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TAMIL CULTURE

A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study and diffusion of Tamiliana

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TAMIL CULTURE ①

This Quarterly Review

THE EDITOR

IT has been for a long time the desire of many students and well-wishers of Tamil Literature and Tamil Culture, that there be some Review in English through the medium of which these subjects may reach the non-Tamil World, and reach also that class of Tamil Society which on account of various circumstances finds itself more proficient in English than in Tamil. Requests for such a review came during the writer's world tour a year ago when he met several scholars and persons of general culture who lamented the want of some means of contact with the Tamil world. In Japan, in the United States of America, in Ecuador, in Peru, in Chile, in Argentina and Brazil, in Europe, the necessity of such a review was again and again impressed upon him. Though he feels that such a venture should come from abler men than he, and from institutions more renowned and longer established than the Tamil Literature Society, the conviction that such a journal is urgently needed has made him undertake this task as a duty towards those who wish to examine the Tamil contribution to world letters and to world culture.

Nearly every generation during the last one hundred years has had a few men in South India and Ceylon who realised the unique features of the Tamil language and literature and endeavoured to have their enthusiasm shared by others. A good number of these men were foreigners whose appreciation of Tamil culture was all the more note-worthy because of their scholarship in Latin and Greek, and their acquaintance with European Culture. The judgements of Walter Elliot, Stokes, Ellis, Gover, Winslow, Caldwell, Pope, Vinson, have been of a most enlightening nature even though they did not have the benefit of recent editions and critical studies ; but the complaints they voiced in their day concerning the

neglect regarding Dravidian culture in general and Tamil culture in particular, may very well be made even today. So little has been accomplished in the meantime; so vast is the field that is offered for research and study. Dr. G. U. Pope wrote thus in 1910 of British neglect of Tamil Literature: "Although the very ancient, copious, and refined Tamil language is inferior to none, it is regarded by most people as the (probably barbarous) vernacular of a people living somewhere in a remote district of Great Britain's imperial possessions. Neither does our Indian Government nor do our Universities fully recognize the value of Tamil Literature; and so those who spend their lives in the study of the great South Indian classics must resemble man seeking for pearls under water.¹ One wonders if these words may not be applied here in India and Ceylon to the neglect that Tamiliana and Tamilology suffer at the hands of those whose duty it is to protect and develop them.

There was a number of Tamils themselves who proficient in the English language and familiar with European thought, sought through translations and critical studies to interest the rest of the world in their own literary and cultural heritage. Kanagasabai Pillai's *The Tamils Thousand Eight Hundred Years Ago*, Isaac Tambyah's *Psalms of a Saiva Saint*, Gnana Prakasar's unfinished Lexicon, the various issues of that excellent journal *The Tamilian Antiquary*, not to mention the scholars of the South like P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar and J. M. Nallasamy Pillai have reminded students at home and abroad of the hidden wealth that yet remains to be discovered in Tamildom. Our Universities, particularly those of Annamalai and Madras, have periodically published works that are most useful to foreign students interested in Tamil studies. But it will not be sufficient to consign Tamil studies only to Universities. Private institutes and private agencies must as well take up the diffusion of Tamil Culture. And that diffusion cannot hope to achieve success unless the centres of Tamil research set before themselves the highest standards

¹ *The Tamilian Antiquary*, No. 6, p. 3.

of scholarship. The more such scholarship embarks on comparative studies, the greater will be its benefit to the world at large.

There are dark and disconcerting obstacles in the way of a dispassionate appraisal of the Tamil contribution to the culture of India and Ceylon. An American scholar sent by the Rockefeller Foundation returned from India to America two years ago with the impression that the Government of India was not interested in any studies that would prove the non-Aryan origin of cultural trends and historical events in India. The activities of the Southern circle of the Department of Archeology have not been conspicuous in the Tamil country. Now that the Indus Valley has been lost to us (and that loss is probably more Tamil's than that of any other language) one would expect more intense work in Adichaynallur, in Arikamedu, in Kaveripoompattinam, but the Archeological Department lacks either the will or the means, or possibly is deficient in both. Similar complaints have been made by scholars with regard to the neglect of Tamil antiquities and epigraphy in Travancore and in Ceylon. The function of the research scholar is not to act as a partisan but to be a witness to the truth. It is fatal to scholarship when it is blinded by prejudice or made to serve the interests of a party. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*. Let the petty politician keep his hands off culture and learning.

The lot that has befallen Tamil is happily not the lot of the Sanskrit language. This other great vehicle of Indian thought is an Indo-European tongue. Because of its affinities with Latin and Greek, and German and other modern languages, it has received recognition abroad. Since the days of William Jones, and more recently, since the days of Max Muller, scholars in the West have come to a better knowledge of the characteristics of the Sanskrit language and literature. Vedic Sanskrit definitely antedates Latin, Greek and Avestan by many centuries, and displays the original Indo-European structure better than any other known tongue, with the exception of Lithuanian. On the other hand, there should be

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a better knowledge of Latin and Greek in India. Scholarship in our Universities, particularly in comparative philology, is woefully inadequate. Scholars in Tamil should be better conversant with the languages and literatures of the other "cultivated" and "uncultivated" Dravidian tongues, and of Sanskrit and English, if they are to make their work truly worth while. Comparative studies in Dravidian languages have not advanced far since Caldwell's time.

Because of its affinities with the North Indian languages, and because of the unique position it has held as a vehicle of religious and philosophic thought, Sanskrit holds a prominent place in Indian culture. Writers like Max Muller, Winternitz, Macdonell, and Keith have revealed to Indians themselves the treasures of the Sanskrit tongue. Tamil cannot expect the same amount of study or spontaneous interest on the part of non-Tamils for the want of such linguistic affinities. No heed has been paid to the observation of Max Muller himself that "Tamil literature hitherto has been far too much neglected by students of Indian literature, philosophy and religion."² Most of the pioneer work, therefore, that will cause interest in the rest of the world must proceed from the Tamils themselves. Some of them should be prepared, even at the cost of sacrifice, to acquire a literary proficiency in foreign tongues so that they may translate the Tamil classics into other languages. So far no translation of a Tamil classic seems to have been incorporated in a series of the world classics in English or in any other language, nor any extracts from Tamil poetry included in the anthologies of world poetry.

There is, however, in European Universities a growing desire to examine the Dravidian contribution to Indian culture. It is a relief to find that such research is popular among at least a few scholars in India. In the new series of "History and Culture of the Indian people", published by the Bharatiya Itihasa Samiti, the first volume entitled "The Vedic Age" contains a study of particular interest, and that is the study

² In *Prefatory Note to Hindu Manners and Customs*, 3rd edition, Oxford, 1905.

entitled "Race Movement and Prehistoric Culture", by S. K. Chatterji of the University of Calcutta. He says, "It has been generally admitted, particularly after a study of both the basis of Dravidian and Aryan culture through language and through institutions, that the Dravidians contributed a great many elements of paramount importance in the evolution of Hindu civilization, which is after all (like all other great civilizations) a composite creation, and that in certain matters the Dravidian and Austric contributions are deeper and more extensive than that of the Aryans. The pre-Aryans of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa were certainly in possession of a higher material culture than what the seminomadic Aryans could show". Again, while estimating the Dravidian and other non-Aryan contributions, he points out tersely that "In culture, speaking in the Indian way, one may say that over twelve annas in the rupee is of non-Aryan origin", meaning that more than three-fourth of Indian culture is non-Aryan and predominantly Dravidian. He proceeds to show that Indian food, the Indian way of thinking, the Indian counting and computation, the Indian marriage and religious customs, and Hindu worship and ritual are mostly Tamil or Dravidian.³

It is clear that the neglect of studies and research concerning Tamil India, can give room to gross errors and misleading judgements in the writing of Indian history and in the exposition of Indian Culture and Indian Literature. The peculiar characteristics of the Tamil language, its antiquity, its one and only declension and one and only conjugation, its classification of gender so unlike the Indo-European that attributes gender to inanimate objects, and even changes the gender of objects from century to century, its ancient and obsolete particles should arrest the attention of all those interested in the structure and the history of human speech. Tamil is as much a classical language and a classical literature as Greek or Sanskrit with this difference that while her ancient contemporaries have changed beyond recognition or been long regarded as "dead", Tamil continues to be one of the most vigorous of modern Indian languages, and perhaps offers the

³ *The Vedic Age*, pp. 151-165, London, 1951.

only example in history of an ancient classical tongue which has survived to this day and yet remains young as it was two thousand years ago. Dr. Winslow had reason when he wrote some decades ago : " 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 the Latin. In its fulness and power, it more resembles English and German than any other living language".

During the last fifty years a number of ancient Tamil works have been edited in print by that prince of editors, the late Swaminatha Aiyer. Knowledge about these ancient literary anthologies has not yet reached those who contribute articles to books of reference in the West. Hence their studies generally are confined to the Kural and the Saivaite and Vaishnavite hymns. The love lyrics of the Tamils, their Nature poetry, the panegyric and ethical poetry of the Puram anthology, the Tamil epics like *Silapadikaram* and Kambar's *Ramayanam* have not been critically studied side by side with the other masterpieces of the world's literature. There are few languages that can claim such a refined and classical a love-poetry as Tamil. Few literatures in the world seem to contain such a large volume of ethical and devotional works. And no other language seems to have been the literary vehicle of the poetry of so many different religions for in Tamil there are poetical works representative of the Jain, the Buddhist, the Saivaite, the Vaishnavite, the Catholic, the Protestant, and the Moslem faiths.

The Kural, no doubt, holds a unique place in the literature of the world. Suffice it to quote Albert Schweitzer, and his comparative comments on the Kural : " What a difference between the Kural and the Laws of Manu. . . Whilst the Bhagavad-Gita in a forced and chilly manner gives as a motive for remaining in active life that it is in accordance with the order of the Universe, the Kural justifies it—what an advance by the idea of ethical activity . . . There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of . . .

ledge that good must be done for its own sake. . . Maxims about joy in activity bear witness to the strength of the world and life affirmation present in the Kural . . . It has appropriated all the valuable ethical results of the thought of world and life negation. But in addition to this ethic of inwardness there appears in the Kural the living ethic of love".⁴ Just as the Kural merits even greater recognition, so does the Siddhanta philosophy, said to be choicest product of the Dravidian intellect.

* * * * *

The Tamils were also great traders and empire-builders. Warmington has written an admirable work from Western sources but an equally valuable work remains to be written from Eastern and Tamil sources about South Indian commerce. The sea ports of the then Tamil country, which included all the Malabar coast as well, were busy ports of call into which ships from the West sailed with their gold, lamps, wine and goblets, to return home laden with pepper and silks and cotton and ivory, and with the pearls of the Tamil seas. Teak from the Tamil country has been found in the ruins of Ur of the Chaldees, and peacocks and apes of the South were sold abroad as early as Solomon's time. *Yavanar*, or men of the Graeco-Roman world, established colonies and trading stations in the Tamil kingdoms, and were even employed as engineers, body-guards, palace-guards, and city-guards in the service of Tamil kings. Tamil Nad was perhaps the best known part of India to the countries of the West, and the Tamils developed a breadth of outlook as a result of their international trade. The sagas of the Tamil navies form inspiring records in Indian history since sea-faring was not forbidden to the Tamil people.

This expansiveness resulted in foreign conquests, in colonisation and in the establishment of empires, comparatively shortlived like all empires carved out by Indian dynasties, but of sufficiently long enough duration to admit of a perma-

⁴ Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development*, pp. 200-205, London, 1936.

nent impress on the countries that were conquered. Ceylon, Burma, Malaya, have all their tales to tell of the "Greater India" that the Tamils established. Today the Tamils are found in many parts of the world outside of the Tamil country. In Malaya, in Burma, in Indonesia, in Mauritius, in Africa, in the Isles of the Martinique, in Jamaica, in Trinidad, and in other countries they have left the stamp of their language and of their enterprise. That the Tamil people are industrious and enterprising, and immigrated in modern times to different parts of the world to earn their bread by manual work, need not lower them in the esteem of scholarship, or render study concerning their contribution to the world, fruitless. The superiority that intelligent men admit is that which is merited because of contribution to thought and progress and human happiness. By such standards the Tamil world may well be proud of its achievement, and in their long and unbroken history, the Tamils have deserved to be classed with the Egyptians, the Hebrews, the Greeks and the Romans.

We need not insist further on the peculiar features of the culture, the language, the history, and the literature, that will form the subject matter of this Review. To bring these to light, to make them available to as many people in the world as possible, is a duty that must be done in the interest of truth. To have had some glimpse of these hidden beauties and not to have shared them with others would be unpardonable selfishness. This Review therefore leaves the press with a mission to perform, and with the conviction that it must meet a long-felt want.

Western Knowledge of Tamil

M. RUTHNASWAMY, M.A., BAR-AT-LAW, C.I.E.

WHEN educated people in Europe or America proceed a decent distance in their knowledge of the culture of India it is of the Sanskrit language and literature that they think and speak. They have not the slightest suspicion that there are other languages and literatures with as ancient an origin or as high a cultural value. It is news to them to be told that there is a considerable body of literature that belongs to another family of languages than that to which Sanskrit belongs. They have heard of the Aryans of India; they have not heard of the Dravidians of India. But the Dravidians conveniently and compendiously describe and define a group of peoples that have played a conspicuous part in the making of the culture of India. These peoples belong to the south of India. And that fact introduces the peoples of the West to another revolutionary fact and that is that the history of India begins in the south with the Dravidians and not with the Aryans of the north as they have been led to think. The south is historically as well as geologically the more ancient part of India.

Of the Dravidians, the Tamils are the people that have played the most notable part in the history of India. The Tamil States of Chola, Pandya, Chera, covering with the umbrella of their rules the whole of the territory to the south of Madras—from Tirupathi Hills to Cape Comorin—the genuine Tamil country—trace their origin to the earliest centuries of recorded Indian history. The classics of Tamil Literature are among the earliest books of Indian literature. As a knowledge of the worth and value of Tamil culture is necessary for liberalising one's own education, an attempt is made to introduce readers in the West to these new and strange realms of gold.

The Tamil language belongs to the class of agglutinative languages with a grammar and syntax system of its own different from that of Sanskrit. Its literature also bears imprint of the genius of the people. A practical realistic, reason-loving people their literature bears these notes. Although like all the peoples of India, they have their eyes on the stars and are devoted to the world of the spirit, they have not lost their touch with the realities of life nor scorned its demands. Their literature can count works on religion and philosophy, their classics have had practical motives or historical origins. Thus the *Kural* is a work of practical morality though it is not without spiritual passion. It is a handbook of conduct for the man, the citizen, the ruler. The high standard of morality to be found in the teachings of the *Kural* may be ascertained from the following aphorisms :

Loveless natures, cold and hard
Live for self alone
Hearts where love abides regard
Self as scarce their own

To give pain to another brings ten again
Would you guard you from grief ? To another cause none.
Would you punish the man who has injured your mind ?
Oh put him to shame by your kindness and love.
Firmness of soul in man is real excellence
Others are trees, their human form a mere pretence.

Friendship with men fulfilled of good
Waxes like the crescent moon ;
Friendship with men of foolish mood
Like the full orb waneth soon.

Virtue can alone bestow
Bliss above and bliss below
Say, oh say, can man possess
Greater source of happiness.

The ploughman are the linch-pin of the world ; they bear
Them up who other works perform, too weak its toils to
share.

The world abides, for 'worthy' men its weight sustain
Were it not so, 'twould fall to dust-again.

Another classic of the Tamil, the *Silappadhikaram*, one of the major Tamil epics, narrating the story of a merchant prince and of the woes of his love-experiences, is a store-house of information about the life of the Tamils of those ancient times.

Lyric poetry is represented by *Pathupattu* and several other anthologies. The English translation of *Pathupattu* by J. V. Chelliah of Ceylon acquaints an English knowing reader with the delicate tracery of Tamil lyricism.

The wide-rayed sun that drives its seven-horsed car
Sank down and disappeared behind the hills.
The deer took refuge under trees in crowds.
And herds of cows that into commons crowd
Called out their calves. The bent-billed nightingale
Whose voice is trumpet-like called to its mate
From broad-leaved palmyras. The snake its gem
Disgorged. The *ambal* tune that herdsmen play
On sweet clear lutes is sounded here and there.
The *ambal* opened out its petals bright ;
The priests performed religious rites at eve ;
In wealthy homes bright-bangled women lit
Their lamps and well performed their evening tasks ;
The jungle men that live upon high lofts
Lit fires. The clouds around the hills grew dark.
Each jungle beast called sharply to its mate ;
And birds their ditties carolled loud.

Kurinchipattu, 220-236.

Just as the crescent in the western sky,
Which thy forbears adored, grows day by day,
So let the honour of thy victory grow
More in succeeding reigns. And as the moon
Wanes day by day in the east and darkness brings,
So may the fortune of thy foes grow less
As years go by. Though thou couldst paradise
Attain and eat ambrosia, being false,
Thou wouldst prefer to be sincere. Although
High gods and men of this wide earth round which
Lie roaring seas become thy foes, thou wouldst

Refuse to fear and cringe. E'en if the wealth
That Vanan stored in mountains of the south
Are given thee, thou wouldst not stoop to do
A wicked deed, as it would bring reproach
From everyone. Thou dost delight in praise
That comes from doing good. Thou hast no ties
With things that senses feel. May *maya* die
That much incites thee to the war, O chief!
There is but one great thing; I cannot speak
Of it. Thy widespread name be ever praised!

Maduraikanchi, 185-205.

In the realm of religious poetry the Hymns of the Tamil Alvars breathe a feeling for a personal God and the devotee's love for Him that strike a note almost entirely absent from Indian religious literature except in the later Vaishnava works.

The freedom of Tamil cultural development is illustrated by that remarkable phenomenon in the history of Tamil literature — the works of Fr. Beschi. Fr. Beschi was an Italian missionary who had laboured in South India in the 18th century. Convinced that the way to the minds and hearts of the people he came to convert to Christianity was through the language of the people, he studied it to such effect and became such a master in the use of it that he has left behind him a classic of Tamil poetry—the *Tembavani*—an epic poem on the Incarnation. It is considered to be such a classic that it has been the subject of commentary by Hindu Tamil scholars. He has been given by them the Tamil eponym of Viramamunivar. Fr. Beschi also laid the foundation of Tamil prose in the works he wrote for his catechists.

Not only in literature but in the arts the Tamils have made outstanding and memorable contribution. Their temple architecture gives them a considerable place in the history of architecture. The temples of Madurai, Srirangam, Chidambaram with their outstanding gopurams (entrance towers) their mandapams, their praharams (processional corridors) place them for their outward appearance on a line with the pyramids of Egypt while their architectural detail makes them

superior to their Egyptian counterparts. The stone-arched corridors of Rameswaram and the restraint of the Tanjore temple should attract visitors from the ends of the world. And the sculpture scattered in such generous profusion in the temples of Madurai, Chidambaram and Mahabalipuram (near Madras) testify to the human element in Tamil art, so also the paintings that have been recently discovered. The Nandi bull to be found in almost every Saivaite temple is an illustration of the realism, strength, and fidelity to nature of the Tamil sculptor. And his closeness to nature is revealed by the animal figures which prevail on many a panel of temple sculpture notably in the composition known as Arjuna's penance in Mahabalipuram.

In industrial arts also the excellence of the Tamil has been famous in time and space. The Tamils were great colonists and the ships they built to carry them across to Siam, Indo-China, Java figure large in the history of Indian maritime activity. The works of their craftsmen, their muslins, their ivory work, their brassware find their way into the markets of the world. The Tamils while not unmindful of the things of the spirit have not renounced material progress.

In recent times the linguistic patriotism that has been accentuated by the decline of English as the language of politics and education has served the cause of the development of Tamil language and literature. It is being fashioned as an instrument of expression of modern ideas. It is becoming the language of political journalism. Books are being written on economics and science subjects. Possessing a literature more ancient and more resourceful than Hindi which has been by a fiat of the Constitution of India declared to be the national and official language of India, Tamil is bound to react in new strength and profusion. One of the living languages of India spoken by 30 millions of people living not only in India but scattered in settlements all over the world, in Ceylon where they form a considerable part of the population of the north and east, in Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, Mauritius, South Africa, Fiji, Tamil is entitled to be known among civilized men. Tamil and the literature and culture of the Tamils must be made known to those that wish to know the best that has been said and written—that is to all men of culture.

Quotable Quotes

"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 the Latin. In its fulness and power, it more resembles English and German than any other living language."

DR. WINSLOW.

"The mode of collocating its words follows the logical or intellectual order more so than even the Latin or Greek."

DR. SCHIMID.

"Perhaps no language combines greater force with equal brevity; and it may be asserted that no human speech is more close and philosophic in its expression as an exponent of the mind. The sequence of things—of thought, action, and its results—is always maintained inviolate."

REV. P. PERCIVAL.

"I was informed by an American who was born in South India and grew up to speak its language along with his English, a man of high education and unusual gifts as a preacher and writer, that he esteemed the Tamil a finer language to think and speak in than any European tongue known to him."

PROF. WHITNEY.

"The Tamil language is extraordinary in its subtlety and sense of logic." "The perfection with which it has been developed into an organ for precise and subtle thought, combined with the fact that it represents a much earlier stage in the evolution of inflexional language than any Indo-germanic tongue, suggests . . . the priority of the Dravidians in attaining settled order and regular Government."

DR. G. SLATER.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

15

"The Dravidian peoples possess one of the noblest literatures, from a moral point of view, the world has seen."

CHARLES E. GOVER.

"It is one of the most copious, refined and polished languages spoken by man." "It is desirable that the polish of the Telugu and Tamil poetry should be better known in Europe: that so competent judges might determine whether the high distinction accorded to Greek and Latin poetry, if there were nothing like it in the world, is perfectly just."

W. TAYLOR.

"The Tamil poets use the genuine language of poetry on the subject of the divine attributes and the nature of virtue."

FR. BESCHI.

"I have felt sometimes as if there must be a blessing in store for a people that delight so utterly in compositions thus remarkably expressive of a hunger and thirst after righteousness."

DR. POPE.

Recent Progress in Research Studies

S. VAIYAPURI PILLAI, B.A., B.L.

RESEARCH in Dravidian Languages, though it is an unexplored field, has not attracted as many scholars as its importance demands. The Sanskrit language, on the other hand, is more popular with research scholars. The Dravidian languages, it is believed, give little scope for research. This is entirely untrue. The public is also fed with the notion that there is no immediate necessity for research to be done in this field. This is also incorrect. Let me just quote a few words from a recent author :

"Finally, and best of all, let the student observe the nearest available spoken dialect of his own mother-tongue, treating it with the respect due to a living organism and carefully protecting it against the intrusion of orthographical, literary, and aesthetic standards and notions of what is 'right' and 'correct'; his concern is with what is, not with what ought to be; words in a book are but specimens in a museum, the speech of the people is the living plant.*"

If Sanskrit research has attracted greater number of scholars, it is because it is studied throughout the entire length and breadth of India. Moreover, it is the earliest representative of the Indo-European family of languages and Orientalists of several countries in the West have devoted their entire lifetime to its study. To them, Indian literature means mainly Sanskrit literature. We need not grudge this honour to this ancient language. It is however good to remember that re-

* S. Vaipayuri Pillai, B.A., B.L., is now Professor of Tamil at the University of Travancore. He was formerly Professor of Tamil at the Madras University. We reproduce here his presidential address delivered at the "Dravidian Languages and Culture" section of the 16th session of the All-India Oriental Conference held recently in Lucknow.

* T. Hudson-Williams : A Short Introduction to the Study of Comparative Grammar, 1935.

search in Dravidian languages, which is equally important and necessary is a neglected field. We are in a measure responsible for this neglect, for we are generally lacking in breadth of vision. There have been no doubt, occasionally scholars of the eminence of the late Prof. Sundaram Pillai. But such men have been few and far between. We have also been ourselves neglecting our language studies. We have been systematically refusing to study Sanskrit and other languages and our equipment for research has been far from satisfactory. We have not sufficiently realised the importance of the study of foreign languages. Even in Conferences like this, we do not take sufficient interest, attend them in large numbers and partake in the discussions. It is high time to give up this apathy and enter heart and soul in the research of our language and literature.

Having said this, let me pass on to the first topic which I propose to deal with here. Since the establishment of research departments in our Universities, philology has been claiming considerable attention. Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaram Pillai, formerly of the Annamalai University, has brought out in Tamil a book on Roots, under the title *Adiccorkal*. It is largely a translation from Caldwell's Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Languages ; but this does not detract from its merit or usefulness. Dr. M. Varadarajan has written a Tamil work on philology under the title *Molinul*. He has studied many English works bearing on the subject and given us the benefit of his studies lucidly in a compact form. Sri M. Raghava Iyengar is preparing a work on the classification of Tamil roots according to conjugations. This, when completed, is likely to be of great service to students of philology.

With regard to Telugu, my esteemed friend Sri. K. Ramakrishnaiah, formerly of the Madras University and now of the Venkatesvara Oriental Institute, Tirupati, published some years ago, an important work entitled *Studies in Dravidian Philology*. Another work on comparative vocabulary under the title *Dravidian Cognates*, has been written by him during the period under review. This is very useful for a comparative study of the Dravidian vocables. For Dravidian phonology

also, this work furnishes a working basis. With regard to Kannada, Sri Mariappa Bhat of the Kannada Department, Madras University, has edited *Mangabhidana*, a very useful classical Nighantu. In Malayalam, a revised edition of *Lilatilakam*, a classical grammar, has been published with critical notes by Sri. Suranattu Kunjan Pillai.

While on this topic, I would like to draw your attention to one important matter. In the West generations of scholars have been devoting themselves to research in philology. They have studied almost all aspects of the subject and by their equipment, wide knowledge and scientific outlook, they have raised this branch of study to a highly respected position. Their method is essential for our research also. Lack of knowledge of their writings means loss of vantage ground. It will lead to results which will be positively harmful and we have to avoid this at all costs.

Closely connected with philosophy is the History of language. No systematic work in Tamil on the subject has appeared so far. Several years ago Sri. V. G. Suriya Narayana Sastriar published his *Tamil Moli Varalaru*. It is antiquated in some respects. Since his time some articles on this subject have been published in journals. In the introductions to some of our publications also we find this topic treated in detail. In Telugu and Kannada, however, some noteworthy attempts have been made. A History of Telugu language has been written in two volumes by Sri. C. Narayana Rao and it is said to be a monument of Telugu scholarship. The author was an indefatigable worker in Telugu linguistics and his recent death is a deplorable loss to Telugu Scholarship. Sri. N. Venkata Rao, the present Head of the Telugu Department of the Madras University has brought out a book *Bhasha Parisodana Prayoga Viseshanamulu*. In Kannada Sri. R. Narasimhacharya's book is small but suggestive. The History of this language has been studied by Dr. A. N. Narasimhaya in detail through inscriptions covering a few centuries and the result has been published in book-form by the Mysore University. Another important work on the subject by Dr. Gai of the Karnataka University, Dharwar, may also be mentioned in this

connection. In Malayalam, a few monographs have been written by the late Sri. L. V. Ramaswami Iyer whose untimely death is an irreparable loss to the world of Malayalam scholarship. In spite of some defects, his books are of real help to our students. Some others also have written on the subject; but they disclose a lack of scientific spirit. The nature of the relationship between Malayalam and Tamil has either been misunderstood or not understood at all. It is hoped that competent scholars will soon address themselves to this task and write a really valuable and comprehensive work on the subject.

Here let me enter a caveat against a tendency which in recent years is manifesting itself in a pronounced manner. In our eagerness to parade our patriotism in all its glory, we write and say things which are very far from truth. Facts are nothing, evidences are mere game-pieces on a chess-board and the only thing cared for is the glorification of our country, people, language and literature. We must resist this alluring temptation with all our might. This tendency defeats its main purpose and we become objects of ridicule.* Truth must be our sole aim and facts must guide our steps and govern our conclusions.

Next to the History of language, we shall consider what advance we have made in the history of literature. Here I must mention one important work which is in progress. Under the joint auspices of the Indian History Congress and Bharatiya Itihas Parishad, a comprehensive History of India is to be published in a series of volumes. The history of the several Dravidian literatures come in for a share in these volumes. It is gratifying to learn that the Central Government are interesting themselves in the scheme and I hope the volumes will all be available to the public in the course of a few years.

* Recently, a scholar (unhappily now no more) undertook to write the History of Travancore and began with the first principle that his country had never been conquered by any of the neighbouring States at any time. Any inscripational evidence to the contrary was held to be spurious.

No doubt this is a very important step. In fact it is one of the greatest literary undertakings. But in the nature of things, in a series of volumes whose main subject is the History of India in general, we cannot expect a comprehensive treatment of the history of our languages and literature. We must seek a different avenue. Our State Governments must sponsor the enterprise for such a comprehensive history. The Cambridge History of English literature may well serve as a model and on the lines indicated therein, a syndicate of scholars must co-operate and produce this comprehensive History of literature of our Dravidian languages. This is an urgent work and no time should be lost in its publication.

Tamil scholars are aware that MM. Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer has published three biographies (Maha Vidvan Meenakshisundaram Pillai's life, Vidvan Thyagaraya Chettiar's life and his own autobiography). These shed considerable light on the contemporary literary history. A similar autobiography of Sri. T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar has appeared and this also serves the same purpose. Some notices of authors and poets have been written and compiled. The course of the development of Tamil literature occurs in brief outline in some books of essays. Special periods of Tamil literature have also been made the subject of study in detail and such studies have been published in Journals. An instance of this is the *Kavya Period in Tamil Literature* by the present speaker. The late S. Somasundara Desikar of Madras University published the lives of the Tamil poets of the 16th and 17th centuries. A revised edition of the *Tamil Plutarch* with notes by Prof. T. P. Meenakshisundaram has appeared and this gives a brief survey of Tamil literature. A revised edition of Sri. K. S. Srinivasa Pillai's *History of Tamil Literature* in Tamil is also now available. Mr. K. Subramania Pillai's book on the same subject has undergone a second edition. A brief outline of the *History of Tamil Literature* by Sri. A. Selvanayagam of Jaffna deserves special mention.

It is very doubtful whether any useful work on Kannada literature has appeared since the publication of Sri. R. Narasimhacharya's *Kannada Kavi Charite* and C. P. Rice's *History*

of *Kannada Literature* in the Heritage of India series. As for Telugu literature, the only work that deserves notice, besides the joint work of Mr. Chenchia and M. Bhujanga Rao, is the *History of Udaharana Literature* by Sri. N. Venkata Rao. He is also responsible for *The Lives of Telugu Poets* from A.D. 850-1250 which is being published by the University of Madras. The late Ulloor Parameswara Iyer has prepared a lengthy history on Malayalam literature ; but it has not been published. I understand that the Travancore University which I have the honour to serve is making arrangements for its publication. Mr. R. Narayana Panikkar, B.A., L.T., of Trivandrum has already published 6 volumes of his History of Malayalam literature (*Kerala Bhasha Sahitya Charitram*) and the 7th volume is in the press.

History of Literatures naturally leads one to think of Literary Criticism. A few books and essays in Tamil have appeared on this subject. The *Kural*, the *Silappadikaram* and the *Kambaramayanam* have been the main subjects of study. The late V. V. S. Iyer's study in *Kambaramayanam* may be cited as an illustration. In other Dravidian languages also, a few works on criticism have been published. Dr. C. R. Reddy's work on the subject in Telugu is a notable contribution and in his death, we have lost one of our most brilliant men. Here I may make an observation. The majority of our literary critics in these languages have followed Sanskrit works and the capacity for progressive thinking is not sufficiently in evidence. Besides, the principles of literary criticism have not been formulated and discussed in detail anywhere. Such a work is yet to come.

Next we shall turn to critical editions of our classics. A work of outstanding merit in Tamil and of great importance to the Chola history has been published and that is the *Muvar-ula*. This edition contains an old commentary on Kulottunga Solan ula and a new commentary on the other two ulas. It is said that the edition was prepared for the press by the late Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer. Some of the eighteen didactic classics have been critically edited with introduction, old commentaries and exhaustive indices. The

Silappadikaram and some other works have been published with new commentaries. A complete anthology of verses on the Chera line of kings has been edited by Sri. M. Raghava Iyengar. The Saiva mutts, especially those at Tirappanandal and Dharmapuram, have issued cheap and generally reliable editions of some of the classics. The Tamils have reason to be grateful to them. We hope the enlightened heads of the mutts will entrust these publications to competent scholars who could make the editions more authoritative and more useful. The Madurai Tamil Sangam is bringing out critical editions of several prabhandas. These are, indeed, welcome advances.

The Government of Madras must be congratulated on the wise step they have taken in providing special grants for the publication of works in the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras and the Sarasvati Mahal Library, Tanjore. But it must be said that, in spite of the enthusiasm of the authorities of these libraries, the Tamil publications are far from satisfactory. Their Telugu publications appear to be somewhat better.

A notable Telugu work that has recently been brought out is the *Ramayana* by Katta Varadaraja Kavi. It is said to be the longest Dvipada work in Telugu literature. The earliest Telugu Kavya, *Kumara Sambhavam* of Nanna Choda Deva has been edited by Sri. K. Ramakrishnaiya for the University of Madras. In this connection Sri. Vavilla Venkatesvara Sastrulu deserves mention. I understand he has published more than a thousand works in Telugu.

Kaviraja Marga Viveka by Pandit Thimmappaiya and *Ramayana Mahakavya* by Prof. K. V. Puttappa are important landmarks in the History of Kannada literature. The death of Pandit Thimmappaiya and of Sri Manjappa Hardekar have removed from our midst two well known research scholars. In the Madras University, editions of two important works *Vardhamanapurana* and *Vishnupurana* are in the press. Among the publications of Mysore Government Oriental series, *Sukti Sudharnava* and *Singiraja Purana* may be spe-

cially mentioned. A critical edition of *Basaveshwar Vachan*, which throws much light on the religious and literary history in the 12th century has recently been edited. The Kannada Research Institute, Dharwar, Sri. Swamiji of Muragalnath, Dharwar, the L. E. Association of Dharwar and Rao Bahadur P. G. Halakatte are all bringing out useful publications and they deserve our congratulations.

It is sad to note that some of the editors have misconceived their duty. In fact, they have made unwarranted alterations in their editions and rendered their publications unreliable. A well known publishing society has issued an edition of *Nurrogai Vilakkam* and *Pratapa Mudaliar Charitram* altering the words of the authors in several places with the idea that they are purifying the language by purging it of all Sanskrit words. We cannot sufficiently condemn such editorial license.

I should like to say a few words here upon our editions in general. They do not compare favourably with the modern critical editions issued from the West. Even when fresh manuscripts are available, these are not utilised. In many cases there is no adequate introduction and indices are wanting. Variant readings found in manuscripts are not always given. These are serious defects. Hence most of our classics lack critical editions with useful indices and appendices. The collation of manuscripts must be done more carefully. In other Dravidian languages also such critical editions of even classical works seem to be a desideratum. Editors must bear in mind that an index verborum will be of great help in fixing the dates of old works, in distinguishing the several periods of literature, and in furnishing a basis for philological and lexical studies.

I have been referring to the collation of manuscripts. For this purpose collection of manuscripts is necessary and some institutions like the Oriental Manuscripts Libraries at Madras and Trivandrum and the Madurai Tamil Sangam are engaged in this task. But this attempt is neither systematic nor thoroughgoing. Proper agencies must be regularly employed for this purpose and the officers in charge of the Manuscript

Libraries must have a good knowledge of the literature of the language concerned. We should not forget that the Manuscripts are our national treasures and every care must be taken in their preservation. When once they are lost, they can never be replaced. I do not think that our Governments realise fully the importance of manuscript collection.

For some time past epigraphical publications are not making any progress at all. Inscriptions in several places have not been even copied. The department does not seem to function with any strength or efficiency. I need not stress the importance of inscriptions for the reconstruction of the history of our country.* Proper measures must be taken for copying them and issuing them regularly at a reasonable price.

The second topic I have proposed to deal with here is about the chief works that have been undertaken and are in progress.

Mention may first be made of the encyclopaedias in Tamil and Telugu. The Tamil encyclopaedia was begun on the initiative of Sri. Avinashilingam Chettiar when he was Minister of Education at Madras and the Tamil Valarchi Kalagam of which Mr. Chettiar is the President, was started for taking charge of the work. A specimen fasciculus was issued about two years ago. The work, I understand, is progressing. The Telugu encyclopaedia was also begun at about the same time by the Telugu Bhasha Samiti. The preparation of encyclopaedias bristles with difficulties. But let us hope that these brave attempts will reach a successful completion within a reasonable period.

* A. A. Macdonell in his *India's Past* (p. 250-1) observes:

"It must be evident that on a minute examination of the inscriptions begun more than a century ago, the ancient political history of India is almost entirely based. Nearly every other line of research, such as literature, religion, and art, ultimately owe much of their chronological framework to this source. Hence it is of the utmost importance that the Indian Government's Archaeological Department, which has been more scientifically organised in the present century than ever before, should not only be maintained, but systematically developed, because from its work must be derived nearly all the light than can in the future be shed on India's past."

Another work which has been recently undertaken is the publication of *Tirukkural*. The special features of this edition, it is said, are variorum commentaries with an exhaustive index of references in the several works and commentaries which have used the *Kural*. The utility of the proposed index of references is questionable. The Dharmapuram mutt has already published the first two sections of the *Kural* with variorum commentaries. There is no purpose gained in duplicating publications of this nature, especially because the organisers have to depend in a large measure on public funds and are still very far from fulfilling their main undertaking, the Tamil encyclopaedia.

The Tamil Department of the Oriental Research Institute, Madras University, of which Prof. R. P. Sethu Pillai is the head, is engaged in useful research works. A concise Tamil Lexicon is being prepared. A comparative vocabulary of the Dravidian languages is being published. Sri. Dorairangaswami Pillai, the Senior Lecturer, is doing research on "The Religion and Philosophy of the Devaram hymns". This is a very important subject and I hope the labours of this capable research worker will bear fruit shortly. Another scholar of this department, Sri. Purushottama Naidu is, I understand, preparing a modernised version of the ancient commentary on *Tiruvoyimoli*. This cannot be called research work of a University standard as it leads to no advancement of knowledge. We may take this as evidence of relatively unpromising lines of research pursued by some scholars.

The Tamil Research Department of the Annamalai University is reported to be preparing a history of Tamil literature. But no part of it has so far appeared in print.

Sri. M. Raghava Iyengar, the first Professor of Tamil in the Travancore University mainly confined his attention to a study of Kerala History as evidenced by Tamil literature. His anthology *Chera Ventar Cheyyut Kovai* in two volumes mentioned already is a useful publication and his *Some Aspects of Kerala and Tamil Literature* gives interesting information on several matters. The Department is now engaged

in the publication of a study of the Kavya Period in Tamil literature and of a critical edition of *Sendan Divakaram*, the earliest nighantu in the Tamil language. A critical and definite edition of Bala-Kandam of *Kamba-Ramayana* is also under preparation.

The third topic I have proposed to speak to you about relates to the preparation of certain urgent aids to research which must be immediately taken up. Here I shall simply mention them without going into details.

1. An index verborum of the Sangam Classics
2. A companion to the Sangam Classics on the model of *A Companion to the Classical Literature*, published by the Oxford University Press.
3. A concise dictionary based on the Tamil lexicon of Madras University. This, as already noticed, is now in progress.

There is much else to be done by way of research. Here I may indicate the several lines of necessary and urgent work.

4. A History of the Tamil language based on literature and Inscriptions.
5. A Historical Tamil Grammar.
6. A critical definite edition of *Kamba-Ramayana*.
7. Critical editions of *Silappadikaram* and other classics with short commentaries, introduction, index, etc.

