE OF RESERVE.

<sup>4</sup> from RUMI — RIPENESS IS ALL.

said Tiruvalluvar. Manickavacagar had such learning in his mind when he sang,

*"I survived the multiple sea called learning."*<sup>5</sup>

கல்வி யென்னும் பல்கடல் பிழைத்தும்

Rumi confirms the inadequacy of mere learning in words reminiscent of Tiruvalluvar and Manickavacagar. He sings,

*"The spiritual man's knowledge bears him aloft ;  
the sensual man's knowledge is a burden.*

*"God hath said, Like an ass laden with books :  
heavy is the knowledge that is not inspired by Him."*<sup>6</sup>

and exhorts the aspirant in these ringing words :—

*" go, seek the thing named.*

*The moon is in the sky, not in the water.*

*"Would you rise beyond name and letter  
make yourself pure,*

*"And behold in your own heart all the knowledge  
of the prophets,*

*without book, without learning, without preceptor"*<sup>6</sup>

### THE SEEKER BECOMES THE SOUGHT

*"Never, in sooth, does the lover seek without  
being sought by his beloved*

*"When the lightning of love had shot into this heart  
Know that there is love in that heart.*

<sup>5</sup> The writer of this article has preferred to translate in his own words, the several passages of the Tiruvacagam quoted in this article. He is fully conscious of his temerity and does so with trepidation. Where the quotations are from Rev. G. U. Pope's translation, due acknowledgement is made.

<sup>6</sup> from RUMI—IMMEDIATE KNOWLEDGE.

*"When love of God waxes in thy heart,  
beyond any doubt God hath love for thee."*

Rumi avers in these words that Manickavacagar had repeatedly declared several centuries earlier. Thus and thus Manickavacagar bears testimony to this reversal of roles, the Sought becoming the pursuing Seeker.

*"Have I indeed performed ascetic deeds,  
Cē-va-ya-na-ma gained to chaunt !  
Civan, the mighty Lord, as honey and as  
rare ambrosia sweet,  
Himself He came, entered my soul —  
to me His Slave gave grace."*

நானேயோதவஞ் செய்தேன், சிவாயநம எனப்பெற்றேன் !  
தேனும் இன்னமுதாய்த் தித்திக்குஞ் சிவபெருமான்  
நானே வந் தெனதுள்ளம் புகுந்தடியேற்கு அருள்  
செய்தான்.

*That Thou, indeed, are the four-fold Vedas' Lord,  
I realise, and I, the lowliest of all,  
A very cur, this too I see ; yet  
Lord, since I say, 'to Thee a lover  
I've become', therefore, Thou took'st me for Thine own.  
Devotees, are there not, besides me,  
A Vile wretch ? Isn't this verily Thy grace ?*

ஆயநான் மறையவனும் நீயே யாதல்  
அறிந்தியான் யாவரினுங் கடையனாய்  
நாமினேன் ஆதலையும் நோக்கிக் கண்டு  
நாதனே நானுனக்கோர் அன்பன் என்பேன்  
ஆமினேன் ஆதலால் ஆண்டு கொண்டாய்  
அடியார்தாம் இல்லையே ஆண்டு கொண்டாய்  
பேயனேன், இதுதான் நிற்பெருமை யன்றே ?

Seekers such as these are called the Mystics. Rumi calls them the Pirs. "The Pirs" says Rumi,

<sup>1</sup> from RUMI—UNIVERSAL LOVE.

<sup>2</sup> TIRU—Pope's translation.

- “ are they whose spirits were in the  
Sea of Divine Munificence before the world existed.
- “ They lived ages before the creation of the body;  
they harvested the wheat before it was sown.
- “ Before the form was moulded, they had received the  
spirit;  
before the sea was made, they had strung the pearl.
- “ The spirit has beheld the wine in the grape,  
the spirit has beheld entity in non-entity —
- “ The finite was infinite, the minted gold before the  
existence of the mine.”<sup>9</sup>

### THE MYSTIC IS A TRI-KALA-GNANI

The Mystic, — the Pir is a tri-kala gnani. As the organs of Divine consciousness,” says Prof. Nicholson, quoting from Jili in a foot note, “He knows the entire content of past, present and future existence, how everything came to be and is now coming and shall at last come to be: all this he knows both synthetically and analytically.”

Manickavacagar bears testimony to this when he sings,

“ Grass was I, shrub was I, worm, tree,  
Full many a kind of beast, bird, snake,  
Stone, man and demon. 'Midst Thy hosts I served.  
The form of mighty Asuras, ascetics, gods I bore.  
Within these immobile and mobile forms of life  
In every species born, weary I've grown, great Lord!  
Truly, seeing Thy golden feet this day, I've gained  
release.”<sup>10</sup>

புல்லாகிப் பூடாய்ப் புழுவாய் மரமாகி  
பல் விருகமாகிப் பறவையாய்ப் பாம்பாகிக்  
கல்லாய் மனிதராய்ப் பேயராய் கணங்களாய்  
வல் அரசராகி முனிவராய்த் தேவராய்ச்

<sup>9</sup> from RUMI—THE SAINT'S VISION OF ETERNITY.

<sup>10</sup> TIRU—Pope's translation.

செல்லா நின்றஇத் தாவர சங்கமத்துள்  
எல்லாப் பிறப்பும் பிறந்தினைத் தேன் எம்பெருமான்  
மெய்யே யுன் பொன்னடிகள் கண்டின்று வீடுற்றேன் !

Nearly seven centuries later, and from a country hundreds of miles away, and in a foreign tongue, Rumi confirms this declaration of Manickavacagar in more than one poem. One, which Praof. Nicholson calls, THE ASCENDING SOUL, amazes the reader with its verbatim similarity to Manickavacagar's song. 'Let Rumi speak :

*"I died as mineral and became a plant,  
I died as plant and rose to animal,  
I died as animal and I was Man.  
Why should I fear? When was I less by dying?  
Yet once more I shall die as Man, to soar  
With angels blest ; but even from angelhood  
I must pass on : all except God shall perish.  
When I have sacrificed my angel-soul,  
I shall become what no mind e'er conceived.  
Oh, let me not exist ! for Non-existence  
Proclaims in organ tones, "To him we shall return."*<sup>11</sup>

The reader of perception would not fail to see the oneness of meaning (notwithstanding difference in modes and moods of expression) between Manickavacagar's ringing affirmation — thus,

*"Verily, Thy golden feet I saw today, and release  
gained"*  
and Rumi's

*"Oh, let me not exist ! for non-existence  
Proclaims in organ tones, "To him we shall return."*

### THE SEEKER'S PERILOUS PATH

The path of the Seeker is beset with many dangers.

*"When in my heart, thought of the Lord was born,  
And, of that Being, (who is) free from hate, contem-  
plation set in,"*

<sup>11</sup> from RUMI—The Ascending soul.

says Manickavacagar, a host of dangers swooped down upon him and surrounded him.

*"Delusive powers in ever-changing millions  
Began beguiling varied play.*

- \* *Friends, neighbours, came around,  
'With fluent tongue they urged their 'atheism.'*
- \* *Relations, the ancestral herd of cattle,*
- \* *Seiz'd me, called me, and became impatient.  
By and large,*
- \* *Penance itself, as supreme, Brahmins*
- \* *Swore and many Vedic texts produced.  
Sectarian disputants complacently  
Discordant tenets shouted loud and fought."<sup>12</sup>*

ஆறு கோடி மாயா சத்திகள்  
வேறு வேறுதம் மாயைகள் தொடங்கின.

ஆத்தம் ஆனார் அயலவர் கூடி  
நாத்திகம் பேசி நாத்தமும் பேறினர்,  
சுற்ற மென்னும் தொல் பசுக்குழாங்கள்  
பற்றி அழைத்தும் பதறினர்; பெருகவும்  
விரதமே பரம் ஆக, வேதியரும்  
சாதமாகவே சாத்திரங் காட்டினர்;  
சமயவாதிகள் தத்தம் மதங்களே  
அமைவதாக அரற்றி மலைந்தனர்.

The truth of these experiences of Manickavacagar are borne witness to by Rumi in these words:—

*"These two-and-seventy sects will remain till the Resurrection: the heretics talk and arguments will not fail.*

*"The number of locks upon a treasure are the proof of its high value.*

*"The long windings of the way, its mountain passes, and the brigands infesting it, announce the greatness of the traveller's goal.*

<sup>12</sup> TIRU—Pope's translation except lines marked with an asterisk, which are in part of full altered.

*"Every false doctrine resembles a mountain-pass, a precipice, and a brigand.*

*"The blind religious are in a dilemma, for the champions on either side stand firm :  
each party is delighted with its own path."*<sup>13</sup>

### THE MYSTIC'S TALISMAN

The peril is great, but the novitiate has an infallible talisman against all dangers.

*"Love alone," declares Rumi, "can end their quarrel, Love alone comes to the rescue when you cry for help against their arguments."*<sup>13</sup>

Our earlier Pilgrim on the perilous highway escaped the 'brigands' with the aid of the same Talisman. In words which read like a perfect 'Grammar' of Love, Manickavacagar relates what true dauntless Pilgrims, the galaxy of Lovers of God, do in such a peril.

தப்பாமே தாம் பிடித்தது சலியா  
தழலது கண்ட மெழுகது போலத்  
தொழுதுள முருகி அழுதுடல் கம்பித்து  
ஆடியும் அலறியும் பாடியும் பரவியும்  
.....நல்லிடையற அன்பிற்

.....சாருங்  
கதியது பரமா அதிசயமாக

.....  
மற்றோர் தெய்வங் கனவிலும் நினையாது

.....  
என்பு நைந்துருகி நெக்கு நெக்கேங்கி  
அன்பெனும் ஆறு கரையது புரள  
நன் புலன் ஒன்றி நாதவென்றாற்றி  
உரை தமொறி உரோமஞ் சிலிப்பக்  
கரமலர் மொட்டித் திருதயம் மலரக்  
கண்களி கூர நுண்துளி அரும்பச்  
சாயா அன்பினை நாடொறுந் தழைப்பவர்.

<sup>13</sup> from RUMI—RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY.



*They swerved not, but unflaggingly held on  
 As wax before the fire,  
 Adoring with melting soul, wept, with body a-trembling.  
 Dancing, shouting, singing, praying,  
 ..... never intermitting in their Love,  
 ..... the aimed-at  
 Goal alone as the Supreme Unseen ;  
 Other God (s), even in dream, never thinking of,  
 Their very bones softening and melting, and  
     wilting wilting with yearning :  
 The river Love overflowing its banks,  
 The goodly senses coalescing and deliriously  
     hailing the Lord,  
 Speech stumbling and hairs on end,  
 The blossoming (open) hands in adoration closed  
     as buds, while the heart blossoms out,  
 The eyes, in mounting joy, glisten with dew-drops.  
 Thus, unswerving Love (they) eternally cherish.*

### DO NOT TRAVEL ALONE

Even with such a powerful talisman, the Pilgrim should not travel alone. அஞ்சரமல் தனி வழியே போகவேண்டாம் — Do not, fearlessly, travel alone — is one of the 'don'ts' of Auvaiyar. Like all the Tamil Proverbs, this also has its worldly as well as spiritual meaning. The அடியார் கூட்டம் — the Caravan of Devotees — is therefore a source of strength and inspiration to the seeker of the Lord.

Therefore, Manickavasagar's petition in the first verse of the 'Ten'<sup>14</sup> called — KOIL MOOTHA-THIRUPPADIKAM —, which is esteemed as the heart of the Tiruvacagam is

..... "to me, Thy bondsman,  
 grant the grace amidst thy devotees to abide."

The poem reveals how much importance Manickavacagar attached to this petition.

<sup>14</sup> 'The tiruvasagam is divided into 'patigams', literally 'Tens'.

"She, my Lady dwells within Thy core ; in my Lady's  
heart you dwell :  
If Thee both do (indeed) dwell within this slave, to me,  
Thy bondsman,  
Grant the grace amidst Thy devotees  
To dwell, .....  
That my heart's intent be fulfilled."

உடையான் உன்தன் நடுவிருக்கும், உடையான் நடுவுள் நீ  
யிருத்தி ;  
அடியேன் நடுவுள் இருவீரும் இருப்பதானால், அடியேன்  
உன்  
அடியார் நடுவுள் இருக்கும் அருளைப் புரியாய் .....  
..... என் கருத்து முடியும் வண்ணம் முன்னின்றே.

Sat-sang, the company of the Good Companions is a vital  
need of the Mystic. For, "the Way to Good", as Rumi says,  
"is full of trouble and bale."<sup>15</sup>

"On this road men's souls are tried by terror,  
as a sieve is used for sifting bran.

"If you go by yourself, I grant that you may  
manage to escape the wolf ; but you will  
feel no spiritual alacrity.

"The ass, notwithstanding its grossness,  
is encouraged and strengthened,  
O Dervish, by comrades of its own kind.

"How many more goadings and cudgellings  
does it suffer when it crosses the  
desert without company !

"It says to you implicitly, "Take good heed !  
Don't travel alone unless you are an ass !" <sup>15</sup>

## LOVE IN ABSENCE

An overwhelming consciousness of unworthiness and a  
sinking dread of being forsaken mingle with a lament at being  
separated from the Lord and a yearning heart-ache for union

<sup>15</sup> from RUMI—Do not travel alone.

with the Beloved, and form the warp and woof of the tapestry of the Tiruvacagam. They are the strands of the web of life of a Mystic.

A whole series of fifty poems of the Tiruvacagam entreat the Lord in heart-wringing words, 'Forsake me Not'.

வினை என் போலுடையார் பிறர் ஆர் ?  
 உடையான் அடிநாயேனைத்  
 தினை யின் பாகமும் பிரிவது  
 திருந்து நான் முட்டிலேன், தலைகிறேன் ;  
 முனைவன் பாதநன் மலர் பிரிந்  
 திருந்து நான் முட்டிலேன், தலைகிறேன் ;  
 இனையன் பாவனை யிரும்பு கல்  
 மனஞ் செவி யின்ன தென்றறியேனே !

*What other sinners are there like to me ?  
 this lowly cur, by even a whist  
 To forsake, is not the Lord's sacred will : nath'less  
 From the Primal One's feet-blossom having parted,  
 My head I smash not or split.  
 My soul is iron, stone my mind,  
 my ear is, I know not what !*

மறுத்தனன் யானான் அருள்றியாமையில் என்மணியே !  
 வெறுத்தெனை நீ விட்டிடுதி கண்டாய்.

*Through ignorance, I have Thy Grace  
 refused, my Jewel  
 Loathing me, Lo Forsake Me Not .....*

எய்தேன் நாயேன், இனி யிங்கிருக்க கில்லேன் .....

முத்தர் உன்தன் முகவொளி நோக்கி முறுவல் நகை காண  
 அத்தா, சால ஆசைப்பட்டேன் கண்டாய் அம்மானே !  
*Wearied am I, a cur : I cannot any longer abide here*  
 .....

*O Fetter-free ! Thy face's lustre to gaze at and  
 smile's gleam to see,  
 O Sire, behold, I eagerly yearned.*

Rumi reveals to us the esoteric meaning of this eternal lament which pervades the Tiruvacagam.

Rumi sings :—

*"How should not I mourn, like night, without His day  
and the favour of His day-illuminating countenance ?*

*"I am in love with grief and pain for the sake of pleasing  
my peerless King.*

*"I complain of the Soul of my soul, but in truth I am  
not complaining : I am only telling.*

*"My heart says it is tormented by Him, and I have long  
been laughing at its poor pretence."*<sup>16</sup>

### THE BODY THAT LEADS TO RUIN AND THE BODY THAT LEADS TO BLISS

Poor pretence it may be, when the heart says it is tormented by Him, but it does not seem to be so when Manickavacagar reviles his body. When he bemoans like this, — "Endure, I cannot, this bodily existence" (தரிக்கிலேன் காய வாழ்க்கை) or "this body that would not be uprooted, I have not felled" (பரியா உடல் தன்னைச் செற்றிலேன்) or thus. "I cannot bear this, but no way of ridding this body do I see" (பொறுக்கிலேன், உடல் 'போக்கிடங் காணேன்) or merely thus, "I die not" (இறக்கிலேன்) he seems earnestness itself.

While the uninitiated reader grows sorely perplexed at this suicidal longing, Manickavacagar confounds him with a strange paradoxical utterance. He says :

*"Hail to the Resplendent Being that did away with the  
body which spells ruin,*

*Hail to Him that created the body which yields ecstasy."*

அழிதரும் ஆக்கை ஒழியச் செய்த ஒன் பொருள்  
அளிதரும் ஆக்கை செய்தோன் போற்றி.

<sup>16</sup> from RUMI—Love in Absence.

Rumi comes to our help and enlightens us thus :—

*“ The spiritual way ruins the body and, having ruined it, restores it to prosperity :*

*“ Ruined the house for the sake of the golden treasure, and with that same treasure builds it better than before ;*

*“ Cut off the water and cleansed the river-bed, then caused drinking water to flow in it ;*

*“ Cleft the skin and drew out the barb, then made fresh skin grow over the wound :*

*“ Razed the fortress and took it from the infidel, then reared thereon a hundred towers and ramparts.*

*“ Sometimes the action of God appears like this, sometimes the contrary : (true) religion is nothing but bewilderment.<sup>17</sup>*

### SPIRITUAL CHURNING

The ‘ruin’ and ‘restoration’ are achieved by a spiritual churning of the body which is plagued by the five senses. Manickavacagar refers to this when he sings :—

*“ By five-fold evil I whirl like curd by assailing churn ”*

மலங்களைத் தாழ் சுழல்வன் தயிறிற் பொரு மத்துறவே

*“ Like churned cool curd, with sense vomiting fire, (I am) stirred.”*

மத்துறு தண்தயிறிற் புலன் தீக்கதுவக் கலங்கி

If there is a churn, there should be a Churner. He is Him, whom Manickavacagar sings in these words :

*The Ancient One, transcending speech,—*

*In soul's apprehension, not to be contained,*

*By eye or other sense-organs not perceivable,—*

*He, who, the ether and all elements, in their order, caused to be born,*

<sup>17</sup> from RUMI—The Ladder to Heaven.

.....  
 Today, to me, in condescending grace came —  
 Resplendent Being that made this body of destruction  
 fall away  
 .....

*And ecstasy yielding body fashioned. Hail to Him !*

சொற்பதங் கடந்த தொல் லோன்,  
 உள்ளத் துணச்சியிற் கொள்ளவும் படான்  
 கண்முதற் புலனாற் காட்சியும் இல்லோன்  
 விண்முதற் பூதம் வெளிப்பட வருத்தோன்,

.....  
 இன் நெனக் கெளி வந்தருளி,  
 அழிதரும் ஆக்கை ஒழியச் செய்த ஒன் பொருள்  
 அனிதரும் ஆக்கை செய்தோன் போற்றி.

In amazingly identical concept and expression Rumi expounds the same mystic truth thus :—

*“Thy truth is concealed in falsehood, like the taste of butter in buttermilk.*

*“Thy falsehood is this perishable body ; thy truth is the lordly spirit.*

*“During many years the buttermilk remains in view, while the butter has vanished as if nought,*

*“Till God send a Messenger, a Chosen Servant, to shake the buttermilk in the churn —*

*“To shake it with method and skill, and teach me that my true self was hidden.*

*“The buttermilk is old : Keep it, do not let it go till you extract the butter from it.*

*“Turn it deftly to and fro, that it may give up its secret.”<sup>18</sup>*

This spiritual churning turns the body which spells ruin into a body which melts in ecstasy. In this state,

<sup>18</sup> from RUMI—Spiritual Churning.

*The body prickles and quivers, its hands clasped over the  
head and adore*

*Thy fragrance-laden Feet, tears well up, the heart melts,  
and*

*The unreal is spurned.*

மெய்தான் அரும்பி விதிர் விதிர்த்து, உன்

விரை ஆர் கழற் கென்

கைதான் தலைவைத்துக் கண்ணீர் ததும்பி

வெதும்பி உள்ளம்,

பொய் தான் தவிர்ந்து .....

*Spurning the unreal, Thee I praise, and never shall I falter  
or cease with repeated songs of victory to Hail Thee !*

பொய் தான் தவிர்ந்து உன்னைப்போற்றி, சயசய

போற்றி யென்னும்

கைதான் நெகிழ விடேன். ....

### FEELING AND THINKING

In this state, the Mystic has no patience with ordinary talk. If ever he speaks, it would only be to repeatedly pronounce thus :—

“O Lord, Father, Sire, My Supreme Master !”

பேசிற்கும் ஈசனே எந்தாய் எந்தை

பெருமானே என்றென்றே பேசிப் பேசி

If, perchance, the Mystics are ever inveigled into an idle argument, they realise their lapse almost instantly and resume their sole pursuit — the praise of the Lord. Manickavacagar declares this allegorically through a conversation between certain girls who go about collecting their friends on their way to the traditional early morning bath in the month of Margazi (December-January) and a friend still tarrying in her bed.