Similar works may be undertaken with regard to other languages.

In order to carry out this programme, it is necessary that there should be co-operation between the language departments of the several Universities. Such a co-operation will ensure a healthy atmosphere in research and also enable us to avoid unnecessary duplication of work. Of course there are difficulties in the way ; but it is our duty to overcome them. Let us all work and co-operate in a strictly scientific spirit. Let truth be our sole objective. Let us add to the sum total of human knowledge by constant devotion to our appointed work. Let us be true servants of our noble mother-tongues. Let us be worthy sons of Mother India.

Ceylon originally a land of Dravidians

SWAMI GNANA PRAKASAR

The eminent Tamil scholar, the late Nallur Swami S. Gnana Prakasar of Ceylon, left behind a number of unpublished manuscripts. One of them entitled "The Kings of Jaffna with sidelights on the History of the Tamils in Ceylon from the earliest era" was written towards the end of his life. Chapters IV to IX of this work have not been found. This article is the first Chapter of the book.—EDITOR.

FROM the remotest times Ceylon was considered an appendage to South India. There was probably a time when both the countries were not separated by a stretch of sea. It cannot be doubted, at any rate, that the inhabitants of our Island, be they cave men or stone age people—originally came from or through the adjoining mainland. Certain paleolithic implements discovered in Ceylon point to men of an archaic type having once inhabited some part of the Island. From this fact one need not conclude that we have here members of a distinct human family on earth, nor that the early inhabitants of Ceylon were aliens to the aborigines of India. Polygenism or the theory of many human origins is now a thing of the past. All eminent physical anthropologists are at present agreed that mankind constitutes a single family tree.

The cave-men of Ceylon were not racially different from the Veddas still to be found in some jungles of the Eastern portion of our island and from the primitive hill tribes of India. Some European writers¹ have mentioned a late theory that the first settlers of Ceylon hailed from China. This was clearly built on the folk etymology of the word Chingala (Sinhalese) in which the first element Chin was supposed to refer to the Chinese. Tennent says correctly that

¹ Le Grand in his French translation of Ribeiro. Preface.

"the greater probability is, that a branch of the same stock, that originally colonised Dekkan, extended its migrations to Ceylon. All the records and traditions of the peninsula point to a time when its nations were not Hindu; and in numerous localities, in the forests and mountains of the peninsula there are still to be found the remnants of tribes who undoubtedly represent the aboriginal race. The early inhabitants of India before their comparative civilisation under the influence of the Aryan invaders,² like the aborigines of Ceylon before the arrival of their Bengal conquerors, are described as mountaineers and foresters who were "rakshas" or demon worshippers, a religion, the traces of which are to be found to the present day amongst the hill tribes in the Concan and Canara, as well as in Cuzerat and Cutch. In addition to other evidences of the community of origin of these continental tribes and the first inhabitants of Ceylon, there is a manifest identity, not alone in their popular superstitions at a very early period, but in the structure of the national dialects, which are still prevalent both in Ceylon and Southern India. Sinhalese, as it is spoken at the present day, and, still more strikingly, as it exists as a written language in the literature of the island, presents unequivocal proofs of an affinity with the group of languages still in use in Dekkan: Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam".³

From ancient times Ceylon as a whole, comprising the respective parts now occupied by the Sinhalese and the Tamils, was known by the name of Ilam or Ila-nadu (later corrupted by Europeans as Illanare) and the old language of the Island was also known as Ilam corrupted later as Elu. These facts should lead one to conclude *prima facie* that, at the earliest times, Ilam was occupied, at least in the main, by a Tamil-speaking people. This conclusion will be further corroborated if it is admitted that the original inhabitants of Ceylon were from South India. The tradition, handed down by Mahavamsa, that the Central Indian conquerors of Ceylon in the

² Queiros Engl. trans., p. 10. This author does not accept the theory. Whether the invaders were Aryan or Dravidian is an open question.

³ Sir J. Emerson Tennent: Ceylon, I, 328.

6th century B.C. found Rakshasas, Yakkhas and Nagas inhabiting the land, does not stand in the way of this conclusion. The three might have been distinct races, which is not likely, or the threefold distinction might have been based on the religion and habits of the three sections of the same people. We have a parallel to this in the caste discrimination of later times which rests on the exclusive occupations of the several groups of a race. From Indian literature the writers of Ceylon's early chronicles had knowledge of the three sections to which they considered the strange inhabitants of the Island belonged. Sanskrit writings often mention the Rakshasas as enemies of the Aryan people in human form. The Yakkhas (Yakshas) who are said, in the Vayu Purana, to have had the same progenitor as the Rakshasas are similarly met with as human beings. The story of the docile Yakkha disciple Alavaka who professed Buddhism is told in the Sutta Nipata, the oldest Buddhistic record. One gathers from the Mahabharata that the Nagas were wide-spread in India. They were a civilised section of the people of ancient India and no invisible beings. The Bharut sculptures represent them in complete human form, only with cobra hoods over their heads to distinguish them from others. It is possible that some people in Ceylon were marked off as Rakshasas on account of their high-handed ways of dealing with the foreigners. The Yakkhas would have got their name from their worship of demons and the Nagas from that of snakes. Even on the supposition that the three sections belonged to distinct races, the analogy of South India would justify us in tracing them all to the same Dravidian stock.

Scholarly opinion tends more and more to regard the Dravidian element in India as a branch of the Mediterranean race. Those aborigines who were once classified as belonging to a non-Dravidian, stock-wavy haired, long-headed, dark and, thick-lipped,—still surviving in primitive jungles and mountain fastnesses, are considered as an earlier Dravidian wave of immigrants from the same cradle of humanity around the Mediterranean. According to G. Elliot Smith, the Dravidians came to India from East Africa via Arabia and South Persia.

According to others, their homeland was Mesopotamia, the same as that of the pre-historic Sumerians, and their passage to India would have been both by land and sea. The earliest immigrants had acquired by age-long stay in India features approaching the negroid type, when later ones, with a higher civilisation and lighter complexion, entered the field and submerged the former by inter-breeding. This probably explains the divergent colouration and physical features in South India, where very little admixture with the much later Aryan colonists has taken place. With regard to the now less favoured theory of the indigenous origin of Dravidians, Gilbert Slater writes : "The logical alternative, that the Mediterranean race itself originated in India, is distinctly improbable, though it has been alleged by some Tamil writers that Tamil traditions indicate that the original Dravidian home was in a land that once made a bridge connecting Southern India with Africa, at a time when the present Indo-Gangetic plain was sea. The extreme antiquity of the Mediterranean race in Egypt, and the fact that it is to all appearances in much closer harmony with its environment in the Mediterranean basin than the Dravidians are in South India, seem to be conclusive."⁴

It is reasonable, then, to suppose that in ancient Ceylon successive waves of immigrants from South India mingled one with another in course of ages but they seem to have been all of the same stock and to have spoken some dialect of Tamil, for, in ancient India, we find no trace of any other language up to the arrival of the Aryans about the second millennium B.C. Mundari, said to belong to the Kolarian stock and spoken by some tribes round about Chota Nagpur, is certainly not so old as Tamil which still has large groups speaking its several dialects all over India and even beyond it, in Baluchistan. Isolation is a factor under which language may continue to preserve its identity in spite of the natural tendency, in all human speech, to corruption or development. And ancient Ceylon seems to have continued to preserve its own dialect of Tamil under the name of Ilam or Elu.

⁴ Dravidian Element in Indian Culture, p. 22.

In the absence of written monuments, have we any criteria to identify the Dravidian dialect used in ancient Ceylon by its inhabitants? There is one such criterion unfailing in its probative value when used with an open mind and with sufficient linguistic discernment. It is the evidence of really old place-names relating to the configuration of land, water courses and such other physical features, as distinguished from names connected with a foreign domination, new religious institutions, towns and villages. The former set of names remains the same from generation to generation even under successive colonization by people speaking different tongues. They never perish entirely but only receive a new twist or turn according to the genius of the new-comers who inherit them. This is what happened to many Dravidian place names in Central Europe and Western Asia which have stuck, during millennia, to old sites, mountains and rivers, as demonstrated by Clemens Schoener in his "Armalurisch"⁵ and other writings. There is no doubt that hundreds of Tamil place-names in Ceylon are pre-Sinhalese, that is to say, names which existed before the Sinhalisation of the original inhabitants of the land. We may instance just a few: Sinhalese *vata* 'garden' from Tamil *vaddam*; *dena*, 'land', from *tinai*; *vila* 'marsh' from *villu*; *kumbura*, 'jungle-field' from *kurumporai*; *ela*, 'stream' from *alai*; *oya*, 'river', from *odai*; *ganga*, 'river' from *kanku*; *gala* 'hill', from *kallu*, *goda*, 'elevated ground' from *kodu*, etc. The argument based on this fact will be best seen in the case of North Ceylon, occupied almost uninterruptedly for upwards of two thousand years by new Tamil colonists from India. Among them we still find the above Sinhalized Tamil place names. What does this show? This shows that before the advent of the present generation of Tamils, a Sinhalese-speaking people was in possession of the land, who had inherited those place-names from their Tamil predecessors and who gave them the Sinhalese form which has persisted throughout the centuries till today. It is clear,

⁵ Armalurish is a contraction of *aru* (river) *malai* (mountain) and *ur* (village or town). Schoener has given some 800 place names Dravidian in origin.

therefore, that those who occupied the land before the Sinhalese used a Tamil dialect.

This historical argument might be disputed by those who are unable to appreciate it. There is another less disputable criterion. The Sinhalese language is admitted, by all who have studied it side by side with Tamil, to be based on Tamil, or in other words, to have the syntactical structure of Tamil. We can do no better than quote from a Sinhalese authority says : " Language, it may be premised, is the medium for the communication of our thoughts, and thoughts are communicated not by isolated words, but by means of sentences. Language taken essentially is, therefore the sentence, and grammar is that science which analyses and explains the construction of the sentence. Scientifically, therefore, the determining factor of a language is not its vocabulary, but its structure, viz., that aspect of it which is concerned with the arrangement and mutual adjustment of words in the expression of thought ; and in this respect, it must be said that Sinhalese is essentially a Dravidian language. This is not all. Its evolution too seems to have been on a Tamil basis. And so we seem safe in saying that while in regard to its word-equipment, Sinhalese is the child of Pali and Sanskrit, it is, with regard to its physical features and physical structure, essentially the daughter of the Tamil language."⁶ Sinhalese is, therefore, a standing monument attesting the language of the original inhabitants of Ceylon. That language was Tamil, and Sinhalese which we know had its origin in Ceylon and nowhere else was built up with that language as its framework. We shall return to another aspect of this subject in the following chapter.

We saw that Buddhist writers of the Mahavamsa and other early chronicles of Ceylon described the aborigines as Rakshasas, Yakkhas and Nagas. But these very writings make us understand that, notwithstanding their alleged barbarism, they were a civilized people according to the standards

⁶ The origin of the Sinhalese Language, p. 13.

of their times. The Mahavamsa shows that the Nagas held, in the sixth century B.C., all the northern part of Ceylon known as Nagadipa and its west coast including Kalyani. They had some form of organised government with armies and strongholds. Their staple food was rice as we may gather from various passages of the Ceylon chronicles dealing with Vijaya's days. They seem to have had extensive paddy cultivation especially in the north-west of the Island, and it is reasonable to believe that the ancient Mahavavi or Giants tank was constructed by them. The Buddhist annals so loud in praise of many kings who built tanks do not mention this as the work of any of them. Parakrama Bahu's inscription at the tank⁷ may only mean that he effected some repairs to the huge reservoir. The extensive ruins at Mantai point to a large city in the remotest times. If the Naga population of Ceylon was derived from South India we may well believe that they were adepts in irrigation works the knowledge of which their forefathers had brought from their original home in Mesopotamia or thereabouts. The prosperity of the Naga kingdom of those days is probably attested by the existence of a large number of prehistoric ruins from Munisvaram in Chilaw, extending northward through Puttalam Pomparippu, Nenaddam, Musali, Mantai Kudiramalai, Kochchikadai and Kantarodai in Jaffna. One may gleam amid much guess work a number of well ascertained facts concerning contemporary Naga colonization in India from the early Chapters of Rasanayagam Mudaliyar's Ancient Jaffna. In spite of its general attitude of scorn and contempt for the aborigines of Ceylon the Mahavamsa could not conceal the fact that they were well advanced in civilization. It is there said that while the Naga King Mahodara was reigning in Nagadipa and his uncle Maniakkhika at Kalyani, Mahodara's sister's son, Culodara, was king of Kanavathamana which probably represents Kandamadanam near Rameswaram. If so, it is interesting to note that the island of Rameswaram had some connection with the Naga reigning House of Ceylon. For the Kings of Jaffna in their own day,

⁷ Chapter 1.

⁸ Parken : Ancient Ceylon, p. 250. cf. also A. V. de Silva : Ceylon's ancient History, p. vii.

claimed Rameswaram as subject to their rule. Now there arose a conflict between Culodara and Mahodara over a gem-set throne in Nagadipa. The story goes that while the two kings were fighting, with their vast armies, for the possession of the throne, which perhaps stands for the sovereignty over Nagadipa—the Buddha travelling through the air descended in their midst and reconciled the uncle and nephew by claiming the precious throne as an object of worship in his honour. As a result of his preaching on the occasion, eighty crores (800 millions) of Nagas embraced his doctrine. The fabulous figure in the story was probably meant to show that a large number of Nagas inhabited the north and west of the Island.

The Yakkhas occupied the centre of the Island. They had capital towns which they called Sirivattu and Lankapura. Before the legendary visit above related, the Mahavamsa says, the Buddha had made another aerial descent amid a mammoth gathering of Yakkhas in the Mahayangana on the right bank of the Mahavaliganga. With them, however, the Buddha had not the desired success. For, impelled by fear, they fled to the highlands in the interior and continued their ancestral worship of demons. The underlying idea seems to be that, in the first instance, a large section of the aborigines made some organised opposition to the spread of Buddhism. At this juncture we hear of the Sage converting to his path many crores of Davas—who were they? It is noteworthy that there is no mention in connection with the legendary visits of Buddha of another class of aborigines, the so-called Rakshasas. It might well be that the same section of Ceylon's population was contemptuously designated as Rakshasas and Yakkhas. The Vaipava-malai calls Yakkhas Iradcatar (Rakshasas) Mr. Brito⁹ comparing the acts ascribed to both Yakkhas and Iradcatar concludes that "there can be no doubt as to there being a close connection, if not an actual identity, between the Rakshasas of the Vaipava-malai and the Yakkhas of the Sinhalese."

⁹ Yalpana Vaipava-malai, p. viii.

The Yakkhas and Nagas retained their identity for a long time even after the arrival of the Central Indian immigrants in Ceylon. They were then gradually absorbed into the newly formed Sinhalese people of whom we shall see more in the next chapter. Under the early successors of Vijaya, we find the aborigines frequently employed in military expeditions. The rank of Yakkha chiefs was admitted by royalty. Under Pandukabhaya (437 B.C.) it is recorded that a suburb of the royal city of Anuradhapura was assigned for their residence. The King appointed two Yakkha princes for administrative purpose of whom one sat on a throne of equal eminence with him.¹⁰ Even in the second and third centuries of our era names of Sinhalese sovereigns such as Mahallaka Naga, Cula Naga, Siri Naga, etc. seem to indicate their Naga origin.¹¹ From these it is clear that the aboriginal population was not treated as a conquered race. The rulers from Bengal saw it was indispensable to "befriend the interests" of the permanent population. And although the new-comers gradually got the mastery by little and little, they were absorbed into the permanent population by inter-marriage, and the influence of the much larger mass triumphed in more ways than one. Tennent remarks: "Traces of the worship of snakes and demons are to the present hour clearly perceptible amongst them: the Buddhists still resort to the incantations of the 'devil dancers' in case of danger and emergency; a Sinhalese, rather than put a Cobra de capello to death, encloses the reptile in a wicker cage, and sets it adrift on the nearest stream; and in the island of Nainativoe, to the south-west of Jaffna, there was till recently a little temple, dedicated to the goddess Naga Tambiran (read Naga Ammal) in which the consecrated serpents were tenderly reared by the Pandarams, and daily fed at the expense of the worshippers."¹²

¹⁰ Mahavamsa, Ch. X.

¹¹ Cf. Ancient Jaffna, by Mudlir. G. Rasanayagam, p. 31-2.

¹² Vol. 1, p. 372-3.

¹³ "The Tamils Turn Singhalese", is the title of the second chapter which will be published in the next number.

The Theory of Cankam Poetry

T. P. MEENAKSHISUNDARAM, M.A., B.L., M.O.L.

CANKAM (சங்கம்)

The earliest poetic literature in Tamil has been for the last one thousand years, classified as "Cankam literature" (சங்க நூல்கள்). The Western world and its admirers, proud of the great French Academy, which prescribed and upheld literary standards, may be surprised to learn through this word "cankam" or academy, that, more than a thousand years before the academy grew up in France, there was an academy in the southern corner of India. An academy reminds one of a literary dictatorship; and stories are not wanting to show the existence of some such purist intolerance in Tamil. A verse describes a cankam poet Cittalai-c-cattanar, the Reader and the Censor, so to say, of the Academy, in his disgust and despair striking his correcting stile (iron pen) against his own forehead everytime he comes across a mistake in a book submitted for his approval. He does it so often that his head continues to be sore with these never-ending self-inflicted wounds, till, to his great joy and relief, he comes across the faultless *Tirukkural* (Tiru Valluva Malai). But unfortunately, it is not clear whether the mistakes which he abhors, are neologisms or ordinary slips, degrading tastes or breaches of grammar. There are, however, reasons for holding that this tradition expresses the poetic dream of the purists who revolted against the later day degradation. The cankams, by which name the great Buddhist councils are familiar to the students of Ancient Indian history, signify a democratic rather than a dictatorial attitude; and the literary cankam of the Tamil country can be no exception. In passing it may be noted that we hear of the Jain-Dravida cankam as well, perhaps as late

T. P. Meenakshisundaram, M.A., B.L., M.O.L., was Professor of Tamil at the Annamalai University.

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as the Pallava period, and this cankam forms into separate schools of learned men.

TOKAI (தொகை)

Cankam means, therefore, a gathering, an assembly, a union. The assembly is a living unity, amidst existing variety. It represents a community of spirit, not a blind uniformity of any pedantic academy. The idea of variety as well as community of spirit is implied therein. The Buddhist cankams and the Jain cankams, are much more homogeneous than the Tamil cankam, in which are found followers of conflicting creeds, the Jains like Uloccanar (Uloccu refers to the ceremony of sacrifice at the time of initiation into the Jaina brotherhood of the Renounced, when the initiate plucks away the tuft of his head and bears in silence the agony) the Buddhist like Ilampotiyar (Poti is a form of the word Buddhist) and Hindus like Nakkirar and Kapilar. The cankam literature is not one continuous epic or a series of narrative poems. It is nothing but an anthology selected from the various poets of the age. There are eight great anthologies (Ettu-T-Tokai: Tokai is a collection, a grouping or an anthology) each consisting of 70 to 400 verses, and a ninth, an anthology of the Ten longest verses, called the Pattu-P-Pattu or the ten Idylls. The Tamil word for anthology is Tokai. Gnana Campantar of the 7th century, looked upon by the Caivites as almost a divine incarnation curiously enough describes this cankam itself as a Tokai (அற்றன்றி அந்தன்மதுரைத் தொகை ஆகியனும்) referring to this bringing together of the poets as a momentous act of God. This beautiful expression, like the related idea of an anthology, emphasises the collective attitude rather than the academic decree. It is rather a democratic commingling than a tyrannic coercion. It is not, however, a mere log-rolling, it is a real communion. This represents the cultural climate of the cankam age, with all its rich variation and free growth. But it is not a confusion nor a wild vegetation. Libertarian is not a libertine. The libertine knows no liberty; he is but the slave of his passions. This free game, however, of literature has its own intrinsic rules and regulations laid

down or willingly accepted by the gamesters themselves. In the absence of any such mutuality how could there have been a game? Tolerance which bespeaks condescension cannot describe this freedom and harmony. There is here an intense reverence for the highest flights of human reason, imagination and ethical mysticism. The *cankam* is really a poetic fraternity of free souls. This kind of development of the group thought is universal in the ancient Tamil country, where the shivering grey heads assemble under the ancient banyan tree in every village to decide upon the common course of village action.

PATTIMANRAM (பட்டிமன்றம்)

In this connection a reference to the Tamilian institution of Pattimanram which unfortunately has not received the attention it richly deserves, may not be altogether out of place. This is referred to in the so-called Twin epics, the earliest epics in Tamil, *Cilappatikaram* and *Manimekalai*. From these epics, it is clear, that this institution is one of the main constituents of the great National Festival of the Tamil country which was celebrated with great pomp. Perhaps the "Vidvat Parishads", convened along with every public State function, are the last vestiges of this ancient institution. This reveals a wonderful vision of the ancient Tamil culture and civilisation. It has nothing to do with the promiscuous confusion and intemperate jollity usually suggested by the idea of feasts and festivities of a national festival. It is not a meaningless sight-seeing or cruel tournaments and bull fights; not a noisy concourse of vain humanity, but a philosophical feast and interplay of the wisdom of the sages. It is the assembly of the poets and philosophers, of the earnest seekers after truth. It is not even a debate of warring creeds and dogmas but the Parliament of Religion and the Temple of Harmony, with no overshadowing by any pride or prejudice, ever with its heart opening towards the rising Sun of Truth on the intellectual horizon. This occupies such an important place in the national festival that all the people are attracted towards it in a spirit of reverence. It is this earnest quest after

truth, free from all bias and prejudice, from all superstitions and prepossessions, that is the characteristic feature of the intellectual climate of the *cankam* age. It is not that there are no superstitions; but, they, never inspire people to quarrel or to become blind to truth; they are nothing more than accidents of life in its historical march.

THE UNIVERSITY

It is not philosophers alone who go about the Ancient Tamil land as conceived by this conception of Pattimanram. India has been a land of pilgrimage; and the sages and the seers, the bards and poets always play an important role in the spread of this universal culture, as is found even today in the various "melas", in various parts of the country. As is made clear by the opening lines of *Porunar Arru-P-Patai*, the bards and poets, the dancers and musicians, also occupy a prominent place in the festivals of the Tamil Country where these devotees of art, refusing to continue as parasites in any one village, after the festival, move on to other places of art festivals in every nook and corner of the Tamil land, as the great messengers of Art and Poetry. Thus, one gets a conception of the old university on heels or wheels, a mobile-university as contrasted with the permanent seats of learning or universities like the *cankam*. Madurai has continued to be the ancient seat of learning in South India, till due to the growing contact with the North, the centre of gravity of South Indian learning moves northwards to Conjeevaram. *Cankam* may, therefore, be looked upon as an ancient university rather than an academy.

ABSENCE OF EPIC

The *cankam* poetry breathes this spirit of harmony of varied outlook, in spite of, or perhaps because of, its seriousness of purpose, earnestness and sincerity. This spirit is very often mistaken for rank realism by some critics of the *cankam* literature; but this point will be discussed in its proper place. This harmony is possible because of the underlying spirit of equality, in addition to the feeling of fraternity in an atmosphere of freedom, already referred to. There is in the *cankam*

age neither an epic nor any longer poem of that kind, towering head and shoulders over the other poems. This absence of the epic is a symptom of the intellectual equality of the democratic cankam literature. All are equal in the eyes of the God of Truth, the man and the woman, the king and the beggar, the old and the young, the primitive hunter of the forest and the civilised minister of state, the Jain and the Buddhist, the devil-dancer and the sage—all are equal in the Temple of poetry, each in his turn offering the out-pouring of his heart—the very life blood of Truth. The poets of the cankam age come from all these groups.

POETIC BAPTISM

The poetic worth is the only thing sought after, all other paraphernalia are but outer trappings counting for nothing. The poet is considered great and his name is gratefully remembered. But the name is immortalised not for anything else but his poetic vision; he is remembered as the seer of the poetic vision; all else is immaterial. In this view of things, the accident of his name also does not count. There is, therefore, no attempt to research and recollect this accident of a name, should it be ever forgotten by the world. His beautiful expression immortalising the passing but divine, elusive but permanent poetic moment is looked upon as the quintessence of his poetic life and therefore is always remembered. He is more often than not baptised anew in this eternal fire of poetry and christened after a beautiful phrase he has himself woven. A poet is called for instance CEMPULAPPEY-N-NIRAR because he has used the beautiful simile of CEMPULAPPEY-N-NIR and a host of others are called in a similar manner after the phrases used by them. The name which means nothing is often forgotten but not this unique poetic personality so very well reflected in the ambrosial dew drops of his own literary phrase.

UNITY

The anthological character of the cankam literature is something intrinsic about it. It is a co-operative venture—perhaps an unconscious collective adventure in poetry. The

Tamil country is not blessed, in the Cankam Age, with a political unity, but the poets whilst singing of the three kingdoms of old, establish a cultural unity. *Tolkappiam*, the earliest grammar in Tamil now available, refers to the ancient monarchs of Tamilakam with their respective distinct emblems (Sutram 1005 to 1336) but yet speaks by implication of an all pervasive theory of language and literature reigning supreme in the hearts of the people. It is the universal outlook of the poets that makes their adventure succeed whilst the warring heroes and scheming politicians fail in those days. This emphasis on the unity of Tamil culture has continued all through the history of Tamil Literature. Cankam poetry, therefore, lives, inspires and gives directions to its history. Its universalism, its conception of brotherhood of man ("யாதும் ஊரே யாவரும் கேளிர்." "Every village is my native village and all are my kith and kin") breathes through the greatest poetry of Tamil Literature, in *Tirukkural*, in *Kamban*, in the eclectic poets from *Tirumular* to *Ramalingar*.

THE GOPURAM

In other literatures of the world and in other periods of Tamil literature itself, poetic greatness finds its expression in one great personality like Kalidasa, Kambar, Shakespeare, Virgil, or Dante. But in Cankam poetry, though the personality of the poet casts its reflection in his poem, it does not stand separate and distinct. All these personalities form into one unity, even as the waves of the ocean are one with its expanse. The great names of poetry all the world over live by the bulk of their poetic work—not by a mere bunch of lyrics as in the cankam poetry, however exquisite they may be—ushering in a great poetic form, the choicest gift of their invention and their art of variation, choosing a subject-matter recognised to be of universal importance and treated with imaginative authority otherwise called originality, giving through it all, their life message at once personal and of general relevance on vital and all absorbing aspects of human experience. These poets, as Mallarmé says, "Donnent un sens pur aux Nots de la tribu" (which Dr. Eliot translates) "Purify

the dialect of the tribe." "Such poets not only write poems that are felicitous in phrase and rhythm in which the diction seems exquisitely appropriate but they revive the very stuff of poetry, the language and speech rhythms of their day and country, they recreate the instruments they use and suggest to their contemporaries and to those who come after them new capacities in the language new possibilities of poetic expression." Cankam poetry is unique as the group poetry par excellence. It has a personality of its own representing the group mind and the group personality of the *cankam* age. Taken as a whole, it satisfies all the requirements of great poetry, enumerated above. The folk songs and proverbs of an age, with their authors unknown form a unity, as the very expression of the national personality and the language. Cankam poetry, though too cultured to be called folk song, consciously creates this universal personality and that is why it has been classified as a separate group in Tamil literature—the really great national poetry, not in the sense of national popularity but in the sense of being the voice of the nation in its origin. These remind us of the towering gopuram of Tanjore expressing the aspiring spiritual height of the Cola age, though it is not the handiwork of any one sculptor but the work of a group of artists, each giving expression in rock to a vision of his own. It is therefore necessary to realise the importance of this conception of *cankam* literature as a *Tokai* or anthology or group poetry which lies at the very root of the Theory of *cankam* poetry.

The Tamilian Ideal of Manly Effort

A. CHIDAMBARANATHA CHETTIAR, M.A., Ph.D.

ONE of the greatest ideals of the Tamilians, to live up to which people strove in the ancient Tamil country nearly eighteen hundred years ago, was to be active, to pursue some occupation or other and to earn one's own livelihood. Several evidences from ancient Tamil literature can be adduced in support of this statement.

A king, by name, Ko-perum Cholan, when he was on the point of renouncing the world, is reported to have spoken in the following manner¹: "It is only the idlers that wonder whether they should do good deeds or not. A hunter who goes out in quest of elephants is able to catch them too; but a hunter who seeks to catch a quail returns empty-handed. Anyone inspired by noble ideals in life will obtain bliss in the higher world; if he does not obtain this, he will not suffer from penury in his next birth; even if one is not born after death, one will attain fame of Himalayan height. So let everyone do good deeds."

With this message of that king, one is tempted to compare a couplet given by Tiruvaluvar,² "the Socrates of Southern India", which runs as follows: "To hold the spear hurled against an elephant, though it has missed its aim, is much better than to have hit a deer of the forest with an arrow". The same sage said in another place, "In all thoughts and deeds let the highest be one's ideal; even if it is not attained it will not have the effect of being thrust from one."³

A. Chidambaratha Chettiar, M.A., Ph.D., is Professor of Tamil at the Annamalai University.

¹ Vide *Purananuru*, stanza 214.

² *Tirukkural*, No. 772.

³ *Tirukkural*, No. 596.

He added, "Ill-luck is no disgrace to anyone ; but it is a disgrace if one does not know what to do and does not exert one-self".⁴

Tamil poets of old seem to have observed one of the peculiar characteristics of the panther according to which it would never eat any animal upon which it darts if the latter falls to its left. More poets than one have alluded to this trait in the course of their poems as a point of comparison for the man of valour or perseverance. For instance, a poet, by name, Velladiyanar,⁵ while speaking about a man who performed his duty, temporarily unmindful of the pangs of separation from his lady-love, compared his resoluteness to that of the panther which would rather die than eat the elephant that fell on its left side. Another poet, by name, Nalluruttiran⁶ observed that he would not befriend those whose efforts were like those of the rats that fill their holes with stolen corn but would be glad to be friends with those persons who persevered like the panther, which without eating the pig fallen on the left side would wait, though hungry, until the next day when it would pounce upon a big elephant, kill him, make him fall on its right and then eat him.

Another poet, Perunkadunko (who was an expert in portraiture of separation of the lovers) puts the following words⁷ in the mouth of the man who before parting with his wife stressed the importance of securing wealth : "They are not rich who squander the inherited wealth. Those persons who live on inherited property without efforts of their own to earn their livelihood are worse than beggars." The same poet remarked in another place⁸ that a man without self-effort is a body without life. Sage Tiruvalluvar said,⁹ "Nothing is sweeter than the porridge, though thin, earned by the sweat of one's brow."

⁴ *Ibidem*—618.

⁵ *Akananuru*, stanza 29.

⁶ *Purananuru*, stanza 190.

⁷ *Kuruntogai*, stanza 283.

⁸ *Kuruntogai*, stanza 135.

⁹ *Tirukkural*, No. 1065.

In *Kalittogai*, Perunkadunko again had occasion to commend the earning of wealth by self-effort. There he stated¹⁰ that with riches earned by one's effort one could do charity, one could win one's enemies, one could annihilate the opponents and one could enjoy marital happiness much better. In *Tolkappiyam*,¹¹ as some of the reasons that impel one to go out in order to earn the following have been stated : (1) Life is short ; (2) Manly effort is commendable ; (3) Poverty is despicable.

In *Narrinai*,¹² it has been stated that a Tamilian of yore crossed several mountainous regions including those of Vadugar (the northerners) with a view to increasing his wealth. In *Akananuru*,¹³ Marutan Ilanaganar alludes to a man who went in a ship several days and nights and reached finally a shore guided by beacon lights and then amassed wealth by self-effort. Karikala Cholan¹⁴ is reported to have invaded North India as he did not find any compeer in the south. Ceran Cenkuttuvan did not heed to the suggestion that for dedicating a shrine to Kannaki a granite block from the Pothiyil hills (in South India) could be secured and that it could be dipped in the waters of Cauvery (in South India) but wanted to go to the north¹⁵ and actually got a block from the Himalayan region, dipped it in the Ganges and had it carried on the head of Kanaka and Vijaya, two northern princes who opposed him.¹⁶ A Chetty, by name, Sathuvan, is reported to have gone abroad in an adventurous manner and to have returned with several gifts from an unknown land inhabited by Nakka Saranar¹⁷ after winning them over by his acquaintance with their language and dexterous speech.

When Sathuvan returned, his wife Athirai gave away several nice gifts and trinkets which he had brought. In fact,

¹⁰ *Kalittogai*, stanza 11.

¹¹ *Porulathikaram*—Section 41.

¹² Stanza 212.

¹³ Stanza 255.

¹⁴ *Cilappathikaram*, Canto V, ll. 90 et seq.

¹⁵ *Cilappadikaram*, Canto XXV, ll. 121-125.

¹⁶ *Cilappadikaram*, Canto XXVII, ll. 64-65.

¹⁷ *Manimekalai*, Canto XVI, ll. 56-125.

the primary purpose of earning was not entirely to enjoy, but to derive the pleasure of giving. Mention to this effect has been made in *Narrinai*.¹⁸

The desire of the ancient Tamilians to do their duty and to derive pleasure therefrom has been well brought out in a simile which has occurred in *Narrinai*.¹⁹ Here the lover compares the sweetness of his lady-love to the pleasure he derives on accomplishing the task he had taken on hand. From these examples culled out from ancient Tamil literature, it will be found that the Tamilians prized self-effort.

¹⁸ *Narrinai*, stanza 333, *Vanmai Vēndi Arumporutku akanra kathalar*.
¹⁹ Stanza 3.

Bharati—Poet of the Tamil Renaissance

C. S. RAGHAVAN, M.A.

I N a poem, *Moonlight, Stars and the Wind*, Bharati speaks of the secret of his poetry. "Here he comes, the angel of the wind, bringing to my ears the thousand and one sounds of man's life on the earth. There is the voice of a bell swinging towards me, a dog barks, a beggar cries piteously for a handful of rice, somebody slams the street door, from the east floats the wailing of a conch, men talk and argue and quarrel, a child weeps,—ah, who can count the notes that the wind brings? I sit and weave them all joyously into songs." Bharati never 'sat himself in a lonely place' like Tennyson's poet, nor was he one of those music-makers who seek 'lone sea-breakers' and 'desolate streams'. His place was with his people in the paddy field and the bazaar and to them he spoke: "Brethren, mute, deaf and blind, listen to me, I bring the healing word". To him as to Chandi Das, the Bengali singer, 'man was the highest truth' and reality itself was a flame in the innermost shrine of the human will, a flame self-lit and self-illuminating. This absorption in human life makes Bharati's poetry stand firmly on the earth. The poet looked around and saw the degradation and misery that political bondage has wrought on his countrymen; and from his agonised heart poured forth words instinct with life and of an amazingly wide range. He defined the ideal: "Here in our own land, we shall no more be slaves of the stranger, no, nor endure this living death". This is political freedom but of what use is it if it does not bring with it to the lowest among the thousand and one castes of Hindu society liberation from the age-long oppression of privileged birth and to the backward and the poor escape from ignorance

C. S. Raghavan, M.A., is Principal, Chidambaram College, Tuticorin.

The peoples of the earth into one love-knit band.
And then, the Mother's voice is heard :
'No, my poet, sing of Me'.

He turns to sing of rain, 'this miracle of the descent of
heaven's waters' but he finds that his words

stray away
They sing 'Victory to her!'
The wind and the rain, they are the Mother's play.

His very life-force sweeps him on to the uncharted sea. Once there, like the true mystic, he traces the chart of it on the earth. In his *Kannan Pattu* (Kannan Songs) and in the lyrics to *Para Shakti* (Transcendent Mother), he moulds a thousand symbols out of the common clay to express the ineffable. The great Tamil mystical tradition of the Alvars and Nayanmars is behind him and though he owes a great deal to them, the individuality of his mystical work is unquestioned. He does not leave the earth, to lose himself in the sky : on the other hand, he looks lovingly at the earth and finds the sky reflected in it. Plato spoke of Love as being 'the interpreter and mediator between God and man'. To Bharati, not love alone but all human relationships are messengers of the timeless. He uses them all as symbols of them with frankness, yet always with the power to make the pulsations of the earth beat to the flow of spiritual experience. The concretisations employed by earlier Hindu mystics, the body of *puranic* legend, are also woven by him into the poems. The result is poetry of a wonderful richness and suggestion, sensuous, passionate and yet shot through with spiritual travail and triumph. The many-coloured dome of life rises before the eye as the visible temple of the white radiance of eternity.

Bharati was a singer, not a writer of poems. Most of his poetical work has not merely the tidal movement of rhythm that all poetry has but the wave beats that mark the simple song. In fact many of his lyrics are set to music and sung over the length and breadth of the Tamil country. Also Bharati employs a language disarmingly simple, so direct and simple indeed that to translate him seems easy enough till one attempts it. Bharati works his magic with inflexions of the Tamil idiom and creates a shining interspace between word

and word clearly perceived by one whose mother tongue is Tamil but incapable of being rendered easily in another language.

This is the age of Bharati in Tamil literature. He was a pioneer in many fields of literary expression. He brought into being a prose that captures all the ease, naturalness and flexibility of the spoken word. He wrote short stories, sketches and fables—all of them of great merit. He attempted a novel. He has left behind a delightful bunch of essays, both 'loose sallies of the mind' and detached objective excursions into the realm of ideas. But his greatest achievement lies in the field of poetry. For centuries after the great epic poet, Kamban, Tamil poetry had remained practically barren. Large numbers of works were written in verse, no doubt, during the period but most of them were idle panegyrics of petty chieftains or clever artificial elaborations of erotic formulae. The few that were touched with sincerity and purpose were the works of saints like Pattinathar and Thayumanavar and these had breathed a chilling other worldiness alien to Tamil or had lost clarity and vigour in a cloud of pseudo-mystical symbolism. Tamil poetry had cut itself off from life and buried itself in ornate inanities, in religiosity and in theological hair-splittings, that is to say, it had ceased to be a poetry. It was in this flat, spiritless world that Bharati was born and by the time he died in 1921 at the early age of thirty-nine, he had accomplished a miracle. He had freed Tamil poetry from the affectation and pedantry of pundits, the religiosity of the *sthalapuranas* and the obscurities of arid, theological posing. He had it planted firmly on this earth, had fed it with the joys and sorrows of men and by securing for it sincerity and truth had enabled it in the only manner possible to reach out in its large, life-embracing sweep from realism towards reality. He had substituted experience for formulae, expression for ornamentation, vision for catch-phrases and iridescent song contours for dull word piles ; and the spirit of poetry alert and aware, was reborn in the Tamil land.

and want? And he sang :

*Freedom, freedom, freedom!
To the pariahs, the tiyas, the pulayas, freedom,
To the paravas, the kuravas, the maravas, freedom!
If there is no bread for one, even one,
We shall smash the world.*

Again the women of his land, dumb, unlettered, moving about as chattels in their own homes caught his eye and like Walt Whitman he became 'the poet of the woman the same as the man', feeling like him that 'it is as great to be a woman as to be a man, . . . there is nothing greater than the mother of men' :

*Praise be to the mother!
Dance and proudly sing 'Praise be to her!'
Ho there, beat the drum, beat,
Breathe life into the pipes golden sweet,
And your voices raise :
'Praise be to women, praise.'*

The political freedom that Bharati defines is thus synonymous with social equality and economic justice. In turning the minds of his countrymen to this ideal, Bharati employed all the capacity of a poet for mood and expression. He could be sad and moving like Leopardi, intoning a dirge over the glory of the past or he could speak of it in such rousing accents that the accumulated wisdom and strength of the ages came to life in the passing moment, giving it the irresistible validity of the eternal. He could lash out furiously at indifference, self-seeking and meanness, with a biting irony like Heine's. He could be assured and serene like Shakespeare's John of Gaunt, affirming with boundless faith his country's great destiny. In India's struggle for freedom, while politicians were fighting against the foreigner's law and statute and armed might, the poet fought the harder fight against the languor of the spirit. He gave his brethren the vision without which a people perish and the will without which a vision is but an idle dream. It is not surprising that, to the Tamils, Bharati is primarily the *Desiya Kavi*, the nationalist poet.

But Bharati is a poet, with all the poet's passion for beauty. 'I sing,' he says simply 'because I have drunk deep

of the ambrosial wine blended of the moonlight, stars and the wind'. But he brews the wine himself in the vats of his intuition and thus even the common crow, that clumsily moving dark blotch in the bright sunlight, is to him 'passing sweet to the eye'. His poems are rich with the sights and sounds of the earth—the red laugh of the wild flower on the ash heap, the swinging dart of the sparrow, morning light filling the grass land, 'a flood of molten gold, sweet as honey', the palm branch swaying and waking silver ripples in the moonlight, the long, long snake basking in the sun, rivers swinging down to the sounds of their own music, the tiger testing its voice in the gamut of terror, the friendly roundelays of birds, the fiercely glad tumult of the monsoon. Writing with his eye on the object and with an unerring sense of the emotive or picturesque detail, Bharati revived the ancient *Sangam* poet's fidelity to nature and yet in his descriptions, there is a fairy light, indefinable and elusive, a Merlin's gleam flashing the veil. It is not the beauty of leaf or flower, of the world of eye and ear that is of primary moment to Bharati. It is the spirit of infinite loveliness running like fire beneath the coloured ash of appearance that he touches; and in one ecstatic moment Beauty and Truth become one and we are made aware of

*a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the blue sky, and the mind of man.
And the round ocean and the living air,*

Strange as it may seem, Bharati, the poet of resurgent nationalism, the knight of the down-trodden and the poor, the singer of the beauty of the earth and the livableness of life, is a mystic. The very intensity with which he shared the joys and sorrows of his fellowmen and with which he sought beauty in all things lead him to the outer edge of phenomena, to the beyond. He is querulous, he fights against the current, clinging to the earth. 'I want to sing', he cries,

*'Sing and sear with a song
The sickness and poverty of the land;
Sing and forge with a song*

Dr. G. U. Pope – Tamil's Ambassador

REV. A. ARUL THANGIAH

WHEN non-Tamils write or speak of India, they think only of the country of the Ganges and the Indus and of the Sanskrit language, the language of Aryan culture. They have scant notions of the land of the Kauveri and the Vaigai and of the Tamil language, the language of Dravidian culture. If the West has some knowledge of the Tamils and their language, it is mainly due to the Christian missionaries from the time of that unique genius, Father Beschi, who said, "The Tamil poets use the genuine language of poetry; there are excellent works in Tamil poetry on the subject of Divine attributes and the nature of virtue".

In the last century missionaries from England, Europe, and America have done great service to Tamil and have declared to the world their critical appreciation of Tamil literature. In the 19th century the ancient Tamil language entered into a new phase of development in its history. One of the greatest names connected with the history of the Tamil language in the last century was that of Dr. G. U. Pope. Those of the older generations know his name at least through his famous grammar book they had to learn at school.

Grammar in an easy form

Pope's grammar was a favourite with the teacher and the taught. Dr. Pope made it possible for school children to study Tamil grammar in simple prose. Before his time all the authoritative grammar books were in the form of difficult poetry with scholarly commentaries, and were not meant for ordinary school boys. As early as 1848 Rev. G. U. Pope realised the

Rev. Arul Thangiah is Tamil Lecturer at a Teacher's College.

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need and brought out an easy catechism of Tamil grammar. In it, he combined the Indian and the European methods. The grammar was in the form of questions and answers and it had four parts including prosody. Afterwards he wrote a "Second Catechism of Tamil Grammar" for schools and a "Third and Complete Grammar of the Tamil Language". These books enabled Tamil students to learn their own language easily.

Tamil Handbooks for Non-Tamils

It was G. U. Pope's conviction that those whose lot it was to serve the Tamil people should know accurately the Tamil language, and that they should not only think in Tamil but that they should also feel in Tamil. Therefore, he wanted to help them to learn Tamil. Rev. C. J. Beschi, the greatest of the European Tamil scholars, had also done much in this sphere. Father Beschi was the father of modern Tamil prose and of dictionaries in Tamil. He was the first to write grammar books for Europeans who wanted to learn Tamil. G. U. Pope continued the work of Beschi in making Tamil known to the West. In 1855 he published his "First Lessons in Tamil" to enable the non-Tamils to study Tamil. After sometime, he brought out "The Tamil Handbook" for those who had completed the study of his "First Lessons in Tamil". One who reads these books cannot but be struck with wonder at his thoroughness and accuracy.

G.U. Pope's Work in Tirunelveli

This great Englishman, who has become dear to Tamil people, was born in 1820, came to Madras in 1839 and was in South India for 42 years. He began to study Tamil during the voyage and soon after his landing in Madras, he preached a Tamil sermon. His first years were spent in Sawyerpuram, a village in the southern-most district of India, where he won fame as a missionary educationist. He was a born teacher and a strict disciplinarian. He never spared the rod. He taught his students not only classical Tamil, but also, Greek, Latin and Hebrew. He was a good teacher of Mathematics. He taught his students not only during the day, but also from

8 p.m. to 11 p.m. The importance of the Sawyerpuram Institution was recognized in 1848 by the University of Oxford, which contributed a suitable library for the Institution. The buildings he erected for the school were of first rate excellence.

Text Books in Tamil

After ten years' work in South India, he was compelled by ill-health to visit England. On his return to Madras, he was sent to Tanjore where he worked for eight years. It was a memorable period in his life. He applied himself strenuously to the study of Tamil and consequently became a real Tamil scholar. He was always proud of the fact that he was a student of Tamil. Some of his earlier books including his "First Lessons in Tamil" and "The Tamil Handbook" were published in those days. As an educationist he never forgot his duty to the school children, and it is very interesting to note that he was the first to bring out a "Tamil Prose Reader" and a "Poetical Tamil Anthology" for use in Schools. In his introduction to the Anthology, he says, "Nothing like the moral verses of the Tamil poets are to be found in the cognate languages of South India". He also wrote "Little Raja's History of India" for use in schools. He also compiled a "Tamil-English and English-Tamil Lexicon".

His Work in Tanjore ends

When he was thus serving the Tamils and their language in addition to his duties as a missionary, he had to face an opposition which ultimately led to his resignation from the missionary society. "Caste Christians" declined to receive the Holy Sacrament, after their non-caste brethren. They insisted that distinction should be shown to them even at Divine Service. Rev. G. U. Pope did not yield to them; but the S.P.G. Diocesan Committee asked him to accede to the requests of the caste Christians. In a temperate but firm letter to the committee, he pointed out that whatever effect that caste might have in social and domestic circles, in the Church of Christ it had no place and that it was opposed to the spirit and teaching of Christ. The result was that he left the mission

and was cast on the world, a poor man with a wife and five children.

G. U. Pope, the "Arnold of India"

In 1858 he left Tanjore and the mission and went to Ootacamund where he opened a school for the sons of European officers and other European children. His school soon developed and drew boys from all parts of India. It became famous and was known far and wide. It turned out many well-known men for the Services, civil and military, and Rev. Pope was styled the "Arnold of India". After 13 years, he was asked to take charge of the newly opened Bishop Cotton Schools for boys and girls at Bangalore and he was the head of those schools from 1871 to 1882.

Pope represents Tamil in England

After 42 years of South Indian life, the great scholar went back to the land where he was born, but he never gave up serving the 'noble' language which he always loved and adored. He was Professor of Tamil and Telugu in the Oxford University. He served Tamil most in Oxford till his death in 1908 in his eighty-eighth year. During that period he worked day and night to make Tamil known in the West by means of his splendid English translations of *Thirukkural*, *Naladiyar*, *Thiruvagasam* and other works.

George Pope was born in a land where English was the language of the people, and his parents were English. But he came to the Tamil country before he was twenty and he was here for 42 years. His long residence in the Tamil country, his admirable Tamil Scholarship and his enthusiastic love for Tamil have made him one of the greatest sons of Mother Tamil. He went to Oxford and represented the interests of Tamil in England as an ambassador of Tamil by means of his translations of Tamil classics, his Tamil professorship in the Oxford University and his essays in reviews and periodicals.

Thiruvalluvar introduced to the English speaking world

His famous translation of *Thirukkural* was published in 1886. He had always tried to help forward the study of

Tamil, among both Europeans and Indians and his translation of *Thirukkural* had also this object in view. He was of opinion that such a code as *Thirukkural* could only arise among an essentially moral and noble race. That was what he claimed for the Tamil speaking people. He rejoiced to see the publication of his work which he had planned even at the very outset of his Tamil studies. The work must have cost him much time and labour.

In his introduction to his translation, he says many interesting things about the Tamils and their culture. He considers *Kural* as a book which has no equal in the literatures of the world. He asserts, "Old times are changed, old manners are gone and strangers fill the Pandiya's throne, but the Tamil race preserves its old virtues, and has the promise of a noble future".

"A well of Tamil undefiled"

He devotes some space to a discussion of the independence of the Tamil language and the words that are used in the *Kural*. Among other things he says the following :

"The *Kural* is composed of pure Tamil, that is with scarcely any admixture of Sanskrit. Whatever may be the original connection between what Tamilians call the வடமொழி and the தென்மொழி, it is obvious that Tamil is not a dialect of Sanskrit, but an independent language with a copious and original vocabulary, having clear and philosophical grammatical system, very highly developed, and in every respect equal to Sanskrit itself. . . . Tamil is the mother of South Indian languages. . . . Of this pure and primitive Tamil this work of Thiruvalluvar is the most finished specimen and may fitly be termed a well of Tamil undefiled. The very few words introduced from the Sanskrit are made to assume a Tamil garb under which it is very hard to recognize them."

Naladiyar in English

His translation of *Thirukkural* was much appreciated by the non-Tamils as well as by the Tamils and it opened the eyes of the Western moralists to the excellence of the ethical

system of the Tamils. Dr. Pope decided to give another book of this kind to the English knowing world and therefore, he completed his translation of *Naladiyar* and published it in 1893 with elaborate and useful notes.

'Tamils are the foremost people in India'

Dr. Pope was much impressed by the existence of books like *Kural* and *Naladiyar* in the Tamil language. In his introduction to *Naladiyar* he writes with feeling the following lines :

"Pervading these verses, there seems to me a strong sense of moral obligation, an earnest aspiration after righteousness, a fervent and unselfish charity and generally a loftiness of aim that are very impressive. I have felt sometimes that there must be a blessing in store for a people that delight so utterly in compositions, thus remarkably expressive of hunger and thirst after righteousness. They are the foremost among the peoples of India and the *Kural* and *Naladi* have helped to make them so."

Who are the foremost among the peoples of India? Dr. Pope, who lived in India for 42 years, answers the question in the passage quoted above in his introduction to his translation of *Naladiyar*. He had travelled throughout the whole of India collecting materials for a history of India. He was a scholar in South Indian Languages as well as Sanskrit. He knew Hebrew, Greek and Latin. He answers the question as follows : "Tamils are the foremost among the peoples of India". He answers another question also, "How did they become the foremost among the peoples of India?" "The *Kural* and *Naladi* have helped to make them so".

Pope's apprehension

He always had two objects in view as regards his publications. One object was to acquaint the non-Tamils with the rich treasure available in Tamil literature, and the other was to inspire the Tamils to apply themselves to an intelligent study of their literature. In the introduction to his translation of *Naladi*, he writes, "I am not without a hope and belief that such editions of their great classics may find favour

with some at least of the great multitude of young Tamil men who pursue with enthusiasm and fair success their English studies, but are, I apprehend in some danger of neglecting their own wonderful language."

Wonderful Literary Activity in old age

Dr. G. U. Pope was 73 years old when his *Naladi* was published. In spite of his age he continued his literary activity and he carefully prepared a scholarly translation of *Tiruvasa-gam* and published it on his eightieth birthday (1900) with critical notes on the Saiva Siddhanta system and Saiva religion. Dr. Pope himself gives a reason for the translation and publication. "If the Tamil people and the English are ever in any degree to understand one another, and to appreciate each other's thoughts and feelings regarding the highest matters; if any progress is to be made in the development of a real science of Hinduism, as it now is, our English people must have the means of obtaining some insight into the living system which exercises at the present day such a marvellous power over the minds of the great majority of the best Tamil people."

His appeal to Tamils

He appeals to his Tamil friends to study the religious poetry of the West. "It must be confessed," he says, "moreover, that I very earnestly wish also that my valued Tamil friends may be led to make the closer acquaintance of some of the collections of sacred poetry existing in English."

Let Tamilians cease to be ashamed of Tamil

In another place in the Introduction with his usual love for Tamil he writes as follows: "The speech of a dying people may perhaps be allowed to die; but it cannot be said of the Tamil race. Heaven forbid! Dead languages have great uses. "Even in their ashes live their wonted fires." Yet in many ways, the living tongues are better. One cannot tell what flowers may yet bloom, what fruits may yet ripen, on the hardy old trees. Let Tamilians cease to be ashamed of their language".

These words have to be said even today. It is very strange that there are Tamilians who seem to be ashamed of their mother-tongue. They have to be told about their language by foreign scholars like Beschi, Pope and Caldwell who had no hesitation to call Tamil a noble and admirable language.

Those who have not seen any of Pope's translation may be interested at least to see his rendering of a verse or two from *Thiruvasa-gam*.

"Him none by hearing know
He hath no kin; naught asking heareth all.
While people of the land beheld, here on this earth
to me a cur, He gave a royal seat;
To me, a dog, all things not shown before, He showed;
all things not heard before, He caused to hear;
And guarding from future 'birth', He made me His.
Such is the wondrous work our Lord hath wrought for me."
"Lo, I have seen His mercy's might.
See, His roseate foot this earth hath trod.
See Him, even I have known the Blessed one.
See, in grace He made me His."

Pope's opinion about the sage and his poems

It is worth the while to reproduce some of Dr. Pope's statements about Manickavasagar and his *Thiruvasa-gam*.

"It is impossible to read the poems without feeling that the sage was a sincere seeker after God. His own personal devotion and fervour of spirit made him an altogether irresistible Apostle of his faith. . . . He taught the people that there was one supreme personal God, no mere metaphysical abstraction, but the Lord of Gods and men. He also taught the people that it was the gracious will of God to assume humanity, to come to earth as a Guru, and to make disciples of those who sought with adequate preparation."

"In considering the poetry of Manickavasagar the Tamil student must feel its superiority to all the vast collections of the *Devaram*, although the authors of some of these enjoy perhaps a wider popularity among the Tamil people. Versions can of course give nothing but the very faintest idea of the earnestness and grace of the sage's hymns."

A long life of devotion to Tamil

At the time of the publication of *Thiruvvasagam*, Dr. Pope thought that it was his last work. "I date this on my eightieth birthday. I find, by reference, that my first lesson was in 1837. This ends, as I suppose, a long life of devotion to Tamil studies. It is not without deep emotion that I thus bring to a close my life's literary work". But it was not to be his last writing. He lived for another eight years and began to translate *Manimekalai*, *Puranuru* and *Puraporul Venba*. Some of his translations of these books have been published in magazines. He worked for Tamil till the end of his life informing non-Tamils about the greatness and richness of Tamil literature and inspiring Tamils to the study of their wonderful mother-tongue.

The present need

There is a greater need today than in the days of Dr. Pope to carry on the work performed by him. We are living at a critical period in the history of mankind. Peace and goodwill should be established in this world. It is, therefore, necessary that there should be mutual understanding between different peoples speaking different languages. The Literature of a particular people is the expression of the inner soul of those people. Those who have no idea of Tamil literature can never understand the feelings of the Tamils. The Tamil people should endeavour to know the highest thoughts enshrined in the literatures of other peoples and others should, as well try to appreciate the sublime ideas that are found in Tamil literature.

Our Duty to the nations of the world

It is unfortunate that in spite of the intrinsic worth of Tamil, its place in the field of world literature is not recognised and the Tamils have not done much to acquaint non-Tamils with the treasures that are available in their literature. The greatness of the Tamil Language is not even known to the intellectuals in North India. Three hundred years ago Kumara Kurupara Swamigal of Srivaikuntam (Tirunelvely District) travelled to the North India, and with the permission of the

Moghul Emperor, built a Mutt in Banares for teaching Sivaism and Tamil. Dr. G. U. Pope, who was not a born Tamilian, has done much more than most of us, and it is our duty to continue the work done by him and others. We, Tamilians, who are custodians of one of the best literatures of the world, owe it as a duty to the nations of the world, and may God give us the vision and courage to do our duty to our language and to the peoples of the world.

The Todas of the Blue Mountain

F. LEGRAND

AMONG the primitive tribes that inhabit the Nilgiris—one of the highest points in South India—the most curious one is certainly the Todas. They are easily distinguished from the other tribes by their prepossessing appearance, their physique and dignity of bearing. The luxuriant crop of hair, which is their pride, differs however but little from the unkempt hair of many of the wandering tribes of the Carnatic, except that it is oiled and combed. They are a fine-looking race, hardy, rather tall, though not so tall as the Badagas.

Outward Appearance

It cannot be denied that there is a lot of romance in what has been written and said about the Todas. Their facial peculiarities are not so marked as they appear at the very first sight; the absence of the turban, the way of cutting their hair, their long beards,—which some of the youngsters are now discarding to show their independence—separate them to some extent from the rest of the tribes of the Blue Mountains. But we cannot say, as of old, that their features can be described as European; the so-called Roman nose, or Jewish characteristic which some writers have attributed to them is a pure fancy. When they shave and wear turbans, as some of the younger generation actually do, they can hardly be distinguished from a Badaga or a Kotar, except by the dress,—the putkuli,—consisting of a thick cotton cloth, of coarse manufacture, which, when clean, is white with one or two red stripes or borders. They hang it over the left shoulder, and wind it round the body, so as to make it form a kind of petticoat, leaving the legs almost bare; then it is brought under the right arm, and the extremity is thrown backwards over the left shoulder again, leaving the right arm free; they

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allow the folds to fall gracefully down to the knees. This dress is, to some extent, resembling a Roman Toga—which may account for the explanation of some writers describing them as of Roman origin.

The women wear the same kind of dress, but it is merely thrown over the shoulders and clasped in front by the band; it is not so gracefully worn as by the men. The women wear also heavy brass armlets above the elbow; these are made by the Kotars, and called *Tolwadi* or *Tuwagi*; they wear sometimes two on one arm, the big ones weighing up to 3 lbs., the small ones 1 lb. An armlet made of the Nilgiri nettle fibre, bound with cotton thread, is worn as a buffer between the brass armlets. These armlets are never taken off except for repairs. They have necklaces made of beads strung upon thread made of the Nilgiri nettle: black beaded necklaces being called *kechwad*, the red ones called *nerballi*. They wear also silver bracelets, and silver rings on their fingers and thumbs; also in each ear, silver ear-rings, which they call *kafthriath*. Iron bracelets, called *hibbal*, are sometimes worn on the left wrist. Sometimes also, a brass chain named *thaggār*, is worn round the waist next to the skin.

The women are usually good-looking, with a clear and delicate skin, rather fair in complexion. Their hair is of a lighter colour than that of the men; they part it in the centre, carefully combe all around and throw it behind the ears, leaving it hanging free over the shoulders and back, in a mass of flowing curls. Their hair dressing is by far the most elaborate feature of their toilette; the curling of their ringlets on long sticks occupies a considerable time every evening.

There is a pastoral simplicity about the Todas, when they go with their herds in the fields and marshes of the Downs, which agrees with our ideas of a patriarchal community. There is something in their fearless manners and independent bearing which makes them very attractive. A Toda will laugh without disguise or restraint at anything that strikes him as ludicrous; they show no servile fear of anybody, European or Indian, and will answer the Governor or

the King in a frank and bold manner. This fearlessness may be due to the superstitious awe with which the other tribes regard them; the Badaga regards the Toda of the hills as a great counterpoise in the art of necromancy to the malicious Kurumba of the slopes. It is impossible not to like them, were it only for their independence and good-humour.

The fair sex is self-possessed to a great degree, contrasting strongly with the usual custom in India where the women are habitually shy in public; the Toda women, on the contrary, readily enter into conversation with strangers, and speak boldly to those who approach them. Generally great respect is paid to the old women, who are saluted in a peculiar way when met with. However, it is the Toda woman who salutes the man when meeting him, by raising his feet one after the other to her forehead.

Villages and Huts

The Todas are essentially a pastoral people. There were originally many villages belonging to them, and actually each *mand* possesses one or two other villages, to which they move with the buffaloes whenever they find it convenient or necessary to do so, to find pasture for their herds or shelter from the rains or cold. They do not cultivate any land. However, of late, they have applied to the Government to do so, probably owing to scarcity of grains. They depend for support mainly on their large herds of buffaloes, which is of a fine species, large and fierce-looking, resembling the buffaloes known in Mysore as *Chokatti* buffalo, which comes from the tracts along the Kistna river. They do not eat flesh, meat or fish, though some pretend they take it at times in secret places, in the woods. But they take the milk of their buffaloes, and prepare a kind of cheese and ghee out of it. They receive also from the Badagas and Kotars a portion of their field produce, the *gudu*, which may be equal to one-tenth of the produce. This *gudu* is paid to the Todas probably to induce them not to molest the other tribes, and partly also as an acknowledgment of their former proprietary right on the land. However, this custom is gradually deceding, and

nowadays, only those cultivating in the immediate vicinity of a *mand*, occupied or abandoned temporarily, are paying this contribution.

The Toda lives in a kind of hut of a peculiar shape; a cluster of five or six houses form a *mand* or village. One of these huts is always used as a dairy, or *pältchi*, which is also the temple of the *mand*, where only the guru is allowed to go; one or two smaller huts give shelter to the calves. The rest are dwelling houses. The following description of these huts is given by Dr. Thortt in his work: *Tribes of the Neilgheries*:

"These huts or dwellings form a peculiar kind of oval pent-shaped construction, usually 10 feet high, 18 feet long, and 9 feet broad. The entrance or doorway into this building measures 32 inches in height and 18 in width, and is not provided with any door or gate; but the entrance is closed by means of a solid slab or plank of wood from 4 to 6 inches thick, and of sufficient dimensions to entirely block up the entrance. This sliding door is inside the hut, and so arranged and fixed on two stout stakes buried in the earth, and standing to the height of 2½ to 3 feet, as to be easily moved to and fro. There are no other openings or outlets of any kind, either for the escape of smoke or for the free ingress and egress of atmospheric air. The doorway itself is of such small dimensions, that, to effect an entrance, one has to go down on all fours, and even then much wriggling is necessary before an entrance can be effected. The houses are neat in appearance, and are built of bamboo closely laid together, fastened with rattan, and covered with thatch, which renders them watertight. Each building has an end walling before and behind, composed of solid blocks of wood, and the sides are covered in by the pent-roofing which slopes down to the ground. The front wall or planking contains the entrance or doorway. The inside of a hut is from 8 to 15 feet square, and is sufficiently high in the middle to admit of a tall man moving about with comfort. On one side there is a raised platform or a pial formed of clay, about 2 feet high, and covered with sambre or buffalo skins, or sometimes with a mat. This platform is used as a sleeping place. On the opposite side is a fire-place

and a slight elevation on which the cooking utensils are placed. In this part of the building faggots of firewood are seen piled up from floor to roof, and secured in their place by loops of rattan. Here also the rice-pounder or pestle is fixed. The mortar is formed by a hole dug in the ground 7 to 9 inches deep, and rendered hard by constant use. The other household goods consist of 3 or 4 brass dishes or plates, several bamboo measures, and sometimes a hatchet. . . . Each hut or dwelling is surrounded by an enclosure or wall formed of loose stones piled up 2 to 3 feet high, and includes a space or yard measuring 13×10 feet."

The *mands* are usually picturesquely situated, commanding good views of the plains, or surrounded by rich woods, or at least backed by some beautiful single trees. All around them is usually a patch of green grass sloping down to the stream which supplies the *mand* with water, or terminating in a marsh where their cattle wallow.

Temples

In the olden days, there existed about hundred of these *mands*; but I doubt if twenty of them are actually in existence. Each *mand* has its own temple, which may be of two kinds: the ordinary temple called *pāltchi*, and the cathedral, or *Boa*. The *Boa*, of which there are only four, is a conical temple, in the form of a truncated pyramid, surrounded with a low wall. As for the houses, there is only a small entrance into it; and the priest alone is allowed to go in. This priest, who is usually called a *Varzhāl*, has to undergo a special preparation, which lasts several days; he purifies himself with the juice of a certain tree called by them *Tūr*, the botanical name of which is *Millingtonia*,—a very common little tree on the Nilgiris, possessing no remarkable properties in flower, seed or sap. The Todas treat this tree with the greatest respect, drink its juice and rub the bark over their body for purification purpose. The *Varzhāls* hold office temporarily, and wear only the *languti* during their tenure of office; they must abstain from intercourse with women as long as they are in

The four cathedrals or *boas* are:

1. The one called Manboa, at Muttanad mand, about four miles from Ootacamund, on the left of the Sigur road.
2. Kinezh, at the Tiriari mand near Sholur.
3. Tārshva, at the Tiriari mand on the Kundahs.
4. Mutterzhva, near Brikapatti.

Formerly there was a fifth one called Katedva near Mukkurti at Mudimand; it was in ruins, and is now under the water of Mukkurti Dam.

The *Boa* is usually 16 feet high, and from 30 to 35 feet in circumference down at the entrance; the inside diameter varying from 8 to 9 feet. The door faces the west. The interior is in two compartments, divided by several thick beams standing on end, the centre one reaching from the ground to the conical top.

The other kind of temple is the *Pāltchi*, which in outward appearance is an ordinary house, but larger. Of these, there are two varieties: the first is the dairy house, which every *mand* possesses; the second one is of a similar appearance but is considered to be more sacred, and the Todas call *Etadmand*, or great mand, (the Badagas *Muimand*) the village where it is found, in contradistinction to a *Buri* or common mand.

The *Pāltchis* and *Boas* are used as dairies; but the priests may live in the *Pāltchis*, not in the *Boas*, which are considered more sacred. The *Pālāl* is usually in charge of the *Pāltchi*: he is a mixture of an ascetic and an herdsman. He is in charge of the sacred herd, which is kept for his use at the Tiriari, an isolated mand, which no woman is allowed to go near. The *Palāl* is selected by the Todas for the priestly function and purified by special and hard ceremonies, which may last a full month. Once purified, he exerts a great influence on the Todas; they believe that God dwells in him, and they come to him for counsel: in fact, he is a kind of sorcerer, of whom Badagas, Kotars and Todas alike are afraid. These

Pālals are also in charge of the sacred bells, which they carry from mand to mand : a dozen of these bells are known to exist. During his functions, the Pālal wears but a scanty black cloth, specially made for him by the Badagas. He holds office generally for a period of three to four years.

Religion and Social Customs

The Toda religion is of the vaguest kind. They occasionally venerate the rising sun (Birsh), fast at eclipses, and sometimes prostrate themselves at the door of the Pältchi ; but very little is done beyond this. All the other sacred functions are performed by the priest, who acts in their names at the marriages and burial ceremonies. However, there seems to be a remnant of a more complicated ceremonial in the burial and birth functions. They exhibit a bow to which they give a name, and which is burnt at the burial ; this is rather strange in a race that is actually purely a pastoral race, and it seems to indicate that in the past they were also hunters.

Todas are not idolaters, yet are superstitious enough to have their lucky and unlucky days : this has a powerful influence in whatever they do ; thus Thursday, Saturday and Sunday are reckoned good days, some of them adding also Tuesday. If a person dies on any of the ominous days, the burial rites are deferred to the following good day. The ceremony on this occasion consists in assembling the relations of the deceased, who offer their condolences in loud lamentations ; after which follows a sacrifice of one or two buffaloes ; the corpse is then placed on the pile for cremation.

On the anniversary of the death (actually they wait sometimes for two or three burials to minimise the expenses), the whole tribe, in numbers, gathers at the burial ground, each one bringing a buffalo : there, a crowd of young men leap into the kraal or enclosure where the buffaloes are kept ; they seize one or two of them and drag them to the burial place or sometimes to the temple, where they kill them by one blow inflicted between the horns from the back of an axe. A more complicated ritual is described at length in J. W. Brecks : " An

Account of the Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the Nilagiris," published in London in 1873. Brecks distinguishes the green funeral that takes place immediately after the death, and the dry funeral, which is celebrated at the anniversary. At both these funerals, the Kotar musicians are in attendance, and crowds of Badagas and other natives come to witness the ceremony. After the slaughter of the buffaloes, their flesh is given to the Kotars who eat it, leaving the hides to the Todas who use them as beds, when clean and dressed.

The Todas have no formal rites of marriage ; they arrange their alliances by reciprocal choice. The boy goes to the girl's house and salutes his future father-in-law by lifting the feet of the latter to his forehead. They exchange a couple of buffaloes. When the time is come to claim his wife, the young man goes alone to the mand of the father-in-law, who gives him the girl, and a separate house to live in for a few days. After a further exchange of buffaloes, the bride is taken home. When arrived at the house of her husband, the bride is obliged, in case he has brothers, to acknowledge them as husbands, and to render them the services and submission due from a wife. She is allowed by their laws to choose also an individual from a separate family as a gallant, who has discretionary power over her ; in case the young woman should be at the house of one of her husbands, and the *coombhal*,—as he is called—arrives, the husband immediately retires, and leaves her to his embraces.

In spite of this promiscuity, the Todas live very peacefully together. The thought that they use to practise female infanticide is now abandoned ; the fact that more men than women exist among them may be due to the kind of polyandry they are practising, when a woman is common to a plurality of husbands. However, in some settlements which I have personally visited, I noticed that among the actual generation, more girls seem to be born than boys.

The names of the girls are frequently ending in a syllable which seems to be pronounced *buff* or *puff* (perhaps meaning flower),, such as, Ijabuff, Sindaribuff, Seimelibuff. Many of

the boys' names end in *gud* or *god*, such as Koduvagod, Akirigod, Betmangod.

Language

I shall add a word about the language of the Todas. In the last chapter of Colonel Marshall's book : " A Phrenologist among the Todas ", published in London in 1873, Rev. Pope gives an outline of Toda Grammar. He thinks it probable that the language of the tribe is a dialect of Old Kanarese. The Todas have more sounds than any other Dravidian dialect, and some of these sounds, such as *rz*, *ff*, are quite peculiar to them. The *f* especially is pronounced full and clear, unlike in the other Dravidian languages where it is usually transformed into *p*. Rev. Pope is of opinion that this language was once highly inflectional, but it has now dwindled down to a mere skeleton, barely enough for use. He thinks that it is a kind of old Kanarese, and that the Todas are immigrants from the Mysore plateau, having come to the Nilgiris about 800 years ago.

There is no doubt that many words of Kanarese origin can be traced in their language, when they speak with the other tribes especially ; these words may be accounted for by their long intercourse with the Badagas who are of Kanarese stock. However, it is a fact, that, when the Todas speak between themselves, nobody else can understand what they say, which fact would be difficult to explain, were the language of the same family as that of the other tribes, even in a remote way. Moreover, many words of quite common use, cannot be traced to any other language of the neighbourhood. Thus :

mituf, a nose	ētud, big
varsh, a young man	kirud, small
kukh, a woman	birsh, cold
mosht, axe	ākh, no
ēsht, a made buffalo	ākhadi,, not
pūf, insect	kekhui, near
kandaf, a pace	birnd, suddenly
ārsh, house, room	ani then
tuar, village-wall	etwan
tuel, cattle-pen.	makā, to-morrow.

Such and other names I cannot trace to the Dravidian languages. The names of the days of the week can in part be traced to Kanarese and Sanskrit :

Sunday : asvom	(Vom = vāram, in Sanskrit)
Monday : tuvom	
Tuesday : am	
Wednesday : budavom	(buda = Mercury)
Thursday : tam	
Friday : bellivom	(belli = silver, Venus)
Saturday : thanivom	(thani = sani, Saturn)

Another peculiarity of the Toda language, which cannot be accounted for when compared only with Dravidian languages, is the names given to their mands, temples and bells. Names like Marialf, Kyadf, Tervalth, Torialdf, Manboa, Tilthboa, Nirzh, Muderzhva, Terpivor, etc., are impossible to explain.

Conclusion

After a careful consideration, I personally am of opinion that the Todas are altogether a different race from the Dravidians. Perhaps, they are a remainder of the former Nagas of the old Tamil and Sanskrit literature. The Todas themselves used to say at the time of the discovery of the Nilgiris, more than a century ago, that the cromlechs, barrows, old villages and sculptures found scattered on the hills, had not been erected by their ancestors, but were built by the Boopalans, the predecessors of their race. They seem to recognize that they are not the first inhabitants of these Hills. Some go on saying that they came from the jungle tract of inferior hills situated between the Kanarese and Tamil districts, in the direction of Hōsanūr Pass, in the Eastern Ghats. I rather think that they came from the West Coast. Many of their customs resemble those of the Malayalis, and the position of their mands, which are mostly in the western uplands of the plateau, whilst some are even in the Wynad, seem to lend colour to the view that the country of their origin lay to the west of the Nilgiris, and not to the north or east. A few of their customs seem to resemble those of the Kōl and Mundah tribes. There is a great similarity in their funeral rites with those of the Mundah Kōls of

a few years ago in the study of a dynasty of rulers called 'Irukkuvēls', who ruling from Kodumbālūr—a small place today about 12 miles from the Railway station of Pudukkottai—became the first historical rulers of this region, that I stumbled upon a few indications that could possibly throw much light on its early history. Of them two or three sources appeared to me as very important. They are the dolmens, rock-cut temples and caverns and the finds of Roman coins that are particularly numerous in this part of the country.

In this article I propose to deal with the dolmens. In his lecture on the "*Stone Age in India*", Mr. P. T. Srinivāsa Iyengār said as early as 1925 : "The best district for the study of the burial customs of the neolithic man is the Pudukkottai State."² Such is the large number of ancient burial sites to be seen in this region extending for miles in continuity very close to the modern town of Pudukkottai, that there can be no doubt that the area must have been one of the most densely populated regions in ancient times. They reveal in the first place interesting customs of burials that were in vogue in olden days ; and a study of them would suggest that the common custom of burning the dead on the funeral pyre now in vogue all over India particularly among the Hindus is a comparatively recent one having in view the long periods of time before the Aryan advent when customs other than burning were practised.

Excavations in the Pudukkottai region revealed mainly three types of burials : (a) grave burials, (b) burials in urns or pots and (c) burials in stone-built chambers with elaborate stone coverings.

Mr. K. Venkatarangam Rāju, Curator of the Pudukkottai museum, excavated as early as 1917 several cases of urn-burials at TIRUKKATTALAI, NILAYAMPATTI, MOT-TAIMALAI, and ARANIPATTI. They contained burial urns varying in size, the largest measuring 4' in height and 3' 6" in diameter ; while one excavation made at TIRUPPUR (KOLATTUR Tk.) in 1938 revealed an urn as high as 6'.

² *Stone Age in India*, p. 41.

Dead men seem to have been placed in pots in a sitting posture and buried in pits covered with grain and sand, with trays containing grain and a few of the tools used by them while in life placed all around the urn. The burial urn itself was covered with sand and the whole pit with a large oval stone slab. That there was a custom of placing in the pit even the ornaments of the deceased was seen in a few excavations, in which bracelets, chank-shells, nose-rings and glass beads with holes for the string to pass through were found. In some places iron swords, daggers, spear heads, and arrow heads, were planted round the urns with their points to the ground. In some places stone implements also were seen along with iron ones.

Of the third type of burials known as megalithic dolmens more than 60 were excavated by Mr. Raju between the year 1934-35 at SITTANAVASAL, ARANIPATTI, SURANDAPATTI, TACHANPATTI and TODAIYŪR and at MUTTUKĀDU, KĀLIYAPATTI, KĀLAKKUDIPATTI, and TIRUPŪR in 1938.³ These are elaborate burial constructions known to archaeologists as cists or kistvaena. They are enclosed by circles usually varying from 18' to 23' in diameter and within the circle the boulders demarcating the burial place rise above the burial ground to a height of 2' to 3'. Excavating below two to three feet, the excavator comes upon regular stone cells, each of which consists of usually two chambers, the main and the outer one, the latter being roughly of half the size of the main one, which in this region measures 8' square and 7' deep. The larger chamber is divided into two, one of which is further divided into two, an upper and a lower chamber. The dead person was possibly sent in through a hole bored in the outer wall. All the chambers were covered for 3' from the ground level with sand and with sand and lime from that level to the bottom which was nicely paved with stone. Weapons, earthenware pots, iron and bronze vessels are found only at a depth of 4' to 5' from the ground level.

³ See for the list *Pudukkōttai Manual*, Vol. I, Chap. XXII.

Nagpur the Larkā Kōls have the same singular law of inheritance, by which the house becomes the property of the youngest son. We must recognise in them the traces of a formerly higher culture ; but, owing to their long isolation this culture has now nearly disappeared from the surface, leaving us in the doubt as to their origin and history.

Dolmens in Pudukottai Region

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

THE old State of Pudukkottai was made into a separate political unit by the amalgamation of the two independent principalities of Pudukkottai and Kolattur, and was constituted a Native State ruled by the great Tondaiman rulers about the year 1750 A.D. Its geographical position in S. India is marked by $1^{\circ} 7'$ and $11^{\circ} 4' N.$ latitude and $78^{\circ} 25'$ and $79^{\circ} 12' E.$ longitude and it is bounded by the modern districts of Ramnad in the South, Tanjore in the north and the east and Trichinopoly in the north and the west. It has been amalgamated with the Indian Union in the general merger of 1947 ; and today it forms a part of the district of Trichinopoly.

The wide field for research which it offers to the student of antiquities is something really noteworthy. Early in its history the region became a bone of contention between the Pandya and the Cola, and the successive importance that it obtained in the history of South India can be easily gauged from the number of inscriptions that have been copied from this area by the epigraphist. The collections up-to-date number nearly 1,300. "To get an idea of the value of the inscriptions in the State", writes the author of the *General History of the Pudukkottai State*, "it will be enough to know that while in the Madras Presidency about 120 inscriptions have been found for the Pandyas of the 13th century, in Pudukkottai State alone there are 80 additional inscriptions of the same class and period."¹

The purpose in stating this is to indicate the importance of this region in historical times. It was while I was engaged

M. Arokiaswamy, M.A., Ph.D., is Lecturer in Indian History and Archaeology, University of Madras.

¹ Radhakrishna Iyer : *Gen. Hist. of Pudukkottai State*, p. 54 c.

the dead in these pits and urns are those "of men of pre-Aryan times",⁷ though his connecting this fact with the name *Pāndavakuli* given to kistvaens in S. India does not stand to reason.