THE GIRLS :—

“O thou of radiant pearl-like smile, is't not now dawn ?”

THE LAZY ONE :—

“Have all the sweet-voiced come, like parrots, many-  
hued ?”



THE GIRLS :—

*“ We shall count, and true tally, report (to you), meanwhile in sleep close not thine eye ; let not thy time in vain be sept.”*

THE GIRLS CONTINUING AFTER REALISING THEIR LAPSE :—

*“ Heaven’s Unique Elixir, Veda’s Quintessence, Eyes’ Delight, We’d rather sing of Him, our hearts melting away in ecstasy ! We shall therefore not count ! Come and count for yourself, and if the tally is short, go back to sleep.”*

ஒன்றித் திலநகை யாய் இன்னம் புலர்ந்தின்றோ  
வண்ணக் கிளி மொழியா ரெல்லாரும் வந்தாரோ  
எண்ணிக் கொ ள்ளவா சொல்லு கோம் அவ்வளவுந்  
கண்ணைத் துயின்றவமே காலத்தைப் போக்காதே  
விண்ணுக் கொரு மருந்தை வேத விழுப் பொருளைக்  
கண்ணுக் கினியானைப் பாடிக் கசிந்துள்ளம்  
உந்நெக்கு நின்றுக யாம்மாட்டோம் நீயே வந்  
தெண்ணிக் குறையில் துயிலேலோ ரம்பாவாய்.

Rumi relates an anecdote which quaintly underscores this same one-pointedness of the Mystic.

*“ Someone struck Zayd a hard blow from behind. He was about to retaliate,*

*“ When his assailant cried, ‘ Let me ask you a question first, answer it, then strike me.*

*“ I struck the nape of your neck, and there was the sound of a slap. Now I ask you in a friendly way —*

*“ Was the sound caused by my hand or by your neck, O pride of the noble ? ’*

*“ Zayd said, ‘ The pain I am suffering leaves me no time to reflect on this problem.*

*“ Ponder it yourself : he who feels the pain cannot think of things like this.”<sup>19</sup>*

<sup>19</sup> from RUMI—Feeling and Thinking.

## THE MYSTIC'S HIGHWAY — THE SPEEDIEST

Many are the pilgrims to God and diverse are the routes that they take, but the Mystic's highway is the speediest and the surest one. His goal rushes forward to him more speedily than lightning. "The Lord", sings Manickavacagar, "eludes many earnest seekers, who strive to reach him through rites, or Vedic lore, or Yogic contemplation, and

*"even those (ascetics) who bidding their senses five depart to regions far, seek unknown mountain heights, and with body stripped of all but the bare breath perform rare austerities."*

But "to me" he sings in ecstasy,

*"Today, right now, in condescending grace  
He delivered Himself."*

-----சேண் வயின்  
ஐம்புலன் செலவிடுத்து அருவரை தொறும் போய்த்  
துற்றவை துறந்த வெற்றியிர் ஆக்கை  
அருந்தவர் காட்சியுள் திருந்த ஒளித்தும்  
-----

இன்றெனக் கெளி வந்திருந்தனன் போற்றி.

"The Mystic", Rumi declares, "ascends to the Throne in a moment; the ascetic needs a month for one day's journey.

"Although for the ascetic, one day is of great value, yet how should this one day be equal to fifty thousand years?

"In the life of the adept, every day is fifty thousand of the years of this world.

"Love hath five hundred wings, and every wing reaches from the empyrean to beneath the earth.

"The timorous ascetic runs on foot, the lovers of God fly more quickly than lightning."

## I AM GOD

In that moment, when the Lord, in condescending grace delivers Himself to the Mystic, he is filled with God — *he is God.*

That rare moment is for ever captured in the outburst of Rapture with which Manickavacagar concludes the *Tiru-anda-p-paguthi*.

*"I know not what to say. Blessed be Thou !*

*Is this proper ?*

*Ah me ! a mere cur, I cannot sustain this.*

*What Thee to me has done,*

*I cannot comprehend. Ah ! I am dead. To me,*

*Thy slave,*

*What Thou in grace hast bestowed, I know not ;*

*with mere slipping, am not satiate,*

*(Greedy) swallowing, I cannot take it in.*

*The rich cool sea of milk in flowing billows swells*

*Like the new-moon mid-ocean tide and fills my soul*

*to overflowing.*

*It beggars description — in each hair-root of my body,*

*Nectar sweet, to collect, He ordained. Taking abode*

*in this my frame,*

*Each fibre of this wretch's fleshy body,*

*Through honey-filled wondrous ambrosial channels*

*He irrigated right to the very cavities of the bones.*

*As if with (my) melting heart he fashioned a form,*

*An ecstasy bubbling body He created for me.*

*(Thus) when in me, Mercy's pure honey he mixed,*

*He made me, in His grace, surpassing Nectar sweet.*

*சொல்லுவ தறியேன், வாழி ! முறையோ !*

*தரியேன் நாயேன், தானெனைச் செய்தது*

*தெரியேன். ஆவா ! செத்தேன் ! அடியேந்*

*கருளிய தறியேன். பருகியு மாரோன்,*

*விழுங்கியும் ஒல்லகில் லேன்.*

*செழுந்தண் பாற்கடல் திரைபுரைவித்*

*துவாக்கடல் நள்ளுநீர் உள்ளகந்ததும்ப,*

வாக்கிறந் தழுதம் மயிர்க்கால் தோறுந்  
 தேக்கிடச் செய்தனன். கொடியேன் ஊன்தழை  
 குரம்பை தோறும் நாயுடலகத்தே  
 குரம்பை கொண் டின்தேன் பாய்த்தி நிரம்பிய  
 அற்புதமான அமுத தானைகள்  
 எற்புத் துளை தொறும் ஏற்றினன். உருகுவ  
 துள்ளங் கொண்டோர் உருச் செய்தாங் கென  
 கள்ளுருக்கை யமைத்தனன் -----

-----என்னிற்

கருணை வான் தேன் கலக்க  
 அருளொடு பராவமு தாக்கினன்.

“‘I am God’,” says Rumi, “is an expression of great humility. The man who says, ‘I am the slave of God’, ‘affirms two existences, his own and God’s, but he that says ‘I am God’, has made himself non-existent and has given himself up and says ‘I am God’ i.e., ‘I am naught, He is all, there is no being but God’s. THIS IS THE EXTREME OF HUMILITY AND SELF ABASEMENT.”<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> from RUMI—Deification.

# *Sources for the study of the History of Jaffna*

SWAMI S. GNANA PRAKASAR, O. M. I.

IT is an anachronism to call the North Ceylon of the Tamil period by the name of Jaffna. Nor is it correct to say that any Ruler of the North of the Island was king of Jaffna. The name Jaffna, now designating the entire Peninsula, was first given to the new town in Nallur in the 17th century. The kings, whose brief history is to be related in the following pages, reigned first at Sinkai Nagar, a town situated probably on the sea-shore near Point Pedro and then at Nallur, till their downfall. Their kingdom was known in their own days as that of Ilam, a name given also to the whole Island of Ceylon. As this old name is no more in use, and as "Jaffna" has to come to indicate the northern kingdom, we conform to modern usage in calling our ancient rulers the kings of Jaffna.

On the history of Jaffna there have been quite a number of Tamil works published recently. They have drawn invariably from a Tamil Prose work called *Yalppana-Vaipava-Malai* by one Mylvakanapulavar of Jaffna. This was translated into English by late Mr. Advocate C. Brito (1879). Mudaliar C. Rasanayagam who wrote his "*Ancient Jaffna*" in English was himself laid much store by this uncritical work of recent times. For, it was written according to the author's own statement as late as the year 1736 or thereabouts; for Maccara, at whose instance it was undertaken, was Governor of the Dutch possessions in Ceylon at that time. We have, therefore, to take it for what it is worth, and this can be determined only by a critical examination of the sources utilized

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This is a chapter from an unpublished manuscript.

by the author. The following is a summary of an article contributed by the present writer to the "Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register."<sup>1</sup>

### SOURCES OF THE YALPPANA-VAIPAVA-MALAI

The "Special Preface" which is verse tells us that Mayilvakana-pulavar drew from the following older writings : (1) *Kaylaya-malai* (2) *Vaiya-padal* (3) *Pararasasekaran-ula* and (4) *Irasa-murai*. These works deal with the period of native kings alone. We may well imagine that no records of the troublous times of the Portuguese conquest of Jaffna, followed by days little congenial to the production of Tamil literature, were left in the native tongue for our author to consult. For the history of these times he had to fall back upon oral traditions. Of the little he says of the Dutch period we can attribute only a small fraction to him. As Mr. Brito remarks : "The bold language in which the policy of the Dutch is described and the prophecies which the work contains relating to the English, must be regarded as interpolation of a later date."<sup>2</sup>

Confining our attention, therefore, to the earlier portion of the Vaipava-malai, we find that this can be divided into three distinct sections :

1. The legendary section closing with the story of the yalppadi : (pp. 1-13).
2. The colonisation of Jaffna under Koolankaic-Chakkavartti (pp. 13-18).
3. List of kings down to Pararasa-sekaran (pp. 18-26).

Of these, section 1 is in all probability based on the *Vaiya-padal* Section 2 on the *Kailaya-malai*, and Section 3 on the *Irasaparamparai* and *Pararasa - sekaran - ula*. The last two records supplying, apparently, the data for the most historical

1. vi p. 125 & seq.

2. The Y. V. M. Translator's preface.

portion of the work is lost, a truly unfortunate thing. The *Kaṭṭaya-malāi* has been recovered and printed.<sup>3</sup> A good portion of the *Vaiya-padal* has been recently discovered.<sup>4</sup> There exists also an old prose rendering of it, complete, which will help us to supply the lacunae of the incomplete original.

Leaving out, therefore, section 3, on which we can pass no judgment before its sources are, if ever, possibly brought to light, let us proceed to tackle Sections 1 and 2 of the work which now occupies our attention.

The *Vaiya-padal* opens with an episode from the *Ramayana*, according to which Vipishanan had been made king of Ceylon in the room of his brother Rāvanan by no less a personage than Tasarata Raman himself. A Yalppadi (lutist), who was serving at the court of Vipishanan, clears the jungle of the Northern peninsula, then known as "Manaltidal," plants gardens and groves, and, after bringing down a thousand Indian families to people the new land, crosses over to North Madura and obtains from king Kulaketu, the *maitunan* of Tasarata, one of his sons to become the ruler of this colony. This prince had one hand shorter than the other and was therefore known as Vijaya-Koolankaic-Chakkaravartti. This was in Kali-yuga 3000 or B. C. 101.

Mayilvakana-pulavar has embodied this account in his book. But Vipishnan was a misty character of the remote past and the events connected with the Sinhalese history,

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3. By Mr. T. Kayilasapillai of Jaffna in 1905. See also Brito op. cit. pp. xliv-xlvi.

4. By Mr. Arudpiragasam of the Central College, Jaffna. The prose version was edited by me from MSS with notes in 1921. Mr. Brito translates the greater portion of this opusculc in his Y. V. M. pp. xxx-xxxiv) and remarks: "the above is a work of no authority. It is a confusion of persons, places dates and events." Still I hold that it is out of this confusion that the author of the Y. V. M. has endeavoured to build up, the first section of his work. How far he has succeeded in accomplishing this rare task will be seen in the text. The prose *Vaiya* has been also quoted by Mr. J. P. Lewis in the first chapter of his *Manual of the Vanni* but under the name of Kalveddu.



which the pulavar had without doubt, known through the Mahavanso tradition, had to be reckoned with. So he dexterously sandwiches these events between the reign of that puranic celebrity (p. 1) and the so-called colonisation under the Yalppadi (p. 13). Again, the Pulavar had no doubt that Vijaya was a Saivite. For, when that adventurer left India, Buddhism was not a full fledged faith. It was an easy task for him, therefore, to connect the more ancient Saivite temples of Ceylon with its famous conqueror (p. 3). Likewise, the coming out of the oldest families of Brahmans was naturally bracketed with the origin of these temples (p. 1-2). Again, it was too notorious a fact to be ignored, that the old inhabitants of Ilam with their speech shaded off into Sinhalese had held Jaffna before the modern Tamil settlers ever set their foot here, and there seems to have been an idea that the former had come from Siam. So, the pulavar adds that Vijaya had brought the Buddhist settlers from "Siam and other parts of Burma and placed them in different parts of the country." (p. 2). And when the Yalppadi brought his Tamil settlers he is made to rule over "the new colonists and the Singhalese natives whom he treated alike." (p. 13.)

The *Vaiya-padal* places the story of Marutap-piravikavalli after the colonisations by Yalppadi and follows it up with the arrival of sixty Vannias in connection with the marriage of Vararasa-sinkan, the man-lion son of Ukkirasinkan by that Chola princess. One of the Vannias, afterwards, stays with Vararasa-sinkan at Kandy, while the rest conquer Adankapattu and rule it under the overlordship of Jaffna; they invite the various Indian castes and clans, which we now find settled in Jaffna and the Vanni, including Tampalakamam and Koddiamam. Eventually, fifty-four of the Vannias are slain in a battle with the Parankis(?) and the remaining five returned to India but are drowned on their way thither. In the meantime, the wives of all the sixty Vannias, with their swordsmen and other attendants, leave India in order to meet

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5. We learn this from De Queyroz, *Conquista Temporal espiritual de Ceylao*, p. 4. He couples Bengal with Siam.

their husbands in Ceylon. Hearing, on the way, of the death of the fifty-four, an equal number of the Vannichis mount the funeral pyre, one goes to Kandy to find her lord, and the remaining five each the Vanni unaware of the tragic end of their husbands, and subsequently become Vannipam (rulers of the Vanni), their new husbands being known as Ayutanti.<sup>6</sup> Into this story is woven an episode of two pirate chiefs Vedarasan and Meera. They are defeated by Meeka-man a fisher chief, who was sent to Ceylon, from Madura to obtain Nagarubies for the anklet of Kannakai (?) and from the Mukkuwa colony of Batticaloa and the Moorish one of Vidattativu.

Thus far the *Vaiya-padal*. The writer of that opuscle has put the different legends of his day pell-mell, without any regard to chronology. Mayilvakana-pulavar, on the other hand, had to fit them with the statements of another document which doubtless he had before his eyes. This was Konesar-Kalveddu,<sup>7</sup> or at any rate the tradition derived from it. Thus we find him following this document with regard to the Vannias who, according to it, were brought down in connection with the Konesar temple by Kulak-kodden, another nebulous hero about whom more in the sequel. But before bringing Kulak-kodden and his temple to the notice of his readers, he takes care to safe-guard what to him appears the greater antiquity of the Nakulesar temple by throwing in a word on Kiri-malai and on the legend of a mongoose-faced sage which has grown round that temple. Then, harmonising the Vaiya's statement and that of the Kalveddu with regard

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6. Portuguese : ajudante, adjutant.

7. Printed with the Takshina-Kayilasa-puranam, about which see note 11. The prose portion of the Kalveddu looks older on the whole than the verse. It is attributed to a certain Kavirasar who appears to contribute a "Special preface" to the Takshina-Kayilasa-puranam. If so, it is as old as this work. Mr. Brito who gives a good summary, of the Kalveddu in his Y. V. M. (pp. xxxix-xliv), says that it is unquestionably a work of great antiquity, but it bears evident marks of having received additions from time to time up to every recent dates." Before Mr. Brito Mr. Casie Chitty had given a summary of the Kalveddu in the Government Gazette of 1831. See this reproduced in the Ceylon Literary Register 1-63.

to the Vannias, our author declares that the Vannias invited by Kulak-koddan also received "an accession of fifty-nine" new families from Pandi". (p. 7).

This number "fifty nine" is unquestionably from the *Vaiya-padal* as the story of Kulak-koddan bringing the Vannias is from the Kalveddu. He then takes up the episode of the pirate chiefs, now metamorphosed into usuman and Sentan (probably to account for the two village names: Usuman-turai and Sentan-kalam), and succeeds in tracing out a cause for chiefs afterwards migrating to Batticaloa and to "the sea-coast far removed from Kiri-malai" (p. 5.) The circumstances of five Vannias being drowned, sixty Vannichis coming out to meet their husbands with their swordsmen &c., and fifty-four of them committing suicide, reappear in the reign of Sankily transformed into the following: Forty-nine Vannias come out to join their caste in Ceylon. They are all lost at sea except one Karaippiddy Vannian who reaches Jaffna; he is stabbed to death and his Vannichi commits suicide; the sixty swordsmen in their pay are degraded into Nalavas (pp. 34-35). The transmutation of numbers in the two stories, which nevertheless present the same chief events faithfully, is interesting.

As for Marutap-piravika-valli herself, the *Vaiya-padal* tells us that she was the daughter of Tisai-ukkira-cholan, father-in-law or uncle of Koolankaic-chakkaravartti. She and her brother, Sinka-ketu visited Ceylon for the purpose of bathing in the sacred spring of Kiri-malai. Here she was cured of a deformity in the face which had resembled that of a horse. From this marvel the country came to be known as Mavidda-puram. They travelled on to Katir-kamam and on their return journey Marutap-pravika-valli had, by Uk-kirasinkan, a son born with a tail, who resembled a man lion.

This is what the *Vaiya-padal* has. The *Kailaya-malai* introduces a slight change. According to it, the daughter of

a Cholan apparently named Rasa Rasan bathed in the sea-tirttam of Ceylon to obtain a cure and was encamped with her attendants and a large army. The lion-faced king of Katirai-malai (Katirkamam) stealthily carried her away to his hill capital and made her his queen. She gave birth to a beautiful son called Varasinka - maharasa. Narasinka - rasan. The queen next gave birth to a daughter. When the children grew up they were married to each other.

The *Vaipava-malai* version is much more developed. Ukkira-sinkan appears here with a fuller previous history. He is "a prince of the dynasty founded by king Vijaya's brother." (p. 8) He makes a descent on Ceylon with a numerous force, conquers one half of it and reigns from Katirai-malai. He has the face of a lion and makes a pilgrimage to Kiri-malai where he encamps in Valvar-kon-pallam, "so named from Valavan (Chola-rasan) who had formerly encamped on the same spot." (p. 8) At this stage comes the incident of Tondaiman (no doubt invented by folk-lore etymologists to account for Tondamanaru) who pays him a visit. On this returning to Katirai-malai he passed through the Vanni, receiving the voluntary submission of the Vannias and imposing on them a tribute "which he enjoined should be paid to the temple of Konesar." (p. 9.) Then comes Marutapiravika-valli; she encamps at *Kumaratti-pallam*, bathes in the holy spring under the direction of Nakula-muni, and her cure gives Ma-vidda-puram its name. She builds the Kandaswami temple, for which her father Tasai-ukkira-cholan sends the men and the materials.

There is then introduced a detailed story about the Brahman, Periamanat-tullar, who is miraculously sent from the

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8. Mr. Brito translates: "a son of great personal beauty but having a tail." "Y. V. M. P. xlv. The text does not justify this. *ceyya-adi-val-alku* means "the great beauty of the rosy feet." The *Vaiya-padal* is solely responsible for the prince's cumbersome appurtenance.

opposite shore to officiate in the new temple. This furnishes the author with another opportunity for propounding the popular etymology of Kankesan-turai and for appending some traditions concerning the origin of "the Kashi and Tillai races of priesthood" (p. 12). Again, Ukkira-sinkan visits Kiri-malai once more presumably hearing of the temple being built by a Chola princess and a circumstantial account is given of how he possessed himself of Marutap-piravika-valli and how, in deference to her wishes, he tarried at Manaltidal until she had completed the sacred edifice. (p. 11) Subsequently he takes her to Katirai-malai and there celebrates the nuptial ceremonies. Soon afterwards he abandons this city and makes Senkadanakari his capital. Here the queen brings forth a son and a daughter. The son who was born with a tail, was named Narasinka-rasa and the daughter Senpaka-vati. Their parents unite them in marriage and crown the son sub-king under the title of Vala sinka-rasa ; but on his father's death he ascended the throne with the name of Jaya-vararasa sinkan. (pp. 12-13.)

Thus we find that the original story as found in the *Vaiya-padal* and the little more expanded version of *Kayilaya-malai* have undergone a great many developments in the *Vaipava-malai*. What are the sources of these developments ? It is, again, the Kalveddu in combination with folk-lore-etymology and the popular evolution of ideas which have given the Pulavar his data. The ground-work of the story of the miraculous cure of an Indian princess and the building of a temple by her is found ready-made in the account of Kulak-koddan and the temple of Konesar.