Now, this brings us to the next question, namely that of the terminology employed by the S. Indians to signify these ancient repositories of the dead. Many names like *kurangupattadai*, *mathamathakkathāli*, and *Pāndavakuli* seem to have been in general currency among them. Whence came these names and what is their significance? Rev. Taylor in his *Catalogue of Oriental Mss.* collates no less than eight traditions connected with these names and says that they were attributed

- (a) to a desire for obtaining shelter from a predicted shower of fire about the era of salivāhana.
- (b) to certain pigmies towards the end of Dwaparāyugā.
- (c) to the five Pāndavās to save themselves from the fury of Duriyodhanā.
- (d) to the votaries of the goddess NILAMUCARI.
- (e) to the Vēdar and the Kurumbar as places of safety for their family when the men-folk had gone out hunting or grazing the cattle.
- (f) to men with monkey tails.
- (g) to rakshasās for protection of their family during times of war.
- (h) to old men who had lived too long.⁸

The term '*kurangupattadai*' (lit., workshop of monkeys) seems to derive its explanation from tradition No. 6 collated by Rev. Taylor. But this cannot be in any sense a possible explanation. Its value is just as useful as that of events narrated in Aesop's Fables. So also is the reference to the Pāndavās, though the *Mahābhārata* refers to an occasion in which Lord Krishna dug a trench to cover the Pāndavās when Duriyōdhnā sent a giant to destroy them. But in common

understanding this Pāndavā tradition has come to imply that all the ancient grave pits to which we have referred above are the hand work of the Pāndavās. Hence the name '*Pāndavakuli*', which is manifestly absurd.

Rai Bahadur V. Venkayya and others who helped the writing of the chapter on history in Salem Gazetteer Vol. I, roundly stated the term is as "valueless historically as the epithet 'cylopaean' in Greece or the 'Nimrod' legends in Babylonia". It may be so, if we take into account all the tales that go current by the term '*Pāndavakuli*'. The view that the Pāndavās had something to do in their erection and the tradition that they were built by dwarfs with the strength of giants can never be accepted. The commonsense view of the whole question appears to be that they were repositories of old men, who were respected in life as in death and were as such placed in these special repositories after their death as a mark of respect. The term must have really begun as '*Pāndukuli*' (pits of old men, the term '*pāndu*' signifying 'old') and became in course of time as '*Pāndavarkuli*' as the *Pāndavā* tradition gathered momentum. The term '*mathamathakkathāli*' is likewise nothing but '*muthumakkalthāli*' (urns or pots in which old men were buried, the term '*muthumakkal*' signifying "old men"). The name '*Pāndavakuli*' can neither be interpreted as the Tamilisation of the Sanskrit, *bhṇadā-kulī* (in which *bhṇadā* stands for pot) as some interpret, nor as the corruption of '*māndavarkuli*.' The term, '*kurangupattadai*' is possibly a corruption of the term, *kurangu parruarai* (kurangu+parru+arai) meaning the sepulchre which holds the corpse tight as in a monkey-hold. In places indicated by this term no pots are found,⁹ so that it would appear that it refers to grave burial pure and simple. Thus by three terms here noted the two main systems of burial, the grave and the urn (whether in pit of kistvaen) are indicated.

⁹ The finds at TENNANGUDI, where a whole field is still called '*kurangupattadai vayal*' are of this class.

⁷ Walhouse, *JRAS.*, VII (New Series), pp. 24-25.

⁸ Taylor, *Cat. of Oriental Mss.*, III, p. 426.

Besides the social interest attaching to these novel kinds of burial, the antiquarian is interested in knowing their age and authors. Mr. Rea, the Madras Government Archaeologist in an article contributed by him to the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal for 1888 on the burial places at Pallāvaram (Chingleput Dt.) expresses the opinion that these burial places of S. India cannot be earlier than 1,000 years before his time,⁴ since the silting that has taken place round these monuments points only to that amount of antiquity to them. This may be true of some of them, which might have been constructed in imitation of the pre-historic practice; but this cannot be posited on any account of all the burial monuments of S. India on a lump. In Pudukkōttai itself certain dolmens indicate only stone implements. Those at MOTTAIMALAI for example, come definitely in this category and cannot be placed in any age later than the neolithic. Certain dolmens indicate a combination of iron and stone implements like most of the megalithic dolmens excavated in 1934-35. They possibly indicate an age of transition from the neolithic to the iron age. On the other hand, evidences from Tamil literature dating from the Sangam times to the late 12th and 13th centuries indicate the widespread existence of these burial customs in S. India,⁵ while there is no doubt that they persisted even long after this period, and even today the Pallis—the descendants of the ancient Kurumbās—follow the custom of placing a stone in a small pit before burning their dead in memory of the ancient custom of burying in pits and cists.

From the above discussion it would appear that it is difficult to date these burial monuments. Still from the finds obtained in them it is at least possible to date them approximately. Thus it is possible to say that some of the burial urns like those excavated in 1917 are distinctly pre-historic and belong to the neo-lithic age; while the megalithic dolmens of SITTANAVASAL, ARANIPATTI and other places

⁴ JASB., 1888, pt. I, No. 2, p. 50.

⁵ See *Puram* 228, 238 and 256; *Manimēkhalai*, VI, II. 67-68, *Vikrama Cōlan ulā*.

belong to an age of transition from the stone to the iron age, dating at least to 3,000 years before Christ. It is even possible that the MOTTAIMALAI finds belong to the Paleolithic times going before 20,000 years B.C., since the stone implements found therein are distinctly archaic and ancient and there is no trace of iron or bronze in the burial monuments of the region⁶; while some of the urns unearthed in 1917 may belong to distinctly later times, since swords and daggers with blades sometimes 18" long are found in them as in the finds of the NILAYĀPATTI region. Further, the human finds in many of these urns were seen at least in the form of skeletons while in the megalithic dolmens the bodies are all completely turned to dust, a phenomenon which naturally argues an earlier period for the latter.

We may also posit for a fact that of the existing burial monuments in S. India, taking into account both those already turned by the spade of the archaeologist and those still awaiting it, a great majority are certainly pre-historic or belong to early historic times. The custom of these elaborate burial systems must have gone down in usage with the advance of time, in spite of the fact that OTTAKŪTHAN sings about them in the 12th century in his famous *ulās*. One of the results of the advent of Brahmanism in the south was to invest the ceremonies of the funeral pyre with all the sacredness of a religious rite; and the other systems of burial must have begun to dwindle in face of this vedic influence. There is no doubt that at least from the dawn of the Christian era these earlier customs must have been progressively fallen into desuetude. The noted archaeologist, MR. WALHOUSE, opines in the same way, when he says that the remains of

⁶ The density of population in this region in neolithic and iron ages make it possible that it was also inhabited by men in the earlier paleolithic times. "The burial sites are so many that it appears the region round the modern town of Pudukkottah must have been occupied by man continuously from the paleolithic Age right up to modern times."—P. T. Srinivāsa Iyengar, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

For the dating of the different ages see the same author, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

Mr. A. Rea, whom we have already quoted in these pages, observes that the urns were used for men, who were always buried in a crouching posture and the pits for women who were always buried in a horizontal posture.¹⁰ As against this it must be first observed that whether such a distinction of sex was uniformly made in all cases and at all times is a question that cannot be answered satisfactorily from the evidence of the finds at our disposal. Besides the evidence of the Tamil classics of the Sangam times tells us a very different and at the same time a very plausible story. From this it would appear that while the pits were used for old men, who died after reaching a respectable old age, the urns were used in the case of men of rank or distinction. This would be seen from Puram 228, which while bemoaning the death of the Cola king Killivalavan addresses the potter in the following manner :

"Kalanjei Kōvē, Kalanjei Kōvē

* * *

nedumāvalavan
Thēvarulakam eithinānāthalin
Anrōrkavikkum kanagantāli
Vanaiṭhal vettanai āyinenāiathum
Iruṇilanthikiriyaṭṭermalai
Mānavanaithalollumō ninakkē."

"O, Potter, if you desire to make a pot big enough to cover one of such eminence and glory, you must have the earth as your wheel and the big Meru mountain itself as clay." (Pope's Transl.)

The same view is confirmed by another poem in the same collection in which the gallant wife, who had accompanied her husband to the battle-field, requests the potter to make the urn large enough to enclose her also along with her dead husband :

"Kalanjei kōvē, kalanjei kōvē
Achudaisakatāraporunthiya
Siruvenpalli polothannōdu
Surampala vantha enakkumaruli
Viyan malarakan polilimathāli
Akaliṭhaka vanaimō

Nananthalai mūthūr kalanjei kōvē."—Puram 256.

"O, Potter, shaper of the urn, like the little white lizard that sits in the garland of the axle of the chariot over many a desert

plain I have come with him ; make the funeral urn large enough for me too, maker of the urns for the old town's burning ground."
(Pope's Transl.)

It would be observed that this particular reference goes directly against the view of Mr. Rea, who says that urns were not used for ladies.

The tradition of the Kurunbar noted by Mr. Cox in his "N. Arcot Manual", that each person of rank had a burial monument constructed periodically" also supports the above conclusion. The view sometimes expressed that the grave burials were practised by the poor while the rich had recourse to urn burials may also be true, though the exact significance of the different uses did not emphasise so much wealth as distinction or rank merited by the deceased in life.

The cisterns appear as later development of the urn burials, just as the urn burials themselves must be the later development of the grave burial. Later Tamil works like the VIKRMACOLAN ULA and the SANKARACOLAN ULA of the 12th century refer to the practice of depositing old men in pots, while still alive. Thus the former work has the following lines, which clearly refer to this practice ; when it sings in praise of Vikrama Cola :

" māralin
Thōdi marali olippa mūthumakkad
Sādi vagutha tarāpathiyum."

Possibly this came into practice when old men beyond the age of 100 were many and it was a job to move them from place to place. Such men may have been interned into the pit in the urn in which they had lived during their last years. It is to this tradition collected by Taylor (eighth in the list) must refer.

Who were the authors of these remarkable systems of disposing the dead ? Mr. Walter Elliot put forth a suggestion at the International Pre-Historic Congress at Norwich that these were the inventions of pastoral tribes. Though much can be said in favour of this view, his contention suffers from the supposition that these pre-historic burial places

must have been the work of tribes that had migrated into the south of India from the north. It is to the same idea that Mr. Walhouse refers, when he says :

"In the present state of information it seems therefore no improbable hypothesis that the megalithic monuments of South and Central India were constructed by a race originally nomad, descending at some unknown period from the steppes of Upper Asia establishing themselves and remaining in power long enough to found settled and considerably advanced dominations and cover the face of the country with their tombs."¹²

The modern view militates against this supposition since the sepulchral remains here indicated show layers of culture in continued succession. Though these have been roughly placed in the Iron Age, some of them point to a period even much earlier. The region of the old State of Pudukkottai was a favourite grazing ground for the pastoral tribe known as the Kurumbar. That at a very early time they had spread all over the State is also clear. While the old Tondainād region (comprising the modern districts of N. Arcot, S. Arcot and Chingleput) is said to be *Kurumbabhūmi par excellence*, we have unmistakable evidences of their having occupied regions far from them like the Kongudēsam, the Karnātakaā and even far-off Malabar, where a taluk is still named *Kurumbanād*. Besides the names of numerous places in the Pudukkōttai region ending with the suffix 'patti' (*lit.*, cattle-fen) and 'kudi' (as is seen in names like VEDAMPATTI, SEVALPATTI, SELLUKKUDI, etc.) bear simple testimony to the fact of a large population of the Kurumbar having once occupied the region. Traces of the tribe are still to be seen here in places like SELLUKKUDI and ARANIPATTI where there are large colonies of Kurumbar working as weavers of woollen carpets known as 'cumbli'.

It cannot, however, be argued as Mr. Elliot does, that these ancient burial monuments belong only to the Kurumbar. The burial places indicate finds of different ages, and bear on themselves marks of varying construction techniques. Besides, as has been shown above, many other than the Kurumbar,

¹² JRAS., VII, 29.

warriors and even kings had recourse to these systems and that long after the day of the Kurumba glory. Further, alongside of the Kurumbar in the State of Pudukkōttai, the Vēdar were also prominent in the forest regions of the State. We may therefore state in final conclusion that these ancient burial monuments, though they belonged to all the ancient people, who inhabited the region, were perhaps begun and largely used by the pastoral and the hunting tribes, the Kurumbar and the Vēdar.

TAMILIANA—NEWS & NOTES

CITY BENEATH THE SEA

We reproduce below the correspondence of the former Vice-Chancellor the Annamalai University, Lt.-Col. Dr. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam, with the Union and State Governments on the subject of exploring the site of the ancient Tamil Emporium on the East Coast, Puhar or Kaveripumpattinam. It is regrettable that neither the Ministry of Defence nor the Archaeological Department is at present equipped for such explorations.

Lt.-Col. Dr. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam,
Vice-Chancellor.

Annamalai University,
Annamalainagar,
9th March, 1951.

Ref.: P. C. No. 226/a/b/51.

To

1. The Secretary to Government, Ministry of Defence,
Government of India, New Delhi.
2. The Director, Archaeological Department,
Government of India, New Delhi.

Through

1. The Secretary, Ministry of Education,
Government of Madras,
Fort St. George, Madras.
2. The Secretary, Ministry of Education,
Government of India, New Delhi.

Sir,

Sub: Study of sub-merged area about 25 miles off Annamalai University—Facility required.

In *Silappadikaram*, an ancient Tamil Classic, usually assigned to the 2nd century A.D. there are references to a place called Kaveripumpattinam and Pumpugar. This was once a Capital of the Chola monarchs and was a sea port of great renown. Ptolemy and Periplus refer to it. And Buddhadatta, a famous Buddhist writer of the 5th century A.D. lived here and wrote his Pali books. Part of this old city is understood to have been washed away by the sea. It is what remains of it that is even now known by its old name. It is situated on the sea coast near one of the mouths of the Kaviri in the Tanjore District,

in the Madras State, some 15 miles from the nearest Railway Station, Sirkali, on the main line of the S. I. Railway.

I recently visited the place and from the information I gathered on the spot, I learn that the fishermen report the existence of what they regard as buildings underneath the sea. There exist even now on the mainland close by some of the temples and tanks referred to in the *Silappadikaram* and an exceedingly beautiful image of a Hindu deity was recently discovered in the area and is preserved in a temple in the locality. People report that the sea has been encroaching in that area even during past 30 years and it is very likely that a part of the ancient city of Kaveripumpattinam is really lying submerged under the sea.

May I therefore suggest that the Government make necessary further enquiries in the matter and if they are satisfied that there are strong grounds for believing the statements of fishermen and of the people in the locality re: the existence of the submerged part of the old city, efforts may be made through the Defence Department for taking underground photographs of the sea in that area and for exploring the place through submarines and other underground vessels. It is only the Defence Department that can undertake this work.

It appears to me that this is a matter worth investigating in the interest of historical research and its studies may throw further light on the question of identity of the site of the old city and on the life, manners and customs of the ancient Tamils. As this is of considerable historical value, the University will be glad to render all possible help in any step that the Government of India may wish to take in the above direction.

I request, therefore, the authorities addressed in this communication to take sustained interest in the matter and see if steps could be taken to take underground photographs of the submerged area and to explore it.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) S. G. MANAVALA RAMANUJAM,
Vice-Chancellor.

Dr. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam,
Vice-Chancellor.

Annamalai University,
Annamalainagar,
19th June, 1951.

To

The Superintendent,
Archaeological Department,
Fort St. George, Madras.

Sir,

I enclose herewith copies of correspondence in regard to the exploration of the hidden city of Kaveripoompattinam described in the ancient Tamil Classic *Silappadikaram*. I shall be glad if the State Department of Archaeology will take interest in the matter. A resolution to this effect, I believe, has also been passed at the recent Silappadikaram Conference held at Kaveripoorpattinam.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) S. G. MANAVALA RAMANUJAM,
Vice-Chancellor.

Dr. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam,
Vice-Chancellor.

Annamalai University,
Annamalainagar,
19th June, 1951.

To

The Hon'ble Mr. M. Bhakthavatsalam,
Minister for Public Works,
Fort St. George, Madras.

Sir,

As desired by you in my conversation with you at Kaveripoompattinam, I herewith enclose correspondence relating to the exploration of the hidden city of Kaveripumpattinam. I shall be glad if the State Archaeological Department could be made to interest itself in the matter.

It will be seen that I have addressed the Director of Archaeology, Government of India, so far with no effect. The Ministry of Defence has replied that they have no facilities for underwater photography and exploration. I think it is necessary that the Navy should possess the necessary equipment as they may be useful even in any Naval warfare.

Trusting that you will take some interest in the matter.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) S. G. MANAVALA RAMANUJAM,
Vice-Chancellor.

Dr. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam,
Vice-Chancellor.

Annamalai University,
13th August, 1951.
Annamalainagar,

To

1. The Secretary to Government, Deptt. of Education,
Fort St. George, Madras.
2. The Director of Archaeology, Madras State,
Madras.
3. The Director-General of Archaeology, Government of India,
New Delhi.
4. Secretary to Government, Ministry of Defence,
Government of India, New Delhi.

Sir,

Sub: Study of submerged area of Kaveripumpattinam
about 25 miles off Annamalai University—Facility
required.

Ref: This office letter P. C. No. 226/a/b/51 dated 9th
March, 1951.

May I in this connection, namely, making underwater study of the relics of Kaveripumpattinam which are now believed to be submerged under the sea about 150 miles south of Madras coast, draw your attention to the following excerpt* from a recent publication which will be of some interest to you in this purpose and suggest that some endeavour is made to get the apparatus for use in our country.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) S. G. MANAVALA RAMANUJAM,
Vice-Chancellor.

□ □ □ □

Just before the outbreak of the last war, Ewing and his associates succeeded in producing an apparatus capable of photographing the sea bottom at depths down to 3½ miles in the North Atlantic. This camera was used for locating wrecks on the east coast of the United States, and by Shepherd and Emery to determine the character of the sea bottom off California.

Through the kindness of Mr. Lamar Worzel of the Geology Department of the Columbia University of New York, an underwater camera was loaned to the Division of Fisheries for about four months this year, and after a few initial failures, has been successfully used from the R. S. "Africana" at various places off the west coast.

Yours faithfully,
(Sd.) S. G. MANAVALA RAMANUJAM,
Vice-Chancellor.

* Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa, Vol. xxxiii, page 1.

Dr. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam,
Vice-Chancellor.

Annamalai University,
Annamalainagar,
30th August, 1951.

To

1. The Secretary to Government, Dept. of Education,
Fort St. George, Madras.
2. The Superintendent of Archaeology, Southern Circle,
Fort St. George, Madras State, Madras.
3. The Director-General of Archaeology,
Government of India, New Delhi
4. Secretary to Government, Ministry of Defence,
Government of India, New Delhi.

Sir,

*Sub: Study of submerged area of Kaveripumpattinam
about 25 miles off Annamalai University.*

In continuation of my communication P. C. No. 226 a/b/51 dated 13th August 1951 regarding the exploration of the sea floor of Kaveripumpattinam in the Tanjore District, may I draw your kind attention to an article "Photography of the Sea Floor" by H. G. Ververs, M.A., D.Phil., in the recent Number of the Journal of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom, Vol. 30, No. 1 (issued June 1951) in which a new photographic equipment for underwater camera is described. Pages 102 to 104 give a description of the apparatus. It will be good if the Government of India and also the Fisheries Department at the Centre and of the States would have this equipment for underwater photography and incidentally help in exploration of such submerged land areas as Kaveripumpattinam.

(Sd.) S. G. MANAVALA RAMANUJAM.
Yours faithfully,
Vice-Chancellor.

Copy to: 1. Director of Fisheries, Kilpauk, Madras.
2. Ministry of Food (Fisheries), New Delhi.

INDEPENDENT OF ANY LANGUAGE

MADRAS, Feb. 12.

"Tamil which seems to be the oldest language of the so-called Dravidian group of languages, grew independently of any other language, including Sanskrit," declared Prof. V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, Professor of Indian History, Madras University, speaking on "South Indian linguistics" on Saturday.

This was the sixth of the Sir William Meyer Endowment lectures on "Pre-historic South India."

Dealing with the origin of writing, the Professor said the ancient man communicated his thoughts by pictorial writing. Some sort of development in speech forms existed, and these forms proceeded not from sentence to sound but from sound to sentence.

ALPHABET WRITING

On the origin of alphabet writing, he said it had almost been concluded from the evidence of Asokan inscriptions found in South India that it was only from the days of these inscriptions which were in Brahmi characters, that writing began to be practised in South India and also in North India.

Rejecting this and another theory that the art of writing was imported into India by foreigners the Professor said the art was indigenous.

Since the beginning of the alphabet, two scripts were evolved. One was cursive and the other literary. The former was represented by Tamil while the literary script developed into the Grantha alphabet used for writing Sanskrit.

The Tamil characters might have been derived from Vattelettu which literally meant round hand. The inscriptions of the 7th century in the Malabar region represented perhaps the survival of an ancient form of writing.

"It is certain that Vatteluttu could not have been derived from the Asokan characters nor the Asokan characters from Vatteluttu. So, both Brahmi and Vatteluttu are independent,

the first more allied to Sanskrit and the second to Tamil," concluded the Professor.

REFORM OF TAMIL SCRIPT

MADRAS, March 24.

The Report of the Committee on Reform of Tamil Script had been received and had been sent to the Madras and Annamalai Universities and the Tamil Academy, Madras, for their opinion and for definite proposals, stated Mr. K. Madhava Menon, Education Minister, replying to an interpellation by Mr. N. M. R. Subbaraman, in the Legislative Assembly today.

The Minister said that a "provisional reply" had been received from the Academy but no reply had yet been received from the two Universities. He would place the recommendations of the Committee and the main proposals and suggestions for reform on the table of the House as soon as they were printed.

Mr. L. S. Karayalar enquired if the Government would pass orders for adopting the reformed script in the text books for the coming academic year. The Minister replied that this was not a matter in which they could do things in a hurry, as varying opinions had been expressed and strong views had also been expressed against any change.

Asked what the occasion for any reform was, the Minister stated that certain experts and scholars had suggested certain reforms and the Government thereupon appointed a Committee to go into the matter. The Committee consisted of Messrs. T. S. Chockalingam, R. P. Sethu Pillai, S. Gopalan (of A.I.R.), T. N. Subrahmanian, K. Swaminathan (Principal, Government Arts College), M. Varadarajan and T. P. Meenakshisundaram Pillai.

Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao enquired if the proper course, in a matter of this kind concerning the entire community, would not be to leave it to public opinion to adopt whatever changes considered necessary instead of the Government taking it upon themselves to effect reform or spend money on such controversial matters. The Minister said that if the reform was considered good, there could be no objection to their taking interest in it.

VIEWS OF TAMIL ACADEMY

Mr. Abdul Majeed enquired if the Government would place on the table of the House the views of the Tamil Academy. The Minister replied that the Tamil Academy first wrote to say that the President called for a conference of Tamil scholars and it arrived at certain tentative conclusions. Subsequently, the report of the Conference was sent to the Government. He said that he must consult the Academy before he could give publicity to the report.

Mr. Karayalar enquired if public opinion was in favour of reducing the larger number of characters of the Tamil alphabet and whether it was not necessary to reform the script in the interests of mechanical efficiency, etc., especially as the proposed changes would help to reduce the number of letters by 42. The Minister replied that this was, perhaps, a very good answer to the question by Mr. Kaleswara Rao. In the meeting called by Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, the general opinion was in favour of certain changes in the script.

Mr. Kaleswara Rao enquired if the Government were aware of a proposal for introducing Devanagari script for all Indian languages and also the suggestion for introducing Roman script. The Minister replied: I am not aware of any serious public opinion in South India for such a course.

B. B. C. MAY DROP TAMIL SERVICE

LONDON, Mar. 27.

The B.B.C. may drop its Tamil programmes on its Indian Services, according to the *Daily Telegraph*. This is expected in the face of a reduced Government grant.

Two more Indian languages may also be affected, Bengali and Marathi. Urdu and Hindustani services alone will be continued.

"We cannot say whether there will have to be a cut in our overseas programmes" a B.B.C. spokesman said today. "We are working out how best to maintain our overseas services."

LAKE SUCCESS, April 1.

There is tremendous interest and goodwill for India in Latin American countries and we should cultivate them better,

said Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, who has just returned from Santiago after attending the session of the U. N. Economic and Social Council there.

Generally, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar said, he found Sanskrit and Gandhian literature being widely studied in South America. In the libraries he found Spanish translations of Gandhiji's and Mr. Nehru's works, which were in great demand. The people were also eager to know more about Dravidian culture, he said. The State University of Santiago had a Chair in Sanskrit and was also keen on starting a cultural contact programme of exchange of Sanskrit and Spanish scholars and history professors. Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar hopes to get the Madras University interested in this scheme.

While Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar was in Santiago, an association called the Society of Friends of India was formed to promote better contacts and understanding between the two countries.

COLOMBO, October, 15.

A stone slab bearing a Tamil inscription was found recently at Panduvas-nuvara by the Archaeological Department.

Panduvas-nuvara is situated in Giratalana Korale of the Devamadi Hatpattu in the Kurunegala district and is about two miles from Hettipola.

Dr. Senaratha Paranavitane, Archaeological Commissioner, has identified Panduvas-nuvara as Parakrama-pura mentioned in the Chulavamsa.

A citadel, a palace and monastic buildings like a dagoba and stupas are found on the site which have been excavated recently.

Some distance away to the west of the dagoba is a raised quadrangle on which are the remains of several structures including a small stupa. It is in the vicinity of the stupa that a slab bearing a Tamil inscription was brought to light last month.

The inscription runs into 22 lines each of which is one foot nine inches in length. It appears to concern a grant to a temple made by the king, nobles and other military officials.

Dr. Paranavitane told me the inscription could be placed in the 12th century and that it was dated in the fifth year of a king styled Parakrama Nissanka Malla, of South Ceylon.

FULL DEVELOPMENT OF ALL LANGUAGES

SATYAVATI NAGAR, Oct. 19.

Prime Minister Nehru declared here today that a language could neither grow nor be suppressed by Governmental action. "It can and must progress only through its use by people," he said.

History, he said, had known many instances of ruthless oppression and suppression by Governments; but never could a live language be suppressed by any Government, however ruthless. Nor had it ever been possible to promote any language by any sympathetic Government.

Governmental support might make a difference here or there, but essentially a language grew only through its use by the people.

"In my opinion," the Prime Minister observed "no regional language of India should try to compete with Hindi, nor should Hindi attempt to compete with regional languages. I feel that all languages must be given a fair and equal opportunity to grow, and Hindi, being the national language, must be respected."

Under no circumstances should the regional language in any region be ignored, because such action was bound to hamper the growth of children in that region.

WHEN TAMIL WORKED

NEW YORK.

Mr. A. D. Mani, Editor of *Hitavada*, who has left for Paris to join the Indian Delegation to the U. N. General Assembly, told me before his departure of an amusing experience he had in Atlanta, Georgia. There is a strong colour bar in this southern State and Mr. Mani was warned in advance to be prepared for trouble if he visited "white" restaurants. He arrived in Atlanta of an evening and had to go to bed without supper because to whichever restaurant he went he found a "For Whites Only" sign displayed outside and he did not want to run the risk of being thrown out. Hunger, however, is the mother of invention and the next morning, it seems, he walked boldly into a "white" restaurant and asked in Tamil if he could get some-

thing to eat. Nobody understood what he said, but everybody understood he was a foreigner. There was therefore, no objection raised to his presence and Mr. Mani said he had all his meals at that restaurant during the remainder of his stay. (Hindu Nov. 16.)

DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGES

MADRAS, April 8.

Inaugurating the Thirukkural Research Publication last evening at the Senate House, Dr. Rajendra Prasad emphasised that all the languages of India should be developed and enriched. He pointed out that research workers should attach greater importance to the teachings of the "Kural" than to the details of the life of its author.

The publication has been undertaken by the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya (Coimbatore) in co-operation with the Tamil Academy.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam, President of the Publication Committee, welcoming Dr. Prasad, said that among the spoken languages of the world, Tamil was perhaps the most ancient. The "Tholkappiam", the earliest treatise on grammar, rhetoric and poetics in Tamil, reflected a mature culture, of which any people could be proud. The "Thirukkural", belonging to the period of the third Sangam, had remained the basis of Tamil culture throughout the last 2,000 years and had influenced the lives of millions of men and women of all classes and creeds.

The scope of the present research, Mr. Avinashilingam said, would cover not only all the available classical commentaries, but also the collection of concordances and quotations by all the later authors upto the present time. Besides, a good index and a preface bringing out exhaustively the various aspects of its manifold teachings, would be prepared with the help of scholars. The great work would be published in two volumes of about 1,000 pages each, at the cost of about Rs. 60,000.

Mr. Avinashilingam said that the Vidyalaya was one of the pioneering educational institutions in South India. It was proposed to provide for research facilities in the institution. The research might be in fundamental problems of education or in connection with classical literature. As a first measure, research in the "Thirukkural" had been undertaken in co-operation with the Tamil Academy.

DEVELOPMENT OF TAMIL

The Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam or the Tamil Academy, Mr. Avinashilingam said, had for its objective the development of the Tamil language in all possible ways by encouraging authors and publishers and organising annual Tamil festivals in various parts of Tamil Nad. He thanked the Madras and Central Governments, the Madras University and the various donors for their help in the preparation of an encyclopaedia in Tamil in 12 volumes at the cost of Rs. 12 lakhs, undertaken by the Academy. Indian culture, to be real, should be a synthesis of the best that every language in the country could offer. The plan of the Government of India for bringing out the best in the various languages into the other sister-languages of the country was a move in the right direction and should be implemented as soon as possible.

Mr. P. N. Mahalingam, Secretary, in a report on the work done so far by the Committee, said that there was an enthusiastic response from the public to its endeavours. The various items of work for the research volume were being planned and it was their hope to finish it within a reasonable time. Appealing for more financial help, he hoped that the inauguration of the function by the President would begin a new era of greater appreciation of the cultural wealth of South India and its contribution to the culture of India.

Mr. K. Madhava Menon, Education Minister, garlanded the President amidst cheers.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

Dr. Rajendra Prasad said: "You are rightly proud of your language and culture. Your language has come down for many centuries and you have maintained it in this part of the country as well as outside, wherever your people had gone. It is in the fitness of things that you should be thinking of making your contribution to the general culture of the country as a whole—not that it is a new thing, because, after all, the culture of India, as it is, is a composite culture which is drawn from the different parts of the country. In course of time, we have been able to evolve, in the midst of all the diversities that we see, a general unanimity and unity of culture. That is one great thing which we always cherish."

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TAMIL CULTURE

A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study of Tamiliana

The Greatest Tamil Mystic

S. MAHARAJAN

TIRUMOOLAR is the greatest mystic and seer that Tamil Nad has ever produced. The eighteen Siddhas of Tamil Nad acknowledge him as their supreme preceptor and as the progenitor of the esoteric school of the Tamils.

Legend has it that he lived for 3,000 years, and out of the silence of his soul, brought out one song a year. It may be that is only a poetic way of saying how profound and beautiful are his three thousand songs and how long each of them must have taken to be contemplated and composed. Beyond legend there is no reliable historical material to help us fix his age. In Puranic literature, however, there are references which suggest that Tirumoolar lived in 6,000 B.C.

Whatever might be his age, Tirumoolar remains valid for all time. His *Thirumanthiram* is an encyclopaedia of authentic spiritual experience at almost all levels, that is to say, from idolatry to a disembodied absorption in the Ultimate Void. He is about the only Indian mystic who has cared not only to record his experiences but also to evolve and communicate an elaborate technique by following which other aspirants may reach the goal he set for himself. It is true that the secrets discovered by Tirumoolar have been set down in highly symbolic language. The writer of this article once thought that the key to his symbolism has been irretrievably lost. But subsequent contact with living mystics has convinced him that the key is in safe and exclusive keeping. If there is good reason to keep the atom bomb out of the reach of the rabble, there is much greater reason to deny to it the fruits of supra-material research.

S. Maharajan, B.Sc., B.L., is a member of the Madras Judicial Service.

Even the intellectual is not qualified to obtain initiation into the secrets, unless he realises that the intellect is after all one of the most contemptible and inadequate instruments given to man. It is in the awareness of human ignorance that Tirumoolar sees the beginnings of spiritual wisdom. Accordingly, in his preface to *Tirumanthiram* he sings with characteristic humour :—

ஆறிவார் எங்கள் அண்ணல் பெருமையை
ஆறிவார் இந்த அகலமும் நிகளமும்
பேறியாத பெருஞ்சுடர் ஒன்றதின்
வேறியாமை விளம்பு கின்றேனே.

Whoever knows the glories of my Lord
and who, the vastness of Infinity : (yet)
Of my ignorance of that Nameless Light
I shall sing three thousand songs.

Einstein, that great scientist, standing on the brink of the Known and peeping into the Unknown, exclaims,

“How terrifying is my ignorance !”

Consciousness of ignorance, however, holds no terrors for Tirumoolar : in fact he exults and revels in it as the liberator from the Ego.

But even the man who has become aware of his ignorance is trammelled by the Ego. Tirumoolar would, therefore, urge him to go beyond knowledge and ignorance into Pure consciousness. The wisdom acquired through such unfettered consciousness can alone be regarded as having ultimate validity.

அறிவறியாமை கடந் தறிவானால்
அறிவறியாமை அழகிய வாறே.

How then are we to have access to the region of Pure consciousness where there is awareness but no thought? The exact mechanism by which the different states of consciousness can be reached has been suggested by Tirumoolar in several places.

The mind is located by Tirumoolar in a specific physical centre in the human body. This is very much like the gear box of an automobile. The mind can be said to be in the first

gear when we are awake, in the second gear when we are dreaming and in the third gear when we are in deep, dreamless slumber. In other words, there are three physical states in the body corresponding to the three mental conditions, viz., waking, dreaming and sleeping. When a waking man falls asleep, a corresponding involuntary change takes place in his physical condition. Likewise, when he drifts into the dreaming condition, an automatic physical change occurs. In their great spiritual laboratories, our Gnanis made this most momentous discovery and put it to immediate use. By physically manipulating the centre in which the mind resides and by changing its gear they found they could enter into any of these three mental conditions voluntarily and at will, retaining at the same time their awareness. They could, for instance, get into the deep slumber condition, remaining aware or “awake”. The Ego, which is like a prism distorting and refracting Reality, is itself asleep in slumber, and the Gnani, who can go into slumber without losing awareness, is in a position to have a glimpse of Reality undistracted by the frolics of the Ego. Beyond slumber is the fourth condition of Turiya where the Ego dies completely and the soul stands face to face with the Lord ready to melt in his embrace.

It is when the mystic finds himself in this condition of the utmost absorption that he is able to pierce the multifaceted crust of reality and perceive the Primordial and undifferentiated stuff of Being. Tirumoolar clarifies this truth with his famous analogy of a wooden toy elephant.

The child played, ecstatic, with his elephant proud
He cared not it was made of wood,
Unplayful man beheld but a lump of wood,
He missed, alas ! the elephant's form ;
Even so, the Elements hide the Real from our sight,
But the Mystic's eye pierces thro' the Elements and gets
at God.

மரத்தை மறைத்தது மாமத யானை
மரத்தில் மறைந்தது மாமத யானை
பாத்தை மறைத்தது பார்முதல் பூதம்
பரத்தில் மறைந்தது பார்முதல் பூதம்.

Lest the reader should think that Tirumoolar is much too pre-occupied with the Spirit, it is necessary at this juncture to set out the place he assigns in his system to secular life. Albert Schweitzer complains that all oriental philosophers, with the wholesome exception of Tiruvalluvar, deny the reality of life and the world. Tirumoolar affirms the reality of life and the world. To him the human body is not an execrable delusion but a divine gift to be treasured and even adored. In fact he calls every human being "a walking temple of God" and adds that any offering made to this temple is more readily accepted by God than the offerings made in the stone temples of God. This principle supplies a rational basis for, and justifies all social service. Even from the spiritual stand-point, the individual, who engages himself in social service, finds that his Ego is slowly thinning out and he begins to experience a new joy which derives from his increasing liberation from the Ego.

The dignity of the body, in Tirumoolar's view, is almost as great as that of the spirit. He confesses :

"Once I thought that the body was something, vulgar and mean,

But now I know that inside the body and only through it, can I get at Reality."

உடம்பினை முன்னம் இழுக்கென் றிருந்தேன்
உடம்பினுக் குள்ளே உறுபொருள் கண்டேன்

At another place he says that the Body is the Temple, the Mind is the Sanctum Sanctorum and the spirit is the Lord and the five wicked-seeming senses are the eternal foot-lights that light up the glory of the Lord.

உள்ளம் பெருங் கோயில் ஊனுடம் பாலயம்
வள்ளற் பிரானுக்கு வாய் கோபுர வாசல்
தெள்ளத் தெளிந்தார்க்குச் சீவன் சிவலிங்கம்
கள்ளப் புலனைந்தும் காளா மணி விளக்கே.

One must make spiritual hay while the bodily sun shines, for, the moment the body is lost, all experience comes to an end and consequently, the opportunity of emancipation comes to an end, too. That is why our mystic exclaims,

உடம்பை வளர்த்தேன்
உயிர் வளர்த்தேனே.

"By developing my body
I developed my Spirit, too".

To Tirumoolar bodily health, however, is only a means to a spiritual end and not an end in itself.

Turning next to the control of the senses, we find that Tirumoolar's attitude in this respect is refreshingly unorthodox. The senses are but the servants of the mind and have no volition of their own. He, therefore, declares that it is dangerous to impose any restraint upon the senses. That will be tackling the mind from the wrong end. Every such restraint is bound to create an inhibition in the mind and thereby further complicate the sub-conscious. He suggests that the mind (conscious and sub-conscious) should be independently treated in such a way that an effective disjunction between the mind and the senses is brought about at will. When one has acquired mastery of the mind in this way, he gains freedom from the senses, not by controlling them, but by transcending them.

அஞ்சும் அடக்கடக் கென்பர் அறிவிலார்
அஞ்சும் அடக்கும் அமரரும் அங்கில்லை
அஞ்சும் அடக்கில் அசேதனமா மென்றிட்டு
அஞ்சும் அடக்கா அறிவறிந்தேனே.

The esoteric tantras (exercises) laid down by Tirumoolar for the rejuvenation of the body and the purification of the Mind and Spirit cannot be understood except through the initiation of a competent and loving Guru. The supreme necessity of seeking out the Guru is, therefore, repeatedly emphasized by Tirumoolar as in the following song :

வரும்வழி போம்வழி மாயா வழியை
கருவழி கண்டவர் காணா வழியைப்
பெருவழி யாம்நந்தி பேசும் வழியை
குருவழி யேசென்று கூடலு மாமே.

But, the acquisition of the Guru is, in Tirumoolar's view, governed by the laws of Grace. Thus Tirumoolar, like all great Mystics, ends, as he began, with a declaration of his boundless faith in Divine Grace and his absolute surrender to God.

The Ethical Interpretation of Nature in Ancient Tamil Poetry

DR. XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM, M.A., M.LITT.

IT IS a favourite point with writers on India to say that the "historical sense" is wanting in all ancient Indian literature. If by a "historical sense" is meant a sense that ought to have produced chronological tables, and authors like Herodotus and Livy who wrote to recount the deeds and facts of the past, then it must be admitted that no literature has come down to us that warrants the existence of such works.

Yet, ancient Tamil literature abounds with allusions, both to contemporary and past events. If even in the absence of works similar to those written by Greek and Roman historians, it has been possible to trace out a history of the Tamil people during the Cangam period, it is due to the historical references in Cangam literature.¹ Many of these references occur in love-poetry. This fact ought to prove to some extent how much the Tamils relished historical references. At the same time, it must be observed, that even these references were often made not only to praise the memory of great Tamil personages of the past but also to eulogize their patron-kings and patron-chiefs. For instance, a poet writes about the gossip in the locality regarding the courtship and clandestine meetings of a hero and a heroine. It may be he has an actual "case" in mind, or it may be he is just imagining a poetic situation. The poet would compare the wide-spread gossip and scandal-mongering (*செய்வார்*) of neighbours to some contemporaneous or past victory in battle achieved by a king or chief he admires, or from whom he has received bounteous gifts, saying that the gossip was more resounding than the shouts with which the foes of his hero retreated in battle, or louder than the jubilant cries of his patron's soldiers when they cut

down the "guardian tree" of his enemy. Or the allusion may be manifestly to historic exploits performed by the nation's heroes in the past.²

Apart from the purely historical allusions, Cangam literature contains also numerous passages in which the poets associate landscape with historical events and historical persons. This historical association in nature poetry is also to be found among poets of other nations like Vergil. English poets have used it in poems here and there. Byron's *Childe Harold* contains many passages where landscape evokes thoughts and reflections on the past, and Scott is famous for seeing his landscape always through historical association. The Tamil poets too had a capacity to see the earth coloured by this historical association, but their manner of expressing historical association is worth noting for it is both rare and impressive.

The tresses of the heroine have a fragrance that floats in the breeze. The fragrance reminds the poet of the fresh sweet smell that emanates from parks and jungles on a morning when the *mullai* is in bloom, and forthwith he compares the fragrance of the tresses to the fragrance of the forest-reserve of one of his patrons, say Ori :

"Her tresses smell like the fragrant breeze that
blows having traversed through the forest-park
of Ori of the liberal hand and the valiant chariot"

(*Kur.*, 199).

The tresses of a heroine are compared sometimes to a flourishing city, but often to the wavy river sand, or the wavy dry bed of a river. The waves of her tresses are thus compared to the side-bed, of not any river, but one that the poet would like to extol, say the ford of the Kaveri at Uranthai, the capital of the Colas or the banks of the Vaigai near Kudal.³

Potiyil, one of the peaks of the Western Ghats, stands like a lofty sentinel in the Southern portion of the range. The sandal-wood that grows on this mountain and these ranges has been always a favourite term of comparison with poets including Kalidasa. The hill would seem to have been in-

1. Writers like P. T. SRINIVASA IYENGAR and K. N. SIVARAJA PILLAI have based their works entirely on this literature,

2. *Kur.*; 328; 393; *Agam* 36; 45; 209; 253; 256.

3. *Puram*; 347, 5-6.

cluded for sometime within the kingdom belonging to chiefs of the Ay family. The heroine is said to be as fragrant as the sandal-wood, or the Vengai and *kanthal* of Ay's *Potiyil*, and cooler than its water-lilies."⁴

The eyes of a heroine are usually compared to neyda! blooms or to water-lilies. But often the flowers are specified as belonging to the lakes or tanks of some historic place or famed ruler. Thus, in a poem of the *Agananuru* collection, the eyes are compared to the neyda! blooms of a maritime lake (கழி) bordering the sea near Korkai, the emporium of the Pandians.⁵ Parana, in another poem of the same collection after having enumerated the various difficulties and obstacles that a hero has to overcome to keep a tryst with his heroine concludes saying that they are as difficult to overcome as the outer defences and the defence-forests of Tittan's Uraiyur.⁶

“நொச்சி வேலித் தித்த னுறந்தைக்
கன்முதிர் புறங்காட் டன்ன
பன்முட் டின்ருல் தோழிநங் களவே”

Another poet compares the forlorn appearance of the heroine on learning of the impending departure of the hero, to the groves around the Kaveri :—

“Thy forehead is like unto the honey-smelling groves floored with white sand on the tender shores of the great river. After the March festival, under the dense trees rich with foliage and flowers may be seen the ashes of fires kindled by those who have been feasting. As desolate as the grove without people art thou. Your shoulders too, once resembling the elegant and stately bamboos that grow on the flanks of the *Potiyil* hill that belongs to the Pandyan, master of the Southern sea rich in peerless pearls, have also lost their pristine elegance.” (*Agam* ; 137).

And thus numerous examples may be given of the brief but significant ways in which history and Nature and personal

4. *Kur*; 84.

5. *Agam*; 130. Cfr : *Agam*; 47, 69.

6. *Agam*; 122, 21-23

association are linked together by the Tamil poets in the composition of imagery. As great an attraction for them was, however, to consider an ethical aspect in Nature, often based on historical and personal association.

The Tamils were always a hard-working and industrious people. The fertility of the soil was greater in the Cangam period than now, but was not so great as to require much less energy and industry on the part of cultivators than are required at present.

It happened that Nature made up by providing an abundance of luxury goods in exchange for what she exacted by labour from the Tamils. The hills of Tamil Nad provided pepper, cinnamon and other spices ; her seas gave pearls and red coral; her forests yielded metals and precious stones. Therefore, as early as historical records go the Tamils have distinguished themselves as traders, with China to the East, with Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Roman Empire to the West. They made the most of what Nature gave them, and their commerce added not a little to the wealth of their country.⁷

The Tamils were also known for their spirit of warfare. The chiefs and kings fought intermittently among themselves, and as it happens when war and diplomacy and alliances have become common, they developed early a very honourable code of warfare.

Their commerce with foreigners, and their warfare made them develop high ethical standards of conduct. Honesty, truthfulness, bravery, love of honour, are virtues without which no people may distinguish themselves in trade or war. Mercy and sympathy are also qualities which are natural to those who have attained a position of permanent wealth and to the warrior used to the miseries of the battle-field. Hence the repeated emphasis in Tamil literature on the right use of wealth by distributing it to the poor and the needy.

Cangam literature is nearly one-fourth ethical if you consider the didactic poems as well as those that personify and illustrate virtuous deeds and allude to virtuous persons.

7. E. H. WARMINGTON, *The commerce between the Roman Empire and India*, Cambridge, 1928.

"Ethics in Cangam literature" would certainly form enough matter for a voluminous study. Here is a typical poem of our four lines by Avvai, "The Tamil Sappho."

"Land whether it be high or low, cultivated or uncultivated may be called good not because it yields good crops, but because it yields good inhabitants."⁸ And here is a typical comparison where a certain lover's words are said to be as faultless and true as the arrows shot by the archers of the army chief, Palyan.

கொற்றச் சோழர் கொங்கர்ப் பணியர்
வெண்கோட் டியானைப் பேளர் கிழவோன்
பழையன் வேல்வாய்த் தன்னின்
பிழையா நன்மொழி தேறிய இவட்கே"

Nar ; 10, 6-9.

Tamil poetry abounds with passages in which the fertility of a region or kingdoms, unfailing rains, well-watered rivers, abundance of birds and beasts and general prosperity are ascribed to the righteous rule of the sovereign. The panegyric poems of the *Pattupattu*, the *Patirrupattu* and the *Purananuru* are impregnated with this idea. The praise of a sovereign's rule meant the praise of the hills, the rivers and the general beauty and fertility of his kingdom.⁹ Sometimes the panegyrics assume a language reminiscent of Vergil in the fourth eclogue. Describing the region of Ilanthirayan, the poet says, "in his land there are no marauders that attack way-farers to rob them of their goods. Peals of thunder you will not hear ; the serpent will not kill, nor the forest animals hurt. Proceed, therefore, as you will."¹⁰

When praising sovereigns, the roar of the ocean or the cataract, and the sound of thunder are said to be the drums that announce his greatness. The heights of the mountains bespeak the heights of greatness achieved by him. The streams that descend the mountain sides may be seem shimmering silverlike from far and wide ; they are the silver banners that proclaim his victories and his unrivalled prowess in war.¹¹

8. *Puram*; 187.

9. E. G. *Puram* ; 143, 12, "நின்னு நின் மலையும் பாட" ; *Puram*; 231 ff; *Maduraikanchi*; 105 ff; *Patir*; 28.

10. *Perumpan*; 40-43.

11. *Patir*; 69, 78; *Agam*; 162, 358; *Patir*, 70, 22; *Puram*; 126, 8.

The waters even in the biggest and deepest of his rivers are so clear that ornaments that have fallen off from those sporting in the river may be seen lying deep down on the sands. The clear waters are an indication of the unsullied record of his rule.¹² This mode of praise occurs in the panegyric poetry, both in explicit terms and by suggestion.

Nature's reflection of righteousness is not due to the actions of the sovereign alone. It may be due to deeds of individual chiefs as well as the deeds of a people of the entire village. An amusing and significant poem of the *Kali* odes presents a young lady and her companion as apparently wondering that Nature could be so luxuriant in the country of her lover who has not kept his tryst. The inference is that since he has not kept his word he cannot be an upright man, and consequently Nature cannot appear lovely in his land.

"What ! The river glimmers ! Can it truly glimmer in the land of one who is not true to his promises, who has not kept his word ? What ! the rain cloud wanders, does truly the rain cloud wander in the land of who is the cause of wasting form ?"

இலங்கு மருவித் திலங்கு மருவித்தே
வானி நிலங்கு மருவித்தே தானுற்ற
குள்பேணன் பொய்த்தான் மலை"

She expresses her surprise in similar language about these beauteous and beneficent aspects of Nature, for she would expect that the land of one who has been false to her would be deprived of Nature's beauty and Nature's bounty.¹³

Another poem in the same collection is an imaginary exhortation to relatives of a young lady not to refuse her hand in marriage to the young man who has rescued her from being swept away by the waters of a river. In rescuing her, the young man has had to clasp her to himself, and according to the Tamil code, it was but proper to get her married to the one who was first to touch her. It was the ancient ideal that a young lady should not touch or be touched by anyone else than the one who was to be her partner in life. The speaker who counsels her people threatens that unless pro-

12. *Patir*; 86.

13. *Kali*; 41, 42.

priety is observed in this regard and the young lady given in wedlock to the one who had clasped her for the first time,

"The Valli will not yield its roots, the hilltops will not yield honey, the garden pannicum will not bear fruit because the mountain dwellers have observed that which is evil."

"In the mountain summits which attract the eye, and there the *gloriosa superba* casts around its fragrance, the bows of the archers fail not just because their wives are devoted exclusively to their sires."

The inference in the latter part is that the hunters in the hills will not be successful in obtaining food with the bow and arrow if they do not regard the propriety regarding the wedlock in question.¹⁴ Such is the power of chastity, that a chaste maid or a chaste wife could merit seasonal rains for her village.¹⁵ Such is the power of the prayer of these good men that their devotions bring rain when they are in need, and keep away the rain clouds when it threatens to rain too much.¹⁶

Vergil enunciated a principle of poetry much in vogue among the ancients when he said that what is described ought to correspond to the dignity of the theme or the hero - *si canimus silvas, silvae sinte consule dignae*. The Tamil poets took pains to describe everything noble even in the landscape of imaginary heroes. In love poems, the heroes and heroines may be real or imaginary. The poet may have in mind actual incidents from life or he may be describing incidents his poetic fancy has built up. The heroes and heroines are depicted as ideal persons for Tolkappiyar and the poets believed in another principle enunciated also by Aristotle that a class is represented by the best of its type.

They chose the best of the types they described, and the nobility of the landscape is always made to reflect the nobility of character of their heroes.

Descriptions and allusions to Nature contain historical references of a kind which allude to the goodness, gentleness

14. *Kali*; 39.

15. *Kali*; 19, 20: "வான் றநுங் கழிஞன்" *Kali*; 39, 6.

16. *Puram*; 143; 1-3.

and kindness of the historical heroes. When Shakespeare in *Coriolanus* refers to Valeria as—

"chaste as the icicle
That's curdied by the frost from purest snow
And hangs on Dian's temple"

he no doubt meant that ice, pure everywhere, becomes purer by association with the temple of Diana at Ephesus, the celebrated edifice in honour of the goddess of chastity.¹⁷ The Tamil poets work in similar associations where possible. The eyes of a lady are compared to the round water-lilies. A Tamil poet would not be satisfied with any simile in general; he would want a historical simile. He would rather refer to the water-lilies growing in the region of a particular king or chief. This topical and specific setting served a double purpose, namely to praise the region, or its ruler, as well as to say that the flowers in the particular region would be lovelier because of the goodness and righteousness of the persons associated with it. The latter inference is derived from the historical allusion and the lesson is that the beauty of a landscape is commensurate with the moral beauty and ethical ideals of its rulers and citizens. While in *puram* poetry such assertions are directly made as may be seen in any panegyric poem, in *agam* poetry they are alluded or suggested as in the examples that follow.

The taste of water after eating the goose-berry is sweet. However, the poet thinks that it will be sweeter after eating of the goose-berry in Pannan's garden, for he is one who does not live for himself but for others.¹⁸

Pari, one of the last seven patrons of poets, had a picturesque lake in the hilly territory of which he was chief. The water-flowers that bloomed there are sometime objects of comparison. In a poem in which a lover is remonstrated for his coldness and indifference towards his beloved, the lady's nurse addresses him in these words:—

"Once, even if my lady had offered you the green fruit of the margosa, you would have received it. as sweetest sugar. But now, were she to give you

17. *Coriolanus*, V, III, 65-67.

18. *Agam*; 54.

even the clearest water of a January morning from the cool lake of *Pari's* hill, it might scald you and taste bitter. Such is your wavering love."

Waters on a January morning would be cool and crystal-clear in all lakes. Many lakes could have been taken as a term of comparison in the Tamil country. But here the poet pays a compliment to *Pari* as well as teaches a moral lesson. Waters in *Pari's* territory ought to be clearer because he has a clear and unsullied record, and his lake is cooler because he refreshes with his giving all those who have recourse to him.¹⁹ Similarly, the flowers of his lake are more fragrant, and the poet would compare the heroine's fragrance, not to any flower in general, but to the flowers of *Pari's* lake, or to the flowers that bloom on *Sirumalai* of the *Pandyans*, or on the hill of *Ori*, the beneficent chief, or of *Ay*.²⁰

Much that was ethical entered also into the world of Tamil imagery. A few examples will suffice. The bee goes from flower to flower. Having spent the day among aquatic flowers, when the sun sets and the aquatic flowers close their petals, the bee betakes itself to the flowers on creepers and branches which flower at night. The bees that abandon the lotus and the water-lily in the evening for the jasmine and the kantal reminds the poet of those who forsake the friendship of men whose wealth and influence are on the decrease.²¹ Another poet imagines a trial of strength between a rogue elephant and a tiger. To the bee the tiger's spots seem to be flowers of the vengai. It flies to and fro, between the elephant and the tiger, trying to taste of the elephant's rut, as well as of what it imagines to be the flowers of the vengai. The bee reminds the poet of those peace-makers who seek to bring together two contending armies or two opposing parties.²²

19. *Kur*; 19.

20. Cf. *Agam*; 47, 69, 78.

21. *Agam*; 71, 1-4.

"நிறைந்தோர்த் தேரும் நெஞ்சமொடு குறைந்தோர்
பயனின் மையிற் பற்றுவிட் டொருமம்
நயனின் மாக்கள் போல வண்டினம்
சுனைப்பு நீத்துச் சுனைப்பூப் படா"

22. *Kali*; 46.

For wealth of Nature imagery the *kali* odes occupy a very prominent place in *Cangam* literature. In the *kali* odes of the *palai* class the sun is represented as cruel as a sovereign that because of the evil influence of his minister has become an unjust ruler. On the other hand in a *neydal kali* where Nature is considered under a different aspect, the sun is compared to a victorious and virtuous king proceeding to another world to enjoy the fruits of his good deeds.²³

Trees in the *palai* region are said to be dried up like the tree under which has sat a man that hath borne false testimony.²⁴ They are also said to be devoid of fruits and leaves like a young man whose youth has passed a lonely existence. Like the petty-minded man whose wealth does not benefit those who approach it, and like the end of him that lives a life of wrong-doing which ends in self destruction, the tree too dries up even to its very roots.²⁵ The luxuriant trees, on the other hand, that border rivers and tanks are suitable similes for those who flourish because they share their wealth with the poor and the needy.

"The trees on the well watered river banks grew like the wealth of him that gives without stint, and lives a virtuous life doing no evil to others." (*Kali*: 27, 1-2)

"The trees were heavy with flowers like the bounty of him who realises the transitoriness of life" (*Kali*; 32, 11)

"Like the wealth of the bountiful man, the trees bloomed; like the effortless ease of those who enjoy the wealth of such a man, the bees sported among the flowers" (*Kali*; 35, 1-2).

The petals of the *gloriosa superba* are compared to women's fingers and the entire flower, especially before it has unfolded itself is compared to the two hands joined in an attitude of supplication. Trees and plants that are bent or drooping are compared to the bent head and shy posture of wise and learned men who have heard their own praise spoken in their presence.²⁶

23. Compare *Kali* 13 with *Kali* 118.

24. *Kali*; 34, 10.

25. *Kali*; 10.

26. *Kali*; 119.

From animals too the Tamil poets learned wisdom. The hero as well as the heroine recall their own course of love when they observe what part love plays in the behaviour of animals. The elephant that strokes with its trunk the back of its mate or helps it to feed on bamboo shoots, the deer calling unto deer, the dove cooing unto dove, the buffalo, the crab, all these teach them or remind them of the affectionate relation that should exist between those who are pledged to each other.

Ancient Political thought in the Kural

P. R. PAKRISANKAR, M. A., B. L.

MORE THAN once in the history of discovery, fortuitous accidents and the expert's uncanny instinct to nose out things have saved for humanity such precious books as Gaius' *Institutes* or Kautilya's *Arthashastra*; and more than once in the history of human folly books of rare merit have been irretrievably lost; but seldom, very seldom indeed has a book been read and reread and its message laboriously misunderstood. This, the *Kural* owes to its assiduous commentators. The surest way to get a book neglected and relegate it to the limbo of forgetfulness is to call it "A Hand book of Ethics or Morals." Then nobody takes the trouble to look into it and everybody agrees "it is just fine and there is nothing like it." It is unfortunate that a book (namely *Kural*) which combines the Confucian mundane wisdom with Taoian highthinking 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 machiavellinism of the *Arthashastra*, should have received such scant attention from political thinkers. The Author of "Ancient Indian polity," a book from the Madras University is apparently so much engrossed in committing poor Indian polity to a one and only source that he forgets that there is *Kural* at hand to give him a fuller picture and saner perspective of what he seeks. The source that he is at pains to explore and exploit is *Arthashastra* which enshrines the glorious and resplendent civilisation that has completely conquered North India. *Kural* which is decidedly later in time represents an attempt by a creative individual to transfigure and sublimate the dis-integrating civilisation of the South. Here I like to quote, though I do not fully share his views, Mr. Sivaraja Pillai of Madras University who says in his "*Chronology of the*

Tamils. "Except for its prehistoric remains of which the recent finds in Mohanjodharo and Harappa form probably but a part, North India has been literally swept clean of its Dravidian antiquities by the great Aryan flood. That did not and could not happen in the South. Here the so called Aryanisation seems to have assumed a milder form; its mighty waves have been splintered into ripples here. But even then it did not fail to spread a somewhat thick scoria of religious odour over the whole face of Dravidian life and spiritual outlook. This was presumably effected by the Aryan alliance with the Kingships raised on the ruins of the ancient village communities of Dravidian India and by the use of political power as an engine for engrafting new beliefs and practice on the old stem."

This might be true before the time of the *Kural*; but certainly not when *Kural* was being written. Aryanisation and to use A. J. Toynbee's words, "Racial discrimination" as exemplified in the caste system is complete. Forces of the north had completely conquered the south. *Kural* was a very conscious gesture of defiance against this system of caste and religious hierarchy and an attempt, if possible, to revive the solid peasant civilisation of the olden days. Toynbee in his study agrees with the common view that the "earliest known revolts against caste are those of Mahavira the founder of Jainism and Buddha, both about 500 B. C." If either Buddhism or Jainism had succeeded in the Indic world caste might have been got rid of. Though they advocated secession from Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism failed. And Valluvar's (*viz.* the author of *Kural*) attempt at rationalised archaism also failed miserably. Because these great prophets along with other modern historians failed to construe and interpret Indian history in sociological and racial terms. They thought of caste as the merest stratification and that the Hindu society had been statically petrified along those lines. Unexpectedly its dynamism overwhelmed and overcame them. In each and every institutions of Society, in its religion, magic and ritual, in its literature, art and education, in its mythology, morality, metaphysics and ideology, what has been perpetuated in caste in an extreme form, found reflection, exposition and embodiment. Caste is no symbiosis or superimposition of conflicting civilisa-

tions but its rationable is the sole detriment of all life, its scope, achievement and goal. Valluvar's lone voice that all are born equal, only deeds and deserts differ — was a little startling in its freshness at that age, though utterly futile. Valluvar's assurance to the king of the land that his sceptre precedes everything and state comes first even before vedas and sasthanas, his endeavour to get the peasant's hearing by eulogising agriculture as the primary axis of world's economy — all these illustrate the desperate response of the author's anguished soul to the challenge of the cast-iron social milieu in whose meshes, like everybody else, he is inextricably caught.

Mr. V. R. R. Dikshidar in his latest book, when translating 543 *Kural* as "The king's sceptre is the standing proof of Brahminical books and their teachings," commits a very reasonable mistake. Of course Valluvar meant exactly the opposite. If it is granted that this *kural* is rightly translated, I am fortified in my analysis of history though my characterisation of Valluvar would lack precision. I think however, the translator, himself a historian, is having a subconscious orientation towards true historical position (as I have just described) and makes Valluvar his mouth-piece. To illustrate, against what tendency in kings and princes the *Kural* is arguing, I like to quote Mr. K. V. Rangasamy Ayyengar of ancient Indian polity. "We shall by analogy," he says "be able to realise the transforming influence of Brahminic law and polity in ancient India. That these inferences are not based entirely on analogy or surmise will also be clear if we take into further consideration the imposing series of references in our inscriptions and in the literature of India and Ceylon from the Gupta period down to the threshold of modern times — in which the rulers of different parts of India living in different times, often rulers of non-Aryan descent display keen anxiety to be remembered by posterity as those who strictly carried out the precepts laid down by Manu, the Dharmasastras, and the Nitisastras."

Before closing this subject of the historical role of Valluvar's thought, I like to mention how preposterously inapt such materialistic conception of history and its determinism seems to us when applied to our society. These are the words of Marx. "The phantasmagorias in the human brain are

enforced supplements of man's material vital process. Morality, religion *etc.*, in general with their appropriate forms of consciousness thus forfeit the semblance of independence."

Valluvar is fully alive to this vital process of material production in society and assigns to it its legitimate perspective. To him poverty is not merely something to be pitied, it is perhaps the greatest evil that one could be afflicted with on earth and as a remedy he *suavely* suggests that there are wrongs to be set right. About the peasant he says that every one including kings must prostrate themselves before him because he is the giver of food. Notwithstanding all these there are some other things like individual self respect and social *dharma*, or justice which he values more.

J. B. Bury, the historian is reported to have said "The forms of Government which are commonly classed as absolute monarchies have not received the same attention or been so carefully analysed as republics and constitutional monarchies". Indeed it is so. The monarchical institutions portrayed in *Kural* is neither despotic nor autocratic. There are so many warnings in the name of justice and equity to the monarch, adequate safeguards against misrule, severe injunctions never to disobey that blend of custom, law and morality which in Tamil is called "*Aram*" (Justice) (which should not be confused with *Dharma* of Sanskrit). One wonders whether Valluvar is trying to convey in a nebulous way the juristic conception of the state and hoists sovereignty on to the wisdom and conscience of society viz. "*Aram*".

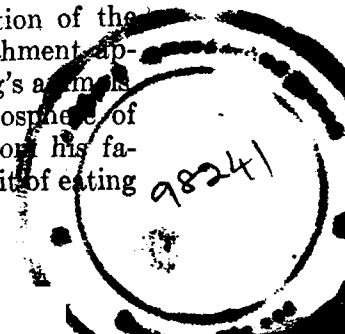
His analysis of state, society and government which he respectively calls as "*Arasu*" "*Nadu*" and "*Senkonman*" leave nothing to be desired and indeed can stand comparison with the best literature of anytime. There is the King's ministry to advise and act in his name. There is also a council of elders whose help the king may seek in times of stress and strain. The other essential departments of government, the court, the corps of diplomats, the standing army, forts and police are shrewdly discussed and vividly portrayed. Of course Valluvar is quite oblivious that there could be other forms of government or that there could be other forms of schism in the body social as existed elsewhere. It is only natural, that his thought conditioned by his environment was

chiefly concerned with the greatest schism of caste hegemony. Perhaps this should explain the mystery of centuries of political stagnation, and dearth of imaginative ventures into the fields of political philosophy in our land. Mr. K. V. Rangasamy Aiyangar in *Ancient Indian Polity* says :

"The Brahmans class formed a privileged body in some respects like the clergy in Medieval Europe. But the Brahmans did not form a state within the state because they had no organisation fitting them to act together for common purpose under acknowledged leaders. Thus we arrive at the negative conclusion that neither theocratic nor sacerdotal would be appropriate terms to describe our old polity by." Here the learned author misses the obvious explanation. They were not a state within the state simply because they did not recognise a sovereign state outside themselves. They might not have had an organisation in the ordinary sense of the term. They had something better than that — they had the caste hierarchy at their command. Ancient Indian polity is certainly not theocratical. Nobody would call the serving of the purposes of a dominant minority theocratical. Religion, everything else becomes instrumental.

Turning back to *Kural*, we find nothing in it that could be called utopian with ethereal standardisations or mere wish fulfilment. In fact it is characterised by a peculiar sense of robust realism of right proportions that does not descend to despicable depths of vulgarism or immorality. In this it stands utterly contrasted with *Arthasastra*.

To quote from *Arthasastra* : "The king is practically an autocrat who is generally inaccessible, showing himself to the people only once in a month or two in order to prevent disturbances caused by rumours of his death (Stalin might have read this in addition to his catechism on Marx). He is so removed from the common folk that he is to converse with envoys and subjects only through his ministers. He is constantly guarded by troops of women armed with bows. Much importance is attached to high birth. The position of the ruler is so exalted that impalement is the punishment appointed for a man who merely teases even the king's armorer. But at the same time the king lives in an atmosphere of suspicion and treachery guarding himself even from his family, for "princes like crabs, have a well known trait of eating



up their parents, and confiding rulers have come to grief." Let us now quote from *Thirukkural*. 'The king is impartial and just. He must protect his people. But that is no excuse for his maltreating them. He must take paths to find out and punish evil doers, it is something like the peasant weeding out his fertile field.' It is my opinion that Valluvar had read Kautilya and read him to advantage. There are 10 couplets dealing with who a "Duta" is, what his duties are and relations with the princes. They form such a quintessence of diplomatic wisdom and foresight that every one of the ambassadors of our government, should be admonished on penalty of forfeiture of their office to get them by heart and recite them before going to bed. Here again *Arthasastra* runs true to form. 'Intrigue, sowing dissensions among friends, fetching secret force, easing away by stealth relatives and gems, gathering information about spies, breaking of treaties of peace — these are few of the duties of an envoy which the *Kural* definitely does not mention but Kautilya recommends. But undoubtedly *Arthasastra* is more practical or scientific — if you will. *Kural* is cursed with the Tamilians' vice of vague generalisation and sterile abstraction. Even here the advantages are not all on one side. For instance talking on medicine *Kural* expatiates about balanced food, methods of hygiene, diagnosis and clinics, which are eternally true. In a like instance the author of *Arthasastra* scrupulously puts down how may cat's eye and owl's eye be used in a powder to make one see in the dark or to make one visible to others. Sometimes, I think it is wise if we leave out details such as these, especially when we mean something for posterity.

Of course Valluvar cannot be compared with Machiavelli. I remember Morea, the Italian political thinker, writing in his book "Ruling Class" that this fashion of overrating Machiavelli something like applauding smart Alec of Big Business for having written an economic treatise from his experience of the Stock Exchange. *Kural* is certainly not meant for the Bourgeois but only for Asoka and Aureliuses. So what *kural* loses in its positivism it more than makes up in its essential morality and nationality, in its breadth of vision and depth of thought.

After another searching and elaborate enquiry into Greek political ideas, E. L. Myers says that "they resulted from

an unusually successful attempt to solve the problem of living, not merely in so far as to maintain life with a fair degree of security against external and internal dangers but in the sense that the life so maintained was a good life with an ideal of behaviour and of well-being in view, and a large measure of success in attaining. That ideal was a high one, nothing less than independence in its two aspects of self-sufficiency and self-mastery, reasonable control over goods and physical circumstances of self-control no less guided by reason in the corporate enjoyment of the fruits of co-operative effort." That in few words is the Greek view of life. That in few words is Valluvar's view of life also and it finds its fullest vesture, in the short couplets that he wove out of the finest threads of reason and justice. Plato created his REPUBLIC to spite Athenian Democracy and to show off Sparta. Aristotle failed to realise the momentous crisis that was overtaking his city-state when he sat composing his meticulous work. Valluvar sang his *Kural* fully believing in humanity, in its roll, in its achievements and in its destiny. He was not a Plato of Tamilians for he never surveyed the political world from a balloon in the air. He analysed the components that constitute a state — a good state — so fully and systematically that he can be termed more Aristotelian than Platonic.

Jain Vestiges in Coimbatore District

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

COIMBATORE, the headquarters of the district which goes by its name in the State of Madras, is well-known to-day as the "Manchester of South India." There is perhaps not another place in the whole of this region to equal it not only in the numerous spinning and weaving mills it possesses but also in the general standard of wealth, health civilisation and culture. But few are interested in studying the history of this district and particularly the development of culture in this area. Of the era preceding the period of British occupation of the district, which began in 1799, particularly little or nothing is known.

In this paper I propose to make an enquiry into a subject which forms part of a larger whole, viz., the cultural development of the Coimbatore region in early times and the particular subject for enquiry here is an estimate of the Jain contribution to this quota. So many vestiges of Jainism are to be found in this district that there is no doubt about the great influence this religion must have exerted over the people of this region in early times. That it must have been much more than any one would suspect is certain. Names of places like Seenapuram clearly remind one of the early Jain influence over the region; while old Jain shrines found in places like Vijayamangalam, Tirumurthimalai and Karur bear an equally strong evidence to the same. A figure of the Jain Thrithankara is found in Tirumurthimalai; and a number of Jain beds are found to this day in Arunattarmalai in Karur Taluk while in Arasannamalai near Vijayamangalam the Neminatha temple has been now converted into a Vinayaka temple. Not only this. The district of Coimbatore in early times seems to

M. Arokiaswamy, M.A., Ph. D; is Lecturer in Indian History and Archeology, University of Madras.

have been the home of several Jain scholars, not the least of whom was the great Bavanandi, the author of the celebrated Tamil grammar, *Nannul*, who seems to have lived in the region of Vijayamangalam in Erode Taluk.

It is impossible for us to explain these vestiges unless we postulate a period of Jain glory in the district at some time during its sojourn in South India. The *Kongadesarajakkal*, a XVII century Tamil Mss., which has been recently edited by Mr. C. M. Ramachandran Chettiar, Advocate, Coimbatore,¹ brings to light a set of seven rulers called Rattas (*Rashtrakutas*?) in this region during the period between 250 A.D. and 400 A.D. Many if not all of them are represented in this work as professors and strong supporters of Jainism.² In the reign of the fourth ruler, Govindaraya, a grant to the Jain Arishtanna is mentioned and in that of the sixth ruler, Kanaradeva, the names of three great Jain theologians, of whom one Naganandi is mentioned by name, are referred to.³

The history of the origin of the Ganga dynasty of Mysore indicates even more clearly how deep-rooted was Jainism in the district of Coimbatore in early times. It would appear that in the closing years of the IV century A.D., King Padmanabha of the Gangas had to send his two sons, Dadiga and Madhava to the south by way of preparing himself to meet his enemy, King Mahipala of Ujjain.⁴ The rest of the narration as found in Rice's words is as follows :

"When they arrived at Perur, which is still distinguished from other Perurs as Ganga-Perur (in Cuddapah district), they met there the Jain Achariya Simhanandi. He was interested in the story of these Ganga princes and taking them by the hand, gave them instruction and training and eventually procured for them a kingdom."⁵

Many Ganga records like the Udayendiram plates of Prithvipati II, the Kudlur grant of Marasimha and the Santara inscription on the Huncha stone* bear clear evidence to the fact that Simhanandi gave them a kingdom and that he

¹ Madras Govt. Oriental Series, VI, 1950.

² Ibid., pp. 1-2.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Rice; Mysore and Coorg; p. 31.

⁵ Rice: op., cit., loc., cit.

was a reputed Jain teacher. The last mentioned record indeed refers to him as "the achariya who made the Ganga kingdom.":

"Ganga-rajyamam madida Simhanandy acharyya."⁶ Indrabhuti in his *Samayabhushana* names him as a great poet to be kept on par with Elacharya and Pujiyapada.⁷ Still, no better description can be given of Simhanandi than what is found in the Jaina record near the Siddhesvara temple at Kallurgudda in Shimoga Taluk:

"The Vijaya or victory to the farthest shore of learning, the full moon to the ocean of the Jaina congregation, possessed of patience and all the ten excellent qualities, his good life, a secure wealth, rejoicing in the modest, his fame extending to the four oceans, keeping at a distance from the evil, a sun in the sky of the Kranurgana, devoted to the performance of the twelve kinds of penance, promoter of the Ganga kingdom—Sri Simhanandiacharyya."⁸

On the other hand we owe to the evidence of inscriptional records like those of the Parsvanathi Basti at Sravana Belgola and others to be seen at Kallurgudda and Purale in Shimoga Taluk that Madhava definitely came under the influence of Simhanandi, who initiated him into Jain doctrines and conferred on him a kingdom on condition that he always took care to uphold that Faith throughout its confines.⁹ The latter two give a detailed account of this origin of the Ganga Kingdom, which deserves to be quoted at least in part, as it gives one an idea of the depth of Jain influence that ruled over the region where the Ganga kingdom was founded:

"On Madhava impressing him with his extraordinary energy . . . Simhanandi made a coronet of the petals of the Karnikara flowers bound it on Madhava's head, gave them (the two brothers) the dominion of all the earth, presented them with a flag made from his peacock fan and furnished them with attendants, elephants

⁶ EC., VIII, Nr. 35.

⁷ IA., XII, 20.

⁸ EC., VII, Sh. 4

⁹ Ibid, also 64.

and horses. Along with these he gave them also the following advice: 'If you fail in what you have promised, if you do not approve the Jina sasana; if you seize the wives of others; if you indulge in wine and flesh; if you form relationship with the low; if you give not your wealth to the needy; if you flee from the field or battle—your race will go to ruin.

The question that has to be decided here is the identification of Perur mentioned in Ganga records. Taken in conjunction with the history of the Rattas, the *Kongadesarajakkal* furnishes proof that it was on their fall that the Gangas rose to power and began ruling from Skandapura in Kongudesa (which is the ancient name for the territory comprising the modern districts of Coimbatore and Salem). The chronicle would even inform us that the last Ratta ruler changed his religion from Jainism to Saivism and that was the cause of his downfall. Further, all the early activities of Konganivarman—as the first historical ruler of the Ganga house becomes known in all the records of this dynasty—are confined to this Kongudesa.¹⁰ It is true that we lack definite epigraphic evidence in support of this, which we have mainly only from the Tamil chronicle above referred to. But it must be remembered that in the first place we have only a few records for the Ganga period here referred to; and even the few references that we have to the early grants of the Gangas seem to refer only to places in Coimbatore district. Such are places like "*Kudluru*" to the west of the Totla and east of "*Marukarevisaya*", in which the names of Kudluru and Marukarevisaya are easily identifiable with the present Gudalur and Madukarai in this area.¹¹

The conclusion naturally follows that Perur here referred to as the spot on which Madhava was initiated into Jainism and conferred a kingdom on condition that he upheld it through all its confines must be the Perur within 3 miles from Coimbatore. We have numerous evidences to show that, at the time referred to and for long afterwards this Perur was indeed an important place. The place referred to by this

¹⁰ Kongadesarajakkal (Or. Mss. Edn.) pp. 2-3.

¹¹ Kudaluru grant of Madhavavarman; MAR., 1930.

name cannot be the Perur in Cuddapah district, as Rice surmises, where no Jain remains are to be found. The tradition is that Dadiga and Madhava were sent to the south of Mysore, as already indicated. Further, the very title assumed by the first ruler as Madhava Konganivarman seems to give an unmistakable proof of this conclusion, since as the *Kongadesarajakkal* aptly remarks :

“ As wealth, the Kongu country and great munificence were possessed by him he was styled Srimat Konganivarman Dharmamahadiraja.”¹²

while the mention of Simhanandi as a “ person of the southern country ” in the inscription at Parsvanatha Basti at Sravana Belgola already referred to, seems to set the seal upon this conclusion.

It is an agreed fact that the canarese country of which modern Mysore forms the crown and centre furnished a home for the religion of Mahavira in the days when it was not very much liked by his own countrymen of the north. The *Brihatkatha* of Harisena clearly refers to the migration of the Bhadrabahu mission from Mysore to Punnata in the years following the death of Chandragupta Maurya.¹³ Historians are not yet agreed as to what country is meant by the name, ‘Punnata.’ All available evidences seem to point to the region of S. Coorg and N. Coimbatore district as the region designated as ‘Punnata’ by Harisena, so that it would appear that a portion at least of the modern district of Coimbatore was the central hearth of Jainism even before the beginning of the Christian era.

A copper plate grant of the Ganga King Durvaniti seems to give a direct clue to this identification, when it refers to the King's conquest of Punnata in his 20th. regnal year.¹⁴ On the other hand, the Komaralingam copper plates of the Punnata King Ravidatta indicate the occupation of the Kingdom by Durvaniti by positing a break in the regular line of Punnata rulers.¹⁵ The latter plates record the grant of the village of Pungisoge by Ravidatta while on his victorious

¹² Kongadesarajakkal (Taylor's trans.); MJLS., XIV.

¹³ Rice; Mysore Inscriptions, p. 146; IA., XVIII, 366.

¹⁴ MAR., 1916.

¹⁵ IA., XVIII, 362.

march and in his camp at Kirtipura — a place generally identified in the southern portion of modern Mysore. Whatever be the strength of this identification, it cannot be definitely said what region was comprised in this kingdom of Punnata.

In the first place, it must be remembered that Kirtipura was not its capital, as has often been maintained by writers, but only a camp in the victorious march of King Ravidatta. It is quite possible that he had undertaken a campaign in the attempt to strengthen his possessions, which had suffered during the occupation of Durvaniti. The mention of various grants made on the occasion from Kirtipura of places like Kolur, Kodamuku etc., “ to persons to whom they belonged,” as the grant clearly mentions, only confirm this conclusion. Further, the copper plate grant which gives evidence here is obtained from the village of Komaralingam in the Udumalpet Taluk in the modern district of Coimbatore; and Ptolemy designates a country called ‘Ponnuta’ as a “land of beryls,” so much found in the Kangayam area of the same district. Besides, the donor of the grant, Ravidatta, expressly states that he is making it with the permission of the Cheramman :

“ While his, Ravidatta's, victorious camp is at the town of Kirtipura, which is the best of towns, with the permission of Cheramma(n) the village known as Pungisoge in the east central desa in the Kudugur nadu which is in the Punnadu vishaya has been granted.”¹⁶

As has been already said, several villages like Kolur, Kodamuku, Tanagundur and Elagovanur are mentioned as coming under other grants made on the same occasion. Though these names must still remain unidentified, it is clear that all these places abutted on the Kongu frontier. The location of Pungisoge as mentioned in the above quoted passage, “in the east central desa in the Kudugurnadu (modern Coorg) only supports this conclusion. The name Elagovanur itself suggests the possibility of a location near to if not Coimbatore itself. That Ravidatta was a feudatory of the Cera sovereign of the time is put beyond doubt by the permission he is said to have obtained from the Cheramman for issuing the grants referred to.