A Chola prince called Kulak-koddan (the name simply means one connected with tank and temple) comes to worship at Tiri-Kayilai, i.e. the shrine at Trincomalie. Here another Cholan, Vararama Tevan, has worshipped before him. He builds the temple and its towers, makes the sin-dispelling well, and appoints a line of Vannias to see to the maintenance of the temple and its worship. He invites Brahmans from India to officiate in it. Now there comes another character on the

sage. Adaka-savuntary<sup>9</sup> was a Kalinga princess born with a deformity and on that account committed to the waves enclosed in an ark. The ark was wafted on Ceylon shores and picked up by the king of Unnasakiri. The child was adopted by the king and in course of time succeeded him as ruler of Ceylon. It was during her reign that Kulak-koddan was busying himself with the pious work of restoring the temple. The report of his activities reaches her ears and forthwith she despatches an army to drive him out of the island ; but this only results in a friendly understanding and Kulak-koddan marries her at Unnasakiri. They both retire to Tiri-kayilai where a son named Sinka-kumaran is born. Afterwards they return to Unnasa-kiri and made him king.

Now it will appear at a glance that the two accounts are not independent of each other. Both are, in fact, substantially the same, if we make allowance for a confusion of names and places. In the one case it is a Chola princess who builds a Ceylon temple<sup>10</sup> and espouses a prince of the Kalinga family. In the other it is a Chola prince who builds a Ceylon temple and espouses a princess of the Kalinga family. In both the cases the princess is sent to Ceylon on account of a personal deformity. But what is a conclusive argument for the identity of both the stories is that both point to the head of a new dynasty in Ceylon practically with the same name, i.e. Vala-sinkan and Sinka-kumaran.

On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the story of Kulak-koddan and Adaka-savuntary is earlier than that of

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9. The name, the deformity in question, and some other details disclose the fact that this legend has much in common with those of Tadakai in the *Ramayanam* and Tasatakaip-piraddy in the *Tiruvilai-yadatpuranam*. The author of the Y. V. M. makes Adaka-Savuntary the queen of Pandu. (p. 6) See how this equation enables him to fix some dates : Pp. 7 and 9. This is clearly a device to make a distinct personage of Marutappiravikavalli whereas she is actually identical with Adaka-savuntary.

10. Kulak-koddan repaired the temple of Tambalakamam and the old temple of Kirimalai is called by the Y. V. M. Tiruttampala-Isuran-koil. (p. 3) There is surely some identity behind this resemblance of names.



Ukkira-sinkan and Marutap-piravika-valli, just as the shrine of Konesar is older than that of Nakulesar. We know that the former temple was of equal celebrity with Tirukketicchurām as early as the seventh century A. D.; for Tiru-Gnana-Sambantar has sung them both in his Tevaram hymns. But we hear nothing of Kiri-malai till such comparatively recent times as the *Vaiya-padal* and the *Kayilaya-malai* represent. As for Marutap - pitavika-valli the *Takshina - kayilasa-puranam*<sup>11</sup> makes no mention of her, not even in the incoherent episode<sup>12</sup> of the Kantaruvan or lutist connected with the Ravanam myth, in which Kiri-malai figures as an ordinary tirtam. The *Tiruk-konasala-puranam* does indeed represent her as visiting Kiri-malai in the course of her peregrinations through the many sacred places of Ceylon. But this work is of our own days<sup>13</sup> and the story is again different in details from that of the *Vaipava-malai*. Certain it is that both these works have each spun its own yarn from the legend handed down by that most uncritical document ever put on paper — the *Vaiya-padal*.

In all probability the legend of Marutap-piravika-valli originated as folk-lore in connection with a noted shrine of old days. We have a parallel to this in all the ruins of old buildings in Jaffna being popularly attributed to some princess or other. Compare the legend concerning Alli-arasany and

11. First edition printed at Madras, 1887. A second edition which seems to follow older MSS, was printed at Jaffna, 1914. Internal evidence shows that this work could not have been written after the period of the native kings, i.e., after 1620. Its "Special preface" is attributed in the first edition to Arasa-Kesari and in the second to Kavi-virarakavan. If the latter is the blind poet who visited Pararasa-sekaran's court, his time should probably be placed before 1591. This is the Pararasa-sekaran nicknamed Rei torto who was a friend of letters and who could have composed the verses attributed to the Jaffna king in Kavi-virarakavan's life. See *infra* chapter xii. A certain Kavirasar too contributes a "Special preface" to the *Takshina-Kayilas-puranam*. If he is identical with the author of the Konesar Kalveddu (as the editor of the former work thinks) then both the works belong to the same period.

12. It is clearly an interpolation as the editor remarks see page

13. "Its author Mr. Masilamany Muttukumaru, is a native of Trincomalie where he still lives." Mr. Brito in his Y. V. M. page xxviii.



Kumaratty. The circumstance of Marutap-piravika-valli's miraculous cure is probably to be traced to the influence of the legend of Adaka-savuntary, which itself owned its origin to some ancient floating myth, while her equine face would be naturally suggested by the place name Ma-vidda-puram.<sup>14</sup> But folk-lore went a step further. It would connect this beautiful legend with another not less beautiful — that of Yalppadi. And nothing was easier. The Kulak-koddan tradition was there, ready to furnish all the missing links. That celebrated Chola prince who married a princess of his own country miraculously brought to Unnasa-kiri was no other — it was discovered — than the lion-faced Ukkira-sinkan who married Marutap-piravika-valli at Katira-malai<sup>15</sup> and reigning as the sole monarch of Ceylon bestowed the Northern peninsula on the Yalppadi!

But who was this Yalppadi? I find it a clumsy attempt to derive Yalppanam from Yalppadi. If there was a question of Yalppanan as the coloniser of our peninsula all would be well. Yal-panan is a classical word meaning one whose occupation and caste-duty is to play on the lute. And a country connected with a Yalppanan can very correctly be called Yalppanam.<sup>16</sup> Again, it is contrary to fact to say that Jaffna was

14. I venture to think that "puram" in this name actually represent "veram" (for vihare) as in Suddi-puram, Suli-puram and Tol-puram. See this discussed by me in the *Ceylon Antiquary*, II, 292. "Mavidda" stands perhaps for Maha-wata or sacred Wata-tree as suggested by Mr. S. W. Coomaraswamy in his *Some place-names in the Northern Province* (Tamil. p. 132.). There are many pulams or arable lands in Jaffna known as Mavattai and it is quite conceivable that a Mavattai pulam came to be called Mavattai-puram which would have given a chance to popular etymologists to, connect a horse with it. I notice a Vadda-Kallady in Poiyddi (or Bositiya) near Achchelu. Poiyddi itself is known as Seedi-puram (for veram) no doubt with reference to a Vihara which stood on the sitiya.

15. A plausible suggestion has been made by Mr. H. W. Codrington C. C. S. in his lecture before the Jaffna Historical Society (on 12th Feb. 1920) to the effect that Ukkira-sinkan and Jayatunkan might be identified with Magha and Jayabahu (1215-1238). But see Brito's view in chapter iii infra.

16. See this discussed at length by Mr. Coomaraswamy in opus cit pp. 128-30.

made habitable and colonised only so late as the epoch assigned to Koolanic-chakravarti. Mayilvakana-pulavar corrects the *Vaiya-padal* with regard to the previous inhabitants of Jaffna, but adheres to the legend of the Yalppadi as all native writers have ever since done. He ventures even further in search of the antecedents of his hero and commits an anachronism by identifying him with the blind poet, Vira-rakavan, who indeed seems to have actually visited the court of a Ceylon king but as late as the sixteenth or the seventeenth century.<sup>17</sup>

The mention of the Yalppadi, however, is met, for the first time in native writings, only in the *Vaiya-padal*.<sup>18</sup> The original *Takshina-Kayilasa-puranam* has no reference to it. There seems, therefore, to be no doubt that the entire legend was conjured up as an explanation for the place name Yalppanam. But unfortunately for the etymologists who built up such a romantic story on a name Yalppanam is probably in no way connected with either *yal*<sup>19</sup> or *panan*. Learned opinion is now in favour of a Sinhalese origin to the name of the Portuguese town of the 17th century.<sup>20</sup> Yapa-ne is a good

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17. See note 11 supra.

18. It would seem that the *Vaiya* was composed during the times of the last Jaffna kings. See the traditions about the writer of this work in Mr. Mootootamby Pillai's *Jaffna History* 2nd edition p. 49. The Portuguese knew the story of the Yalpanan. For De Queyroz (p. 37), speaks of "the colony of the lord Jaffna which is the name of the first coloniser."

19. The author of *Ancient Jaffna* would see the kingdom of Jaffna in a reference to the Veenai flag in *Kalingattupparani* (1. 8.) But there is no evidence for the lute having ever been on the standard of the kings of Jaffna. Mr. Brito says somewhere that the sign gemini was the emblem for Jaffna. How he made that out is not clear. The *Sarasothi-malai*, a work of the 13th century, gives the *yal* as the auspicious sign of Tundi and makes no mention of Jaffna at all. On the other hand we know from *Sekarasa-sekara-malai* and other sources that the Bull and Setu were on the Jaffna flag, and the Jaffna coinage bore the same emblem.

20. See the *Ceylon Antiquary* II 58, 173. Also Mr. Coomaraswamy op. cit. p. 130.

Sinhalese equivalent for Nallur: "Yapa" means good and "ne" is a common Sinhalese ending for village names. The earliest mention of the name is, in fact, in the Sinhalese.<sup>21</sup> Tamil works of the period of Jaffna kings always speak of Sinkai-nakar as the capital of the North, while later ones call it Nallur. All this shows that the story of the Yalppadi is to be abandoned root and branch.

The real historical portion of the *Vaipava-malai* begins with Koolankaic-chakkaravartti. On the alleged colonisation of Jaffna once more under him (pp. 14-18) little need be said here. The author has closely followed the *Kailaya-malai* which represents the local traditions of each village with regard to its reputable or perhaps reputed ancestors.

There follows then (pp. 18-27) a list of kings (is it complete?) with brief chronicles on the reign of each and this looks firmer ground to tread. The author has, in all probability, bodily "lifted" the *Irasamurai* into his work, slightly abridging it, perhaps, as he has done in the case of the *Katila-malai*. But from Pararasa-sekaran<sup>22</sup> onwards he seems to have entirely depended, as already stated, on oral tradition for his information hence his glaring inaccuracies with regard to the kings of the Portuguese period of Ceylon history.

The greater portion of the "prophecy" of Supatiddamuni is from *Vaiya-padal* which ascribes it to the time of Kanakachakkaravarti son of Koolankaic-chakkaravarti! Additions to the "prophecy" have been made from time to time down to the coming of our present rulers and we are bidden by the latest interpolator, to look forward to the appearance of king Vala-sinkan, to whom the Piranchu (French)

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21. The *Selalihini Sanaesaya* (stanza 28). Also the *Koila Sandesaya* of the same period (stanza 9.). There is no instance of Yalppanam earlier than the 17th century.

22. The author of the *Jaffna history* says that "the *Irasamurai* was compiled a little before the Portuguese conquest of Jaffna." (p. 7). But he does not give his authority for it.

and Ulanteru. (Dutch) kings will deliver the kingdom of Lanka which they will have wrested from the Intiresu (English) man !

Having cleared the ground, so to say, of the unhistorical fancies of a work so long believed by every Tamil writer as authoritative, we shall now prove to compile a history of the kings of Jaffna from more reliable sources.\*

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\* Articles on the same subject will follow—Ed.

# *Tamil Architecture - Its Development*

V. KANDASWAMY MUDALIYAR

**A**RCHITECTURE has a history as old as man's ; the first cave-men lived 100,000 or 100,000,000 years ago, as variously commented by anthropologists, carved on bones figures of the reindeer and the four-tusked elephants, which are a marvel to modern draftsmen ; and besides covered the walls of their cave-dwellings with colourful paintings. Therefore artistic expressions were inherent in men who first came to live on earth.

Then follows a long gap of years until we come to a period when men came to live in different regions following different occupations, and began to build tenements suited for their lives. The hunters lived in caves, the shepherds who moved from place to place to find new pastures for their sheep and cattle learnt to make portable huts, and the agriculturists, who lived in and about their lands, built mud houses thatched with leaves ; these three correspond to the three Tamilian divisions, Kurunchi, Mullai, and Marutham (the hill-land, pasture-land, and agricultural land). When men learnt to bake bricks in the sun or fire, structural brick buildings appeared. This corresponds with the descriptions of tenaments given in the Tamil Classics *Pathu-pattu* (then ten songs) of of about 200 B. C. or 500 A. D. There is no external evidence by way of remains of the Tamils of the prehistoric or of historic times earlier than 600 A. D.

The excavations carried out by Sir John Marshall in the year 1921 at Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh and Harappa in the Punjab show a well-defined civilization. Prehistoric India

also knew of the megalithic period, and dolmens, menhirs and cromlechs are found throughout the Indian Peninsula; there is one such dolmen group near about Palani. No definite conclusions have been reached about the origin of this civilization as evidenced by these architectural and other remains. They are pre-Aryan ; they may be of Dravidian or of Sumerian origin or a blending of both, which goes back to 2800 B. C. After that, till we come to the Magado period in the North and to the Pallavas in the South there is a long gap.

As there are no architectural relics of the Tamils prior to the Pallava period we have to fall back upon the internal evidence of the Tamil Classics. A few of the following excerpts (English translation of relevant lines from the Tamil *Pathu-pattu*) will bear out the advanced stage of the Tamil architecture as early as the second century B.C. or the second century A. D.

*Consulting the deities of the quarters, builders  
Learned in their lore plotted with line a fair site  
For a palace suited to the King's royalty,  
When the two mark pegs cast no shadow, when the sun  
Spreading its radiant rays careered to the west  
In its ordained path and stood at its zenith high.*

மாதிரம்

வீரிகதிர் பரப்பிய வியல்வாய் மண்டில  
மிருகோல் குறிநிலை வழக்காது குடக்கோர்  
போருதிறஞ் சாரா வரைநா னமயத்து  
நூலறி புலவர் நுண்ணிதிற் கயிறிட்டுத்  
தேஎங் கொண்டு தெய்வ நோக்கிப்  
பேரும் பெயர் மன்னர்க் கொப்ப மனை வருத்து  
(நெடு II. 72-78)

*And with doors, steel-clenched and painted in vermeil red,  
Fitted the doorway gleaming in the sculptured beauty  
Of Gajalachmi on the lintel-uttaram  
And the yawning gateway, high above the far reach  
Of victory flag-elephants, and gleaming fair*

*In its mustard-mantled and oil-daubed doors strong knit  
Of bolts and close-fitting panels by craftsmen  
Cunning of art, rose in majestic proportions  
Of tower and dome like rock-cut stately temple-art.*

ஒருங்குடன் வணைஇ வோங்குநிலை வரைப்பிற்  
பருவிரும்பு பிணித்துச் செல்வாக் குரீஇத்  
தாமோடு குயின்ற போரமை புணர்ப்பிற்  
கைவல் கம்மியன் முடுக்கலிற் புரைதீர்ந்  
தையவி யப்பிய நெய்யணி நேடுநிலை  
வென்றேழு கொடியோடு வேழஞ் சென்றுபுகக்  
குன்றுகுயின் றன்ன வோங்குநிலை வாயில் (நெடு 79-88)

Soaring in mountain majesty gleamed the palace, stoutly  
guarded, with colourful flags and festoons like towering peaks  
of hills spanned by a rainbow.

*Girdled by corridors borne on well-turned pillars,  
Adamantine and gleaming in sapphire-blue sheen,  
Rose the central hall of the fair stately mansion,  
Famed from the very day of its firm foundation.  
Its walls, to half the height, were stuccoed silver white,  
And frescoed with a matchless border of the creeper  
Of water-lily with flowers varied in bloom ;  
The lower half was richly sculptured and gleamed  
As a high-relief bronze-work in its chiselled beauty.*

வரைகண் டன்ன தோன்றல் வரைசேர்பு  
வில் கிடந் தன்ன கொடிய பல்வயின்  
வெள்ளி யன்ன விளங்குஞ் சுதையுரீஇ  
மணிகண் டன்ன மாத்திரட் டிண்காழ்ச்  
செம்பியன் றன்ன செய்வுறு நெடுஞ்கவ  
டுருவப் பல்பூ வொரு கொடி வளைஇக்  
கருவோடு பெயரிய கண்பி னல்லில் (நெடு 108-114)

This was the state of architecture (Pillars, halls, panels, pylons, high relief, and stucco and fresco works) during the pre-Pallava period. In the Pallava relics themselves there are indications of an architecture prior to 600 A. D. That Pallava



art was influenced by the Buddhist is shown by the presence of round pillars and rock-cut temples ; and structural buildings appear only in the Kailasanathar, Vaikunda Perumal Mukteswarar and Matangeswarar temples at Kanchi. Even in these temples the presence of round pillars of round and bell-shaped crowns along with rectangular pillars (கட்டைத்தூண்) of bracket-crowns indicates an assimilation of the Northern Buddhist art. In spite of this architectural invasion of the North the pre-Pallava art of the Tamils clung to its own mode of expression until the time came when the round pillars of elaborate crowns gave place to the square pillars of bracket crowns.

## II

Incidentally we may mention that the whole of India did not come under the sway of Asoka the Great, for the three Tamil Kingdoms (Chera, Chola, and Pandia) were independent as V. Smith says. And the Pandian and the Chola Kings through a spirit of tolerance allowed Jaino-Buddhist monks to build mutts on the banks of the Vaigai and the Kaviri. The Jaino-Buddhist immigrants must have carried with them their architectural traditions, and must have built their mutts after the fashion of the cave temples of the North. This view is confirmed by the descriptions of Jaino-Buddhist mutts described in the Song of Madura (Mathurai Kanchi) and the Song of Kaviri-pattinam (Pathnapalai) of *Pathu-pattu*. We cannot say that the North was not influenced by the Tamils, for Cheran Senguttuvan who invaded the North and established his rule there must have carried the South Indian architectural traditions ; the presence of a few square pillars with bracket crowns in Ajanta, Ellora and Elephanta caves lends support. As after the inrush of the Northern culture, Tamil Literature came to be influenced by it without completely surrendering itself, so also Tamil architecture held its own against the alien influence. The square pillars with bracket-crowns are purely Tamilian ; the four sided pillars with the march of time became six-sided and eight-sided, which almost look like the Buddhist round and fluted pillars ;

their severe and graceful shafts came to be broken up by Cubes whose faces were sculptured ; and floral and serpent bands were added ; similarly the plain bracket-crown came to have floral and bud decorations, and sometimes the brackets rested on round or bell shaped abacuses. The Pandian architecture developed buttressed pillars of rampant horses or griffins resting their fore-legs on human figures, dwarfs and animals ; and to their capital human figures and elephants came to be added and the pillars became flamboyant. So the pillars from the pre-Pallava simplicity evolved, step by step, into flamboyant art. The existence of the different types of pillars in the temples of South India tells the story of such an evolution and assimilation of the North.

We cannot assert that the sculptures of man and beast were mostly conventional ; in the Kanchi Kailasanathar and Mamallapuram temples there are sculptures of elephants, deer and bull which are true replicas of natural objects ; but later they became highly conventionalised and of recent times there is an example of a lioness on the right side of the Gopuram of Ashtabujam at Kanchi which is reminiscent of the Assyrian masterpiece of a wounded lioness. The original purity of female figures of rhythmic curves and soft supple undulations (of which a preeminent example is of a seated Saraswathi in the temple at Gangaikonda Cholapuram) in later times grew to be erotic. The seeing eye will probably see many such gems of sculpture scattered in the remote villages of South India.

### III

Next we come to the towers or gopurams of the Tamil architecture. There are three distinct and clearly marked types. The towers sometimes rise above the sanctum where the deity is templed, as in the case of the Siva temples of Tanjore and Gangaikonda-Cholapuram and they have bud-crowns (கோட்டு முடி) ; more commonly the tower rises like a pylon at the entrance of a temple with waggon crowns (கூடு முடி - வண்டிக்கூடு முடி) and instead of one tower at the entrance, which mostly faces east, there are at the most three

others rising from the middle of the rampart walls, but they are of a lesser height. They are pyramidal in shape, either like the one at Tanjore or like that of the one at Madura. The towers are richly sculptured and in later times they had lost their naturalness and purity of style ; the third type of an umbrella-crown (சூலை முடி) which we find in the shore temple of Mamallapuram and other smaller Pallava sanctuaries of the period were not copied out by the Cholas or the Pandyas. All crown end in one or more urnfinnials according as the tower is bud-crowned or waggon-crowned.

In the group of shrines at Mamallapuram we have examples of waggon and umbrella-crowns. The architects deliberately have given these two types and have also traced the evolution of towers from huts by the representation of Draupadi's sanctuary after the fashion of a hut. Huts in early times were either pyramidal or waggon-shaped with one or many pots on the top or tops of one or two props bearing up the hut ; it supplied the motif for the bud-crowned and waggon-crowned towers.

Lesser shrines have a cupola with sepals-bound buds, (all smaller shrines are of this type) which grew into tall bud-crowned towers. Thus we can trace the evolution of towers from the small beginning of a hut.

Some of the larger temples have a double row of high and formidable rampart walls one within another or a single row on which cannons were mounted, probably for defence against marauding enemies. One such cannon is even now to be found on the rampart of Tanjore temple and in Gangaikonda-cholapuram we have the cannon-mound (பீரங்கி மேடை) without a cannon.

The ground plan of a temple is more less the same even to-day. There is the sanctum with a circum-ambulatory passage ; the deity mostly faces east ; in front of the sanctum is the pillared hall for the worshippers, which is flanked by pillared verandahs whose walls are covered with sculptured

panels or by paintings ; most of the paintings have disappeared through white-washing. The bulb is near the edge of the steps of the pillared hall or sometimes within it, and faces the deity ; behind it towers the flag-staff, and behind it is the sacrificial altar, a reminiscence of the animal offerings of an early worship.

And besides there may be other shrines round about for Ganesa and Skanda ; the Parvathi's shrine is close to the sanctum. There are also buttressed-shrines (அடியார்த்தக் கூடு) for the apostles (அடியார்களுள்). The tank and the Vagana-mandam may be within or without the temple precincts.

The ancient temples were the repositories of the different arts that flourished at the times. Besides the builder and the sculptor who embellished the temples there were also painters ; but Tamil painting of the realistic school and of exquisite colouring and rhythmic lines disappeared with Saraboji of Tanjore. The brazier fashioned brass lamps and utensils used in worship ; the metal caster made bronze deities and statue lamps ; the wood-carver fashioned the mounts (Vahanas) and richly carved the temple car ; the jeweller did the jewellery and the embroiderer did the colourfully applied saddle-cloths and face-masks of the temple bull and elephant, and the banners, flags and festoons. Even culinary artists prepared delicious food-offerings.

It cannot be gainsaid by a study of South Indian architecture that the Buddhist art of Elephants, Ellora and Ajanta and earlier Magada art continued to influence the architecture of the Tamils , but pre-Pallava and post-Pallava art of the Tamils did not completely surrender itself to the alien influence ; and the pre-Pallava tradition was carried out by the Cholas and the Pandians, though with fresh embellishment. The Chola art reached its zenith in the reign of Raja-Raja Chola and his successor, and the temple at Tanjore and Gangai-konda-cholapuram are supreme examples of the Tamil art.

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# *Education in the Ancient Tamil Countries*

VIDVAN, PANDIT K. P. RATNAM M.A., B.O.L.

## CHAPTER III

### *The Significance and Conception of Education* (copyright reserved)

THE ancient Tamils attached great value to the acquisition of learning. In almost all the Tamil works that deal with 'aram'<sup>1</sup> and 'porul'<sup>2</sup> certain chapters are entirely devoted to the discussing of the importance and significance of education. Of the four sources of pride, education was given the first and the foremost place in Tholkappiyam.<sup>3</sup> "Number and letters are the eyes of human beings"<sup>4</sup> says Thiruvalluvar. He also asserts that only the educated have true eye sight and the eyes on the face of the uneducated are nothing but sores.<sup>5</sup> The ancient Tamils held the view that education imparts the necessary insight and broadens the outlook of human beings so as to enable them to have a sense of values, which is necessary for a successful life in this world. Therefore they compared education with the eyes of the human beings.

Education was also considered a means of intellectual enlightenment. It is an ever burning light that saves men from the darkness of ignorance.<sup>5A</sup> It gives the necessary knowledge to understand the problems of the world in their

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1. Virtue.

2. Wealth.

3. Tholkappiyam—meyppaddiyal 9.

4. Thirukkural 392 cf. Chintamani 1602 and Vinayagapuramam 119.

5. Ibid. 393, 5 A. Nanmanikkadikai 103 and Aranerichcharam 194.

true perspective. The author of *Neethinerivilakkam* observes 'as the educated have learning as their ornament, no other ornament is necessary for them.'<sup>6</sup> Nallathanar, goes a step further and says that "education is an ornament of the next birth too."<sup>7</sup> Thiruvalluvar urged the Tamils to acquire learning, by telling them that education acquired in one birth will be useful in all the seven births.<sup>8</sup>

The ancient Tamils were lovers of beauty. Their love of beauty resulted in developing the fine arts. They realised fully the value of literature, music, dancing and drama. They believed in the harmonious development of mind, body and soul. In order to effect this development they felt that the study and the appreciation of these fine arts were indispensable for a human being. So they combined these three fine arts in their language itself and called it Muththamil.<sup>9</sup> This combination is peculiar only to the Tamil Language. Hence there is no novelty in their concept of education as a thing of beauty. "Beauty of locks, beauty of circling garments beauty of saffron tint — these don't make for true beauty." This is the view expressed in *Naladiyar*.<sup>10</sup> *Elathi*, one of the lesser classics says "Beauty is not in waist, nor in arm, nor in deportment, nor in modesty, nor in a shapely neck, numbers and letters are beauty."<sup>11</sup> The author of *Sirupanchamoolam* also subscribes to this view.<sup>12</sup>

One venba in *Naladiyar*<sup>13</sup> declares that a medicine like education is not found in any world. "Since in this world it yields fruit ; since given it grows not less ; since it makes men illustrious ; since it perishes not as long as its possessors themselves exist ; in any world we see not any medicine that,

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7. Thirikadukam 52.

8. Thirukkural 398.

9. இயல், இசை, நாடகம்.

10. 131.

11. 75.

12. 37.

13. 132.

like learning, removes the delusions of sense." Education was also considered as the best of all wealth which could not be destroyed.<sup>13 A</sup> The wealth of worldly possessions is not real and good as learning. *Naladiyar* describes the qualities of this wealth and concludes that it is the proper legacy that a man can provide for his children. "It cannot be taken from its place of deposit; it does not perish anywhere by fire; if Kings of surpassing grandeur, are angry they cannot take in away. (And therefore) What any man should provide for his children as a legacy, is learning; other things are not real wealth."<sup>14</sup>

Learning gives wisdom, teaches discrimination, helps in the practice of virtue, the acquisition of wealth the enjoyment of domestic life, the attainment of heaven. Hence it is praised as a help-mate.<sup>14 A</sup> Educationists and poets went to the extent of calling it the chaste wife as it gives pleasure and comfort.<sup>15</sup> *Manimekalai* compares it with a boat.<sup>16</sup> As the boat helps us to cross the sea, learning helps us to cross safely the rough and uncharted sea of life.

The encomiums bestowed on the learned by Tamil poets also throw some light on the significance and conception of education of the ancient Tamils. The learned were considered the ornaments of society. The kings honoured them and treated them with respect and equality. They invited the learned men irrespective of caste and creed, appointed them as members of the council of state.<sup>17</sup> They thought the contact with learned men was nothing but a boon for them.<sup>18</sup>

Tamil society neglected the elders of a family and honoured the educated youngsters that belonged to it.<sup>18 A</sup> Educated people were esteemed as the elders of a family irres-

13 A. Kural 400, Cinthamany 1602.

14. 134. 14 A. Neethinerivilakkam, and Cinthamany 1602.

15. Neethinerivilakkam 3.

16. 111 — 137.

17. Puram 183

18. Perunkathai 3-12. 28 18 A. Nanmanikkadikai 65.



pective of their age. They were more illustrious than the Kings, for the kings commanded respect only in their own countries, but the educated are honoured wherever they go. Learned men belonged to the high caste by virtue of their education even if they were the members of a lower caste. "The excellent regard the salt produced in brackish ground choicer than paddy from fertile soil. It is fitting to place in the first rank the learned — wise though sprung from the lowest origin,"<sup>19</sup> says *Naladiyar*.

Acquisition of learning had such a power even to change the mind of a mother in making her to love her learned son more than the other sons.<sup>20</sup> The difference between literate and illiterate men is so great as to be compared with that of a human being and a beast.<sup>21</sup> If the worship of learned men were preferred to learning itself,<sup>22</sup> nothing need be said about the reputation and popularity of the learned men of the Tamil Land.

Public opinion with regard to the necessity of learning as perhaps the only means to prosperous and happy life, was so strong in ancient Thamalakam that the uneducated were held in low esteem. The illiterate were called trees,<sup>23</sup> dogs,<sup>24</sup> dolls,<sup>25</sup> brackish land<sup>26</sup> and chaff<sup>27</sup> on account of their ignorance and failure to acquire wisdom. They were condemned as blind men who could not get the benefits of this beautiful world.<sup>28</sup> They were not allowed to sit in the assemblies with the learned, nor were they permitted to talk with them.<sup>29</sup> Their talks were compared to the barkings of dogs.<sup>30</sup> "When

19. 133.

20. Puram 183.

21. Thirukkural 410.

22. Muthumolikkanchi 1 - 8.

23. Moothurai 13.

24. Naladiyar 254.

25. Thirukkural 407.

26. Ibid 406.

27. Narunthokai 36.

28. Kural 403.

29. { Naladiyar 254.

30. }

a man who has grown up without learning enters the society of the wise, if he sits still, it is as if a dog sat there, and if he rises to speak, it is as though a dog barked," says *Naladiyar*. 'The trees in the forest are not trees, but those who cannot read a paper when asked to do so in an assembly are the real trees.'<sup>31</sup> These are the words of Auvayar. She also blames the mothers who give birth to men who are unable even to copy a manuscript.<sup>32</sup> Such persons, not only bring shame to their parents, but also to their caste and race.

The Tamil sage Thirumoolar, the famous author of *Thirumanthiram* advises the people not to look at the uneducated man, whose words are also not worth hearing.<sup>33</sup> The wise men did not take seriously the counsel of the uneducated even if they were good.<sup>34</sup> Even wealth in the possession of an illiterate man will land him into trouble.<sup>35</sup> "The wretched person who knows nothing though born among men is not a man" is the opinion of the author of *Thirikadukam*. Even the body of an illiterate has no use for him.<sup>36</sup> An uneducated cannot realise the existence of God who is always found in the mind of the learned.<sup>37</sup> All these go a long way to convince us that education was considered indispensable for a human being to live a full life in this world.

#### CHAPTER IV

### AIMS AND IDEALS OF EDUCATION

In the previous chapter we have seen how greatly education was valued and in what high honour the educated were

31. Moothurai 13

32. Thanippadal - Auvaiyar.

"வெண்பா இருபாவிற் கல்லாணை வெள்ளோலை  
கண்பார்த்துக் கையா லெழுதாணைப் பெண்பாவி  
பெற்றாளை பெற்றாள் பிறர்நகைக்கப் பெற்றாளை  
எற்றோம் மற்றெற் றற்று"

33. Thirumanthiram 134.

34. Kural 404.

35. Ibid 408.

36. Nanmanikkadikai 22.

37. Thirumanthiram.

held in ancient Tamil countries. We will now make a study of the aims and ideals of that education which was conceived of as the most fundamental activity of the national life by the ancient Tamils.

All theories of education are ultimately an expression of social philosophy in action. Spenser said, "true education is practicable only to a true philosopher."<sup>1</sup> "The art of education" says Fichte, "will never attain complete clearness in itself without philosophy."<sup>2</sup> Dewey has perhaps given the most penetrating definitions of philosophy by saying it is the theory of education in its general phases.<sup>3</sup> Ancient Tamil education was a reflection of the Tamil outlook on life in this world and the next. It was an expression of its culture and ideals. A civilization stretching throughout the centuries, touched life at many points. Poetry was the mother of philosophy in India as in Greece, and the Tamil poets played the roll of philosopher cum educator and formulated aims and ideals of education. According to their views education had not only a cultural and utilitarian end, but also a spiritual end.<sup>4</sup>

Thiruvalluvar, the eminent poet and seer of Tamilkam says, "of what avail is learning if he who has it, does not worship the feet of the all-knowing one."<sup>5</sup> How similar is Froebel's "the purpose of education was to expand the life of the individual until it should comprehend its existence through participation in all pervading spiritual activity."<sup>6</sup> Thiruvalluvar is also of the opinion that those who received the right type of education and realized the external truth will end their cycle of birth for ever.<sup>7</sup> This, of course, reminds

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1. Education.

2. Sixth address.

3. Democracy and Education 366.

4. 'அறம் பொருள் இன்பம் வீட்டைத் தூதயயினே' — Nannool. 10.

5. Kural 2.

6. Education of man.

7. Kural 356.

us of Milton and Loyola<sup>8</sup> who had their eyes on Heaven and God in describing the aims of education.

Herbert Spenser's assertion, that the aim of education is complete living was preached by Thiruvalluvar and the other Tamil poets long ago. The Tamil philosophers and poets, even though they believed in rebirth and salvation, never advocated the renunciation of the pleasures of this world entirely. Wealth nor women was to be despised according to the Tamil way of thinking and living. It is the Aryans and especially the Buddhists and Jains who introduced the idea of total renunciation into the thoughts and actions of the Tamils. The Tamils, according to Tholkappiyanar,<sup>9</sup> recommended renunciation after enjoying the full joys and pleasures of life. Hence the aim of complete living is not incomplete with the Tamils. One stanza in *Nanmanikkadikai* attracts us by its vivid description of the aim of education. It says, "Education removes ignorance, as a result of which illusions are shattered and true knowledge is gained. This knowledge leads the human beings along the path of truth and enables them to get reputation in this world and salvation in the next."<sup>10</sup>

Acquiring knowledge was undoubtedly one of the aims of education in *Thamilakam*. This knowledge is not potted information. It is the knowledge of the eternal truth.<sup>11</sup> It enables the people who have acquired it, to have apprehensions of values, which is the important quality that differentiates human beings from beasts.<sup>12</sup> Many a Tamil poet called

8. Ground work of Education — Ross.

9. "காமஞ் சான்ற கடைகோட் காலே

ஏமஞ் சான்ற மக்களோடு துவன்றி

அறம்புரி சுற்றமொடு கிழவனுங் கிழத்தியுஞ்

கிறந்தது பயிற்றல் கிறந்ததன் பயனே" — *Tholkappiyam katpiyal*.

10. *Nanmanikkadikai* 28.

11. "எழுத்தறியத் திருமிழி தகைமை

.....வீடு பெறும் — *Thanippadal*.

12. *Kamba Ramayanam*.

this kind of knowledge as "virtue" itself as Socrates did. "Acquire wealth in order to give ; learn great works that you may walk in the way of virtue ; speak every word with gracious purposes. These are the paths that conduct not to the world of darkness" says *Thirikadukam*.<sup>13</sup>

The Tamils also had ideas of "Nurture and discipline" in education. Thiruvalluvar emphasizes the importance of subject matter and also of training and discipline.<sup>14</sup> "If men, leaving works of wisdom, that contain well-weighted instruction, unstudied, devote themselves to the recitation of mere worldly literature, they will acquire a store of empty high sounding words but not that wisdom by means of which mental confusion (that treats unreal things as real) is removed."<sup>15</sup>

Education and knowledge are deemed useless if they do not modify the natural development and mould the character of the individual.<sup>16</sup> Education imparts knowledge, and this knowledge should check the mind from going astray, and lead it along the virtuous path.<sup>17</sup> In other words, education should develop character and personality. Thus character training was the supreme aim of education. It was even compared to the mahout<sup>18</sup> and the horseman.<sup>19</sup> As the mahout trains and controls the elephant, education gives the necessary training for the moulding of good character, which was considered more precious than life itself.<sup>20</sup> In order to have a strong and sustained character religious piety was instilled into the minds of the youngsters.<sup>21</sup> "Education should," says Sir Henry Watton, "embrace the timely instilling of conscious principles and seeds of religion." This dictum was an accomplished thing in the Tamil land. Not only was morality

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13. 90.

14. Kural 391.

15. Naladiyar 140.

16. Kural 834 ; Nanmanikkadikai 71 ; Puram 375.

17. Nannool 25 ; Kural 396 and 422.

18. Silappadikaram 23, 36 and Manimekalai 18, 166.

19. Kural Parimelalakar urai 422 and Thirikadugam 35.

20. Kural 131. 21 Aranerichcharam 195.

the aim of education, but also a good portion of the contents of the texts used in the Tamil countries had a high moral end, and they were full of injunctions to moral rectitude.

"To live for a time close to great minds is the best education" says John Bunchan. "Though themselves unlearned, if men live in association with the learned, they advance daily in excellent knowledge. The new vessel, by contact with the Padri-flower of old renown and lustre imparts fragrance to the cold water it contains,"<sup>22</sup> is the opinion of the Tamils expressed in *Naladiyar*. The Kurukula system of education strengthened the character of the student by making him live with his teachers. The student watched not only the teacher's intellectual process, but also their moral behaviour. He lived in an atmosphere of learning and wisdom and righteousness. The heroes of great authors too were held up as ideals to be followed in life. The dangers and pit-falls and temptations of life were to be watched for and avoided.

The student by following his teacher's ways of thought shared in the teacher's achievements, and his mind was formed by contact with theirs. The teachers of the Tamil land appear to be men of admirable personality. The students were drawn to them and they helped to create ideals for the student. These ideals in their turn inspired the student and developed his self discipline which ~~was~~ the foundation of character.<sup>23</sup>

The idea of a liberal education was also not new to the Thamalakam. The educational set up of the Tamils enabled "men and women to understand the world in which they live and to contribute to the understanding of its problems."<sup>24</sup>

The education imparted in the Tamil countries was not mere dynamic instructions<sup>25</sup> as certain people think. It aimed

22. *Naladiyar* 139.

23. *Nannool* 46.

24. *Kural* 140 *Nanmanikkadikai* 28.

25. *Naladiyar* 318.

at the full development of "valuable personality and spiritual individuality."<sup>26</sup> The aim of social efficiency was, however, not neglected. The history of education of some other countries show a tendency to emphasize either the development of personality or social efficiency at different periods of their history. But the Tamils throughout their long history, considered these two aspects as having equal value. There ~~was~~ no conflict between these aims. Teaching itself was praised as one of the supreme social services.<sup>27</sup> The educated people were appointed to key positions in the government. They also served society and contributed immensely to its advancement. The hall mark of an educated person was his readiness to serve others and society.<sup>28</sup> The characteristics of the socially efficient individual are enumerated by Professor Bagley as (1) Economic efficiency (2) Negative morality (3) Positive morality. There are innumerable references in the Tamil works<sup>29</sup> to those characteristics which are also the characteristics of an educated man. The ideals of education and life were not separate or antithetical as far as Tamils were concerned. On the other hand a synthesis of these two ideals were conceived by them. They called it self-realization. Self-realization was the goal of education and of life too.<sup>30</sup> All the efforts of the Tamils in the field of Education were directed to this supreme goal. All the ancient educators of Tamil land treated this topic exhaustively and urged the people to strive for it. "The persons who achieve self-realization will become the object of prayers of others," was the verdict of Tiruvalluvar.<sup>31</sup> To reach this goal the one and only means preached in *Thirukkural* and other works<sup>32</sup> on morals is social service.

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26. Nannool 25.

27. Iraiyanar Ahapporulurai P. 15.

28. Kural

29. Thirikaḍukam 32; Palamoli 55; Aranerichcharam 71.

30. Kural 356.

31. Kural 268.

32. Puram 182.



# *The Problem of Dravidian Origins*

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THE PLACE of origin of the Dravidians, who fill so large a place in the history of South India, is yet one of the unexplained fundamentals of South Indian History. So many are the theories concerning this subject that the question has really now become a problem of the history of this land tract. Sir Edward Risley once grouped the Dravidian type with the Australian one ; while Prof. William Crooke grouped it with the S. African type. Dr. Richard Hall, the great Archaeologist of the Middle East, allied the Dravidians to the Sumerians ; while Mr. Edgar Thurston allied them to the mediterranean type. The newest light thrown on this problem is from the pen of Dr. Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf, Professor of Asian Anthropology in the University of London, who speaking at the International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnology held at Vienna in the September of last year (1952) opined that the Dravidians were a race of people closely connected with the Mediterranean peoples who had entered into South India either from the N.W. of India along the West coast or possibly by sea from the West coast of the Peninsula in comparatively recent times as late as the middle of the I millennium B.C.

The April number of the *Tamil Culture* bears a summary of the paper read by the Professor at the Conference above referred to and there is reason, I dare say, for looking into it more closely than we usually do with articles appearing in Journals however learned they may be. I begin with what

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Dr. Haimendorf concludes : "I am not competent to voice an opinion on linguistic matters of a technical nature, but it appears to me that the close integration and compactness of the Dravidian language group fits the assumption of a comparatively recent Dravidian expansion." The crux of the antiquity usually attached to Dravidians in South India lies in fact here. The argument of the antiquity of Tamil literature is precisely what gives proof of the antiquity of the people who spoke it. It is true the learned doctor says that "protagonists of the great antiquity of Dravidian speech and culture on Indian soil have based their argument on what they consider the internal evidence of ancient Tamil literature, "implying thereby that such antiquity cannot be established by such evidence. And yet it ought to be obvious for anyone who deals with literary evidence in support of chronology that, the only argument that can be drawn is from internal evidence of the works themselves ; and only too often they give unerring evidence indeed, evidence that is more dependable in fact than what is drawn from ethnological or geological data.