¹⁶ Komaralingam Copper plates, 11., 11 ff.

From all these considerations it seems but natural to conclude that the Kingdom of Punnata must have been a small state carved out from parts of S. Mysore and N. Coimbatore during the period of the weak rule of the Gangas over Kongu, possibly immediately after the death of Vishnugopa. This period seems to have offered a golden opportunity for Chera revival. Though silence is no argument the omission of the Chera name in all the victories detailed in the inscriptions of the various Ganga rulers from Kongani I down to Durvaniti is very significant. A few inscriptions from Vellalur in Coimbatore district give the names of two Cera rulers, Kokkandan Viranarayana and Kokkandan Ravikodan who style themselves "sovereign jewels of the luni-solar race."¹⁷ Unfortunately there is no indication about their date, except the fact that the letters of the records are of old archaic characters. On the other hand, the style assumed by the kings, "jewels of the luni-solar race" clearly indicates the Cera-Pandya connections, since the moon (luna) is mentioned. The effective appearance of the Pandya in Kongu occurs only in the VII century AD, so that it may be safely surmised that these inscriptions of the Cera must belong roughly only to this period.

These points of information help us to posit

(a) that the Ceras had come on a decline after the era of the sangam age and it helped the rise of ganga power in Kongu and Karnataka ;

(b) that the Ceras made attempts to revive in the VII century AD ;

(c) that the Vellalur inscriptions record the establishment of Cera power once again in Kongu ;

(d) that the line of rulers of the Komaralingam copper plates were Cera feudatories.

From these deductions the identification of the Punnata country seems plausible. It must have been a kingdom subordinate to the Ceras comprising parts of Coorg and Coimbatore district. Ptolemy's description of Punnata as " a land of beryl " seems definitely to point to the region of Kangayam in modern Coimbatore Dist. as lying within the kingdom of

¹⁷ ARE, 1910 pp. 147-48.

Punnata.¹⁸ The Mercara copper plates refer to Punnata as a "ten-thousand country ;" and, as Mr. Rice contends, it must be the same as the later-day "Padi-Nadu" (Ten country), mentioned in the Yelandur inscription of AD. 1654¹⁹ In locating this region the above mentioned record clearly mentions the place 'Tarapura,' evidently modern Dharapuram in the district of Coimbatore, which is said to lie SE of the kingdom.²⁰ The fact that equidistant to both Kangayam and Dharapuram (lying within a distance of six miles) is Padiyur, which is still famous for the far-famed beryls of Ptolemy, must be taken as giving a very strong confirmation to the view here advanced. That Coorg and this region of Coimbatore district must have once formed a unit in early times is seen from what the celebrated historian of Mysore, Col. Wilks, records in his "History of Mysore" :

"In the southern part of Mysore the Tamil language is at this day named the *Gangee* from being best known to them as the language of the people of Kankayam."²¹

On the other hand, the same Wilks bears testimony to the fact that for some time the Cera king had complete mastery over this region, when he says :

"Cheran united Kangiam and Salem to the dominions of Kerela of Malabar."²²

Even the name 'Punnata' can be explained. It seems to be just a corruption of the name, 'Ponnadu' the land of gold. That there was much gold to be had from the region of Coorg and Kongu is unexceptionable. While the Mysore gold mines bear evidence to this in some indirect way, the XVII century Tamil work, *Maduraikalambakam* speaks of the "gold that is found in Konku" (Konguraippon), thus bearing a direct testimony to the Kongu wealth of gold.²³

¹⁸ McCrindle : Anc. India.

¹⁹ Mys. Inss., p. 283, 334.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 334.

²¹ Wilks, Mysore, p. 4, F. N. 2.

²² op., cit., p. 5.

²³ The term Ponnadu seems to have been analogous to the name of the Cola country watered by the Cauvery, viz., the 'Punalnadu'.

Thus we are able to posit that the region of modern Coimbatore was a central hearth of Jainism in the south at least three centuries before the Christian era and that it continued to be so for a long time afterwards certainly throughout the period of the Ganga rule. An inscription of the XII century while referring to the Hoysala conquest of Kongu under Vishnuvardhana (1120 AD.), speaks of his general in that region, Gangarajah of great fame as "a devout Jain."²⁴ We need not try to trace the later history of Jainism in Kongu. Probably it came on a period of steady decline from that date onwards. But what has been so far said is enough to explain the numerous Jain vestiges in this region, to be seen to this day.

²⁴ See Sastri; Colas, II, i.

Beginnings of Tamil Rule in Ceylon

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

IN ANCIENT times Ceylon was divided into four provinces, Nagadipa in the North, Kalyani in the South West, Rohana in the South East and Malaya in the Centre. Mediaeval Ceylon consisted of three Ratas or countries: The first was Pihiti or Rajarata, the king's country which almost coincided with the ancient Nagadipa and was situated roughly above the Deduru Oya and Mavaliganga: the second was Maya or Mahaya Rata, the country of the sub-king which was to the south of the Deduru Oya as far as Kaluganga and the third was Ruhuna extending all over the East and South of the Island as cut off by the Kaluganga and Mavaliganga. We have seen in the last Chapter, that the inhabitants of Nagadipa were never fully reconciled to the new belief which came to the firmly established under Devanampiya Tissa (247 - 207 B.C.) In their heart of hearts they clung to their old religion and had constant communication with the Tamils of the main land who were often found in their midst as merchants and dealers. They ever nurtured a spirit of revolt and were only too ready to stretch out a helping hand to any adventurer who would attempt to curb the sovereign power of the Sinhalese. An occasion soon presented itself.

When Suratassa was reigning at Anuradhapura the two Tamils Sena and Guttaka "sons of a freighter who brought horses hither" conquered the king "at the head of a great army." They were evidently from South India and were in the Island as dealers in horses like many other merchants who frequented the country. Where they raised their "great army" we are not told. If that army was not formed of the local Tamils, the latter certainly approved the two Indians seizing the Sinhalese throne. The Mahavamsa itself has but praise for the Tamil rulers. It says that the two brothers

"reigned both together for twenty two years justly."¹ (B. C. 237 - 215) If the usurpers had brought their army from India the chances are that a considerable accession would have been made to the Tamils of the North.

As pointed out by Tennent, there was a reason for the Sinhalese themselves to acquiesce in the rule of this country by Tamils from India which was so often repeated in the course of as many as fifteen centuries. That reason was the intimate relation which originally existed between Tamils and the Sinhalese. "Vijaya himself was connected by maternal descent with the king of Kalinga, now known as the Northern Circars; his second wife was the daughter of the king of Pandya, and the ladies who accompanied her to Ceylon were given in marriage to his ministers and officers."² Brito adds these interesting details: The Pandiyan sent out his own maiden daughter with 699 maidens chosen from among his nobility. These 700 ladies landed with their retinue safely at Cottiar. (Cassie Chetty's Gazetteer). The princess was attended by a personal staff of 18 officers of state, 75 menial servants (being horse-keepers, elephant-keepers and charioteers), besides numerous slaves. It may reasonably be assumed that each of these 18 officers was accompanied by his wives and children, his men-servants and maid-servants and his male-slaves and female-slaves. In like manner each of the 699 noble maidens was accompanied by attendants, servants and slaves, of both sexes. And there were also numbers of families of each of the five sorts of tradesmen who came to Ceylon on this occasion. (Rajavali p. 175, Tennent I 458). These facts swell the number of the original Tamil colonists to at least twenty times that of the Magadhi settlers. And it must be borne in mind that the way once made for these colonists was kept open by a communication which Vijaya carried on with Madura during his whole reign of 38 years. He sent pearls and chanks to his father-in-law from time to time of the annual value of two lakhs. Such a communication could not have failed to lead to a continual influx of the Tamils from the continent in his and the succeeding reigns.³ "Inti-

¹ Mahavamsa Chapter 21

² Tennent Ceylon I, 394-5.

³ Yalpana-Vaipava-malai, p. 1v.

mate intercourse and consanguinity, were thus established from the remotest period. Adventurers from the opposite coast were encouraged by the previous settlers."

Such a reason might have naturally suggested itself to Elalan or Elara "a Damila of noble descent" from the Chola country who, only ten years after Asela the Sinhalese successor of Sena and Gultaka was in power, landed at Mahavatutota near Trincomalee with a large army and seized the throne. He reigned forty-four years over the entire Nagadipa or Rajarata, compelling the chieftains of Rohuna and Maya to acknowledge his supremacy and pay him tribute, "He reigned with even justice toward friend and foe" says the Mahavamsa which goes on adding some instances of his absolutely impartial justice: At the head of his bed he had a bell hung up with a long rope so that those who desired a judgement at law might ring it. The king had only one son and one daughter. When once the son of the ruler was going in a car to the Tissa-tank, he killed unintentionally a young calf lying on the road with the mother cow, by driving the wheel over its neck. The cow came and dragged at the bell in bitterness of heart; and the king caused his son's head to be severed (from his body) with that same wheel." Let us remark that this is a stock incident related in Tamil literature about the mythical Chola king Manu. After relating some other wonderful achievements in his life the Buddhist analyst says about the pious Hindu: "Only because he freed himself from the guilt of walking in the path of evil did this (monarch), though he had not put aside false beliefs, gain such miraculous power; how should not then an understanding man, established in pure belief, renounce here the guilt of walking in the path of evil?" Of Elalan the Pujavaliya adds that he established thirty two fortresses in Rajarata and employed twenty great champions.⁴ But the allegation that he destroyed religion throughout Lanka can only mean that the inhabitants of his realm began to practise their old religion openly. The Rajavaliya also seems to voice the sentiments of some bigots when it affirms that Elalan "reigned wickedly."⁵ (B. C. 205 - 161).

⁴ Extracts from the Pujavaliya by Mudliyar B. Gunasekara, p. 15.

⁵ refer to page 7 of this chapter.

When Dutthagamani had slain Elalan in single combat and ascended the throne, Bhalluka the latter's nephew arrived from India with a following of 60,000 men at arms (or 30,000 according to the Rajavaliya) in response to his uncle's invitation. Learning that Elalan was no more he made a bid for the throne himself, but was defeated and killed.⁶ That all his army was slain is doubtless an exaggeration by the Buddhist Chronicles. It is more probable that those who escaped with their lives found an asylum among their kinsmen of the Northern country.

The Rajavaliya mentions a more successful invasion in B.C. 103. "Seven Tamils landed on the Island of Lanka bringing with them 7000 men from the Soli country and drove out king Valagambahu. One of the seven Tamils having pursued the king, carried off his chief queen; another of them carried off the dish from which the Buddha used to eat. The remaining five Tamils succeeded one another and reigned 14 years."⁷

The same Chronicle records that during the reign of Vankanasika Tissa (A.D. 110-113) a Chola king made a predatory descent on Ceylon and carried away 12,000 Sinhalese as slaves to work on the embankment of the Kavery. Gajabahu I, the son and the successor of the Sinhalese king, avenged the outrage by invading the Chola country and bringing to Ceylon a large multitude of Cholas together with the redeemed captives. The Cholian Tamils are said to have been established in a number of villages of the Alutkuru Korale where they lost their identity among the Sinhalese inhabitants.⁸ This is one of the many instances of infusing fresh Tamil blood into the Sinhalese people. It is also of interest to note that Gajabahu brought with him a jewelled anklet of the Goddess Pattini whose worship he introduced in Ceylon. He is also said to have brought back the bowl relic of the Buddha carried away in the days of king Valagambahu.⁹

⁶ Mahavamsa XXV, 77-97.

⁷ Rajavaliya p. 44.

⁸ Ibid pp. 44-49.

⁹ Cf. R. A. S., C. B. Vol. XIII,

pp. 144-149. The Cilappatikaram mentions the visit to India of a Gajabahu king of Ceylon but on a friendly mission.

Anuradhapura was again taken by Pandu and five other Tamil chiefs from India in A.D. 436. All Sinhalese noble families fled to Rohana beyond the Mahavali-ganga. The entire land of Rajarata was under Tamil rule for twenty seven years. Five of the invaders occupied the throne one after another, when, Dhatu Sena was able to overpower them at last. With regard to this Sinhalese king's reign Tennent remarks: "Dhatu Sena, after his victory, seems to have made an attempt, though an ineffectual one, to reverse the policy that had operated under his predecessors as an incentive to the immigration of Malabars; settlement and intermarriages had been all along encouraged and even during the recent usurpation, many Sinhalese families of rank had formed connections with the Damilos. The schisms among the Buddhist themselves, tending as they did to engraft Brahmanical rites upon the doctrines of the purer faith, seem to have promoted and matured the intimacy between the two people; some of the Sinhalese kings erected temples to the gods of the Hindus, and the promoters of the Wytulian heresy found a refuge from persecution amongst their sympathisers in the Dekkan."¹⁰

If we may believe the Vaipava-malai's statement about Kulak-kodan's visit to Trincomalee, it was probably during the Tamil rule of this period that the Vanniyas from India began to colonize the country between Trincomalee and Mantota. The Tamil history mentions the correct date of king Pandu as Saka 358 which works out as A. D. 436. He is made to reign at Anuradhapura, another correct detail. At Trincomalee Kulakkoddu-maharaja repaired the ruined Konesar temple and sending for the Vanniyar from the coast of India put them in charge of the temple and the lands he had allotted for its support. Here Mailvakana-pulavar relates many legendary accounts taken doubtless from the Konesar Kalveddu and the Vijaya¹¹ but the central fact of the Vanniyas being connected with the Konesar temple seems historical. In India they were a fighting caste. Probably large contingents of them had accompanied the Tamil invaders at various times and remained behind. Later, they set themselves up as petty chiefs in various parts of the north, some of them be-

¹⁰ Tennent I, 397-8.

¹¹ Vaipava-malai p. 4-8.

coming or begin nominated as managers of the temple of Trincomalee. The Vaipava-malai also speaks of their increasing in number and power in course of time. And the name and date of the king of Anuradhapura who curbed their pride and reduced them to the rank of Atikaris are correctly given as Aggrabodhi (the first of the name) in the year 515, Saka year, which is A.D. 593. This is another purple patch in an otherwise confused medley of facts and legends.

Another invasion claimed by the Pallava Narasimhavarman¹² (630-668) but actually by Manavamma with the help of that Pallava king is noteworthy as having brought fresh accession to the Tamils in Ceylon. He was the son of Kasyapa 11 but was excluded from regal power by Dhathopatisa 11 who ascended the throne (664). Manavamma fled to India and took service under Narasimhavarman and was present at the battle of Vatapi in which this monarch defeated Pulakasa 11 in 642. Now Manavamma returned to Ceylon with an army furnished by Narasimhavarman and succeeded in taking Anuradhapura but had soon to return to this patron for further help. Invading Ceylon after the reign of three of its kings "he raised the imperial banner of sovereignty over all Lanka."¹³ (691-726).

The story of Ukkirasingan in the Vaipava-malai looks like a travesty of Manavamma's first taking possession of the north and then the south of Ceylon. In spite of many a wild fancy it gives a date for his invasion which makes the story likely to be based on some historical fact. Advocate Britto, the translator of the Vaipava-malai into English has a note about this in an unpublished work entitled *Viruttiyam*. It says "In Knighton (p. 111) we read: There was a scion, Mahalaipamu, of the royal blood of Ceylon, who having obtained aid from an Indian king named Narasinha, invaded Ceylon, but was defeated. Repairing again to his patron, he obtained a large force, by means of which he was completely successful. And he ascended the throne in A.D. 720. The Saka year 717 of the Vaipava-malai is evidently a mistake for A.D. 717.

¹² His grandfather Simha Vishnu also claimed in one of his inscriptions to have vanquished the Sinhala king: Dubreuil: *Pallavas* p. 73.

¹³ Mahavamsa Ch. XLVII

The author of the Vaipava-malai lived in Jaffna during the Dutch period and collected his materials, as he says in his preface, from other authors some of whom probably gave their dates in A.D., and not in Saka. Accustomed to use the Saka year, the author sometimes adds the word Saka to the Christian year without first altering the Christian year to correspond with the Saka year. Sometimes he adds the number 78 to the Christian year, intending to subtract that number in order to reduce the Christian to the Saka year. This is an instance in which he adds the word Saka to the Christian year. If it is so, there is still a difference of three years. That difference is not great. Nor is it unaccountable. It may be that 717 A.D. is the year of the first and unsuccessful attempt, while 720 is the year of the conquest. According to the Sinhalese account Narasinkan is the name of the patron of the conqueror. According to the Tamil account, that same is the name of the Conqueror's son and successor.¹⁴

The story of Ukkirasinkan then is based on a historical fact the slight disparity of dates notwithstanding. The author of the Vaipava-malai considered Manavamma whom he confuses with Narsinhavarman and also in part with Kalinga Magha (to be spoken of in the next chapter as a king of Jaffna), but the northern kingdom did not come into existence yet. New colonists were gradually preparing the way. Aside from the large accessions to the older population brought in the train of Tamil invasions, the opposing factions of Ceylon

Rajavaliya translation by Mudlyr B. Gunasekara, p. 25. "An indication that the rule of the Tamil king, Elara, was democratic, is afforded by an inscription found near Anuradhapura, with points to the fact that Elara granted his subjects freedom of discussion and assembly which had been denied by some Sinhalese kings to all except the privileged few. The inscription had been discovered at a place to the north of Anuradhapura about 500 yards behind the building known as the Elephant Stables. The inscription itself was found on the vertical side of a stone terrace leading up to a stone platform mounted on a large boulder. According to the inscription the stone terrace and platform were erected at the instance of a person known as "Sammanna, tha Tamil". It is described as the prasada (platform) of the Tamil householders who foregathered to discuss important questions. The suggestion is that the leading householders of the time foregathered in such central places to hold consultations on matters of moment." *The time of Ceylon*, 20-10-45.

¹⁴ Britto's MS p. 100.

rulers themselves were in the habit of hiring the services of the warlike South Indian Tamils one against the other. To mention a few instances : In A.D. 38 we hear of king Fla Naga (a Sinhalese probably with Naga antecedents) betaking himself to the continent for bringing "a mighty force" to defeat the Lambakannos.¹⁵ In 237 Abhaya Naga has recourse to a Tamil army for overthrowing the reigning king Voharika Tissa.¹⁶ Mogollana I (497-515) goes to the main land to bring an army for defeating his brother Kasyapa I, parricide and founder of the fortress of Sigiriya.¹⁷ During the reign of Sila Meyavanna (614-623) Sri Naga proceeds to South India and returning with a large army of Tamils takes possession of the northern dominion. The king however defeated him. Of his followers many were killed the rest being captured and distributed among the various Vihares as slaves.¹⁸ Again Agra-bodhi III brings a Tamil army for defeating Jettha Tissa III (623-4).¹⁹ On several other occasions Sinhalese rulers had recourse to mercenaries from South India who enrolled themselves indifferently under any leader and deposed and restored kings at their pleasure. "For four hundred years," says Tennent "from the seventh till the eleventh century, the exploits and excapades of the Malabars occupy a more prominent portion of the Sinhalese annals than that devoted to the policy of the native sovereigns. They filled every office, including that of Prime Minister, and they decided the claims of competing candidates for the crown. At length the country became so infested by their numbers that the feeble monarchs found it impracticable to effect their exclusion from Anuradhapura. Hence to escape from their proximity, the kings in the eighth century began to move southwards, and transferred their residence to Pollanarrua, which eventually became the capital of the kingdom."²⁰

The teeming Tamil population of the North was anxious to throw off the yoke of the Sinhalese sovereigns. We find their chiefs ever ready to cast in their lot with any one who

¹⁵ Mahavamsa XXXV, 27-45.

¹⁶ Ibid XXXVI, 42-51.

¹⁷ Rajavaliya p. 55.

¹⁸ Mahavamsa XLIV, 70-73.

¹⁹ Ibid XLIV, 103-112.

²⁰ Tennent I p. 400.

chose to revolt against the central authority. When Agra-bodhi VII died in 781 "the chiefs of the districts of the Northern country with the dwellers in the province seized the land by force and refused tribute to the king."²¹ Mahinda II the successor of the deceased king is said to have "crushed all the chiefs of districts together with the dwellers in the province." This was never effectually done. There was always some sort of military government among the Tamils. According to the tradition preserved by Trindade and after him by Queiroz²² there seems to have been in the land a military order of government composed of Vidanes, Araches and Mudaliyars or Captains. That they persisted in some sort of independence is seen by their again joining hands with the Pandiyans during the reign of Sena I (846-866) Anuradhapura was sacked and, notwithstanding that peace was subsequently made with the invaders, the king considered it prudent to transfer his royal seat to Polonaruwa.²³ He was the first to make this town the capital city although Aggabodhi IV is mentioned as the first to have had a temporary residence there.²⁴

In India the Cholas began, about the end of the ninth century, to assert their supremacy where the Pallavas and the Chalukyas had extended their sway. Dappula V had hardly come to the throne of Lanka in early tenth century, when a Pandyan king was fleeing from the Cholas and came to Ceylon begging for help. Internal dissensions in the Island prevented Dappula from acceding to his request, and the Pandyan had to return disappointed. He left, however, his crown and royal ornaments with the king of Ceylon.²⁵ The Cholas under Parantaka I attempted to obtain possession of the Pandyan regalia under Udaya III (864-972) and failed. They had however some success in subduing the northern parts. It is this abortive enterprise doubtless which furnished the occa-

²¹ Mahavamsa XLVIII, 83-85.

²² Trindade p. Queiroz, p. 37.

²³ Mahavamsa Ch. L.

²⁴ Ibid. XLVI. 74.

²⁵ Ibid. LIII, 5-9.

sion for Parantaka's boast in his inscriptions that he had conquered Ilam.²⁶ He also speaks of having killed the king of Ilam. This might have been a ruler of the North since we know Vijaya was not killed.

Again under Mahinda IV (975-991) the Chola king Vallabha, apparently Parantaka II sent a force to subdue Rajaratta. It landed at Nratota, but was not successful. The invaders had to make a friendly treaty with the king of Lanka.²⁷ The Tamils had soon the upper hand. Mahinda's son, Sena V (991-1001), thoughtlessly killed the brother of his general, who in his rage made over the government of the country to the Tamils. Sena took flight to Rohuna and sent an army to fight the general but with ill-success. In the meantime the Tamils oppressed the inhabitants of the country so much that they made an _____ to the king. He was forced in his helplessness to make a treaty with his infuriated general for pacifying him and returning to Polonaruwa resumed the government.²⁸

The Sinhalese fared worse under his successor Mahinda V who reigned at Anuradhapura (1001-1017). This was a weak monarch. He had not the wherewithal to pay the arrears of his Kerala army. They revolted and the king sought safety in flight to Rohuna. "In the remaining country Keralas Sihalas and Kannadas carried on the government as they pleased." At this juncture the great Chola emperor Rajaraja I (985-1012) bethought himself of adding Ceylon to his possessions in the South of India and sent a force of 95,000 Tamils according to the Pujavaliya and seized all the country save the remotest parts of the South still held by the Sinhalese. This was between 1001 and 1004. By about 1017 king Mahinda himself was captured and deported to India with his crown, jewels and the Pandyan regalia left by a fugitive king during an earlier reign. Mahinda died a captive in India.

²⁶ Epigr. Ind. Vol. vii p. 1.

²⁷ Ibid IV, 12-16. The author of *Ancient Jaffna* (261) sees reason to find the name of Vallabha in the legendry Valvar-kon-pallam of the Vaipava-malai.

²⁸ Ibid I iv, 57-70.

Ceylon was made a province of the Chola empire and named Mummudi Chola Mandalam. Polonaruwa, the capital was given the name of Jananathapuram with a viceroy in it. Mantota, the great port of ingress for Tamil armies, was renamed Rajarajapuram. Several Hindu temples were erected at the capital city and in other places. The land so long filled by irresistible tides of invasion, became now fit for the peaceful penetration of more and more Tamils from the mainland.

After Rajaraja I Ceylon continued to be subject to three Chola emperors in succession, Rajendra Deva II, Vira Rajendra and Adhi Rajendra the one time viceroy at Polonaruwa. The foreign rule lasted for more than seventy years, eighty six years say the Pujavaliya and Nikaya Sangrahawa.²⁹ There were occasional risings by the Sinhalese always repressed by the Cholas. According to the Manimangalam inscriptions of the Cholas three kings of Jaffna probably feudatories were deprived of their crown and killed during the Chola occupation of Ceylon: Manabharana before 1038-30, Sri Vallabha Madana Rajah in 1042 and Vira Sala Masha in 1012. At last, Vijayabahu I, profiting by the wars of succession among the Cholas in India which ended in the accession of Kulotunga Chola I 1069, had an easy walk over to Polonaruwa. He entered Anuradhapura in 1070 and was subsequently crowned king of all Ceylon.³¹ Among the many inscriptions during his rule of more than fifty five years, there was a remarkable Tamil inscription at Polonaruwa. By it the Velaikkara army of three divisions from South India, probably brought under the Cholas, made agreement with the king to protect the Tooth relic temple newly erected by him at the royal city now renamed Vijayarajapuram.³²

²⁹ Pujavaliya p. 33; NikayaSangrahawa p. 19.

³⁰ See *Ancient Jaffna* pp. 278-284.

³¹ Mahavamsa Ch. LV: LVIII. Cf. Codrington *History of Ceylon* Ch. III and IV.

³² See R. A. S. C. B. XXIX, 266 ff. As many members of the armies from the opposite coast the Velaikkaras also contributed their quota to the new colonization of the north. Cf. a land in Tolpuram kuricchi with a tombo name of Velaikkaran.

Since the death of Vijayabahu I, probably in 1,111, Ceylon again fell a prey to internecine conflict between members of the royal family till Parakramabahu I, by intrigues and blood shed, literally cut his way to the throne in 1153. We do not hear of the northern country as subject to the kings of Polonaruwa till this great king's accession. Under the Chola regime and later feudatory chiefs who often rebelled against the central authority conducted the government normally Parakramabahu the great seems to have kept down their rebellious spirit and to have exercised some sort of supremacy over them. The fact of his having employed Tamil soldiers mostly for his expeditions is significant. His Tamil inscription at Nainativu regulating traffic in the surrounding seas points to the sovereign authority he enjoyed in the extreme north. But after his death (1186) his successors found themselves unequal to the task of holding the north in check and there seems to have been a line of independent Tamil Kings ruling there. Jadavarman Sundara Pandya I (1251-1280) says in his Sidamparam inscription, apparently of 1257 that he received tribute of elephants and gems from the king of Ilam. As there is no mention of the invasion of this Pandyan in the annals of Sinhalese kings it is likely that the northern Kingdom was meant. Jadavarman Vira Pandya II in a record of his 11th year (1265/6) boasts that "he killed one of the two kings of Ceylon captured his army, chariots, treasures, throne, crown, necklace, parasol, chauris, and other royal possessions, planted the Pandya flag with double fish at Konamalai and the high peaks of the Trikutagiri mountain, received elephants as tribute from the other king of Ceylon and subdued the Kirala". Codrington who notes these facts says : "The slain monarch must have been the king of Jaffna and the other Parakrama Bahu (II) if all these records refer to one campaign as seems probable, its date must fall between 1254 and 1257. On either side of the main entrance to Fort Frederick, Trimcomalee, may be seen the double Pandyan fish on carved stones taken from the old Konesar temple."³³

³³ Ceyl. Antiq. X p. 50.

At Polonaruwa kings were set up and dethroned in quick succession. After Parakrama Bahu the Great ten kings sat on the Sinhalese throne each for a short time. Anikanga the eleventh brought an army from the Chola country slew his son the infant king and exercised power for only seventeen days, when Lilavati, Parakrama Bahu's widow, began to rule for a second time. But she was dethroned by Lokssara who brought a Tamil levy with him and reigned for nine months. The queen seized the throne once more but was speedily ousted by Parakrama Pandya for three years. He was deposed about 1215 by Kalinga Magha who descended on Ceylon with a large army of Keralas, claiming the throne by inheritance through his kinsmen who had reigned before. The story of his founding a new line of kings in north Ceylon will be recounted in the following Chapter.

The Literature of Saiva Siddhanta and Allied Schools

D. I. JESUDOSS, M. A., L. T., M. Litt.

D R. G. U. POPE, "the student of Tamil", has testified years ago that 'under some form or other, Saivism is the real religion of South India, and of North Ceylon; and the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy has, and *deserves to have*,* far more influence than any other': It is 'the most elaborated influential and undoubtedly the most intrinsically valuable of all the religions of India.'

The literature of Saivism is very wide indeed. We shall group them into the following divisions for purposes of convenient treatment: (1). The Vedas and Agamas (2). Puranas and Ithihasas (3). Saiva Tirumurai (4). Siddhanta Sastras (5) Pandara Sastras (6) Works on Saivic schools. (7). Miscellaneous works (8) Journals and (9) English works.

The *Vedas* are the highest revelations to which the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy and the other schools of Saivism are usually traced. The term Vedas comes from the root Vid, meaning knowledge. These scriptures are four in number — Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atarva. Every one of these can be mainly divided into karma kanda and jnana kanda. The latter part includes the famous Upanishads — "the end of Vedas." There are very few Siddhanta scholars who do not refer to Svetesvatara Upanishad, even if they do not speak of others.

The Vedas are in Sanskrit. A certain Siddanta scholar by name Swami Vedachalam claims that there existed four Vedas in Tamil with the same names and that out of these the Sama Veda, it is alleged, was sung by Ravana of Ramayana fame.**

D. I. Jesudoss is Lecturer in Philosophy, Annamalai University.

* Italics Pope's own.

** Siddhantam Vol. 5. No. 9; see the inside of the back portion of the cover.

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The *Saivagamas*, which are sometimes referred to as tantras, are very many. Twenty eight of them are considered important. They are: (1) Kamika (2) Yogaja (3) Cintya (4) Karana (5) Ajita (6) Dipta (7) Sukshma (8) Sahas-raka (9) Amsuman (10) Suprabha (11) Vijaya (12) Nis-vasa (13) Svayambhuva (14) Agneyaka (15) Bhadra (16) Raurava (17) Makuta (18) Vimala (19) Chandrahasa (20) Mukhayugbimba (21) Udgita (22) Lalita (23) Siddha (24) Santana (25) Narasimha (26) Paramesvara (27) Kirana (28) Para. Sometimes the Agamas that are counted Saivic are numbered as hundred and eight. Every one of these agamas consists of four parts — jnana kanda, yoga kanda, kriya kanda and sariya kanda. The worship and the celebration of festivals in the temples dedicated to Siva are based on the agamas. Further, they are also treatises on God, soul and matter technically called by the Saiva Siddhantins as Pati, pasu and pasam. The so called inner schools of Saivism — Pasupata, Mahavrata, Kapala, Vama, Bairava and Aikya Vada — also trace their precepts and practices to these agamas.

(2). *Puranas* are allegorical stories. The outstanding Saiva puranas are Siva Purana, Skanda Purana, Linga Purana, Vayu Purana, Matsya Purana and Kurma Purana.

The *Ithihasas* also are stories but they are considered to be historic events that have occurred in recent yugas. They may be said to explain religion at the secular level. The well known ithihasas — *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* — throw some light on Saivism. Moreover some of the leading personalities of these stories such as Rama, Ravana and Krishna are regarded by the Saiva Siddhantins as devotees of Siva.

(3). The *Saiva Tirumurai* are the canonical literature. These are classified into twelve parts. They were codified by Nambi-andar-nambi, but not in the historical order. These works are devotional literature and consequently they are emotional in character. The songs of Tirugnanasambandar form the first three tirumurai; those of Appar comprise the next three tirumurai; and Sundarar's hymns go to make the seventh tirumurai. These songs of the three Saiva samayacharyas are called tevaram and all of them together go by the name of adangan murai.

Now, out of the 10,000 hymns sung by Sambandar only 384 are extant ; out of 49,000 hymns of Appar except 315 others are extinct ; and out of 37,000 hymns sung by Sundarar only 100 exist.

Tiruvagasam and *Tirukovaiar* of Mannikkavasagar go to make up the eighth tirumurai. G. U. Pope has translated *Tiruvagasam* into English. Schomerus and Frederick Heiler have translated parts of it into German. Though the orthodox saivaites regard it to be a heinous crime to write a commentary on this work, the late Professor K. Subramania Pillai has written a running commentary for the same and the erudite Siddhanta scholar Panditamony Katiresan Chettiar has written lucid commentaries to *Tiruchadagam* and *Nital Vinappam*, two of the parts of the same work.

The works of nine saivaites devotees (beginning with *Tirumaligai Devar* and ending with *Sethirayar*), called *Tirupallandu* comprise the ninth tirumurai. Sage *Tirumular's Tirumantiram* is the tenth part of the canonical literature. There are 3000 stanzas in this work. The eleventh Tirumurai is a compendium of the works of many authors from *Tiravalavayudayar* to *Pattinatar* and those of *Nambi-andar-nambi*. G. H. Cobban has translated some songs of *Pattinatar*. The last of the Tirumurai is a biographical work by poet *Sekkiyar*. This is entitled *Tirutondar puranam* but popularly known as *Peria puranam* which means 'the great epic'.

(4). Apart from the devotional works mentioned just above, there are fourteen philosophical works in Tamil which are usually denoted as *Siddhanta sastras* or *Meikanda sastras*. There are commentaries as well as English translations for many of these works.

The most important of the Siddhanta sastras is the famous *Siva-jnana-bodham* by Meikandar. It comprises twelve sutras, terse in nature. These sutras embody the metaphysics and psychology of Saiva Siddhanta in a nut shell. Meikandar himself provides arguments, analogies and brief commentaries to these sutras. Some scholars, notably Dr. Ramana Sastri and Dr. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, regard the Tamil *Siva-jnana-bodham* as a mere translation of the Sanskrit *Papa-vimochana padala* of the Raurava agama. But many others

do not contribute to this view. Rev. H. R. Hoisington, Gordon Matthews, J. M. Nallasamy Pillai, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam and Shuddhananta Parati have rendered the *Siva-jnana-bodham* into English. *Pandi Perumal Virruthi* by *Pandi Perumal*, *Siva-jnanabodha bashya* (*Dravida Mapadiyam*) by *Siva-jnana-yogi* are the well known commentaries on this work.

The next work of importance in this group is *Siva-jnana-Siddhiyar*. It contains two parts. The first part which is called *para-paksham* refutes fourteen schools alien to Saivism. The second part is known as *supaksham*. This part contains a preliminary chapter on Logic and a lucid elaboration of the twelve sutras of *Siva-jnana-bodham*. There is a saying that half a stanza of *Siddhiyar* will suffice to understand the purport of many a work. The author of this work was *Arulnandhi Sivachariya*, who was first the guru of *Meikanda's* father and later the disciple of *Meikanda* himself !

Out of the many commentaries for *Siddhiyar*, the joint commentary by *Siva-jnana-yogi* and *Subramaniya Desikar* (*irruvar urai*) and the individual commentaries by *Nirambavalakiar*, *Sivagra Yogi*, *Maraijnana Desikar* and *Jnanaprasakar* are well known. All these are commentaries on the *supaksham*. *Tattvaparakasa Tambiran Swami* has commented on the *Parapaksham*. Dr. Grant and J. M. Nallaswamy Pillai have translated parts of *Siddhiyar*.

Irrupavirupatu by *Arulnandhi* again is another sastric work. It is in the form of a conversation between a master and his pupil, on God, soul and malas (impurities). The next is called *Tiruvuntiyar* by *Vyyavanda Deva* of *Tiruviyalur*. It comprises of 45 stanzas which deal with the ways of obtaining salvation. The next of the series in the Siddhanta sastras is entitled *Tirukkalittupadiyar*, which can be regarded as a commentary on the previous works mentioned just above. Then comes *Unmai Villakkam*, again a dialogue on the evolution of matter, the dance of Siva, the five-lettered mantra and the way to attain salvation. This work is followed by *Unmai-neri-villakkam* which deals with the different steps on the way of the soul's progress toward mukti.

All the other works of Siddhanta sastras are by Umapati Sivacharya who lived and died very near Annamalainagar, the present seat of Tamil learning and culture. The chief of Umapati's works is *Sivaprakasam*. This also treats of God, soul, fetters, etc., but the method of treatment is interesting. The topics are dealt with in a concentric style. In the first part something is said on them and in the second part additional information is given. Sivaprakasam, Chidambaranada Munivar and Tiruvilangam have written commentaries on it. Rev. Hoisington and K. Subramania Pillai have translated Sivaprakasam into English.

Now let us refer to the other works of Umapati. *Tiruarulpayan* treats of a variety of topics such as the nature of God, soul, anava and grace. Hoisington and G. U. Pope have translated this into English. *Vinavemba* deals with the salient principles of Siddhanta saivism. It is akin to *Irrupavirupatu* in many respects. Namasivaya Tambiran has commented on this work. The poem *Potripahrodai* reveals that every act of Siva is for the benefit of the souls. *Kodikavi* is a flag-song wherein the soul's upward journey towards salvation is compared with the rearing of the flag. *Nenjuvidututu* is an address to Tirugnanasambandar dealing with the three eternal of Saiva Siddhantapati, pasu and pasam. It also criticises the alien schools of philosophy. *Sankarpanirakaranam* is a polemical work in which one can meet with both the exposition and exposure of a number of allied and alien schools to Saiva Siddhanta.

Most of the sections of the Siddhanta literature which we have considered so far are closely connected. Their interrelations are expressed in a familiar Tamil stanza which says that "the Veda is the cow; the Agama is its milk; the Tamil of the four saints (Tevaram and Tiruvasagam) is the ghee churned from it; the excellence of the well instructive Tamil (Siva-jnana-bodham) of Meikanda Deva of Tiruvennaiyallur is like the sweetness of such ghee".

(5) We shall now pass on to the next section. There are a number of saivite Mutts in South India. Many of the swamis of these mutts have recorded the teachings of their gurus and also their own thoughts in a number of Tamil works in the form of poems. These are called the Pandara

sastras. Even though there are quite a number of such works, fourteen of them are regarded important. These are the writings of the venerable sanyasis of Tiruvaduturai and Dharmapuram adhinams. They are : Ambalavana Desikar's dasakaryam, Dakshinamurti Desikar's dasakaryam, Swaminatha Desikar's dasakaryam, Sanmarga Siddhiyar, Sivachrama Telivu, Siddhanta Pahrodai, Upadesa Pahrodai, Panjagra Pahrodai, Siddhanta Sigamony, Upaya-nittai-venba, Nittai vilakkam, Upadesa venba, Athisaya malai and Namasivaya malai.

(6) To any one interested in the different schools of Saivism, the following works will be of much interest : Manimekalai, Sivajnana Siddhiyar, Sankarpa Nirakaranam, Sarva Darsana Samgraha (translated by Cowell and Gough), Tatwaprakasam, Mukti-nilai, Mukti-nischayam, Sivaneri prakasam, Meijnana vilakkam, Prabodha Chandrodayam, Perun-tirattu, kuruntirattu, Tirumantiram, Sivaprakasa vikasam, Sathamony malai, Siddhanta-sigamony, Avirodha untiyar and its commentary, Tiruporur Sannidhi-murai, Ozivil odukkam, Srikanta Bashya, Takkayaga-parani, Abirami andhadi, Saundaryalahari, Vedanta soolamony, Vallalar Sathiram, works by Pampan swami, Mattavilasa-prahasna, Sivajana deepam, Advaita venba, and Prabhulinga leela.