The great antiquity of Tamil is for example drawn from what its early grammar *Tolkāppiyam* contains. In the whole range of grammatical literature it is hard to find a book to beat this in exactness and literary punctiliousness ; and yet the matter it contains is strangely archaic, if the word may be used for want of a better one. One has only to look into the five-fold classification of land as is given in this work — the *pālai* (desert), *mullai* (the pastoral), *marudam* (the arable), *neithal* (the littoral) and *kurinji* (the hilly tract) — to see what an ancient condition of things the work depicts in its pages. Then again one has to turn one's attention to the citations and the various references to learned works which the author of this grammar makes. These references are in many cases to works that are not extant to-day like the grammar *Aindram*, which is said to date earlier than the work of Panini for Sanskrit. It is noteworthy that even the work of this Sanskrit grammarian is not mentioned in this grammar of the Tamil sage, Tolkappiyanar. Then there is the evidence of learned writers of ancient times who attest to the antiquity of this

Tamil grammar. I may mention in passing one among them — the commentator of the very early work *Irayanar Ahaporul* — in which reference is made to *Tolkappiyam* as a work of the second sangham. There is further the evidence of the writer of the *Payiram* (introduction) of *Tolkappiyam* itself, the learned writer Panamparanar, who refers to the time when *Tolkappiyam* was released to the learned world as an acceptable work as the period of the Pandyan King, Nilatharuthiruvirpandyan, to whom the commentator of *Silappadikaram* refers as the king of the period of an early deluge, when a great tract of territory in the south of Peninsular India was swallowed up by the sea.

Writers of modern times generally make Tolkappiyar and the Sanskrit grammarian Panini contemporaries,<sup>1</sup> which would posit the VIII century B.C. roughly as the date of this Tamil grammarian. There may not necessarily be any unanimity on this point in the fixation of an exact period for *Tolkappiyam*; but there cannot be any reasonable doubt as to the antiquity of this work. Savants in Tamil literature, it must be noted, carry the antiquity of Tamil still earlier since they posit a still earlier sangham of Tamil poets, the first sangham as they call it, in which works like *Paripādal* (not of the period of the III sangham), *mudunārai*, *mudukurugu*, and *Kāliyavirai* were written.<sup>2</sup> It is not for us to discuss here the problem of these colleges of poets, usually designated as the 'sangham'. Suffice it to say that at least for a thousand years before Christ the Tamil tongue, the language of the Dravidian, was fully developed and in full swing. If the period of *Tolkappiyam* is roughly fixed round 700 B.C., then the age of the *mudunārai* and the *mudukurugu*, evidently works on music, must date

<sup>1</sup> See Golāstucker referred to by Prof. V. R. R. Dikshitar in his "Pre-historic South India" (Sir Wm. Meyer Lectures, Madras, 1951-52) p. 213. The same idea is expressed by various Tamil savants as well. See, for example, Sivagnanamunivar in his famous lines beginning as "vadamoliyai Pāninikku vagutharull atharkinaiai thodar-pudaya thenmoliyai ulagamelām tholuthēthum kudamunikku vali-yuruthār kollētrupakar". — Commentary of *Yāpparungala Viruthi*.

<sup>2</sup> Commentary of *Irayanār Ahaporul*.

at least 1000 B.C. If such works could be composed in a language so early as that, then evidently the people who spoke it must be a very early people indeed on the soil of South India.

Now, Dr. Haimendorf when he dates the influx of the Dravidian into South India as being not earlier than 500 B.C. bases himself on the evidence furnished by the finds discovered at Brahmapuri (Mysore), which the Archaeologist Sir Mortimer Wheeler, dates round 200 B.C. The argument of Haimendorf is as follows : The Brahmapuri finds indicate a sudden layer of megalithic and iron age coming upon the relics of a neolithic age, which would imply the sudden incursion of a new and highly developed race coming upon the natives of the soil round 200 B.C., to which date the archaeologist, as has been mentioned above, assigns these megalithic finds. It is just possible, Dr. Haimendorf concludes, that this new race of people are the mysterious Dravidians, who must have entered South India at that time. In support of his contention he of course brings in the peculiar customs of the Dekkan belt, where even now many aborigines abound :

“The racial map of India still reflects this process. There are two great areas of progressive mediterraneanoid populations. One covers the whole of Northern India, while the other extends over Western India and parts of the Deccan. In between these two areas there is broad belt of more primitive populations, in whose racial make-up a Veddoid element predominates. The southern progressive block would seem to represent the Dravidian expansion, and the northern block the Aryan invasions and other racial influences from the Northwest.”

The late date assigned here to the Dravidian appearance in Peninsular India need not detain us. Apart from what has been said above, it is to be remembered that the fixing of the date is highly arbitrary. While the archaeologist fixes it as late as 200 B.C., Dr. Haimendorf carries the date earlier by 300 years in view of the well accredited culture of the Dravi-

dians in South India in 200 B.C. The chronological datum here furnished is not unassailable from any point of view. But what about the other views here expressed by the learned anthropologist? He makes out at least three assumptions of great significance, viz., that the sudden appearance of the iron age relics indicates the Dravidian incursion, that the North of India was generally a *terra incognita* for the Dravidian and thirdly the customs and manners of the Deccan belt of people like the Marathas indicates the Aryan-Dravidian influence and the existence of numerous aborigines in this region even to this day indicates that neither the Dravidian nor the Aryan ever fully reached this area. Whatever may be one's difference of opinion with regard to the authors of the finds of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, it is at least accepted now by the generality of scholars that the civilisation of these two places was the civilisation of the Aryans and the Dravidians working in combination; while experts like Sir John Marshall, the great excavator of these finds, and savants like Rev. H. Heras strongly opine that this was a pure Dravidian civilisation. There is no doubt whatsoever that the Dravidians had frequently crossed over the Vindhya in very early times to the north of India and even beyond to the middle east and Sumeria and even as far as Babylon and Egypt.

The sudden appearance of the iron age finds in Mysore need not also detain us. Such finds have been seen much earlier through the efforts of archaeologists like Bruce Foote in many other places in South India as also outside India in Crete, Greece and many other Western countries. It is just possible that the neolithic man in his search for better facilities suddenly came upon iron and its uses;<sup>3</sup> and be it noted the age of iron in South India is placed in the IV millenium B.C.<sup>4</sup> No one denies the fact that the Deccan belt was the frequent meeting place of the Aryan and the Dravidian, so that one finds in that area an intermingling of cultures; but

<sup>3</sup> See Dr. Guha, *The Census of India, 1931, Vol. I, Pt. iii.* Also see Mr. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar, *Stone age in India*, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> Dikshitar; *Origin and Spread of the Tamils*, p. 19.

the existence of numerous aboriginal tribes here cannot be pressed too far. Many early tribes like the Kurumbar, Irular and the Todas inhabit parts of South India just as, for example, the Kolams of Hyderabad inhabit the Deccan belt.

What is the conclusion to which all this must lead? In the answer to this question lies the resolution of the great problem of Dravidian origins. The view that the Dravidians once occupied the north of India, whence they were driven out and down into the south by the invading Aryan must now be abandoned. There is no definite evidence of such a migration. On the other hand, to say, as Dr. Haimendorf does, that the Dravidian never saw the north as such in early times is equally untenable. Did he come into the south from the North West or by sea through the West coast is a question born out of imagination. It is unthinkable that South India was uncivilised and unpopulated save for a few nomads and aborigines till the first half of the first millenium B.C. or much worse till 200 B.C., as the archaeological finds drawn in support of the Professor's viewpoint would suggest. According to accredited geologists the antiquity of South India goes back to the earliest geological times, this land tract having been united in the continent called Gondwana extending from Australia through Peninsular India to S. Africa on to S. America, from which the various continents as they are known today became separated owing to the sinking of land tracts in the sea — a belief that is popularly reflected in the story of the deluge that is mentioned in the legends of Babylonia and other countries. In India this is reiterated in the Vedic, Epic and Puranic works and the Bāgavatha Puranā in particular speaks of a part of Dravidadēsā as having survived the deluge — a belief that is also referred to in the commentary of Adiyārkunallār to the *Silappadikāram* already mentioned. It seems right to say that the Dravidians were the natives of South India from the earliest of times and that from this home of theirs they may have gone out into other regions where their influence can be seen to this day, whether it be the port-hole burial monuments which remind one of the mediterranean peoples or the Tamil affinity seen in Brahui in the North West frontier of Pakistan.

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# *The Antiquity of Tamil and Tolkappiyam*

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TAMIL POETRY, as in all other languages had its origin in the basic human tendencies to love and fight. These tendencies have remained the same from time immemorial except for the ways in which they are exhibited, in accordance with the environment of the different epochs. From very ancient times themes of war and love were composed by poets and some literary conventions that are to be followed in expounding these themes have been crystallised, classified and arranged in their natural concomitants in the earliest extant Tamil grammar, *Tolkappiyam*. Centuries of literary growth should have taken place before these literary conventions evolved and found place as standard ones in grammars. If some of the literary conventions of these themes of love and war — of Akam and Puram as they are styled in Tamil grammar, the poetry of within (subjective) and the poetry of without (objective) patterns of poetry — are standardised even at so early an age as a number of centuries before the Christian Era, it can then very easily be imagined that much of the poetry of these themes should have been composed at least a number of centuries before that work, so that there should have been sufficient passage of time before certain standard theories and conversations could have been evolved.

Much Poetry should have been formed a part of Tamil Literature before rigid conventions could have been evolved. As for instance, before the rigid conventions of the five

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Tinai or divisions of the course of love crystallised in *Tolkappiyam*, a large volume of literary activity ought to have been in existence in the Tamil country at least in 1000 B. C. if not earlier. But as ill-luck would have it all the poetry of the first millennium B.C.<sup>1</sup> including those, on which *Tolkappiyam* and his teacher Agathiyar based their grammars has perished. Luckily, *Tolkappiyam* has survived the ravages of time, pest and fire and is available to us. The five divisions of the course of love (Akam) called "Kurinci" involving 'punarcci' or union, 'palai' involving 'pirital' or separation, 'mullai' involving 'Iruttal' (patience in separation), 'neithal' involving 'irankal' (wailing) and 'marutham' involving 'udal' or sulking with all its minutiae have come to be conventionally associated with the five-fold<sup>2</sup> physiographical regions of the world namely mountains, deserts, jungles, littoral regions and fields respectively.

Of the three ancient dynasties of Tamil kings that ruled the ancient Tamilakam, namely the Ceras, Colas and Pandiyas, the Pandiyas ruled in the very heart of the Tamil country, that part of country which contained within itself all the above five natural regions of the world and consequently all the five tinai (divisions) of the Tamil poems where all the five kinds of love poetry and kinds of war poetry could have been composed with naturalness and ease. It is no wonder then that Maturai, the Pandiyan capital, was the centre of the growth and cradle of Tamil Literature. It is no wonder again that the 'Sentamil' the right (idiomatic) Tamil, the counter part of the "Queen's English" was forged out and formed here. These five classes of love poems, war poems and other poems, must have been composed each in its appropriate region and in its own place ; where life was fully developed, but before migration of man from one region to another began to obliterate the special features and characteristics of each tribe and brought about the deadly monotony of the so-called civilised life.

<sup>1</sup> History of the Tamils. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar - chapters V and XII.

<sup>2</sup> Tolkappiyam Poruladikaram i. Ahattinai Iyal 5, ii. Ahattinai Iyal 14.

All this must have started in very ancient days, but all that poetry unfortunately is lost to us. But yet, we have these poetic conventions recorded in the ancient extant Tamil grammar *Tolkappiyam*, a study of which will open the eyes of the critics and the Scholars as to the antiquity of the language itself.

An earnest attempt may be made in this paper to assess the antiquity of this grammatical treatise with a view to determine through it the antiquity of the language itself. This attempt of fixing the age of this grammar, roughly, and as far as possible by a careful consideration of the available external and internal evidence, will, it is hoped, be a clear milestone in proving the antiquity of the Tamil language. While we attempt to fix the age of this work, or for that matter any classical work in Tamil, we should bear in mind the following two principles :—(1) The age of any work in Tamil may be judged from its diction, subject matter and the imagery contained in it. (2) The age of any work in Tamil may also be fixed by the appearance or otherwise of Aryan, puranic and mythological ideas, superstitions and poetic imagery of a hyperbolic nature. If these features are abundantly found in any work, it may be comparatively later in time. If on the other hand they are absent, or at least used less, then the work must have been composed comparatively early.

Among the various sources, which throw light on the linguistic, political and social conditions of the ancient Tamil people, *Tolkappiyam* will easily hold the most important place ; and it is therefore regrettable, that considerable neglect should have fallen upon the great mass of early Dravidian, especially Tamil literature. European and American scholars attached greater importance to the study of Sanskrit, closely allied to their languages, so that the Tamil language and its Literature were kept very much in the back ground and they did not have a chance of arresting the attention of the western savants, which they so richly deserve. It would be a task worthy of the scholars to raise this Language and its Literature in the estimation of the public in and outside India and

show their greatness. These western scholars who were not in direct touch with the trends of Tamil Literature and who were not, therefore able to go into the original texts and documents for assessing the evidence and forming a judgement about the value and chronology of any work, are sceptical about the antiquity of the Tamil language once flourishing in the greater Tamilakam even beyond the seas, and now flourishing in the modern Tamilakam in the southernmost corner of India. Their scepticism becomes all the more forcible in their minds especially when they see the absence of the name of the Tamil Language in the list of the classical languages like Sanskrit, Hebrew, Latin, Greek and Arabic. But the great wonder about the Tamil Language is the fact, that, in spite of its being a modern live and spoken language of India, of the ancient Dravidian family of languages, it is also as ancient (if not more ancient) as any of the classical languages of the world. If any credence is to be given to the traditional accounts of the three Tamil academies, that are said to have flourished in the distant past, they will not only take us to the misty past beyond human memory to pre-historic times, but also open our eyes to the often misunderstood fact of not merely the antiquity of the Tamil language and its Literature, but also to its vastness and its richness.

Before attempting to go into the details of the evidence both external and internal, for assessing the antiquity of *Tolkappiyam*, it will not be out of place to give a short sketch of the contents of the work, so that even a reader unacquainted with the work may have just an idea of what it deals with. It treats with the grammar of the Tamil Language (Iyal Tamil) literary language (as against the grammar of Music and musical compositions (Isai Tamil) and the grammar of drama (Nadaka Tamil) in three parts namely Eluttati-karam—chapter of eluttu, sounds or letters (orthography), collati-karam, chapter on words (Etymology), and Porul atikaram—chapter on matter dealing mainly with the original themes of love and war and standardising their literary conventions. The third chapter included in itself yappu, (prosody) and ani (Rhetoric) also, which in later days came to be treated each

separately and elaborately and formed the fourth and fifth divisions of Tamil grammar. Each chapter contains nine subdivisions. It is significant that in the Tamil Language alone the grammarians include the third division of Porul or matter, as part of grammar, while the grammars of other languages stop with orthography, etymology, syntax, prosody, rhetoric, etc. The subject matter of this ancient work is still a sealed book to many Tamil scholars themselves ; and it is indeed very difficult, with its subject matter couched in terse, and pithy epigrams or sutras, to interpret, understand and apply these grammatical rules without the commentaries. There are a number of commentators for this work. Ilampuranar is the earliest of the commentators, and Senavarayar, Nachinarkkiniyar and Parasiriyar followed him. Kalladar's commentary has not attracted much attention and Deivaccilaiyar also commented on a portion of the work. All these flourished in the mediaeval period of Tamil Literature and among the modern commentators of the 20th century may be mentioned Professor S. S. Barathi, Dr. P. S. S. Sastri and Venkatarajulu Reddiyar.

The traditional accounts of the first three Tamil academies and their relation to the age of *Tolkappiyam* may now be given and an attempt made to sift the available evidence from a historical and chronological point of view. According to the commentary on *Iraiyanar Kalaviyal*<sup>3</sup> (which is a grammar book on the love portion (Akam) of porul (matter) of the 2nd century A.D.) the first academy (Talaiccangam) was composed of 549 poets, including Agathiya, Siva, described as the god of the matted hair who burnt the Tiripura Demons (திரிபுரமெரித்த விரிசடைக் கடவுள்), and Muruga the young warrior son of the former who pierced the Krounea mountain (குன்றெறித்த முருகவேள்) and others and lasted for 4440 years. Some of the poems composed by the poets of the academy, which sat in Madurai the ancient sea-sunk capital of the Pandiyan kingdom, namely Mutu Narai Mutu kuruku, Kalariya

<sup>3</sup> Iraiyanar Kalaviyal. Bavanandam Pillai 1916. Sutram 1. commentary, Page. 6.

virai, Paripadal etc., are known to us only by their names. The academy lasted during the reigns of 89 kings from king Kaicinavaludi to king Kadunkon. Excluding the 549 probable resident members, the rest of the total number of 4449 poets were possibly associate members distributed all over the country. All these took part in the activities of the academy. Of the patron kings seven were themselves poets. The standard grammar for this academy was Akattiyam.

A resume of this account is also given by Adiyarkku nallar<sup>4</sup> commentator of *Silappadikaram* a work of the second century A.D. in his commentary on the lines "தெடியோன் குன்றமும், தொடியோன் பெளவமும், தமிழ் வரம்பறுத்த தண்புனல்நாட்டு." and in some other places. After the country was engulfed by the sea, including the capital, the Pandiyan king shifted his capital to the city of Kapatapuram further north, which was also in turn, submerged by a second deluge later.

The Second academy<sup>5</sup> (Idaiccankam) was started here with a strength of 59 residential members including Akattiyar and Tolkappiyar out of the total strength of 3,700 members. The sangam flourished under the patronage of 59 kings from king Vender-Celiyan to king Mudattirumaran of whom five were poets themselves ; and lasted for 3,700 years. The standard grammars for this academy were Akattiyam, Tolkappiyam, Mapuranam, Puta puranam and Isai nunukkam. Some of the works of this Sangam like Kali, Kuruku, vendali, viyala malai, Akaval etc., are but mere names now. After the submergence of the Pandiyan kingdom a second time by another deluge, the capital was again shifted to modern Maturai called then utara Maturai (north Maturai) as it was located to the north of the old Maturai in the South which was once destroyed by sea. The kadaiccankam<sup>6</sup> or the third Academy was founded here with 49 residential members including Nallantu-

<sup>4</sup> i. *Silappadikaram venirkadai lines* — 1-2 Commentary of Adiyarkkunallar, ii. *Ibid.* Kadukankadai L. L. 18-20 iii. *Ibid.* உரைப்பாரியம்.

P. 7. Dr. Swaminatha Iyer's 2nd Edition.

<sup>5</sup> *Irayanar Kalaviyal. Sutram 1. Page 7. Bavanandam Pillai 1916.*

<sup>6</sup> *Irayanar Kalaviyal. Sutram 1. Page 7. Bavanandam Pillai 1916.*

vanar and Nakkirar and the rest of a total of 1850 members were like the members of the previous sangams probably associates 49 kings patronised this academy from king Mudat-tirumaran to king Ukkirapperuvaluti. This is said to have lasted for 1850 years. Almost all the works of this period like Neduntokai, Kuruntokai Narrinai 150 kali, 70 paripadal etc., are fortunately extant and they are codified under the heads Pattuppattu, Ettuttokai and Padinenkilkanakku. Three among the patron kings were poets themselves.

Thus the three academies lasted according to these accounts altogether 9990 years, (with of course intervals the duration of each of which interval is not indicated) with 8598 poets including a few gods of the Saiva pantheon and 197 Pandiyan kings as their patrons. Because of this incredibly long duration of these academies and the large number of poets including the supernatural patrons, historians are reluctant to give credence to these accounts and consequently to the prehistoric antiquity of the Tamil language. The age of the third academy, the works of which are all extant, has been fixed by most scholars and historians<sup>7</sup> with the second century A. D. as its lower limit.

Owing to the fictitious and very long durations given in the traditional accounts of the first two academies, scholars and historians are sceptical about their alleged antiquity and

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- <sup>7</sup> i. Kanakasabai Pillai — Tamil 1800 years ago  
 ii. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri—Pandyan kingdom Ch. II & P. 17 F. N. 1.  
 iii. V. R. Ramachandra Dekshitar — Studies in Tamil Literature and History. Ch. I PP. 1-45  
 iv. M. Srinivasa Iyengar — Tamil Studies. PP. 230-63  
 v. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar — History of the Tamils. Ch. XVI.
- Refer
- vi. Pandit N. M. Venkatasami nattar — Kabilar Ch. I.  
 vii. K. Subramaniya Pillai — Tamil Illakkiya varalaru 3rd edition. Ch. II. P. 28-40.  
 viii. M. Purna lingam Pillai — Tamil Literature. PP. 14 et seq.  
 ix. T. G. Aravamudham — The Kaveri, Mukharis and the Sangam Age P. 56 et seq.  
 x. V. G. Suriya Narayana Sastri — History of the Tamil Language, Ch. VIII.



even their very existence. Professor M. Seshagiri Sastri in his Essay on Tamil Literature says about the first two academies that they are "too mythical and fabulous to be entitled to any credit." But this Professor's criticism is occasionally perverse according to Professor K. A. N. Sastry<sup>8</sup> who dismisses it with the remark that, "we have here the same tendencies at work which made a number of Buddhas and Jainas out of one historical proto-type and spread them over ages. Some of the names of Pandiyan Kings and poets mentioned in this account are found in epigraphs and authentic records. This shows mixing up of facts and fictions. But the existence of an association of poets modelled on the Buddhist Sanga for the promotions of Tamil Literature can be easily understood if its referred to an age of strong Buddhist influence." Some apparent mythological persons and anachronisms as are given below make critics reluctant to accept their veracity. Gods of the Saiva Pantheon like Siva and Muruka as well as Kubera are mentioned as Members of the Sangam being associated with human poets and poetesses without distinction. One and the same member is assigned to different Sangams. For example, Akattiyandar is mentioned as a member of both the first and the second Sangams. Either this must be a wrong information or as is possible in these cases, Akattiyandar of the 2nd sangam may have been a member of the same family or got and not necessarily the same person. Again thought the last patron of the second sangam, Mudathirumaran is said to be the patron of the third sangam, it is not unlikely in the sense that he would have become disabled and lame in the course of his changing his capital from Kapata puram, when it was engulfed by the sea, to uttara maturai, that he was Tirumaran and not lame (முட) before the deluge and that he was called lame (முட) Tirumaran after the deluge. He must have given a new life to this royal academy in the name of Kadaiccangam (கடைச்-சங்கம்) third or last Sangam. Yet another instance for this may be cited. Though the occurrence of the poems of Van-

<sup>8</sup> Vide II above.



mikiyar,<sup>9</sup> Kotamanar and Mudinagarayar in the *Purananuru*<sup>10</sup> of Ettutthohai, (supposed to have been codified in the third academy,) while they were members of the first academy, appears to be an apparent anachronism, it is not altogether unreasonable to justify the occurrence. It may be pointed out, in justification of this, that all the songs in toto that were collected and codified under various collections in the days of the third sangam and especially under *Purananuru* were not composed during the days of the third sangam itself. Some stray songs, which had survived the deluges and the ravages of time, pests and fire were handed over to the third sangam days and were included in this collection and some songs of the poets in question have thus come to be codified in *Purananuru*.

However, the abnormally lengthy duration of these two sangams with of course the intervals, the duration of which is not at all indicated, make us suspect the veracity of these accounts. If we give credence to these accounts, then, the commencement of these academies is to be placed somewhere in 9000 B. C. Though there is a possibility of carrying the heydays of Dravidian culture to the fourth and fifth millennium B. C. by the archaeological discoveries in Mohenjodaro and Harappa, still it is in no way easy to establish a connection between the Punjab and the South and still more difficult to go to the extent of 9000 B. C. as it is far too an ancient date for academic and university life. To add to this, one is struck by the artificiality of the number of years during which each of these sangams is said to have flourished and the number of poets and residential members (1st sangam :- 4440 years, 4449 poets, residential members 549, patron kings 89. 2nd sangam :- 3700 years, 3700 poets, 59 residential members, patron kings 59. 3rd sangam :- 1850 years, 449 poets, 49 residential members and 49 patron kings). The artificiality

<sup>9</sup> Vide *Purananuru* stanzas :- 358, 366, & 2..

<sup>10</sup> *Purananuru* is the anthology of 400 songs composed by members of the 3rd academy and some earlier poets; and forms one of the eight works of the "Ettuttokai" collections.

consists in its symmetry, and the number of years of the duration of each sangam is a multiple of 37 ( $37 \times 120 = 4440$ ;  $37 \times 100 = 3700$ ;  $37 \times 50 = 1850$ ). Again, while the account mentions only 3 pandiyan king-poets of the last sangam, we find nine pandiyan king poets (Royal poets) besides six Cola princes in the third sangam works.

But because of the abnormal durations of these academies with uncertain intervals between each we cannot summarily dismiss the existence of these Sangams themselves as imaginary and unreal. Though the years of duration may be too long and fabulous, there is no doubt of the existence of these first two Sangams, as we have (1) the whole of *Tolkappiyam*, a work of the second academy today with us (2) fragments of *Agattiya*,\* a work of the first academy preserved in commentaries like *yapparunkala virutti* and (3) stray poems of the members of the first academy preserved in *Purananuru*\*\* of the third academy in which the king Utiyan Ceralathan who fed the armies that fought in the Mahabaratha war (1400 B.C.) and the rivers that existed in the land submerged by the first and second deluges in the days of the first two academies are mentioned. We find the tradition of feeding the armies of the Mahabaratha war by Utiyan Ceralatan, current even in the days of *Silappadikaram*<sup>11</sup> (2nd century A. D.) (4) we have also the works of the 3rd academy with us fortunately, now.

In these circumstances we will have, therefore, to go into the question of the age of Tolkappiyar a member of the

\* Agathiya sutrams quoted by Sankaranamacciavayar in Nannul virutti in Sutrams 260, 297 and 327, in Tolkappiya cilladikaram by Senavarayar in Sutram 74, Verrumai Iyal. and in Nannul commentary by Mayilai Nathar in Sutrams, :- 130, 258, 259, 272, 290, 294, 299, 322, 326, 332, 339, 341, 354, 377, 381 and 394.

\*\* Puarnanuru (i) stanza 2 of Mudi Nagarayar (ii) stanza 366 of Kotamanar (iii) stanza 358 of Vanmikiyar (iv) stanza 9.

<sup>11</sup> ஓரைவர், ஈரைம் பதின்மர் உடன்றெழுந்த போரிற் பெருஞ்சோறு போற் றுது தானளித்த சேன் பொறையன் மலையன் — சிலப்பதிகாரம் 29-ம் காதை.

second academy, for the present, by a careful study of the available evidence.

(1) First of all there is the unbroken tradition that cannot be easily brushed aside, that *Tolkappiyam* was written at the end of the first sangam and was one of the standard authorities on grammar for the Second and Third Sangams. If the fact of its being the standard grammar for the Second Sangam also then we must look for a time long anterior to the 2nd century A. D. a time when Mathurai (South Mathurai) and the Kapatapuram the seats of the first and second academies were not destroyed by diluvian catastrophies. Some centuries must have elapsed between Mudattirumaran forming the third sangam and Tolkappiyar composing his grammar for the Tamil language in the end of the first or beginning of the second sangam.

(2) Now, it is a fact well known to Sanskrit scholars and Indologists that Valmiki, the author of the *Ramayana*, the Adikavya of Sanskrit was a contemporary of Rama himself whose sons Lava and Kusa he taught and who also arranged for Rama's hearing the recital of *Ramayana* by his own sons. Valmiki makes sugriva the mouth piece of a few slokas, which contain the Royal Command for the quest of Sita.

In the course of this occurs the mention of the three Tamil kingdoms and the lost city of Kapatapuram as the fortified seat of the Pandiyan court south of the Tambra-parani which Hanuman might come across in his southward journey. He might meet the Tamil grammarian Agattiya too. Now, if the tradition, that *Tolkappiyam* was presented in the court of Nilamtaru Tiruvir Pandiyan,<sup>12</sup> then it must be before it moved to Kapatapuram. Then we will have to take the age of *Tolkappiyam* to a time earlier than the kapatapuram episode of submergence in the sea. If this Kapatapuram is mentioned in *Ramayana*, it must be somewhere at

<sup>12</sup> Valmiki *Ramayana*. Keskinda kanda contos 41-2; 42; 42-13.

<sup>13</sup> *Tolkappiyam* — Payiram (preface) L. 9.

least at the time of *Ramayana* itself. Valmiki<sup>14</sup> is believed to have composed his epic between the 11th and 5th centuries B. S.

(3) Tolkappiyar was one of the 12 pupils of Agattiyar and he is said to be a member of the 2nd sangam along with his master and Panamparanar, one of his classmates wrote the preface to *Tolkappiyam*. In this preface, the Southern Kumari (the river kumari) and not the present lands-end named Kumari (the Cape Comorin) in the southern most corner of the Travancore-Cochin state is given as the Southern boundary.<sup>15</sup> This Kumari is evidently the river Kumari that flowed before the deluge and engulfed the Tamil country (known as *kumari kadam* ; and it is clear that *Tolkappiyam* was written before the Tamil land was engulfed by sea a second time. The *Mahavamsa* mentions that the second deluge was supposed to have taken place in 504 B. C., as a result of which Singalam perhaps became separated from the mainland. Before this deluge, Kapatapuram the capital city with that part of the country was in existence. Extant Tamil classics too allude to this deluge. For instance Ilangovadigal in his *silappadikaram* refers to it in unmistakable terms.<sup>16</sup> Again when the same author<sup>17</sup> gives the northern and southern boundaries of Tamilakam as they were in his days, he refers to the kumari sea and not the kumari river as the southern boundary, the commentator Adiyarkku-nallar while commenting on the term “தொடியோள்பெளவம்” (the sea of the lady wearing bracelet) namely kumari sea, pertinently draws our attention to the term பெளவம், sea, as the southern boundary and not

<sup>14</sup> i. C. V. Vaidya — The riddle of the Ramayana P. 20-51.

ii. A. B. Keith. The age of the Ramayana J. R. A. S. 1915 - p. 218-228

iii. Schlegel-German Oriental Journal part III P. 379/.

iv. Monier Williams — Indian Epic poetry London 1863 page 3.

v. A. A. Macdonald. — Sanskrit Literature London 1928 page. 307.

<sup>15</sup> Tolkappiya payiram — “Vadavenkadam Ten Kumari Ayidai Tamil kuru Nallulakam.” LL. 1-3.

<sup>16</sup> (i) Silappadikaram, — Venir kadai LL. 1-2. (ii) Ibid.Kadu-kam Kadai LL. 18-20. (iii) (Mullai) Kalithokai 104.

<sup>17</sup> (i) Silappadikaram, — Venir kadai LL. 1-2. (ii) Adiyarkku nallar's commentary on the above.

தொடியோன் river in the southern country because by this time kumari river was already engulfed in the sea by the deluge, in support of which he quotes<sup>18</sup> the two lines of Ilangovadigal himself. In the course of his commentary, it is interesting and instructive too, that, the commentator actually gives the names of the 49 Tamil provinces destroyed by the inundation. Another commentator Perasiriyar who wrote commentaries on portions of porulatikaram of *Tolkappiyam* says in his commentary that Panamparanar the class mate of Tolkappiyar mentioned Kumari river as the southern boundary of Tamilakam in his preface to *Tolkappiyam* because he wrote it before the river and its adjoining territories were still existing before the deluge. Kalittokai,<sup>19</sup> Irayavar Kalaviyal urai,<sup>20</sup> Naccinarkkiniyar and Ilampuranar,<sup>21</sup> all with one voice refer to this subsidence.

However it is agreed on all hands that *Tolkappiyam* was presented in the court of Nilamtaru Tiruvir Pandiyan (other wise known as Jayamakirti) of the end of the first academy who was one of its seven partron-kings. In these circumstances *Tolkappiyam* must have been written long before the 2nd century A. D. which has been fixed as the last days of the 3rd academy.

(4) While commenting on the third sutram of Karpial in Porulatikaram ;<sup>22</sup> the commentator, Naccinarkkiniyar says that in conformity with the other authors of the first academy in its last stages, Tolkappiyar too made, in his work, married

<sup>18</sup> Silappadikaram Venirkatai LL. 1-2. commentary.

<sup>19</sup> Kalithokai — Mullai — 'மலிதிரை யூர்ந்துதன் மண்கடல் வெளவவின்' — 104.

<sup>20</sup> இறையனார் களவியல் உரை "ஆக்காலத்துப் போலும் பாண்டிய நாட்டைக் கடல் கொண்டது".

<sup>21</sup> தொல். பொருளதிகாரம் கடல்கத்துப் பட்டுக் குமரியாறு "பனைநாட் டொடு கெடுவதற்கு முன்".

<sup>22</sup> "கடல் கொள் வதன் முன்பு பிற நாடும் உண்மையில் தெற்கும் எல்லை கூறப்பட்டது".

<sup>23</sup> தொல். பொருள் : கற்பியல் நூற்பா 3

பொய்யும் வழுவும் தோன்றிய பின்னர்

ஐயர் யாத் தனர் காணம் என்ப." — commentary.

wedlock succeed necessarily furtive love and he insisted on the ceremonial marriage, because steadfastness and loyalty in marrying the one loved slowly diminished owing to infidelity and desertions. The end of the first sangam evidently means at least some centuries before the last days of the 3rd sangam which are fixed for the middle of the 2nd century A. D.

(5) Naccinarkkiniyar has again in his commentary<sup>24</sup> on the preface of the book stated that Tolkappiyar wrote this book even before Vyasa codified the vedas into the existing four. Before they were codified into these four (Rig, yapu, sama and Atharva) they were called Daitriya, Poudiya, Tala-vakara and sama. Veda Vyasa lived probably between 1500-1000 B. C.

(6) Another piece of external evidence to fix the age of this work at least some centuries earlier to the last days of the 3rd academy is available in the Payiram again, given by the author's classmate Panamparanar<sup>25</sup> who says that Tolkappiyar was versed in Aindram the grammar of India which is supposed to have preceded Pandnis vyakarnna and held the field then. The grammar of India is said to be anterior to Panini and there are, it is said, fundamental differences between the two. If Aindram, the grammar of Indra was holding away before Panini's grammar and if Tolkappiyar, as he is reported, was versed in Aindram school of grammar and evidently not the Panini School of grammar, then Tolkappiyar must have lived at a date earlier than Panini himself. If he had been acquainted with Panini's grammar his classmate would have mentioned it, and not Aindram for purposes of comparative study with the Tamil grammar. Paninis age has been fixed from 5th to the 7th cent. B. C. Professor Dikshitar<sup>26</sup> following Goldstucker opines that Panini must have lived in the 7th or 8th cent. B. C. If Tolkappiyar preceded Panini we have to look for a period anterior to the 7th century B. C. or somewhere near about it. The grammar of Indra finds

<sup>24</sup> Thol. பாயிரம் நச்சினர்க்கினியர்; உரை "நான்கு கறுமாய்"...etc.

<sup>25</sup> Thol. பாயிரம் "ஐந்திரம் திறைந்த தொல்காப்பியன்".

<sup>26</sup> V. R. R. Dikshitar — Pre Historic India Page 213.



also reference occasionally in Tamil classical works as for instance in a stray sutram<sup>27</sup> attributed to Tolkappiyar's master Agattiyar, quoted by Senavarayar in his commentary on Tolkappiyam in connection with the vocative case. Ilangovaligal (2nd century A. D.) also in unmistakable terms refers to the existence of this old grammar of Indra in *Silappatikaram*.<sup>28</sup>

Tolkappiyar has not described the Etymology of words and has dismissed that line of enquiry summarily stating that the apt reason for the meaning of words will not be apparent from a casual reading of the same (மொழிப் பொருட் காரணம் விளிப்பத் தோன்றா) and this reason alone must lead us to place this grammarian before Panini who has given us the notes of words.

(7) Now, this Panini is said to have been the disciple of Varsa who along with Upa Varsa was the court poet of the famous Chandragupta Maurya (400-300) B. C. and according to the traditional account, Panini, one of the many pupils of Varsa who lagged behind in his studies, as he could not keep pace with his classmates was given by his teachers wife menial duties to perform. Unable to reconcile himself to his lot, Panini is said to have resorted to the Himalayas and offered penance to Lord Siva, who, pleased with the devotee appeared before him and taught him the principles of Sanskrit grammar which collected and codified in his famous grammar book. Giving credence to the learning of sanskrit grammar at the feet of Lord Siva, Tamil poets of later days began to attribute the same kind of story . . . of learning grammar<sup>29</sup> at the feet of Siva, — to the earliest Tamil grammarian

<sup>27</sup> “எழியல் முறையது எதிர்முக வேற்றுமை, வேறென விளம்பான் பெயரது விகாரமென்று, ஒதிய புலவனும் உளன் ஒருவகையால், இத்திரன் எட்டாம் வேற்றுமை என்றனன்”.

<sup>28</sup> (i) “புண்ணிய சரவணம் பொருந்துவிராயின் விண்ணவர் கோமான் விழுதூல் எய்துவார்” — (சிலப்.: காடு காண் : 33 : 99).

(ii) “கப்பத்திந்திரன் காட்டிய நூலின் மெய்ப்பாட்டியற்கை விளங்கக் காணாய்”

Ibid. L. 254—55.

<sup>29</sup>-(A) Tolkappiyam Cilladikariam Sutram 294.



Agattiyanar who was Tolkappiyar's master, since in their opinions such tutorship would confer equal status and dignity on the Tamil language as it did on Sanskrit.

(8) We may indirectly find a clue to fix Tolkappiyar's age by reference to the Vartika and the Maha Bashya on Panini's grammar. Vararuchi or Katyayana (4th century B. C.) wrote his vartika (succinct commentary with) emendations and Patanjali (3rd century B. C.) his Mahabashya (elaborate commentary) on Panini's grammar. These two were followers of Panini and must have written their commentaries on his grammar, at least some centuries after Panini. Tolkappiyar, if he lived before Panini, preceded all these people, and must be placed at a period above 500 B. C.

(9) Another piece of indirect evidence is also available through Kautliya, the famous Minister of Chandra Gupta Maurya who in his *Artha sastra*<sup>99</sup> mentions "Pandya Kapātaka." We may take it to mean pearl from Kapata (*i.e.*) Kapatapuram the seat of the second academy. Kapatapuram therefore as a place of pearl fisheries must have existed before 3rd century B. C. as a flourishing sea-port and capital and it was in this place that Tolkappiyar was supposed to have composed his grammar. On the other hand, Dr. Shama Sastri interprets it as 'that which is obtained in Pandyakavata, a mountain known as Malayakoti in the Pandiyan country; as well as Ganapatti Sastri.'

(10) Apart from these oft quoted allusions in the sanskrit works, there are less doubted and more authentic material of Asoka's inscriptions and Megasthenes' writings of the 3rd and 4th century B. C. which refer in unmistakable

<sup>99</sup> (i) விடைபு கைத்தவன் பாணினிக் கிலக்கணம் மேளுள் etc.

பாஞ்சோதி முனிவர் திருவிளைபாடற் புராணம்.

(ii) வடமொழியைப் பாணினிக்கு வருத்தருளி. — திருவிளைபாடற் புராணம்.

(iii) இருமொழிக்கும் கண்ணுதலார் முதல் குரவர் — காஞ்சிப் புராணம்.

<sup>100</sup> i. Kautilya - Arthasastra Dr. Shama Sastry Book II. Chap. 11. examination of gems that are to be entered in the treasury P. 83.

ii. Arthasastra V. Ganapathi Sastry P. 179.

terms to the Pandiyan capital and the Tamil citizens in eulogistic language, which exactly fit in with the traditions of the Pandiyan culture and civilisation. The Ceylon chronicle Mahavamsa also tells us that the Magadha Aeneas<sup>31</sup> (a) who led the first Aryan colony into Ceylon and founded the Lanka dynasty sought the hands of a Pandiya Princess in the 6th century B. C. as worthy of being his bride.

Let us now focuss our attention for a while on some pieces of internal evidence as for instance on the words, style and forms of expression in the work itself. (1) First of all *Tolkappiyam* undoubtedly shows a fusion of the Dravidian and Aryan institutions and a distinct trace of the influence of Aryan immigrants and it would naturally lead us to think that it must have been composed at a time when the Aryans had already come to south India and had even introduced their ceremonials and institutions. In fact Tolkappiyar himself is supposed to have been one among them according to legend. Without going into his origin, it is possible to say that the colonisation of the South by the Aryans, as it is held, commenced about the 10th century B. C.<sup>31</sup> and it would be reasonable to regard *Tolkappiyam* as a work composed after two or three centuries of fusion of these two cultures.

2. We find, again, that fewer Sanskrit words are to be found in it than even in the extant third sangam works. Though in his age, Tamil writers were sufficiently conversant with Sanskrit and though Tolkappiyar is said to be a great scholar in Tamil and Sanskrit, yet at the time of his writing the grammar, not many Sanskrit words were used in spoken Tamil, a few were used in literary works and fewer still in standard grammar works and this fact of the absence of many Sanskrit words in the work itself is considered to be proof of its antiquity — its being too far removed in age from the 3rd sangam works for which it was the acknowledged standard grammar.