(7) Besides the works we have mentioned hitherto, there are a number of other works on Saivism. Though this list of miscellaneous works will ever remain incomplete some of them are worth mentioning. They are : Gnanabarana vilakkam by Vellaiambala Munivar, Archa deepam by Soma-sundara Nayagar, Psalms of Thayumanavar (G. M. Cobban, R. S. Subramaniam, and Isaac Tambyah have translated many of them), Arul-pa of Ramalinga swami, Tirupugal of Arunagiriyar, Tugalaru bodham of Chittambalam Adigal, Sivananda Lahari by Sankara, Tirukkaruvai-patittupath-andhadi (which is also called smaller Tiruvasagam) and Jnanamirtham by Vakisa Munivar.

Some European scholars have also attempted to study Saivism and have produced useful literature. *Der Saiva Siddhanta* by H. W. Schomerus, *Satsamaya vilakkam* by H. A. Popley, and stray writings by T. Gowdie, T. Foulkes, G. E. Philips, A. E. Clayton, Dr. Barnett, N. Macnicol, G. U. Pope,

H. R. Hoisington, Prof. Garbe, R. E. Fraser and Farquhar are useful to research scholars. Similarly on the Indian side the writings of Arumuga Navalar, J. M. Nallasamy Pillai, Dr. S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, Suddhananda Barati, M. Balasubramania Mudaliyar, K. M. Balasubramania Mudaliyar, C. K. Subramania Mudaliyar, Prof. K. Subramaniya Pillai, S. Satchithanandam Pillai, D. Gopaul Chetty, Maraimalai Adigal, V. Kaliyanasundara Mudaliyar and Rajeswari Ammal are worth study.

(8) Among journals the pride of place goes to *Siddhanta Deepika* or the Light of Truth. This journal, which is also known as Agamic review, is unfortunately not published now. The journal which is efficiently popularising Saivism is "*Siddhantam*". Jnana-sagaram, Jnana-sambandam, *Todaṇ*, Tamil-Tondam, Kalai-magal, Sentamil, Sen Tamil Selvi and Tamil Pozil are some of the popular Tamil journals which carry now and then articles on Saivism. Back numbers of the Journal of the American Oriental Society, Journal of Oriental Research (Madras), Contemporary Review and Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Bengal and Bombay) carry a few articles on Saivism.

(9) The following are the outstanding works in English on our subject: *Saiva Siddhanta as a philosophy and practical knowledge* of Marai-malai-adigal; *The Saiva School of Hinduism* by S. Sivapadasundaram; *Vaishnavism, Saivism and minor religious systems* by R. J. Bhandarkar; *Sivadvaita of Srikanta* by S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri; *Essentials of Hinduism in the Light of Saiva Siddhanta* by S. Sabaratna Mudaliyar; *New Light upon Indian Philosophy* by D. Gopaul Chetty; *The Metaphysics of the Saiva System* by K. Subramania Pillai; *Origin and Early History of Saivism in South India* by C. V. Narayana Ayyar; *Saiva Siddhanta in the Meikanda Sastra* by Violet Paranjoti; *The Philosophy of Saiva Siddhanta* by Rev. Fr. Gnanaprakasara; *The Doctrine of Grace in Saiva Siddhanta* by Rev. Fr. A. P. Arokiasamy; *Introduction and History of Saiva Siddhanta* by G. Subramania Pillai; *University Lectures on Saiva Siddhanta* by M. Balasubramania Mudaliyar; *A logical presentation of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy* by John S. Piet; *The Saiva Sid-*

dhanta Theory of Knowledge by Ponniah; and *A Handbook of Saiva Religion* by Subramania Kathiresu.

Every year the Tirupanandal Mutt in co-operation with the Annamalai University is publishing English works on Saiva Siddhanta. So far Prof. R. Ramanujachari, Prof. G. Subramania Pillai, M. Balasubramania Mudaliyar and Vajravel Mudaliyar have published the lectures they delivered at the Benares and Allahabad Universities through this endowment.

Those who have just picked up Tamil and want to launch upon a study of Saivism would do well to begin with works called kattalais. A kattalai in Tamil is a short treatise which presents within a small compass the fundamental principles of religious philosophy. The chief among the Saiva kattalais are *Sivaprakasa kattalai*, *Siddhanta kattalai* and *Tiruvalavai kattalai*.

The First Tragedy in Kamban

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

KAMBAN is hailed as the Emperor of Tamil poetry. His story of Ramayana is well known throughout the length and breadth of the Tamil country. It is really one version of the famous Valmiki's great epic. As pointed out by Sri. V. V. S. Iyar, Kamban along with the other great poets of the various languages of India refuses to translate the great epic, as was done in the West by the translators of the Iliad. He handles the old story in his own inimitable way, giving the world a new epic of his own, like the goldsmith giving us new ornaments out of old jewels of gold presented to him. The architectonics of his epic has been studied from the point of view of the main actors of this drama. Ramayana, from another point of view, is a series of stories and a study of these may reveal the technique of Kamban's art; for, here he enjoys a freedom of construction and development of plot denied to him and others, in the onward march of the main plot. A detailed study of these minor plots will, thus, reveal his originality; they are as it were the main links of his central plot, giving to his story its unique form and shape.

The author of Sri. Vacana Bhushanam in Tamil gives expression to the Vaisnavite view of Ramayana—that it is the glorification of the imprisoned Sita. The other female characters naturally represent so many studies in character contrast. This principle of epic construction, may give unity to the study of the various sub-plots, if considered from this point of view of the minor female characters of Kamban. And curiously enough, the very first sub-plot is that of Tataka—a female character.

Miss E. T. Rajeswari is Professor of Physics, Lady Willingdon Training College, Madras.

II

Criticism is in one sense a comparison. To judge the originality of Kamban, what can be of greater importance than a comparison of his version with that of his original Valmiki? Comparisons, unfortunately, are odious. A comparison for arriving at the special characteristic features of the things compared is different from a comparison for arriving at a judgment on the superiority of the one over the other. When it is a question of comparing two greatest works of art, it is the first kind of comparison which will be of any worth. It is like a comparison between the best of rubies and the best of emeralds. Tastes differ; and there cannot be any consensus of opinion about the preference of the one to the other, though there can be no two opinions about the distinguishing marks of each arrived at, after a careful comparison. The same is the case with the two epics compared.

III

With this warning in mind, Valmiki's story may be examined. The sage Visvamitra takes the princes, Rama and Lakshmana, from Ayodhya to the place of his sacrifice. On the way, the 23rd Sarga or chapter in Balakanda, gives us the story of Kamasrama or Cupid's grove, where Kama was burnt to ashes by Siva. The 24th Chapter describes Visvamitra's crossing the river along with the princes, his explanation to the inquiry of Rama for the peculiar gurgling sound heard in the waters as they enter the rendezvous of Tataka. Visvamitra describes to the curious princes, who are surprised to see this wild forest, how the spot appeared prior to Tataka's advent and what havoc she has been making in the forest. All these are narrated by way of conversation between Visvamitra and the princes, who remind us of the curious boys of the world, putting a series of questions to their obliging elders.

The story of Indra is here narrated by Visvamitra, how Indra killed Vratra, how he became a carrier of the sin of Brahmahatti, how he shed his sin and hunger at this particular place when washed by the denizens of heaven with the holy waters, how he was moved by a feeling of joy and how

as a consequence he blessed this land with fertility. The place is now seen by the princes as a land laid waste by the overgrown forests, wild beasts, and frightful birds. The closing portion of the 24th Chapter refers to the revolution effected by Tataka possessing a strength of 1000 elephants. Visvamitra tells the princes that she was the wife of Sunda and mother of Marica, as powerful as Indra. She is blessed with a big head, round shoulders and a body of spacious proportions. Every day she assumes some cruel form or other, for frightening the people to destruction. Tataka destroyed this place by these revolutionary methods of hers. Visvamitra winds up this part of his conversation with a request to Rama that the prince should clear this land of its dangers. This is all the story that Visvamitra narrates at this stage.

The 25th Chapter begins with Rama's query how a woman — of the weaker sex — comes to be possessed with the strength of one thousand elephants. The sage starts to narrate the story of her life from the beginning, in the good old grand-mother's way. It is all in short the effect of a blessing of the Creator. In olden times there lived a great person by name Suketu of exemplary character but with no child. He performed a great Tapas and the Great Grand-father of the Universe was so pleased with him that he blessed his devotee with a daughter by name Tataka. She was endowed with the might of 1000 elephants—perhaps as a consolation for not blessing Suketu with the much-aspired-for son. This Tataka grew up to woman-hood full of joy and beauty. The father gave her in marriage to Sunda, son of Jamba and in time was born to them a son, Marica. Unfortunately, he was cursed to become a Rakshasa... Sunda was next killed by Agastya. Tataka with her son rushed towards Agastya, ready to pounce on and devour him. The unfailing curse of this sage drove the son as a Rakshasa, while Tataka came to assume cruel and unusual forms. Overpowered by this never-to-be-warded-off-course and consequently by her irresistible anger, she destroyed the country and laid it waste, to become the haunt of wild beasts and birds.

Visvamitra concludes this part of the story with a peroration to Rama. "Oh Rama, for the sake of the good of the cows and the Brahmins, kill this woman of cruel valour and

extreme hard-heartedness. In these three worlds there is no man excepting yourself who can gladly undertake the destruction of this cursed being. To feel any soft-heartedness at the thought of killing her, because it tantamounts to killing a woman—is to waste our sympathy,—it is to no purpose; it is not one's duty. For the good of the four castes, any act has to be done by the sons of the Kings. Whether the act is true or false, whether it is pure or impure, it has to be performed at any cost, in the cause of protecting their subjects. This is the ancient duty prescribed for those on whose shoulders has been placed the burden of State. Pray kill that unrighteous one. To her we owe no duty. It is told of olden times that Indra killed one Mantara the daughter of Virocana (விசேராசனா) who was desirous of destroying the whole world. In ancient times, there was the chaste wife Bhragu (பிரகு) who did not mind the world going without an Indra. That Kavyamata was killed by Vishnu. Like these, by many great princes of old by the best of men, were killed women who were sliding down towards unrighteousness. Therefore, O Rama, leave off this weak-heartedness, and kill her at my command".

In the next chapter the 26th Sarga, Rama with folded hands assures Visvamitra, it is his father's order that he should follow implicitly the words of the sage without entertaining any doubt. "It is the least that I can do," he continues, "to honour my father and yourself, I am going to follow your instructions. I have no doubt that the execution of Tataka is the best act. In the interest of the cows and the Brahmins, and for the benefit of the country, I have made myself ready for following your unrivalled words".

At these words the inhabitants of the forest shed their fears. But Tataka, confused by these very words, becomes full of anger. She runs to the place wherefrom the sound proceeds. Rama sees the angry and unnatural face of this monster. He points out to Lakshmana her adamant and cruel body and remarks, "At the very sight of her, the hearts of those who take a fright, quake and break. She is all strength and magic. I shall remove straightaway her ears and nose. She is protected by her womanliness. Therefore I do not feel enthusiastic about killing her. I shall destroy her

cruel behaviour. That is how my thought runs at the present moment."

These words only instil in her further rage, and she roars in anger. With extended arms she runs at Rama. It is a dangerous situation. The sage intervenes with his Humkara (உம்காரம்) a firm and deep sound which stops her immediately, whilst the sage blesses the prince with victory. She confuses the princes for a long time and raises a hail-storm of stones. Rama neutralises this, by raising a counter-storm of arrows, and cuts with his sword her hands. She roars but Lakshmana makes her earless and noseless. She at once assumes many forms appearing and disappearing at will, and confusing all by her own magic. She creates a downpour of stones. Thus is the fight going on. The sage again intervenes with a timely warning. "Enough of this soft-heartedness. This sinful woman of evil character, creating obstacles to my sacrifice, has been growing strong, from olden times because of her magic and illusion. Kill her therefore before the sun sets. Rakshasas become unconquerable after night-fall."

Tataka is made visible. The weapons hurled at her make her cry and roar. She rushes at them like an on-rushing thunder. Rama breaks open her heart with a weapon. She falls down. The King of the Devas with his followers worships Rama, and begs of the sage to bless the prince with the Mantras and arms, to do his duty by the Gods.

IV

One general remark will occur to anyone who compares both the versions of Valmiki and Kamban. The story as told by Valmiki is narrated in the most natural manner reminding us of the rustic people and the children — always curious to know about things which come on their way for the first time. Rama, in the story of Valmiki is one such young child, curious to know the wonders of the world, as and when he meets them. Why is the forest so wild? What is this gurgling sound? How can a woman of the weaker sex be as strong as thousand elephants?

Rama is full of reverence to the all knowing man Visvamisra who explains these intellectual problems of his childhood; and therefore he promises to do as he is ordered by his sympathetic teacher. Rama and Lakshmana talk and act like two playmates in some joint adventure of boyhood; Tataka appearing to them no more than a dangerous worm or a bird or beast, to be worsted by them by removing a nose or an ear.

Visvamisra reminds us of the world-wide story teller, something more than the usual grandmother telling all sorts of tales whilst feeding the children at dusk. Perhaps he is something more than a story teller too — a true teacher waiting for the active question of the pupil for starting his divine art. Like a good teacher he explains, inspires and moves them to act. In this world of this teacher, the death and resurrection of Kama, the cruel forest, the diabolical Tataka—all become so many scenes in a drama in which in the end, the on-lookers and the audience — these veritable pupils themselves—take part again in a playful mood as gamesters, though the end of it all is the tragic death of Tataka. This is indeed education for life. What a teacher! — What pupils and what a wonderful way of teaching! How we wish we had such teachers to face our world and its problems, sure of success in the end on this playfield of ours! Then only we can understand the inner significance of Shakespeare's statement "all the world is a stage." We see the greatness of this teacher in his slowly working up the playful feelings of the princes to the required sublime heights of a tragedy. But he does not give up the method of story-telling — an art appealing to the imagination more wonderful than our art of visual education merely appealing to the eye. Even this story is not told as a continuous narrative but in two different stages as and when the pupil is ripe for receiving the instruction by putting active and proper questions. There is no forcing down of even stories on unwilling ears, or before they are demanded in all earnestness. There is therefore repetition and slow elaboration, but these are taken advantage of, for emphasising the important facts. But so many times he has to prepare the ground by suggestively oversteering some questions and answering them, before the

pupils get confused or misled. He himself raised a doubt, whether a woman can be killed by a hero — perhaps, that feeling was in that age, that it was beneath one's dignity to kill a woman even in war — strihatti and he tries to answer his question by reference to ancient history to the duties of the Kings to do everything in the higher interests of the State.

The child likes to be commanded and modern psychologists have told us that it looks upon its father or the teacher as the very incarnation of an omniscient Law Giver. True to this conception, Rama, as an ideal pupil, agrees to do as he is commanded by Visvamitra. The princes continue to be in the world of play ; for we have here a wonderful example of the play-way method of education in true citizenship. The teacher, however, belonging to an adult world, full of its own doubts and dangers, is really serious and is impatient with the playful princes, teasing Tataka, as children will tease a worm. When Tataka rushes at the princes, even the all-knowing Visvamitra is unnerved. He utters a terrific sound to stop her, and he blesses the princes with victory, lest anything untoward should happen to them. This is not at all necessary and the Rishi must have known this unnecessary, but love is blind, and hence his anxiety. We have further to be reminded of her monstrous cruelty, lest we forget all this in the playful way the princes deal with her. He is getting nervous because he feels they are playing with fire. The princes in their reverence for womanhood — womanhood which the sage himself has emphasised — aim at putting an end to her cruel behaviour, instead of aiming at her very life. Visvamitra, therefore, hastens to warn them, and goads them on to kill this monster of a woman, before it is dark, for monsters become invisible at dusk. The princes implicitly obey, but they are not serious even then ; they make her speak and cry and they cut her in twain as they would have a worm.

Valmiki thus revels in his art of story telling. The story is told through Visvamitra. Repetitions and digressions really beautify folk tales. For there is no hankering after the strange and the melo-dramatic in the ancient world, feeling happy in the midst of familiar surroundings listening to the

same old stories, as so many reminders of their stable life, with no dangers of strange and untoward happenings. The method of contrast is also often utilised to produce a telling effect. Tataka's heartless cruelty and wanton destruction are certainly heightened by the ancient story of Indra's blessing of fertility showered on this land. A land blessed to be fertile is lying waste and cursed, because of Tataka. This contrast is not directly described. One is made to feel the contrast. The land overgrown with forests and wild beasts is so unusual as to excite the curiosity of Rama. Rama describes with all his feelings of curiosity and surprise this strange phenomena of a dense forest and wild life. The good teacher, to heighten this feeling, gives the story of Indra and his erstwhile fertile land. Naturally the question will arise : "How has the fertile land been turned into a wild forest ?" The story-teller and teacher having kindled the feeling artfully, satisfies it by himself forestalling the question, and offering an explanation by way of the story which he begins to narrate. The details about her family are hurriedly given. The story of this woman's act of destruction becomes probable only because of her strength of one thousand elephants hinted to by the story-teller.

But the curious Rama senses a contradiction in this member of the weaker sex possessing the strength of one thousand elephants, and begs of the teacher to explain. The teacher's face blossoms into a smile, and he is happy that Rama's curiosity has been kindled thus, for being given the required shape. The explanation is that it is a blessing of Brahma. This power intoxicates and corrupts the woman and her family so much that they put themselves against the sage Agastya, only to excite his curse sending them down the sliding plane to the state of Rakshasas. The questions and answers thus had centred round the fact of the womanhood of Tataka. The effect of contrast, introduced to heighten and visualise the cruel monstrosity of Tataka, perhaps Visvamitra himself feels, has been neutralised by this emphasis on her womanhood. The sage therefore as already stated hastens to narrate ancient history, to lecture on King's duties, and to issue finally a command to kill her. The pupil is prepared to obey the command, for he feels he is pleasing both

his father and his teacher. He repeats like a good student Visvamitra's conception of the good of the cows and Brahmins, and is at once ready with his drawn up bow. This sound reaches the ears of Tataka and she rushes forth to the spot. Curious Rama seeing her thinks aloud in describing her to Lakshmana and in speaking of cutting away her nose and ears. There is all the same a conflict of emotions in his mind, a conflict between the feeling of reverence for womanhood and his feeling of reverence for the words of the sage. He feels he can punish her and set her right. This still further excites her anger and she rushes at him. Visvamitra unnerves her by his angry cry. The fight begins, playful, as far as Rama is concerned ; serious, as far as Tataka is concerned. Her magic supervenes, but the princes take it all as a play. Once again Visvamitra has to intervene to remind them and the readers, of the seriousness of the situation. Tataka is felled and is dead to the joy of the Devas. To realise the importance of what the princes consider as play, the Devas are brought in to bless the princes.

This story true to our understanding of it occurs in Bala-kanda, canto of childhood and youth, where in the beginning the princes receive their education. They first receive their instruction under Vasishta, the Kulaguru. After the Gurukulavasa, travel gives a finish to education. This excursion with Visvamitra is therefore part of the education of the princes. Vasishta is a perfect seer and a sage, well versed in all the arts and philosophy, practical arts not excepted. He knows what is warfare but he is not a warrior himself. He is never called upon to use his bow and arrow. It is true he won a victory over this very Visvamitra but he has won it through his spiritual powers. The physical art of warfare he has never practised himself, although he knows all the ins and outs of it. Rama learns all the great arts from him, and practises them too. But Vasishta himself feels that this education received at his hands, should be made perfect by an apprenticeship under a seasoned warrior who has himself taught and used the weapons of war, not theoretically in mere imagination, not as an expression of spiritual power, but as a soldier fighting on the battlefield with the bow and the arrow. In addition, he is the great sage who will give

practical instruction, for a life of high ideals. It is this which actuates Vasishta to goad on Dasaratha to send Rama with Visvamitra the erstwhile warrior who is at the same time a sage and a seer well versed in all the arts and the philosophies of that age.

Valmiki is the greatest of the bards, those messengers of the ancient world, going about their work by narrating tales of valour and love in the colourful courts of powerful kings or the festive congregations of common men. His art of story-telling assumes a new form in the present context of a conversation between the curious youths and the old man, on their way through the rivers, forests and groves, all strange and new to the princes who have been enjoying city life. It is not a catechism we are having but a real and natural conversation where the old man tries to come to the level of the youth. The narrative has to be fitted into this peculiar frame. To use a modern phraseology, one has here the play way method in education for life, through real activity. Life situations occur for explaining the geography and the history of the places visited, all tending to the final fruition of activity, of desroying evil, in the interests of the dumb cow and the spiritual seer—the highest ideal of any citizenship training. The frame-work of this play-way method creates problems of its own in this narrative of the story of Tataka. The high seriousness of the ideal, the cruel monstrosity of the villain, should not be neutralised by this playful spirit. The art of the story teller is almost at its breaking point but he has successfully negotiated the dangerous curves on his way by making the Rishi burst out, and intervene at the proper moments, and by finally crowning it all by the blessings of the Devas.

PART II

I

Keeping in mind this story as given in Valmiki, a comparative estimate of Kampan's version has to be attempted. The tragedy of Tataka is given in one chapter by Kampan, and the story therein begins with a reference to Kamashrama, so called because Lord Siva burnt to ashes Manmatha or

Cupid in that very place. The country itself, where Kama's anga (or body) fell, came to be known as Anga Desa. The whole of Valmiki's 23rd chapter is thus summarised in the opening two verses of Tataka Vatai-Patalam. The third verse is in one sense Kamban's own exclamation about that place of such divine association — an exclamation which the poet takes care, as a dramatist, to give us, as the very expression of Visvamitra. As will be presently seen, all this serves as a fitting introduction to the suggestive description of Tataka's desert.

What Kamban has omitted is equally important for arriving at a conclusion on his art. He does not refer to the crossing of the river after leaving Kamashrama, much less to the explanation of the gurgling noise of the waters. Nor does he waste his time in giving us the story of Indra's Brahmahatti, his shedding the sin at the place — his consequent feeling of joy and his blessings on this land.

Above all, there is one important change which Kamban has introduced with telling effect. He does not follow Valmiki in describing this haunt of Tataka, as a land overgrown with wild vegetation and infested with terrible beasts and terrific birds. He describes it as a burning Sahara, if we may use that term. To make it more striking, he makes the actors stand before our very eyes in that most dreadful desert in the hot sun. The desolation there is complete. The description of this desert is full of hyperbole, perhaps best fitted to suggest the devastation by a supernatural demoness.

II

The sun drinks this favourite cup of land to its last dregs leaving not a drop of liquid nor an air of coolness. His banner of victory flies aloft there. It is there an eternal summer. The very God of burning fire, his heart will be scorched, if he were to think of this spot, and his eyes will burn away if he were to see it. (Kamban Tataka's Vatai-patalam.) Even the tongue describing the heat of this place will be consumed to ashes. The darkness supervening on the last day of destruction along with the vault of the heavens and the worlds intervening will be burnt to ashes. So will be

burnt a new Sun, rising afresh thereafter, and so will be the clouds — the lightening and the thunder. What else will escape this burning death. (6)

Even good things of worldly enjoyment present a cruel, ghastly and mortal appearance of the devil. The sweet scented aloe (akil) comes from the very entrails of the monstrous kalli, destroying its mother in the dance of death of that desert, this dance of death curiously enough becoming the very dance of her birth. The beautiful pearls splash forth from the splitting bamboo dried up and shorn of all its glory of green blades. Again a birth in death. The serpent there in its death pang of burning heat tears down its mouth, whilst from that womb of death its ruby flashes forth (8). The desert cracks and the rays of the gems on the heads of the serpent king of the Netherworlds, glisten and glow, lighting up the very vault of the heavens. But in that dreary, desolation they appear like the blood streaming forth from the cracking wounds on the body of our mother earth. (10) Thus the beautiful and fragrant articles of value and adornment instead of creating joy in the hearts of the spectators are made to inspire awe and horror. What a transformation! only to be equalled by the metamorphosis of the beautiful Tataka into a demoness.

The very five elements are terrified by this burning heat. The ever expanding and galloping wind can never run there and escape. Where is the question of its standing in the desert? The water-bearing dark clouds, how could they run over this desert which is drinking away all the water? The fiery sun—his chariot can never run over this desert on his daily rounds to cross the heavens; he can never travel straight; he has to go round beyond the desert. The earth—how could it run away from this desert, its own form? The fifth element—the ether—the heavens—the heavenly goddess of this desert in her ethereal terrific form, how can she run away from her heavenly charge? (9).

Here the natural and deadly enemies like the elephants and the pythons famished and scorched, lie in mutual embrace of death. The elephant finds no shade except in the wide open mouth of the python, its very portal of death. (11). This is the absolute empire of fire undisturbed by any other

king. The darkest things of the world are scorched. The crows and elephants lay dead like the clouds falling down scorched up by the fire of destruction (12). The mirage moving in the desert rears up its head, but out of pity for the devas of the heavens, it does not reach the heavens lest the latter should be burnt away. It bends and curls like a beautiful stream of water (13). The mirage raising up in the midst of the fire of the desert is the crystal throne adorned with gold legs specially prepared for the Lord of Summer reigning over that desert (14).

III

Surely this is not a place where the princes and the sage can leisurely saunter along and feel at home to converse about the history of the place. This conversation takes place in Valmiki on the cool waters of the Ganges, whilst the princes cross that river, and have a sight of Tataka's forest at a distance. Kamban however makes them hold this conversation in the very burning desert itself. He realises the dramatic awkwardness of such a situation, however effective it may be, for emphasising the desolation of this place brought about by Tataka. How is Kamban solving this dramatic problem of avoiding this awkwardness?

Valmiki in his 22nd chapter, long before the crossing of the Ganges but immediately after the princes are brought from Dasaratha's palace, makes Visvamitra teach them in all solemnity the two great manthras which are to make Rama unequalled in all respects, to be free from the dangers of the Rakshasas and to be free even from the pangs of hunger and heat. Kamban however has not till now whispered a word about these manthras. After placing the princes inside this desert, he visualises a dramatic situation where they can be initiated into the mysteries of these magic formulae with telling effect. Visvamitra notices the flowerlike princes placed inside a cauldron of a desert (17) and hastens to teach them the manthras (18). What a change is wrought?

The description of the desert reminds us of Milton's *Paradise Lost*—the liquid fire of hell. But the manthras make the princes walk as though on clear, crystal, cool waters. It looks as though the heat from the liquid fire has been re-

moved, reducing it to an innocuous cool streamlet of ordinary water (19). The worth of the pudding is in the eating. The manthras cease to be mere verbal statements. Their efforts are experienced by the princes then and there. In this way, the story of the manthras becomes most arresting from a dramatic point of view. Where there is no present experience of the diabolical heat, the conversation can start without any trouble; and it thus so starts. This is Kamban's solution of his problem of art.

IV

"Poetry is emotion recollected in tranquillity". The desert is no more a burning experience to the princes. There is a world of difference between looking at a battle from inside the army as the fighting soldier, and viewing it from the serene heights of the mountain as a seer. This is the difference between actual life and romantic poetry. The classic heights of poetry can be and are reached here. It is not the distant sight of an onlooker but the living experience as it were of the wounded, transmuted and sublimated into poetry. The suffering and painful experience of the burning desert has been tasted. But at the present moment, thanks to the manthras, it is merely a recollection of the experienced emotion in all tranquillity. Thus is reached the sublime detachment of real poetry.

V

The conversation proceeds. Rama asks why the desert is wasting itself away. He remembers what Visvamitra has told them just before entering the desert about Siva reducing Kama to ashes. Rama's question is therefore coloured by newly acquired knowledge and he asks "Has that Siva burnt away this place as well?" (20). The very first dramatic speech in this padalam is that of Visvamitra, narrating with lightning speed the story of Kamashrama. The second dramatic speech is the question of Rama. The Story of Kama is itself made to serve the purpose of this main story of Tataka bringing about a greater cohesion and coherence than is found in Valmiki

VI

Here we see another peculiarity of Tamil poetry. The poets do not always proceed, when they use a simile or a metaphor, from the known to the unknown. When what they describe is already clear, invoking the correct emotion, they use for comparison ideas, especially moral ideas, which are not, *prima facie*, so very clear. This is one way of clothing the situation and their poetry with a moral grandeur. Rama asks "Why is this desert more desolate than the land of the sinful tyrant?" (20). This question reveals to us the high ideals of our statesman and prince Rama. This may be something unknown to the ordinary reader but an indirect way of preaching ideal statecraft.

In describing the desert, Kamban has compared it to the eternal heart burning of the self-respecting warrior forced to lose his honour by the trick of a deceitful rogue, of a coward unable to stand face to face before the hero, on a battlefield of raining arrows (7). The desert is again said to be as hard hearted as the minds of the prostitutes selling their love for gold (15). It remains unconcerned like the saints on their way to salvation, after burning away the three fortresses of their enemies—hatred, desire and ignorance—and after killing the two karmas (15). These suggestions take the readers to a higher level of idealism. This poetic legerdemain, Kamban has learnt from Valluvar.

The pun is Kamban's Will'o the Wisp even as it is Shakespeare's. The word *pasai* means watery trace of wetness as applied to the desert; it means real love as applied to the prostitute and the fetter of desire as applied to the saints. It is the trick of this pun that brings about the magic of a comparison amongst all these unconnected three.

VII

Coming back to the question raised by Rama it is not very difficult to realise that it is the very question Visvamitra has been expecting Rama to ask. The switch is thus turned on. The current flows. The sage begins to narrate the story of Tataka in such a way as to inspire the warrior with a determination to kill the demoness responsible for all

this desolation, murder and devastation. Visvamitra does not even mention the name of this monster to start with. It is a "she" who lives by killing the sweet lives of creation, an incarnation of death, as strong as one thousand elephants. Name is something like a magic creating a concrete reality. Tataka is in the beginning the name of a beautiful woman, and therefore the mention of that name at that stage, will create at once in our minds an indelible impression of womanhood and beauty, of kindness and love. To avoid this impression, the sage does not pronounce this name at all till he has described the personality as the very essence of death and devastation, cruelty and monstrosity. When this impression has been allowed to take deeper roots, the name is uttered as a synonym as it were of this monstrous horror. The most impure heart, without an atom of the milk of human kindness—the very devil red in tooth and nail—full of cruel valour and extreme hard heartedness—a veritable form of death—a woman incarnation of sin, with every part of it full of unnatural ugliness (39)—the quintessence of the life of the wandering murder and wilderness—a veritable death unto sweet living beings, the fire of death pampered on the eternal living beings all devoured in one gulp (21).

Before we proceed further, the textual problem faces us at this juncture. Some 17 verses (22 to 38) giving the parentage and family life of a Tataka as a beautiful woman and finally her metamorphosis into a devil are not found in a few manuscripts which however straightway proceed to describe the present without troubling us about the past. It is better at this stage to follow these manuscripts leaving the 17 verses for being taken for study at a later stage.

Visvamitra continues the blood curdling description of Tataka. "Tataka is the supernatural power of evil and incarnation of sin in the form of a woman. She is a frightful thundering stormy sea; born with its poisonous mountains ever ablaze with the fire of final destruction, with not one but two crescent moons (40). This cruel monster adorned with serpents stands always ready to throw that trident on others—this denizen of the desert—her name is Tataka." (41).

This very form of monstrosity and ugliness, more than a mere remembrance to Visvamitra, stands in strong contrast

to the bewitching beauty of this warrior prince Rama—a masculine beauty driving even men so mad as to pray for a feminine form for themselves. (41). Kamban thus emphasises Tamilian conception of God as beauty by making it stand before the embodiment of ugliness. The sage gives expression to this thought of his and continues.

“Even as the defect of the supervening desire destroys single handed all the good qualities in man, so does this demoness all alone destroy and lay desolate the great expanse of habitable land, once so full of incomparable yields (42). She is in the service of Ravana, and obstructs the due performance of my sacrifice. She kills all the species of living beings in this part of the country this Angadesa—sanctified by Siva’s burning down Kama. She roams about revelling in this wholesale slaughter (43).”

“You are the son of a great king who strives for ever to protect and perpetuate the living beings, looking upon them all as the very life of his life. What more is there to tell you? In a few days she will devour away all the living beings—those eternal beings of creation.” (44).

VIII

Rama full of astonishment shakes his head significantly in the usual Indian way, and asks in all haste where the authoress of this cruel act resides, as though ready to pounce upon her in righteous indignation (45). Hardly as the sage completed the sentence “She lives here in this very mountain,” when Tataka walks in like a mountain of fire (46). Thus is created another dramatic situation.

Kamban again indulges in his passion for hyperbole, as usual for the purpose of reminding us of the supernatural powers of the demoness. The jingling stones of her anklets are the very mountains at every step of hers the earth goes down into a deep cavern of vacuum into which rushes the waters of the sea, while the mountains near by rush after her, carried along by her momentum (47). Kamban’s science colours thus his imagination. Tataka bites her lips and stares, as though her two eyes are two eternal fires of destruction (48). She rises up frightening even the thunder, the heavens

and all the worlds. She is adorned with the necklace of living elephants twisting their trunks with each other (49). She laughs at these new comers, grinds her teeth and glances as though at the very god of death (50). There she speaks, “With my unconquerable strength I have destroyed everything within my jurisdiction. Have you come to offer me the tasteful flesh made thus scarce or have you been driven by your fate?” (51). She is all anger and concludes, “I shall throw this trident to pierce through your hearts” (52).

They are thus standing on the very brink of the precipice of death. Rama knows Visvamitra’s intention though as yet unexpressed. But he is not aiming at her with his arrows. This great soul thinks that after all she is a woman (53).

Visvamitra understands what is passing in the mind of Rama. Is he not a great seer? (54). His great disappointment and consequent resentment become clear. Perhaps, Rama feels the sages are safe, they being very much alive. Visvamitra proceeds to clear up this possible misapprehension. “All that is sinful she has done—she has not eaten us all away, it is true—that is however because we are but chaff to her” (55).

“Should one think of this cruel one as a woman? It is indeed a matter of great scorn for a great warrior to kill a woman bashful by nature. But here the mighty masculine shoulders of the fearless heroes lie vanquished by the merest mention of her name. Pray tell me who is considered to be masculine? (56). Indra himself ran away defeated. What to say of others? The mantara mountains are her shoulders. In masculinity what difference is there between the so-called men and this so-called woman?” (57). A few verses are here found in some manuscripts which would be considered by us later on.

“Oh great descendant of the protector of this world, should she be masculine in form also, she who is setting herself against the great souls, kills the living beings meant for eternity, destroying the very Dharma? (62). Death waits for the appointed day, and even then considers the virtuous acts for sending the people to the heavens; it does not like

this monster stand with its mouth watering merely, at listening to another's statement that flesh is being smelt (63). What can be more simple than her mean act of masticating and devouring the innumerable living beings even before their spans of appointed life come to an end? To think of her as a woman bespeaks of very poor imagination" (64). The sage proceeds to assure that he is not speaking out of anger but after deep consideration over the eternal Dharma. "To stand pacified in her presence is not Dharma, kill her" (65).

X

There is no room for further parley on this battle ground. In passing, one may notice the similarity between this battlefield and the famous Kuru-kshethra, where Krishna goads on Arjuna to kill the enemies arrayed against him, giving up the deluding *karpanya* or soft heartedness masquerading as universal love. Rama majestically concedes not without an internal struggle and a pang "If occasion arises demanding the performance of something other than Dharma—mark he does not say *adharma*—if I am commanded to perform that, O thou incarnation of truth, thy word is my Bible, and to do as thou biddest is indeed the way to perform one's duty" (66).

XI

Tataka realises Rama's determination and taking time by the forelock hurls her spear at Rama (67). The trident came on Rama like Rahu coming to eclipse the moon (68). Nobody sees Rama bending his bow or releasing his arrow. It is all done in the twinkling of an eye, for there lies her spear broken to pieces (69). She brings a downpour of brickbats on Rama, but he raises a counter storm of arrows (70). His burning arrows, rushing fast, like the unfailing words of the sages immediately coming true, are aimed at this damsel of darkness, and they pierce through her adamant chest, rushing away without finding a lodgment inside there, like the great things uttered by the learned to the uneducated (71)—another example of Kamban inspiring the story with his lofty ethical idealism through his similes. It is indeed very difficult to bring out the enchanting music of the

words or to plumb the depths of the thoughts of this oft quoted verse.

She falls down dead—as though the victorious banner of Ravana ominously broke down to pieces (73). It is all now a flood of blood. (72) It looks like the red sky of the twilight falling down without a support (74). The god of death so long afraid of Ravana has after all the taste of Rakshasa's blood (75).

The scene closes with the Devas showering their rain of flowers in grateful recognition of Rama's act, requesting the sage to bless the prince with divine weapons (76).

(To be continued)

Education in the Ancient Tamil Countries

PANDIT K. P. RATNAM, M.A., B.O.L.

CHAPTER I — THE TAMIL COUNTRIES
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THAMILAKAM (Ptolemy's "Damarike") was the word used in the ancient Tamil works to denote the Tamil countries.¹ The boundaries of Thamilakam changed from time to time and hence different accounts were given in the Sangam and other ancient Tamil works. According to Tholkappiyam, the most ancient Tamil work existent, the Northern boundary was Venkada Hill² and the East and the West were bounded by sea.³ The southern boundary which is mentioned in Tholkappiyam merely as 'Kumari' has been a subject of dispute among the commentators of this work.⁴ There are other scholars too who have different opinions. It can be, at any rate, said that the 'Kumari' referred to in Tholkappiyam was the name of a river. Sikandiar, the author of Isainunukkam, mentions the boundaries of the then Thamilakam. In one of his poems he refers to the river in unmistakable terms as 'Kumarith-Theempunai'.⁵ An-

Pandit K. P. Ratnam is Lecturer, Government Training College, Colombo.

¹ Pathittuppathu—Pathigam II; Manimekalai—17. 62; Silappathigaram III. 37.

² Called Thirupathy at present.

³ "வடவேங்கடம் தென்குமரியாயிடத் தமிழ் கூறு நல்லுகம்". — Tholkappiyam — Payiram.

⁴ Tholkappiyam — Porulathigaram — Nachinarkiniyam — Eluthathathigaram — Ilampooranar, p. 809.

⁵ "வேங்கடம் குமரித் தீம்புனற் பெளவம்."

—Isainunukkam, P. 4.

other poetess, Kakkaipadiniyar by name, uses this very same word to denote the south boundary of the Thamilakam.⁶

This southern portion appears to have been submerged by the sea reducing the Thamilakam to its present limit. According to Silappathigaram, which was written in the second century A.D., the southern boundary of Thamilakam was Cape Kumarine called Kumari Munai by Tamil scholars. There is ample evidence to the submergence of large areas by the sea in the ancient Tamil works⁷ as well as in other works like the Rasavali⁸ and the Mahavamsa⁹ which were written by Ceylonese.

The Silappathigaram says "The river pahruli and the Kumari Mountain were submerged by sea."¹⁰ This is confirmed by Panamparanar in a verse¹¹ composed by him. Adiyarkku Nallar, the famous commentator of Silappathigaram gives the names, positions and the extent of the lands which went under the sea.

In the ancient times Thamilakam was composed of the three Tamil Kingdoms called Pandya, Chola and Chera. These were also known as Thenpulam, Kunapulam and Kudapulam, respectively, according to their positions. In later times Thondai Nadu with Kanchi as its capital became the fourth Thamil Nadu along with the older three nadus.

Auvaiyar speaks of the boundaries of these four Nadus as they were found in the 12th Century A.D. in four stanzas.¹² She has also connected these four countries of the Thamilakam in a venba, which reads—"The mountainous tracts of Cheranadu is full of elephants; the fertile land of the Cholas is noted for its rich harvests of paddy; the southern

⁶ "வடக்குத் தெற்கும் குணக்கும் குடக்கும்
வேங்கடம் குமரித் தீம்புனற் பெளவ மென்று
இந்நான்கு கெல்லை யுகவயிற் கிடந்த....."