<sup>31</sup> (a) தமிழ் இலக்கியம் Sangakalam by, ஞா. சா. துரைசாமி பிள்ளை 1923.

<sup>31</sup> Dravidian India. T. R. Sessa Iyengar, P. 156 & 170.

3. It is possible in this connection to offer a definite piece of internal evidence to prove the antiquity of this work and to state that at least some centuries must have elapsed before the extant Tamil classical works of the third sangam were written, collected and codified. The third sangam had its palmy days long before Christ was born and its evening was in the days of the 2nd century, A. D. The works now generally called 'Sangam works' were not all written in a particular period but ranged between some centuries, and they were carefully collected and codified into the existing anthologies. In these anthologies one comes across a host of words which may be considered serious violations of the rules laid down by Tolkappiyar. If Tolkappiyam had been written at a time nearer to these works, then the rules might have been strictly observed in the use of these words and Tolkappiyar himself would not have made rules outcasting these words enshrined in them. As he should have deduced his principles from the standard literary works held in esteem in his times, he should have made provisions for them in his grammar in accordance with the literary tendencies of the times and not traversed the sanction of the great authors of the times.

So in all probability Tolkappiyar made these rules at a time far anterior to the third sangam days and a number of centuries should have passed by before these prescribed words crept slowly and stealthily in the third sangam works, after having lingered long in the background before they were actually introduced in literary works. For, after all, words are not smuggled into a language in waggon loads and in the teeth of its grammar in a single season. <sup>31</sup>Such rules of *Tolkappiyam* may be mentioned here, which prescribe the restrictions for the occurrence of the letters ச, ஞ and ய, (c, n and y) in the beginning of words. The letter C<sup>32</sup>(ச) would not combine with the vowels a, ai, and aw, the letter n<sup>33</sup>(ஞ)

<sup>31</sup> சகாக்கிளவியும் அவற்றோற்றே, அ, ஐ, ஒளவேனும் முன்றலங்கடையே—  
தொல்—எழுத்து—மொழி மாபு—29.

<sup>32</sup> ஆ, எ, ஞ வெனும் முவுயிர் ஞ காரத்துரிய. Ibid. — 31.

<sup>33</sup> ஆ வோடல்லது யகர முதலாது Ibid. 32.

will combine only with the vowels a, e and o and the letter y(ய) will combine only with a and with nothing else, when they initiate words. If these rules were made about the time of the third sangam works, they should have been strictly observed in them. But we find quite the opposite. The prohibited words occur in plenty that is, these letters combine with some of the prohibited vowels at the beginning of words. For instance (1) the letter C (though prohibited) combines with a in the beginning of words like Camaittu (சமைத்து) in Silappadikaram, சண்பு (canpu) in Maturaikanci (l. 172) சலம் (calam) in Maturaikkanci (l. 112) Patirrupattu (84) in Silappadikaram (l. சலம் புணர் கொள்கைச் சலதி) in Tirukkural (சலம் பற்றிச் சால்பில செய்யார்). சந்து (cantu) in Malaipadu kadam (l. 393). சதுக்கம் (catukkam) in Tirummurukarruppadaï (l. 225) சந்தி (canti) in the same, சமம் (camam) in the same and in Tirukkural etc (2) The letter (ஞ) n though prohibited, occurs in words like ஞமனி n Purananuru 74 and Pattinappalai in 140. ஞரல in Patiruppattu 30 and Tirummurukarruppadaï 120, ஞமனங் Purananuru 6, ஞி, in ஞிமிநு in Puram 93, and (3) ya and yu though prohibited occur in யவனர் (yavanar) in patiruppattu 2nd Padigam, Nedunal-vadai 101 and Mullaipattu 61 and yupam in Purananuru 15 and 224 Patirrupattu 67, Maturaikkanci 27 and yukam in Tirummurukarruppadaï 302 respectively. Even among these violations they are less frequent in Purananuru and Ainkurunuru, Patiruppattu etc. than in the comparatively later works like Manimekalai and Silappadikaram.

Commenting on this violation, Naccinarkkiniyar,<sup>35</sup> the commentator says that (though at the time of the composition of the grammar the trend was like that) the rule was violated. in later times and brands them as bad usage (இழிவழக்கு) and Sanskrit corruptions, while Ilampuranar<sup>36</sup> also betrays his inability to appreciate these changes which time had brought slowly into Tamil Literature. In his attempts to reconcile these rules with the usages in later works, he was foiled by the refusal of some recalcitrant words to be forced into har-

<sup>35</sup> & <sup>36</sup> Vide their commentaries on Sutrams 29, 31 and 32 of Moli-marapu of Eluttatikaram of Tolkappiyam respectively.

mony, and he brands them straight way with all the force of his orthodox faith in the inviolability of *Tolkappiyam* rules, could summon to his aid, as of ungrammatical and bad usage and as Sanskrit corruptions. Though he felt satisfied that he had disposed of all the usages which had crept in third sangam works in this way, the inadequacy of the easy explanation will be patent if we look into some other rules which Tolkappiyar himself has introduced deliberately welcoming possible accretions to the Tamil vocabulary. He has provided for the inclusion of Sanskrit words and idioms changing their form of letters to suit Tamil Phonology so that they might not militate against the genius of the Tamil language, even though the Sanskrit forms may appear mutilated. So the commentator could not take shelter under his condemning those changes as mere corruption of Aryan forms and could not pretend that Tolkappiyar did not contemplate the assimilation of Sanskrit words like யவனர் into Tamil literature. But he could not avoid the difficulty by merely saying that his rules were meant only for pure Tamil words and would not militate against the use of Aryan words in the Tamil language. Tolkappiyar himself has used Sanskrit words though stintingly in his work and has made provision, for bringing<sup>37</sup> Sanskrit words into the Tamil language as far as his times called for. A number of non-Sanskrit new words are also found in later Sangam works which also do not square with particular rules of *Tolkappiyam*. Neither could Ilampuranar pluck up courage enough to repudiate these usages in later poems that did not accord with *Tolkappiyam* rules and to brush them aside as ungrammatical usage.

So the simple truth is that *Tolkappiyam* was written long prior to the third sangam works, and the later usages that grew up since the days of *Tolkappiyam* could not be condemned for want of harmony with his archaisms. Language

<sup>37</sup> (i) வட சொற்களினி வட வெழுத்தொரீஇ  
எழுத்தொடு புணர்ந்த சொல்லாகும்மே.

(ii) கிதைந் தனவரினும் இயைந்தன வரையார், *Tolkappiyam*. colladi-  
karam, eccaviyal. 5-6,

like man is organic and grows, and as long as it preserves its vitality it must continue to grow and change in its incessant growth ; for is not change the essence of language as it is of life ? The cradle of the child should not cramp the growing limbs of the baby.

4. Another such instance comes to our notice in *Tolkappiyam* which might enable us to assign if a much earlier date than the third sangams works. At the time of *Tolkappiyar*,<sup>38</sup> syllables like *lya, lya ; nya, nya ; mya, vya, and mva*, could occur in the middle of words. This principle of syllabation is not traceable in any of the works assigned to the third sangam and this rule has become obsolete already at this time and evidently some centuries ought to have gone between these third sangam works and *Tolkappiyam*. In the *Tirukural* supposed to be a work of the 1st century A. D. these are not found. The period when such syllables were in vogue ought to be therefore some centuries before the Christian era.

5. One more internal evidence may be offered in support of the antiquity of the work. *Tolkappiyar* treats prosody as a minor section of *Porulatikaram* dealing with matter, whereas by the third sangam prosody has claimed enough importance as not to be incorporated in *Porulatikaram* itself, but to be treated as a separate division of grammar, and separate treatises like *Kakaipadiniyam* were written on prosody.

6. Finally it may be pointed out *Tolkappiyar* directly supports the tradition that there had been numerous literary writings and more than one treatise on grammar before his days. The significant portion of *Seyyuliyal's*<sup>39</sup> opening sutram

<sup>38</sup> (i) ல, எல்கான் முன்னர் பவ்வுந்தோன்றும். Tol — *EluttTudikaram*

(ii) ஞ, ந ம், வ, என்னும் புள்ளிமுன்னர், பல்கான் நிற்பல் மெய் பெற்றன்றே — *Ibid.* 27.

(iii) மல்கான் புள்ளிமுன், உவ்வுந் தோன்றும் *Ibid.* 28.

<sup>39</sup> Tol. *Seyyuliyal*. 1. ".....  
நல்லிசைப் புலவர் செய்யுள் உறுப்பென  
வல்லிதிற் கூறி வருத்துரைத்தனரே" —



may be given as a typical evidence for this view. In it the author stresses that "poets of good fame have stated the foregoing as elements of a poem emphatically and in an analytical way." There are innumerable places in the whole range of *Tolkappiyam*, wherein Tolkappiyar refers to numerous authors and grammatical works in a general way that have preceded him and that have undoubtedly served as models for him. For instance the author has used the terms 'என்மனார் புலவர்' (the poets say) in about 56 places, மொழிப (they state) in about 45 places, என்ப, (they say) in about 24 places, எனப் படும் (has been said) in about 6 places. சொல்லவும்படுமே (has been mentioned also) அறிந்திசினோர் அறிப (the learned know) யாப்பறி புலவர் மொழிப (those versed in prosody call) நூனவில் புலவர் நுவன்றதைத்தனரே, (Those who have studied grammar declare emphatically) சொன்னார் புலவர் (The poets have told us) பாத்தனர் புலவர், (The poets have composed) நுணங்கு மொழிப் புலவர் மொழிப, (The keen philologists state) உயர் மொழிப் புலவர் மொழிப, (The great philologists state) இயல்புணர்ந் தோர் மொழிப, (Those who know the nature of language state) புலன் தன்குணர்ந்த புலமையோர், (The poets keen in intellect) வரை யார், (They don't exclude) கிளவார், (They don't say) etc.

These innumerable examples detailed above predicate the existence of a number of Tamil grammatical works furnishing him with the materials for several parts of his grammar. Sivagna munivar<sup>40</sup> in his 'payira virutti' says that Tolkappiyar followed the trends of the vast number of works that preceded him in formulating his grammatical theories. The Tamils should have therefore made considerable literary progress long before the 7th century B. C. to develop a civilisation and culture reflected in works like *Tolkappiyam*. Theories of grammar are based on the mass of literature available before a treatise of grammar is written and centuries of culture and civilisation should have gone in turn before they are embedded in the mass of Literature that followed. A great antiquity should therefore characterise a grammatical treatise reflecting this culture and civilisation.

<sup>40</sup> Sivagnana munivar the all round poet, critic, grammarian, logician, and philosopher and the author of a number of works varied has written an elaborate commentary in the preface of *Tolkappiyam* called Payira virutti. He belonged to the 18th century. A. D.



# TAMILIANA-NEWS & NOTES

## INDIAN LANGUAGES DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE AT POONA

*(Report by Mr. V. I. Subrahmaniam, Delegate of the  
Tamil Literary Society, Tuticorin, & The South Zone  
College Tamil Teachers' Association, Tirunelveli)*

"Tamil Literature is as ancient as any of the other Indian Languages including Sanskrit. Their *Thirukkural* and *Kamba Ramayanam* are unique examples. So let not the protagonists of Hindi forget the claims of the Regional Languages," declared His Excellency Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai, the Governor of Bombay, in the concluding session of the Indian Languages Development Conference convened in Poona, by the Poona University on the 23rd, 24th and 25th of May 1953.

The S. P. College on the northern part of this historic city was the venue of the conference which considered the building up of technical vocabulary, development of the official language of union and the development of the regional languages of India. The inaugural and concluding sessions of the conference were conducted in the gaily decorated Lady Rama Bai Hall. Nearly five hundred delegates attended. The Honourable Minister for Education, Mr. M. V. Krishna Rao represented the Madras State, Prof. R. P. Sethu Pillai the Madras University and Sri V. I. Subrahmaniam the Tamil Literary Society, Tuticorin, and the South Zone College Tamil Teachers' Association, Tirunelveli. The Rt. Hon. M. R. Jayakar, the Vice-Chancellor of the Poona University, after stressing the importance of the conference drew attention to the interest shown by the Central and State Governments, the Indian Universities and Cultural Associations by delegating men of great talent to participate in the conference. A warm welcome was accorded to the Delegates. Then he requested

Mahamahopadyaya P. V. Kane, the former Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University to preside over the sessions. The reputed Sanskrit scholar P. V. Kane, discussed in detail the articles of our Constitution regarding languages and brought to light the predominant position occupied by English over the Union Languages. He requested the Delegates to seriously consider the recommendation of Sir S. Radhakrishnan in the Report of Education. Finally he appealed for a dispassionate consideration of all the proposals. 'The great ideal, that we have to place before us,' he observed, 'is how to reconcile the claims of National Unity with the diversity of Regional languages and how to successfully evolve a uniformity in the use of Scientific and technical words throughout the length and breadth of this vast continent.' With this the morning session concluded at 11 a.m. to resume in the same place at 3 p.m.

To facilitate effective discussion the conference branched off into three sections each under a president. The first section dealing about Technical vocabulary, was presided over by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji. In his address he pleaded for a 'go slow policy' in the attempt to Sanskritise completely, the technical terminology urged by Dr. Reguvira and requested to adopt the suggestions of the late R. L. Mitra of Bengal. "Indian Science has the base in Modern Europe and naturally with its Laboratory and all the various apparatus, its technical vocabulary also has come to stay at least to a certain extent. We should try to Indianise by, first, making science an integral part of the mental make up of the Indian citizen. With that if we have both the English terms and the Indian equivalents, and if we take sufficient care for the study of the mother tongue through its literature, the fullest Indianisation of our scientific and technical vocabulary will come in as a matter of course" was his concluding remarks in his lengthy address.

This was followed by the humorous speech of Masthi Venkatesa Iyengar, the president of the second section to consider the development of Hindi. "Since Hindi is the National

language the other languages spoken are not less national. Equally with Hindi, they are National languages. Hindi is not to replace English. The Regional language will be used in all offices and courts in each region. Hindi will be used only for inter-provincial and centre Vs : provincial communications. Persons whose mother tongue is Hindi should select a South Indian Language as a subject for the competitive Examination." Dr. Ragu Vira, the President of the third section dealing about the development of the Regional languages, spoke in Hindi. From the high pitch of his voice and emotional gestures he appeared to have violently refuted Dr. S. K. Chatterji's suggestion 'to go slow'. In the second half of his address, he mainly dealt with the methods of familiarising one language by the other to preserve the national unity. "There should be no mutual jealousies. These will benefit no one but the foreigner. Hindi should not encroach on the sphere of the regional languages. As long as English dominates no Indian language can develop. It will continue withering. Hindi must be taught as an optional language to all school going children. No student should be compelled for the study of Hindi as for any foreign tongue. Mono-lingual states will be helpful in the development of the Regional languages. The lurking idea which finds expression in private conversation, that English will remain for ever must be definitely abandoned. Emphasis on English must be replaced by emphasis on the mother-tongue. Very little is known in North India about Tamil literature. The Tamil Universities and the Ministry of Education in Tamil Nad or the Tamil Academies should undertake the translations of the Tamil classics into North Indian Languages and from other Indian languages into Tamil." These are the other important points of his address. With an invitation from the Vice-Chancellor of the Poona University to tea, in the beautiful lawns of the University Gardens the evening session concluded.

Next day the sectional meetings were conducted in the Lecture Halls of th S. P. College. Discussions were very lively. Rapporteurs were appointed to take note of the discussions

and to report to the President of the Conference. Twenty-seven papers were submitted for the first section which included those of Prof. C. R. Sankaran and R. P. Sethu Pillai. The representative of the Central Government Dr. Humayun Kabir, took keen interest in this section. After two sittings four recommendations were made to the president (which are attached below). The second section under Sri M. Venkatesa Iyengar earnestly considered the suggestions for the Delegates. Hon. Minister M. V. Krishna Rao remained throughout in this section and represented the views of the Madras State. Six papers were received. Sri C. J. Joshi of Dharwar, pleaded for the utilisation of the Dravidic stems along with Sanskrit ones, in building up the technical vocabulary. The third section considered the development of the Regional language. It was active under the chairmanship of Dr. Ragu Vira. Fourteen written contributions were received which included the one from the Delegate of the Tamil Literary Society. It was very refreshing to hear a good many Delegates, particularly those from Bengal speaking high of the cultural antiquity of Tamil Literature. Nine recommendations were made by this section.

On Monday the 25th of May the concluding session of the conference was conducted again in the Rama Bai Hall. His Excellency Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai was expected to say a few words in this session. Due to an urgent call from the Prime Minister he left for Delhi on the previous day and came late to the conference. In his shrill but commanding tone he stressed the need for viewing things in the light of world developments. 'To isolate English from the curriculum is to isolate Indians from the world. Should we do it? Those who desire Hindi do not realize the others point of view. There are languages more cultured and more ancient than Hindi. Tamil literature is as ancient as any other Indian languages including Sanskrit. Their *Thirukkural* and *Kamba Ramayanam* are unique examples. So let not the protagonist of Hindi, forget the claims of the Regional language. In view of all these difficulties let me ask you to proceed slowly and cautiously. We

shall not be shy of English " concluded the Governor of Bombay and left immediately the conference Hall. Before his arrival the conference unanimously passed the following resolutions.

#### SECTION A

(1) All technical terms for all Sciences should be drawn as far as possible from Sanskrit sources.

(2) All international Symbols, signs and formulae should be retained for use as they are in use at present.

(3) International Scientific terms and expressions should be retained if suitable Indian Equivalents cannot be found.

(4) Scientific and technical terms should be uniform throughout the union as far as possible.

#### SECTION B

(1) One of the existing obstacles to a ready spread of the official language of the Union is the apprehension that it will encroach on the sphere of regional languages. It should therefore be made clear that the regional languages should each in its area be the language in which all the affairs of the area are conducted and all instruction is imparted.

(2) Hindi having been chosen as the official language of the Union, the States in which the other languages of the country are spoken should take steps to spread a knowledge of the official language of the Union among their population.

(3) The development of the official language of the Union in accordance with the directives of the Constitution is the common concern of the speakers of all Indian languages. This conference called upon the universities Language and Literary Associations, Academic Institutions and State Governments to take up immediately the study of concrete action on lines indicated by Section 351 of the Constitution. It is hoped and expected that the official language of the Union that will develop as a result of these efforts will conform to the genius of the parent stock and, therefore, will be easily and naturally acceptable to those whose mother tongue is Hindi.

## SECTION C

(1) That the Regional Language or the mother-tongue be the first language of our school going children.

(2) That provision be made for the teaching of Hindi at Secondary Schools.

(3) That provision be made, wherever possible for the teaching of another Indian Language at Secondary Schools.

(4) That advanced courses and research in Indian Languages and literature be instituted at all our Universities.

(5) That Bureau for translation of literary and scientific works from one Indian Language into another be instituted at State Education Ministries, Universities and Language Societies.

(6) That as the first step, grammars, conversation books and bilingual dictionaries of Indian languages be prepared.

(7) That every regional language should have one (all literature) Magazine, in which the users of that language should find information about currents in other Indian Literatures.

(8) That the Central and State Governments should establish Indian Languages Teachers Training centres to serve the needs of schools.

(9) That the Central and State Governments should institute prizes, scholarships, grants and funds to encourage writers, societies and universities to take up and accomplish the items detailed above.

The President P. V. Kane insisted that the representatives of the various Governments should try to carry out the recommendations of this conference. With a vote of thanks proposed by Prof. D. V. Potdar, the chairman of the organizing committee the conference was dissolved. One notable feature of the conference was the sincerity shown by all the Delegates in finding an acceptable solution to the language problem and to put into practice what was arrived at. Many

of the delegates left Poona on that day itself. Those who were linguisticians remained to attend another conference on 26th of May convened by the Deccan College with the aid of the Ford Foundation to give a fillip to linguistic studies in India.

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### SCIENTIFIC TERMINOLOGY

POONA, MAY 24.

Sri Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Chairman, West Bengal Legislative Council, today said in the matter of scientific and technical terminology, India, at least for the present, ought to have a bilingual vocabulary both in English and the mother tongue.

Indian science has had its basis modern Europe, and, naturally, with its laboratory and apparatus, its technical vocabulary also has come to stay — at least to a certain extent," he added.

Sri Chatterjee, who was presiding over a sectional meeting of the Indian Languages Development Conference dealing with "the vocabulary of technical terms," added that English had become a unique vehicle of world Culture at the present day. Indians could always acquire it with greater facility than any other European language.

### KEEP WAY TO ENGLISH OPEN

"Since in India's higher scientific life, and international relations English will retain a place which cannot, within a reasonably near future, be replaced by any Indian language, we should keep the way to English open by making the study of the sciences through English optional.



He referred to the policy of Nagpur University, which has adopted a number of text-books in Marathi and Hindi on Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Botany in which totally new Devanagiri symbols and symbolic representations have been introduced, and said that if such a course was followed in the different language areas in India, it would effectively isolate India's science not only in Hindi, but also in other regional languages.

*"This kind of isolationism, he said, "would be disastrous to Indian science.*

"For whatever we might say and do, in India scientific knowledge is not so well spread among the people, and it is not very much advanced either.

"For years and years, before an adequate scientific education can spread among the masses, we shall have to link up ourselves with the scientific world of other advanced countries in order to ensure our own progress and for this a common set of symbols is one of the primary necessities," he added.

Sri Chatterjee posed the question — should we try to create and impose upon all our Indian languages a common scientific vocabulary? If so, to what extent will that be possible or, should we, he asked, have the principle of "laissez-faire" for each language, allowing its own writers, who are its true custodians, to follow the native trend in this matter and create for each language its own vocabulary independently?

He pointed out that it had been generally admitted that for the greater part of India a cultural vocabulary derived from Sanskrit would be a most potent bond of unity, and for this reason a very widespread "Sanskritisation" of Hindi was sought to be effected within a decade, or even less than a decade. The use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in school and college to the fullest extent possible had also been accepted as a great principle. The conflict bet-

ween Hindi as the Pan-Indian, inter-State language, and the official language of the Union, and the regional languages as had been sought to be mitigated by fostering the greatest amount of unity possibly between Hindi, on the one hand, and the various regional languages, on the other.

*Such unity could only be achieved through a common scientific and cultural vocabulary, as nearly as possible, for all the languages of the Indian Union, a vocabulary of words derived from Sanskrit.*

#### CULTURE INDIVISIBLE

"We should, however, consider the great fact," he added, "that human culture at the present day is one and indivisible, and there has been, ever since man began his quest for the discovery of the unseen, co-operation among different groups of peoples of diverse races and languages. We have also to remember that the present day physical science is a creation of modern Europe, and its greatest exponents are the European peoples, particularly the English-speaking peoples.

*"It should not be in any way derogatory to our national self respect to have borrowed, along with European science, some of its words—particularly its English words."*

Presiding over the section which deals with "the development of Hindi as the common language of India," Sri M. Venkatesa Ayyangar said Hindi should be called the "Federal language," and not "national language," as the other languages spoken in India were equally "national languages."

While agreeing with the decision of the Government in choosing Hindi to serve as the common language for communication between State and State and the States and the Union, he said there, however, had been much misunderstanding in the country of the implications of this choice. One misapprehension among large sections of the population was the

idea that in calling it the "national language," a higher status had been given to it than regional languages.

A second misapprehension was that Hindi had been selected to take the place that English had under British rule. While this was partly true, Hindi, he said, was not intended to displace English. Just as all living Indian languages were national languages, so Hindi was a regional language.

A third misapprehension which should be cleared was that people speaking one of the other regional languages should in future use only Hindi to get into touch with people living in other language areas.

A fourth misapprehension was the belief of some Hindi propagandists that Hindi was understood by very nearly all the population of India.

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## STUDY OF HISTORY OF LANGUAGES

POONA, MAY 29.

A conference of prominent educationists held under the auspices of the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute, Poona, to-day expressed the opinion that it was necessary that a knowledge of the history of a language should form an integral part of the study pertaining to that language. A resolution passed at the conference recommended that universities should include the scientific study of languages in their curricula for the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees and provide for this teaching by the creating of departments of linguistics.

The conference, which concluded its four-day deliberations to-day, was called for the purpose of planning of a project for a scientific study of Indian languages and with a view

to preparing basic vocabularies as a possible solution of the problem of inter-communication among the different regions of India. The conference which was inaugurated by Sir Ralph Turner, Director of the School of Oriental and African studies, London, was attended among others by Dr. S. K. Chatterji, President of the West Bengal Legislative Council, Dr. Raghu-vira of the International Academy of Indian Culture, Nagpur, Dr. Baburam Saksena, Dr. Vishwanath Prasad, Dr. Murray Fowler and representatives of various universities in India.

The conference further recommended that the following fundamental tasks in connection with the immediate needs of Indian linguistics be undertaken : (1) a new linguistic survey of India on a comprehensive and modern lines on an all-India level ; (2) establishment of a bibliography service for linguistics—specially Indian ; (3) critical editions of important texts in the principal Indian languages ; and (4) translation into principal Indian languages of the most important standard books on general and Indian linguistics written in foreign languages.

Discussing the subject, " the project for common vocabularies of the principal Indian languages ", the conference was of the opinion that the project submitted by the Deccan College was one of great significance to the scientific study of Indian linguistics as well as to its application to practical problems. It, therefore, recommended that the project should be undertaken as early as possible with the co-operation of scholars from all parts of the country.

A standing committee consisting of Sir Ralph Turner (Chairman), Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, Prof. Baburam Saksena, Prof. D. N. Shri Kanthayya and Dr. S. M. Katre (Convener) was constituted to advise the Director of the Deccan College on matters of organisation and direction of work on the project. Among the works that will be undertaken by the college will be the preparation of descriptive grammars and bilingual dictionaries of regional languages on a uniform basis following scientific methods of phonemic and

morphenic analysis and the study of the common vocabulary between Hindi and the regional languages as also of the semantic changes of loan words (from Sanskrit and other sources) in regional centres.

The conference also requested the authorities of the Deccan College to extend the training facilities designed for the special staff to be recruited for the project to other scholars interested in Indian linguistics and recommended that a summer training school be inaugurated at the college premises in which Indian and foreign experts could give intensive training in principles and methodology of modern linguistics as applied to Indian languages.

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## BOOKS IN INDIAN LANGUAGES

### BIBLIOGRAPHY TO BE PUBLISHED

MADRAS, JUNE 17.

A national bibliography of books, published so far in all Indian languages, on the lines of the British National Bibliography, is to be compiled at the National Library of India, Calcutta, according to Sri B. S. Kesavan, President, Indian Library Association, and Chief Librarian of the National Library.

Sri Kesavan, who is touring South India to see that a copy of each book published in the four principal South Indian languages, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada, is automatically sent to the National Library soon after publication, conferred with officials of the Madras, and Travancore-Cochin Governments in Madras today. He will leave for Bangalore on Thursday.

In an interview, Sri Kesavan pointed out that during the last seven years, the Government had made no provision to

ensure that publications in various languages in the States automatically accrued to the Central Library. Before that the British Museum in London, and the India Office were given this privilege of selecting whatever books they liked from the publications in the several States as gazetted periodicals. With the new realignment of States in India the Registration Act of 1867 was to be revised, so that publications could automatically be sent first to the State Library, then to the Parliamentary Library, and finally to the National Library.

Sri Kesavan praised the Madras Government for its co-operation in regard to the carrying out of the provisions of the Act of 1867.

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### MALAYALAM TYPEWRITER

CALCUTTA, JUNE 18.

A typewriter in Malayalam will be on sale in India shortly, and its component parts are now on the way from the United States, for assembly in a Calcutta factory.

This Malayalam typewriter represents the successful culmination of 20 years of efforts to design a satisfactory keyboard in this language. The major technical difficulty of typing vowel signs immediately above and below the characters was resolved with the use of dead and offset keys thus eliminating tedious back-spacing.

The typefaces for a prototype Malayalam typewriter were etched by hand in Calcutta. When the prototype proved practical, an art drawing of the characters was made for the final die-making and type-casting in New York.

Typewriters are at present available in Tamil, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Urdu, and Sinhalese.

Development work on Canarese, Oriya and Telugu typewriters is at present in progress.

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## TAMIL FESTIVAL IN DELHI

NEW DELHI, Aug. 29.

President Rajendra Prasad today expressed the hope that "the different languages of the country will grow and enrich the rich culture of India as a whole."

The President gave an assurance that "there is no attempt on the part of anybody to impose Hindi on the south or to suppress any of the other languages of India." "On the other hand," the President said, "we wish them all prosperity and we wish them to grow and enrich the rich culture of the country as a whole."

The President was inaugurating the three-day sixth Tamil festival here this morning. The Vice-President, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan presided.

For a brief moment the Regal Theatre in Connaught Place where the function was held breathed the South Indian atmosphere. While on the one hand the nagaswaram was being played, priests on the other with "Poorna Kumbham" in their hands chanted the Upanishads in a loud voice ready to receive the President. These were features in the Capital unknown to the common folk of the North and naturally attracted a great deal of visitors. Earlier, there was a procession from the South Indian School to the Regal Theatre with Vidwan R. Subramaniam and party playing the nagaswaram.

The President, on arrival, was welcomed by Dr. K. S. Krishnan, Chairman, Mr. O. V. Alagesan and other members of the Reception Committee.

## PRESIDENT'S APPEAL

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, while emphasising the need for a common language which would bind the people from all parts of the country together, was sceptical of the success of the movement to have a National Hindi different from the Hindi



they all knew. What was really necessary, the President was that the various languages of the country should make their contribution to the Hindi of the present day, and should enrich the language which would ultimately not be a Hindi of the Northerners alone but one created, fostered and nurtured by all Indians.

The Central Ministers, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Mr. K. C. Reddy, and Mr. Jagjiwan Ram, and Ceylon's High Commissioner, Mr. C. Coomaraswami, were among the distinguished guests present. A large number of delegates from different parts of India attended the festival.

Dr. K. S. Krishnan, on behalf of the Reception Committee, welcoming the guests, said, "I have much pleasure in extending to all the distinguished delegates and the participants in this festival a very warm welcome. We have been particularly fortunate in having with us at the inauguration ceremony our revered President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, our great philosopher-statesman, Dr. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of the Republic of India, and His Excellency Mr. Coomaraswami, High Commissioner for Ceylon in India, who is a great lover of Tamil. I am sure that the festival inaugurated under such distinguished auspices, along with so many great poets and scholars participating, will be a great success. [We are indeed very grateful to the many distinguished delegates who have come from different parts of India and Ceylon.

"Festivals like the one we are inaugurating today, will, I am sure, greatly help not only in developing the languages, but what will be of lasting benefit, in developing in us a proper sense of values."

#### DR. PRASAD'S ADDRESS

Dr. Rajendra Prasad in his speech said : "I think it will be best for me to begin with a confession and an apology. The confession is that I am completely and utterly ignorant of Tamil and the apology is that I have not been able to learn it.

That apology is not only on my behalf, but I think I can offer it on behalf of all Northerners of this country. We have been thinking of having a common language for our country, a language which will be used for our national purposes. We are expecting and hoping that our brothers and sisters in the South will learn that language. Unfortunately I have not noticed any movement in the North for acquainting ourselves with the languages of the South. The losers are not the people of the South but the people of the North, and I only hope that they will soon realise the great loss which they are sustaining on account of their not being acquainted with the big literature that is enshrined in the languages of the South.

#### CONTRIBUTION TO RENAISSANCE

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, who presided, hoped that the deliberations of the Sixth Tamil Festival would give a great impetus to the work of Tamil scientists, scholars and artists, and others and thus contribute also to the renaissance through which our country is passing.

“The great charm of our country,” Dr. Radhakrishnan said, “is its diversity. It is also its main problem. From the beginning of our history our thinkers have tried to adjust and harmonise the different traditions which arose from the many different peoples of our country and make them blend into a happy harmony. Through interchange of men and ideals we were able to achieve a cultural solidarity which transcends the distinctions of languages and races. If you look at the history of Tamil literature, of Tamil archaeology, Tamil art, you will discover precious tokens of past ages, great memorials of the march of the human mind in this country. It reflects, so to say, the progress of the resurgent India. The earliest work of the Tamils, as Mr. Avinashilingam said, is the *Tholkappiyam* of the fifth century. It refers to Vedic codes which are identified with local deities. You find in the rock edicts of Asoka that he sent Buddhist missions not only to Hellenic potentates but also to the Tamil Powers. Early works like *Thirukkural* and others showed the enormous influence of Jain

and Buddhist thought on Tamil works. The Chinese travellers referred to Buddhist shrines and Buddhist stupas. They point out how some of the great works on Buddhism hail from South India. Bodhi Dharma came from Kancheepuram. Buddha Ghosha and Dharmapala were people from the South, from Tamil Nad. Later on great Acharyas, Saints—Saivaites and Vaishnavites—these have made a profound contribution to the growth of Indian literature. Their names are well-known throughout this country and even outside. We cannot say that Islam and Christianity have not left their mark in South India. In other words, the history of Tamils is a reflection of the history of the rest of India passed through different phases, Vedic, Jain, Buddhist, Hindu revival and Islam and Christianity”.

#### FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS

Continuing, Dr. Radhakrishnan said : “Let us not think that the Tamils are living merely on past inheritance. They have great things of which they can be proud even today. The contribution which they make to politics and administration, to science and art, these are very impressive and I will only say that the Tamil Academy will do better by publishing biographies of eminent Tamilians and also bringing out short series like the Lexicon series which the Oxford Press is bringing out. The Tamil Academy is giving a great encouragement to artistes, scholars and others who are interested in the revival of our culture. It is well known that the artistes are the unconscious legislators of mankind. They are the people who help considerably in bringing about a different climate of opinion which is fostered through democracy and which will enable us to live up to the great ideals which are embodied in our Constitution. We cannot help saying that throughout this country while ideals are proclaimed in our scriptures, and are embodied in our Constitution—they are great—we do not actually live up to them. The South Indian teachers have emphasised the truth of democracy in the Upanishad as “Thathwamasi”. It does not mean that men are equal in their physical form or psychological attitude. It

affirms the claim to equality of every human individual. Deep down in the human soul there must be a road open to all individuals to rise to their highest stature. It is that kind of spiritual equality which the Upanishadic statement affirms. You find a great Tamil work saying "One God and one human community", the community of mankind. Similarly another great South Indian teacher, Sri Vedantadesikar, has stated that the only test of civilisation is either you believe in God or you believe in human equality ; if you believe in these two things, you are civilised whatever may be the caste to which you belong. If you do not believe in them, then to whatever caste you belong, you are not civilised. These are the great ideals of human equality and brotherhood affirmed by the Upanishads and by great South Indian teachers. If today social relations are somewhat spoiled in South India, it is due to a lack of appreciation and lack of implementation of these fundamental concepts, which are handed down to us. It is possible, therefore, for our artistes, for our literary men, to produce a different atmosphere altogether and to see to it that the sense of equality is implemented to a greater extent in South India.

#### VITALITY OF TAMIL

Mr. C. Coomaraswamy, High Commissioner for Ceylon in India, who spoke next, said : "It is a great and opportune idea on the part of the Tamil Academy of Madras to hold a Tamil Festival annually for the promotion of Tamil scholarship and literature including music and fine arts and to hold these festivals in different places. Two years ago this festival was held in my own country and in my homeland of Jaffna, while I was here in Delhi. I think we should congratulate the Delhi Tamil Sangam for arranging to hold the Festival this time in the metropolis of India and bring home to the people of Northern India the richness and beauty of our language. The Tamil language is said to be one of the oldest in the world and some even go to the extent of saying that it is the oldest and sweetest in the world. The fact that it has stood the onslaughts of time and survived, retaining its purity, shows that it has a vitality of its own which cannot be subdued. But it

has had its own bad time. In common with other indigenous languages in India and in my country, it had suffered a setback on account of the domination of these countries by foreign Powers. The damage done in my own country may be said to be even greater than in India. Being a small country, the foreign influence was able to extend deeper into the life of the people there than here. I still remember in my school days the cry was for English and more English. The result was that our national languages were badly neglected and did not receive the attention they deserved. But with the attainment of independence we may look forward to a bright future for our mother tongue. In my own country Sinhalese and Tamil have been made compulsory in schools for children of the respective races and efforts are being made to impart even university education in their languages. I will not take upon myself to say anything on the possibility of complete elimination of English in higher education. But under the present policy, there is no need to fear that there will be any more difficulty in the promotion and progress of our national languages."

#### TRIBUTE TO THE TAMILS OF CEYLON

"Fortunately, in India the establishment of the Madras University had an encouraging effect on the study of Tamil and candidates from my own country used to go there for their studies and also acquired great proficiency in the Tamil language itself. It may be of interest to know that the first graduates of the Madras University are said to be Jaffna Tamils from Ceylon. We, the Tamils of Ceylon, regard the Tamil culture in the South of India as the fountainhead of our language since the greatest Tamil classic came from there. We still look to the great poets and writers of modern times to lead and to give inspiration in literary activities in the Tamil language. Even before we attained independence we have from time to time invited leading scholars and exponents of arts and music to visit our country and to give us the benefit of their achievements in their various subjects. -I have no doubt that this will be continued in the future.

"I may emphasise the fact that the people of Ceylon, though belonging to the two major communities, Sinhalese and Tamil, are of the same stock as the people of India. The Sinhalese are descendants of the people in India who went from Northern India and although their language is now spoken only in Ceylon, there can be no doubt that it was originally of Indian origin. They received the greatest gift, the Buddhist religion, from the great Buddhist Emperor, Asoka. The Tamils of Ceylon, on the other hand, came from South India and have always maintained the cultural and religious connection with the Tamils of South India. It may briefly be said that the Tamils of Ceylon form a permanent and indissoluble and living link between India and Ceylon. In this connection, I may be pardoned if I refer to certain differences that have been arisen between the two countries over the attainment of independence. I can assure you that these are only a passing phase. There is the underlying unity of interests between the two countries which will always bind them together. These differences were magnified and adversely commented upon due to misunderstandings and at the instance of vested interests for their own purposes. But your great Prime Minister and our own Prime Minister are very anxious to see that these differences are settled soon. It is fortunate that by their recent talk they have understood each other's position and appreciate the difficulties. I have no doubt that at no distant date, they will arrive at a settlement satisfactory to all concerned and the two countries together, hand in hand with a common culture and identity of interest will work for the common good.

"I hope the Tamil Festival will be held in different places in rotation and there will be many occasions when it will be held in different parts of Ceylon, and it will no doubt have a beneficent effect in bringing the two countries together."

#### VERY ANCIENT CULTURE

Earlier, Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, President of the Tamil Academy, welcoming the guests, said: "Our great



Indian civilisation is a mighty river formed by the confluence of many streams. Its rise is almost coeval with the birth of man. The earliest stream that could be traced back as near to the source of the river as possible at the present state of knowledge is the Tamil civilisation. Tamil literature reflects this culture and civilisation of the Tamils through these thousands of years. Among the spoken languages of the world, Tamil is perhaps the most ancient.

“The relationship of the Tamil language with the other languages of the world has not yet been fully studied. That it belongs to the group of languages called the Dravidian languages and that it is the oldest, richest and most highly organised of them is admitted on all hands. Researches have shown that the Tamil group of languages had once spread all over India. The language of the mountaineers in Rajmahal abounds in terms identified with Tamil. What is still more surprising is that names by which ivory, apes, peacocks, etc., are known in the Hebrew Bible are the same as still used in Tamil. Teak from the Tamil land has been found to be used in Ur of the Chaldees about 3000 B.C., and there seems to have been commercial intercourses between the Tamils and Mesopotamia about 4000 B.C. Tamil, consequently, has also a very ancient literature.

“The earliest literature now available is *Tholkappiyam*, about 500 B.C., the earlier books referred to in it and other books having been lost. Belonging to about the same age is the *Thirukkural*, about 200 B.C. which is famous for the very great truths it inculcates and so has been translated into almost all the great languages of the world. The Saivite and Vaishnavite saints and the great hymns they sang belong to a later age, namely, from about the Seventh Century A.D., while the great *Kamba Ramayana* belongs to the Eleventh century. Then came the age of the commentators and latter day poets and writers, until in the modern age, we have Subramania Bharati, the great poet of modern Tamil renaissance.



## CHARACTER OF LIVING LANGUAGE

“But mere wealth of ancient literature will not give a great place to a language in modern times. Language is a living embodiment of the needs and aspirations of the people, while in a large measure it also reflects the progress of the people. And so as a living language, it is essential that Tamil should be enriched with modern knowledge, in addition to our great ancient literature. It must have within itself the scope, ability and capacity for self-expression of the people in various ways; it should also provide aspects of knowledge including the highest sciences. The national movement and the freedom struggle have given an impetus to the development of our languages and the achievement of freedom has given the fundamental background necessary for their growth. It is with this great objective in view that the Tamil Academy was founded on the eve of independence in 1947.”

Mr. Avinashilingam Chettiar mentioned that the Tamil Academy was now engaged in the preparation of an encyclopaedia in Tamil and that it had been proposed to bring it out in ten volumes of about 750 pages each at a cost of about nine lakhs of rupees. After seven years of very hard and continuous effort, the first volume had gone to the Press and was expected to be published soon.

Speaking next, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan described the Tamil Academy as a multi-purpose organisation and said that the Academy had a duty to render to the Tamils scattered all over the world who were very anxious to get into touch with their motherland. India, he said, had got to solve the problem of integrating the various cultures of the country while preserving the individuality of each unit.

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