⁷ Kalithokai, 104, 1-4; Iraianar Ahapporulurai, p. 5.

⁸ Rasavali, P. 188.

⁹ Mahavamsam, P. 61; Also see Tennant's History of Ceylon, pp. 5-10.

¹⁰ "பஹுளி யாற்றுடன் பன்மலையடுக்கத்துக்
குமரிக் கோடுங் கொடுங்கடல் கொள்ள."

¹¹ Kurunthokai 50.

¹² Thanippadatiraddu,

land of the Pandiyas is famous for its pearls ; the Thondainadu has men of culture and learning.

At present Thamalakam consists of the southern part of the Madras Presidency and some portions of the States of Travancore and Cochin. The Tamil speaking population of these areas is calculated as 18,517,415 in 1947.¹³ The Northern and Eastern Provinces of Ceylon can also be deemed as a part of this Thamalakam as Tamils have been living in these areas from ancient times. The number of the Ceylon Tamils is nearly eight hundred thousand.

CHAPTER II

THE TAMILS—THEIR ORIGIN, CULTURE AND CIVILISATION

The people who lived in Thamalakam were called Tamils. Whether the Tamils were the indigenous people of India, or whether they came down to India as the Aryans and the other tribes did in later times, is still a highly controversial subject. Various theories have been propounded by European and Indian scholars.

Dr. Caldwell,¹ Kanagasabapillai,² Marshman,³ Ferguson,⁴ Kennedy,⁵ Tirupathy⁶ and some other scholars fixed the original home of the Tamils outside India. Pooranalingampillai, however, made an attempt to show that the theories of some of these scholars were all conjectural. From a study of the findings at Harappa and Mohenjo Daro and of the ancient Tamil Literature a good portion of which is available only now, Pooranalingampillai put forward the theory that the Tamils were the aborigines of the lost Lemuria.⁷

¹³ Statistical Handbook of the Constituent Assembly of India.

¹ A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages.

² Tamils 1800 years ago.

³ History of India.

⁴ History of Indian and Eastern Architecture.

⁵ J. R. S. Journal.

⁶ Ancient India.

⁷ History of Tamil Literature & Tamil India.

This is not easily rejected. The continent of Lemuria covered a vast area that extended from the present Tamil countries into the Indian Ocean.⁸ The Tamil works faintly speak of this area as Sambuththeevu or Navalantheevu.⁹ As a result of successive deluges this mass of land disappeared from the face of the earth leaving that portion of land south of Vin-dhya Hills which is now called the Deccan. The fact of these deluges has been accepted by most students of Geology, History and Anthropology. Professor Haeckel's view on the cradle of the human race also confirms this theory.¹⁰ H. Risely was of opinion that the Deccan was one of the most ancient geological formations in the world.¹¹ This supports the fact of the continued existence of Deccan for milleniums. Therefore, it is possible that the Tamils have been living in the Deccan not only since the dawn of History as Risely himself said, but also from time immemorial. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar too, having analysed critically the ancient Tamil words and customs, comes to the conclusion that "It may therefore be taken as fairly certain that the Tamils were indigenous to South India."¹²

It is not out of place to refer to the comment made by Parimelalakar, on the word "Palankudy" found in one of the verses of Thirukkural. He explains the meaning of this word lucidly as "The families living continuously since the creation of the world." Purapporulvenbamalai, one of the ancient Tamil works, contains another interesting reference to the high antiquity of the Tamil race. Speaking on the antiquity of one family it says that the forefathers of this family came into existence when the world was only a rock before the formation of soil.¹³ All these go a long way to show that the Tamils were the aborigines of the submerged Lemuria of which the Deccan has only been left by the devouring sea.

⁸ Lost Lemuria—Scott Elliot ; History of Creation, Vol. II, pp. 325-326—Professor Haeckel.

⁹ Manimekalai II—107 ; Perunkathai 2,28 : 76 ; Appar Thevaram 11-6.

¹⁰ History of Creation and Pedigree of Man, p. 173.

¹¹ The Peoples of India, p. 2.

¹² History of the Tamils, p. 213.

¹³ "கற்றேன்றி மண் தோன்றக் காலத்தே முற்றேன்றி முற்பட்ட குடி".

"The Hypothesis" says Dr. Ferguson,¹⁴ "that would represent what we know of their (Dravidians) history most correctly is that which places their original seat in the extreme south. They have no traditions which point to any seat of their race outside India, or of their having migrated from any with whose inhabitants they can claim any kindred. So far as we know they are indigenous and original."

This view of Dr. Ferguson is confirmed by Dr. Grierson who says in the Linguistic Survey of India, "that the Dravidian race is commonly considered to be the aborigines of India or at least Southern India, and we have no information to show that they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the South." Dr. Maclean also holds this view.¹⁵

The Tamils of Lemuria or at least of the Deccan which was formerly a part of Lemuria, migrated to North India and to various places outside India.¹⁶ Hence, we find an advanced civilisation in Mohenjo Daro and Harappa before 3000 B. C. Scholars like Father Heras link this civilisation with that of the Dravidians.¹⁷ But there are some other scholars who are not prepared to subscribe to this view. The worship of Siva has been accepted without any reservations whatever, even by eminent European Scholars like Max Muller and Rev. G. U. Pope, as the singular cult of the Tamils in South India.¹⁸ The prevalence of the worship of Siva among the inhabitants of Mohenjo Daro is undoubtedly a pointer as to the relationship of the Dravidians with the people of Mohenjo-Daro.

Sir John Marshall himself says 'There is no reason to assume that the culture of this region was imported from other lands or that its character was profoundly modified by outside influences'.¹⁹ This view inevitably leads to the conclusion that the Mohenjo-Daro civilisation is a part and parcel of the ancient and pre-Aryan civilisation of India

¹⁴ Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. IV.

¹⁵ Manual of Madras Administration, Vol. I.

¹⁶ India and Pacific World, p. 279—Kalidas nag.

¹⁷ Sight of the Mohenjo Daro Riddle—The New Review, No. 19, Vol. iv.

¹⁸ South Indian Bronzes, p. 47—G. O. Gangoly.

¹⁹ Mohenjo Daro and Indus Civilisation.

which is undoubtedly the Dravidian civilisation. This conclusion is supported by the contention of R. Risely who says "The Dravidians were the original inhabitants of the Indian Peninsula and developed a civilisation which was taken to Mesopotamia and formed the basis of Semitic civilisation."¹⁵

After nearly 2000 years of the Mohenjo Daro civilisation the 'wheat coloured' Aryans descending into the plains of Punjab about 1500 B. C. found a race of people whom they called the Dasus and with whom they waged a bitter but successful struggle.¹⁶ This war undoubtedly forms the historical background of the Vedas.

Whatever be the connection of the Mohenjo-Daro civilisation with the Dravidian or rather Tamilian¹⁷ civilisation, the Tamils in India had an advanced civilisation at least 1000 years before the coming of the Aryans to India.¹⁸ This theory is supported by the Hymns of Rigveda itself.¹⁹

The Dasus or the Tamils lived in cities throughout India. Their kings were famous for their wealth. They had innumerable cows, horses, and chariots. These were kept in forts with hundred doors. The Dasus beautified themselves with golden jewelleryes and diamonds. They did not accept the religious practices of the Aryans. The traders were called 'Panikars' and they carried out their business by sea and land with countries even in Europe²⁰ and Africa.

The civilisation of the Tamils and their language influenced greatly the Aryan civilisation and the Sanskrit Language and the dialects of the North Indians too.²¹ In course of time the Aryans gradually incorporated the indigenous

¹⁵ The Peoples of India.

¹⁶ Rigved 1, 33.

¹⁷ Dravida & Dravidian—The origin of these words was explained by Dr. Caldwell. No mention of these is made in the ancient Tamil works.

¹⁸ Discovery of India—by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Dravidian Element in Indian Culture—G. Slater.

Ancient India, pp. 9-29—Rapson. pp. 53, 54.

The Ancient History of the New East—J. R. Hall.

¹⁹ Rigveda Hymns 1-33; Vedic India—Z. A. Ragozin, 1-104; 1-12.

²⁰ Life in Ancient India—P. T. S. Iyengar.

²¹ Lecture on the Ancient History of India—D. R. Bandarkar.

people in their communities and became the predominant race of North India. But in South India their attempt at subjugation of the South Indians by force never succeeded. Asoka, one of the greatest Emperors of North India, extended his Maurya Empire only as far as Kalinga. The attraction of the fertile plains of Kavery and Thamraparni was so great that the Aryans could not resist it. Infiltration by Aryans took place and they entered Thamilakam as colonists, tutors and priests and gradually influenced the Kings of the Tamil countries. As a result of this peaceful penetration Aryan culture introduced a vigorous element into the body politic of South India and superimposed its religion and to some extent its institutions on the South, though it could not deprive it of its individuality. The structure of society, language and custom remained essentially Thamilian.

The majority of the Aryans who entered Thamilakam were Brahmins and these Brahmins were mainly responsible for the worst caste distinctions now found in the Tamil countries. Claiming themselves as the highest caste in the world—the Gods of this world—they successfully introduced the caste distinctions even into Saiva religion for their own ends. They also went to the extent of calling their language Sanskrit as the language of the Gods. They reduced the Tamil language to a position of a dialect of their language purposely hiding its independent origin.²² Sanskrit authors like Kshemendra and others spitefully called the Tamil language as “Paisachi” the language of the demons. The Brahmins also had their own settlements which were named as “Sathurvethimangalam” and “Pirampurams” in the South Indian inscriptions. These settlements were the seats of vedic studies in the Tamil land until very recently.

Buddhism and Jainism also found their way to South from early times, introducing the Aryan culture and modifying that of Thamilakam. The literary works of the Buddhists and Jains have no doubt enriched the Tamil Literature.

The history of the Tamils who lived in the Thamilakam of South India from ancient times cannot be traced easily

²² Thavaram Illai, pp. 34, 23 (by the same author).

due to the paucity of evidence available. Yet the three South Indian Kingdoms seem to have been well known in ancient times. The rock Edicts of Asoka belonging to the IVth Century B. C. mention them.²³ Megasthenes, Greek ambassador to the Court of Chandra Gupta Maurya speaks of the Pandyan kingdom, its wealth and the strength of its armies. The Sanskrit grammarian Katyayana whom Dr. Bhandarkar places in the 4th Century B.C. refers to them. Valmiki's Ramayana and Mahabharata too describe them. Strabo (22 B. C.) mentions a king “Pandio.” Periplus (81 A. D.) and Ptolemy (180 A. D.) give details of the principal ports and marts of South India and indicate that they were places of great antiquity.

Apart from these foreign references the Sangam works are the only evidence now available in the Tamil country for a history of the early Tamils and their civilisation.

Tradition and Tamil literary and grammatical works make mention of three Tamil Sangams²⁴ which are said to have existed successively for a long time almost before the Christian era. Interesting details of these Sangams are given in the commentary on Irarayanar's Ahapporul. It fixes the beginning of the First Sangam about ten thousand years before the Birth of Christ. The existence of these Sangams is seriously challenged by critical scholars as the accounts of them are full of improbabilities and inconsistencies.²⁵ Even though it is very difficult to decide the beginning of the first Sangam and the duration of the three Sangams, it is now almost certain that they existed for a long time before the third century A.D.²⁶ The traditions and the puranic versions as well as the copious references in the ancient Tamil works²⁷ to the existence of these Sangams cannot be easily ignored. Moreover, the traditions of India are not wholly devoid of historical element.²⁸

²³ Rock Edicts, 11, xiii.

²⁴ Assemblies of learned men. Somewhat akin to Academic Royale in the days of Louis XIV.

²⁵ The Chronology of Early Tamils, pp. 24 and 25.

²⁶ The Pandyan Kingdom, p. 36—K. A. N. Sastri.

²⁷ Sangathamilum Pitkalaththamilum, pp. 5-21.

²⁸ Lectures and Essays, Vol. II p. 199—Pro. W. F. Clifford.

The ancient history of Deccan and its inhabitants has not yet been traced fully and the archaeological surveys of South India are yet in their infancy. When the surveys are completed we can reasonably hope that there will be enough material to throw light on the existence of the Sangams^{27a} and on the activities of the ancient Tamils in the sacred field of education.

The Ancient Tamils who had a flourishing trade about 4000 B.C. with the Chaldeans²⁸ and other ancient tribes and kings like Solomon²⁹ should have certainly had a high standard of education and advanced civilisation so as to enable them to cross the high seas at a time when the Mariners compass was not known. Besides, trading is a complicated business demanding accurate calculation, correct book-keeping and last but not least business acumen of first class order. Hence, those traders had not only the prerequisites of their calling but also a working knowledge of the languages of those races with whom they conducted their business. It is a fact that advance in trade and commerce with foreign lands follows the advance of education in a country.

Therefore, it is not improbable that the Ancient Tamils who were undoubtedly great sea farers and big merchants had an advanced system of education in their own land.

The Sangams were set up to stimulate the study of language and Literature. The Tamil Kings who were themselves great scholars and who enjoyed the company of scholars would have perhaps established the Sangams to facilitate the meeting of the best poets of their lands. In course of time these three Sangams, in fact, did the work of the modern critics, and publication boards. The members reviewed the works submitted for approval, and discussed the subject matter and the style of the works with their authors. Besides considering the merits of the works of others, the members of these assemblies who were undoubtedly the cream of the scholars of the land, produced a good number of works on

^{27a} Senthamil Vol. 38 - 1.

²⁸ Hibbert Lectures, p. 137—Prof. A. H. Sayce.

²⁹ Kingsix-x.

Literature, grammar and even on subjects like Music and Dancing.

As the accounts given by the commentary to Iraiyanar's Ahapporul throws some light on the conditions of education in the Ancient Tamil countries, for a long period before the Christian Era, a summary of it is not out of place in a work that deals with the education of the Tamils.

According to that work the First Sangam had 549 poets including Akaththyanar, Siva, Murugavel, Kudinagarayar and Nithiyinkilavan. The number of poets who composed literary works during the 4440 years of its duration was 4449. Some of those works were Paripadal, Muthunarai, Muthukurugu and Kalariyavirai. The venue of the meeting of the poets was Madura which was submerged by sea. Eighty nine Pandya Kings from Kaisinavaluthy down to Kadunkone supported the poets. Some of these kings also produced literary works. The guiding work was "Agaththiyam".³⁰

The Second Sangam has 59 Scholars including Akaththiyar, Tholkappiyar, Karunkoli, Mosi, Kappiyan, Pandarangan, Thirayanmaran, Thuvaraikone and Keeranthai. The poems of 3700 poets were reviewed by them. Kali, Kurgu, Vendali, Viyalamaila are some of the works of this Sangam. The meeting place of it was Kapadapuram. This Sangam existed for 3700 years during the reigns of 59 Kings from Vendarseliyan to Mudathirumaran. Five of these kings too, were poets of reputation. The standard works used by the Scholars during this period were Akaththiyam, Tholkappiyam, Mapuranam, Isaininukkam and Poothapuranam. Pandya Nadu was submerged by sea during this sangam.³¹

The Third Tamil Sangam met at Uththara Madurai and had its sessions under the patronage of 49 kings of whom the first was Mudaththirumaran and the last Ukkirapperu-

³⁰ The name Akaththiyar, author of this work, was connected with a number of works produced during the last 20 centuries without any regard to the time factor. Cf. Rev. Pope's Introduction to the Naladiyar, p. xi. Twenty-one persons with the name of Agaththiyar seem to have lived in India at different times. Agaththiyar Varalaru, p. 26—A. Sithambaranar.

³¹ Tamil Varalaru, pp. 28-44—R. Ragava Iyengar.

valuthy. It had a membership of 49 poets some of whom were Sirumethaviyar, Senthampoothanar, Arivudaiyanar, Perunkunroorklar, Thirumaran, Nallanthuvanar, Naruthanilanaganar and Nakkeerar. Including these members 449 scholars composed many a work during 1950 years. The guiding books were Akaththiyam and Tholkappiyam. The works of this Sangam are generally known as Kadaisanga Noolkal or merely as Sanganoolkal.

In spite of their inconsistencies and inaccuracies, these accounts taken in conjunction with other references in Tamil Literature and Puranic works enable us to think that the Tamils had an advanced system of education which was able to produce from time to time such a great number of poets. They also point to an attempt made by the Tamils to control the production of various works and also to allow only the excellent productions for circulation among the masses. The necessity for such a control would have been warranted by the production of innumerable works during those times by many scholars.

The Tamil Kings became the patrons of these Sangams. It is not a novel thing for a well organised Government to stimulate learning by its patronage and financial support. The members of these assemblies were gathered from all the places of the Tamil land. They were fed and looked after by the Kings.

Among the Tamil works referred to in the accounts of the Sangam only Tholkappiyam, Melkanakku and Kilkanakku³² are available at present. The other works³³ are lost for ever except for some lines quoted by the commentators. One stanza in Thiruvilaiyadal Puranam tells us of the subject matter of the Tamil works lost for ever when the erosion by sea took place at the end of the Second Sangam.

³² The works of Kadaisangam are divided into two groups. Melkanakku or higher classics and Kilkanakku or lesser classics. In each group there are 18 works. The higher classics are again divided into two groups—Edduththokai and Paththup Paddu.

³³ Full and exhaustive accounts of these were given by the author in an article entitled "The Works We Lost", Kalanithy Vol. I, Sec. 1 & 2.

The time of the composition of Tholkappiyam is yet a subject of dispute.³⁴ As a reference the Sanskrit Grammar Indirama, is made in the preface to Tholkappiyam some scholars are of opinion this grammar was written before Panineeyam, the composition of which is fixed by European scholars at 700 B.C. The consensus of opinion is that Tholkappiyam is the oldest Tamil work now extant.³⁵

The lower limit of the Kadai Sangam works is accepted as the second or third century A.D. by both Indian and European Scholars.³⁶ Internal evidence from these works suggests that Tholkappiyam was the standard Grammar which guided the poets to compose these works. Tholkappiyam itself says in many a sutra there are works on grammar, literature and even on music before its composition. Hence the beginning of Tamil Literature could not be fixed accurately as we have lost those works. But it can be safely said that for many centuries before the Christian era the Tamils had a good number of works on Tamil literature, and other subjects. This fact is clearly confirmed by Rev. Pope who says—"The Ancient Grammatical works existing in Tamil and its wonderful metrical system prove its assiduous cultivation for long ages. An elaborate scientific series of metres, such as Tamil glories in, adapted to every style and theme of composition is the growth of centuries. Classical Tamil bears every mark of slow and natural evolution."³⁷

Tholkappiyam and the Kadaisangam works are the only source of information for us to trace the history of education in ancient times in the Tamil countries. These priceless

³⁴ The Chronology of the Ancient Tamils, Appendix IX—Sivaraja Pillai.

Illakkiya Varalaru, p. 82.—K. S. Pillai.

³⁵ Tamil Varalaru, p. 137—Ragava Iyengar.

³⁶ (a) Early History, pp. 471-472 & No. 4. p. 457—V. A. Smith.

(b) "Most Tamil scholars are agreed in referring the Oldest Tamil Literature to the first three centuries of our era and I see nothing improbable in this."—Hinduism and Buddhism, Vol. II, p. 214—Sir Charles Elliot.

(c) The Pandyan Kingdom, p. 36—K. A. N. Sastri.

(d) Elakkiya Varalaru, p. 98—K. S. Pillai.

³⁷ Introduction to the Translation of Naladiyar, p. x—Rev. G. U. Pope.

literary treasures of the Tamils are very rarely known to the outside world.³⁸ The studies in Sanskrit progressed as a result of translations from Sanskrit into European languages and mainly into English. This has undoubtedly produced a number of works on the culture and civilisation of the Aryans of North India and made foreign scholars to speak of the greatness of India, in terms of Aryan culture and Sanskrit language only. The Tamils who can, as Professor Jules Block says³⁹ 'boast of antique and original culture', and a civilisation which is perhaps the oldest in the world⁴⁰ and a language which too is the oldest language of India⁴¹ and perhaps the world, have suffered as a result of the paucity of translations from Tamil to the European languages. Even the present popularity and reputation of this language is due to the few Europeans who have studied the Tamil language and literature and did some sort of pioneer work in telling the world of the purity and the antiquity of the Tamil language and literature. Unfortunately, some of these scholars could not lay their hands on these Sangam works in which, to quote Prof. Jules Block again, 'There probably is still much to be discovered'.⁴²

These sangam works reveal a people of great civilisation and culture. They give descriptions of the three capitals

³⁸ "Caivism is the old pre-historic religion of South India; essentially existing from Pre-Aryan times and holds sway over the Tamil people. But this great attempt to solve the problems of God, soul, humanity, nature, evil, suffering and the unseen world, has never been fully expounded in English." Samaya Kuravar & Santhana Kuravar—Rev. G. U. Pope.

³⁹ Introduction to the Translation of Silappadikaram—V. R. Tickshitar.

⁴⁰ "They (the Tamils) are the foremost amongst the peoples of India."—Rev. G. U. Pope; Tamilar Charitram—Foreword by Swami Gnanaprakasara—Senthamil Volume 39—1.

⁴¹ It (Tamil) stands alone without any predecessor. In origin, it must be long anterior to the Sanskrit"—Manual of Standing Information for the Madras Presidency. Also vide Manual of Madras Administration Vol. 1, p. 43. The largest proportion of the words used in Pro-Dravidian are also found in Tamil. This confirms the common belief that Tamil is the oldest of the present languages." (Sight of the Mohenjo Daro Riddle—Father H. Heras. The New Review, No. 19, Vol. IV.

⁴² Introduction to the Translation of Silappadikaram—V. R. Dikshitar.

of Chola, Chera and Pandya, as glowing with life. In the busy streets were peoples of many nations.⁴³ The Municipal administration was excellent. Roads and streets were kept in good condition and lighted.⁴⁴ Seven storied bulidings were not uncommon.⁴⁵ Life in the town was one of luxury and ease. They took delight in Literature, Music, Dancing, and Religion.⁴⁶ Women decked themselves with costly attire and made themselves attractive, decorating their bodies with jewels and garlands and scented pastes and powders.⁴⁷ Village life was orderly and contented and people following their hereditary occupations, created the economic wealth of the country. The kings were benevolent despots working for the welfare of their subjects dealing out law and justice. The Government was personal but the king was advised by his council. Officials administered the provinces.⁴⁸ Not only in the materialistic way of living but also in the fields of religion and philosophy and spirituality the Tamils reached an advanced stage both in theory and practice. A good portion of the Tamil works speak of virtues and morals and they remind everyone of us to his duty towards the development of his personality and his service to the society. "*Yathum Ure Yavarum Kelir*"⁴⁹ is one of the famous maxims expressed in Purnanooru. This shows the belief of the ancient Tamils in Universal brotherhood. They also gave expression in unmistakable terms to the existence of only one God, one Supreme Being and only one race in the whole world.⁵⁰

The Sangam works in short, reflect, in the words of Rev. Pope "a strong sense of moral obligation, an earnest aspiration after righteousness, a fervent and unselfish charity and generally a loftiness of aim that are very impressive."⁵¹

⁴³ Paddinappalai, LL 216, 217.

⁴⁴ Mathuraikkanchi LL 250-770.

⁴⁵ Paddinappalai L 145.

⁴⁶ Ibid., L 113.

⁴⁷ Silappathigaram Canto 6.

⁴⁸ Dikshitar—Hindu Administrative Institutions.

⁴⁹ Puranam 192.

⁵⁰ Thirumanthiram 107.

⁵¹ Naladiyar Introduction, p. xi.

A great people and a great culture are not made in a day. They are the result of centuries of progress and evolution. The cultural heritage of the ages are treasured to a 'life beyond life' by the creative capacity of its peoples in their literary and artistic works. Education is the means which makes the preservation of a culture and the creative process possible. It is that which gives the vision without which a people perish.

(to be continued)

The Scholarship of Simon Casie Chitty

VIDWAN F. X. C. NATARAJAH

SIMON Casie Chitty was born in a small town called Calpitya on the 21st of March 1807 almost at the beginning of British rule in Ceylon. He started his career as an interpreter Mudaliyar in the Magistrate Court of Puttalam. His pre-eminent ability and efficiency soon secured for him the district Mudaliyarship and Maniagarship of Puttalam in 1833. Nor did he confine himself to public service ; he responded to the call of national service and sat in the Legislative Council from 1838 - 1845. Later he was appointed to the Civil Service and served as a District Judge of Chillaw until his untimely death in 1852. It is really tragical that a man so highly endowed with pre-eminent intellectual and scholarly attributes should have been removed by death in the prime of his life.

Mr. Simon Casie Chitty had not advantage of a normal University Education. He was a self made man in every sense of that term. An untiring worker in the field of Oriental Languages he made contributions to Tamil and local History which are of permanent value and interest. He was one of the greatest among the pioneer orientalisks and antiquarians of whom Ceylon is so proud. His intellectual exertions covered a wide range of research in oriental languages and Ceylon History. Not only was he a master of Tamil, Sanskrit, Sinhalese, Arabic and Hebrew but also he was equally learned grand daughter, the late Mrs. Gardener, had it published in his days as a man of versatile genius. The greater is his merit, if we take note of the fact that he was almost entirely self taught.

Vidwan F. X. C. Nadarajah is a research worker with the official Languages Commission, Colombo.

Already in his seventeenth year he conceived the idea of compiling the origins of various races that inhabited Ceylon, and the origins of the place names in our country. The publication known as the Ceylon Gazetteer saw the light of the day in 1834. Himself unable to meet the cost of publication he successfully prevailed upon Sir Robert Wilmot Horton, the then Governor of Ceylon to meet the cost of its publication out of the Government funds. Only 500 copies were printed. There is one copy available at the Library of the Royal Asiatic Society, Colombo. The Secretary of States for Colonies was quick to recognise the services of this talented young man and awarded a hundred guineas as a graceful tribute to his abilities and labours. The press in Ceylon did not lag behind in praise of this compilation. Says the "Observer" Editorial of March 17th 1833 :

"The author of the Gazetteer, Simon Casie Chitty, Modliar, a native of the Island, has rendered himself deserving of lasting praise for the manner in which he has combated with and overcome the difficulties that must have presented themselves, while collecting materials for the accomplishment of his arduous undertaking and the complete success that has attended his efforts proves him to be a man possessed of a degree of energy for which his countrymen generally, seldom have credit, but which ought in him to be liberally awarded, so that others may be induced to exert themselves and pursue the same useful course equally advantaging the island and benefiting the community at large."

The readers of this quarterly may naturally desire to read a few lines from the Gazetteer. For the benefit and interest of our readers, I shall quote the lines wherein he has traced the origin of the name of our Country, Sri Lanka.

"Ceylon : The Island of which this work treats is situated at the western entrance of the Bay of Bengal between the parallels of 5° 50' and 9° 50' North Latitude and 79° 50' and 82° 10' East longitude. It is separated from the south eastern extremity of the Coromandel Coast by the Gulf of Mannar and is distant about 140 miles from Comorin on the Malabar Coast. Its length may be estimated at about 280 miles while the breadth varies from 40 to 170 miles. It is much broader

in the southern than in the northern part resembling in general outline the shape of a ham ; hence the narrow peninsula of Jaffna received from the Dutch the name of Hamsheel and the projecting angle of Point Pedro that of Hamsheel Point. Its superficial extent is computed at 24,664 square miles but no accurate survey of it has yet been made whereby to fix it with precision.

The Island is usually called "Lankawe" by the Sinhalese "Ilangei" by the Malabars, "Tera Lanka" by the Siamese, and "Lankapoo" by the Javanese. All from the Sanskrit "Lanka" which signifies "holy" or resplendent. The Burmese call it "Theho or Zehoo." In history it bears the name of "Sinhaldwipa" (or the island of lionlike men) from which originated the modern appellation Seilan or Ceylon and its Arabic predecessors Seylandiva, Selendib or Serendib — some derive these names from the Sale or Challias, who, however settled at too late a period on the Island for this to be correct. It is likewise called "Hebenaro" or "the fertile land," "Eslam" or "the insular kingdom" and Tenasserim or "the place of delight." Among the Greeks and Romans it was known by the name of "Taprobane," the etymology of which is disputed by many authors. Some deduce it from the Phoenician words "Tap-parvain" or "the shore of Parvain" ; alleging that the latter (whom they identify with the modern Paravas) were at one time the masters of the commerce of the Island ; others from "Tapo-rawan" or the Island of Rawana" the giant king who was conquered by Rama, others from the Sanskrit term "Tepo-vana" or "the wilderness of prayer" ; while many with more probability suppose it to have originated from the Pali word "Tambapannya" which signifies a betel leaf and to which the Island bears some resemblance in its figure. Bochart labours to support an hypothesis, that Ceylon was the Ophir of Solomon ; but on this point there are likewise many dissentient opinions, and since we do not find gold in any part of the island, we may rather conclude that what is adduced by Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller on this head in favour of the kingdom of Sofola on the east coast of Africa is more likely to be correct.

It has been supposed by Mons Burnard in a memoir inserted the Asiatic Journal for May 1821 that this Island formerly comprehended a greater extent of territory that it now does, and that a considerable portion has been engulfed by some violent convulsion of nature. This supposition is confirmed not only by the general appearance of the coast but also by the traditions current among the natives which place the citadel of Rawana where the Besses are now situated and which also give the Island a dimension of 700 yojenas in the remotest period."

Since the publication of the Ceylon Gazetteer Mr. Chitty wrote a number of learned articles and learned essays on literary, historical, antiquarian, religious, philological and other subjects. In an age in which easy reference to the lines and works of the great authors of Tamil literature was well nigh impossible, and all those facts were hidden away in the ancient old manuscripts, Mr. Chitty delved into them over a period of years with unremitting toil in the midst of his administrative and official duties and gave to the Tamil world his "*Tamil Plutarch*." This work, an outstanding pioneer effort of a great scholar, has since proved to be an authoritative work on Tamil literary history. Dr. Caldwell in his Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Language recognises the authority of Chitty's work. This book has been of some value to the contributions of the Encyclopedia Britannica on Tamil History, published so far back as 1859. The dawn of a new age free from the trammels of an alien rule has revived the interest in our national language and a reprint of this book was issued by Ceylon Printers with a foreward by the Author of the "Yal Nool" the late Swami Wipulananda of revered memory.

"The Castes Customs manners and Literature of the Tamils" is a simple and very readable book which was yet unpublished at the time of his death. Fortunately for us his grand daughter, the late Mrs. Gardener, had it published in 1934. To her we owe a deep debt of gratitude for rendering this service to the lovers of Tamil Language and Literature.

Here is evidence of Mr. Simon Cassie Chittys' scholarly contributions,

1. Contributions to Periodicals

1. The Madras Government Gazette.
"On the identity of Koodremale (Horses mountain) — September 1830.
2. The Ceylon Government Gazette.
(a) "On the Affinity between the Maldivian and Sinhalese Languages — December 11, 1830.
(b) On the Affinity between the Javanese and Sanskrit Languages — February 16, 1831.
(c) Translation of Kavi Raja Varatheiyans Poem, giving an account of the origin and history of the Hindu Temple at Trincomalee — November 26, 1831.
3. The Colombo Journal
(a) History of the Queen Alleyarasany—March 23, 1833.
4. The Colombo Friend.
On the Affinity between the Ancient Egyptians and the Brahmins — 1838.
5. The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland --
(a) Remarks on the origin and history of the Parawas — 1837.
(b) Remarks on the site and ruins of Tammanna Nuwara with a Survey — 1841.
6. The Colombo Observer
(a) Aphorisms of the Tamils — April 1840.
(b) Extract from Kasi Kandam — April 13, 1840.
7. The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society — Ceylon Branch.
(a) An account of some ancient coins found at Colpenty — 1839.
(b) Translation of the sixth chapter of the Tiruvathavur Purana.
(c) History of Jaffna from the earliest period to the Dutch Conquest.
(d) Catalogue of Tamil Books with the names of their Authors.

- (e) An analysis of the great poem of the Moors entitled "Seerah."
8. The Ceylon Miscellany
On the Rodiyas with specimen of their language.
9. The Ceylon Magazine.
- (a) Brief notices of the Tamil Philosophers and Poets in the South of India and Ceylon.
- (b) Remarks on the Language and Literature of the Tamils.
- (c) An account of Ceylon Mass.
- (d) Creation and Fall of Adam according to Mohamedan Legends.

2. Published Works

- (a) A correct outline of the Classification of the Tamil Castes.
- (b) An essay on the ceremonies observed by the Tamil Castes.
- (c) Essay on the Manners and Customs of the Moors of Ceylon.
- (d) Tamil Translation of the Epitome of the History of Ceylon.
- (e) Malai Agaradi.
- (f) Udayaditya or the Rising Sun — A Tamil Newspaper — 1841.
- (g) Life of Father Joseph Vaz — 1848.
- (h) Sketch of the rise and progress of the Catholic Church in Ceylon — 1848.

3. Unpublished Works

- (a) The Sanskrit and Tamil Dictionary.
- (b) Thesaurus of foreign words and phrases in use amongst the Tamils.
- (c) An English and Tamil Lexicon.

The Northern Boundary of Tamil Nad

DR. V. RAGHAVAN

"Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations who had else,
Like kindred drops been mingled into one."
—Cowper, the Task, Book 2

LIKE the Sanskrit writers, the Tamil writers had a keen geographical sense and a notion of their homeland. This is all the more striking when we note that no early Telugu writer has ever defined his land. Even as the Sanskrit Smritis speak of the geographical boundaries of the country where the Dharma spoken of by them are and are to be current, early Tamil writers defined, with clear mention of its geographical boundaries, the land where the Tamil language was spoken. Thus, P anambāranār in his prefatory verse to the oldest extent Tamil work, the Grammar of Tolkappiyanār, says "the fine land lying between Veṅkaṭa in the north and Kumari in the South, where Tamil is spoken." This northern boundary of the Tiruveṅkaṭa hills is reiterated in other old Tamil works like the music treatise of Śikhaṇḍi and the prosodial treatise of the authoress Perum Kākkai-p-pāḍiniyār. In well-known works like the epic Śilappatikāram, Veṅkaṭa with Lord Vishnu is treated as part of Tamil Nad.

A Śilpa treatise in Tamil quoted by the late Dr. V. Swaminatha Iyer in his University Lectures, mentions Tamilnad as extending up to the Krishna, but

evidently this is due to the sway of the Tamil kings extending sometimes beyond the Veṅkaṭa hills.

In contrast to this, it is to be noted that no early Telugu work or writer speaks of the Southern limit of his land, nor of the Veṅkaṭa hills as their southern boundary, nor even of Veṅkaṭa generally in such frequent manner.

We shall then take the evidence of religion. It is well-known that the Tamil and Vaishnava saints known as Nāyanmārs and Alwārs had toured the shrines of Tamilnad and sung of the deities there. Such personal visits the Nāyanmārs had made up to Kālahasti; Śiva-shrines beyond that, they have sung of only generally without visiting them, as has been attested to by the Periapurāṇam. The Tamil Śaivite canonical literature would give the Kālahasti hill shrine and the Svarṇamukhī river there as the northern boundary of Tamilnad. Similar confirmation of the Veṅkaṭam as a Tamil shrine is to be had from the Vaishnavite canonical literature. Besides, many Sangham poets visited Veṅkaṭa hills and sang of them in their Tamil verses.

The Tamils divided their land into several divisions. According to this territorial division, the northern-most division is the Toṇḍai-nāḍu or Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam, ruled over by the Pallavas of Kāñchi, in which division, Tiruveṅkaṭa is included. The Sangam works refer to Pallava rule comprehending Veṅkaṭa hills and parts of Nellore District. The fact that no less than 32 Dēvārām shrines and 22 Divyaprabandha shrines are in the Toṇḍaināḍu shows what an important part of Tamilnād this northern-most division of Tamilnad was. In fact the importance of this part of the Tamil country was so much that

it is called *Dramila* (Tamil) *par excellence*. Daṇḍin, the poet laureate of the Pallavas of Kāñchi, speaks of the Pallavas and their Tondainadu as *Dramila* (Tamil) more than once in his work the *Avantisundarikathā*. Yuan Chwang, the Chinese Buddhist traveller speaks of Kāñchipuram as the capital of *Dramila* (Tamil) country, and it is from a *Dramila* port that he embarked for Ceylon. Several inscriptions refer to the territory of the Pallavas as *Damariga* (Tamilakam). In the heydays of Buddhism in Toṇḍaināḍu, Buddhist works like the *Mahāvamsa* refer to this northern-most division as *Damilo*. It is therefore clear that this northern-most division of Tamilnāḍu, Toṇḍaināḍu, stretching upto the Veṅkaṭa hills, was called *Dramila* i.e. *Tamil*.

This Toṇḍai-nāḍu was again divided into 24 subdivisions or Kōṭṭams which figure in inscriptions from the Pallava times. It must be noted that all these Kōṭṭa names are all Tamil; one of them is Veṅkaṭa-k-Kōṭṭam.

According to another nomenclature, this northern-most division of Tamilnād bears the name Aravānāḍu which again, as is clear on the face of it, means Arava-nāḍu or Tamil-nāḍu. That the Telugu, themselves held this part of the country as Tamil is proved by the fact that 'Arava' is the name by which they refer to Tamils.

That the Telugu country did not extend in the past even upto the Veṅkaṭa hills is clear from the history of the territorial unit called Muṇḍarāshtra which lay between Kālahasti and Nellore. It is beyond the habitat of the Muṇḍas, who were of a Dravidian stock, that the Telugu country began.

Like the territorial divisions of the Tamils mentioned above, the Telugus too have their land-divisions, and it is significant that they have no name or division covering the Veṅkaṭa area. Not only that. One of the names by which Telugus call their land is *Triliṅga* and their explanation of the word is that their land is marked by *three Śiva liṅgas*. These three Śiva-liṅgas are Manthana Kāleśvara in Wāraṅgal District, Bhīmeśvara of Drāksārāma and the famous and ancient Śrīśaila. It must be noted that *Kalahastisvaraliṅga* is not one of these that demarcate their country. On the other hand, in all Tamil conceptions, the shrine of Kālahasti plays an important part; Tamil Śaivism adores the legend of Kaṇṇappa Nāyanār of Kālahasti; according to one classification of the Tamil shrines as per the Five Elements, Panchamaha-Bhūtas, Prithivī, Ap, Tejas, Vāyu, and Akāśa, Kālahasti is Vāyukshetra. And in one of the early commentaries on the Rāmāyaṇa, the Amritakataka, still in manuscript, written by a Tamil Sannyāsin, the deities at Kālahasti, Śivakāñchī (Ekāṃreśvara) and Tirukkalukundram are deemed to form a special Śaiva-Trinity.

As in the case of Kālahasti, there is no early reference in Telugu literature to Tiruveṅkaṭam. It is only in the later Vijayanagara times that Tiruveṅkaṭa figures much in Telugu literature.

Also, in the history of early Telugu culture, there is nothing that is associated with this area. There has been no early Telugu writer, saint or other important personage or memorable Telugu event connected with this area. With this one should contrast the great part this area has played in the history of Tamil culture. The association of Tamil Śaiva and Vaishnava saints with Kālahasti and Tiruveṅkaṭam has

already been mentioned. With Mylapore are associated Tiruvalluvar, Jñānasambandhar and Pēyālwār. In fact, including Pēyālwār, four of the Vaishnava Tamil saints hail from Toṇḍai-nāḍu, and the great Rāmānuja too came from this same region. Tripligane is associated with Pallava Kings and Alwārs. Tiruvotriyūr is full of Tamil Saints' exploits, those of Sundaramūrti, Paṭṇattār etc. Tiruvēlaṅgādu has similar old Tamil religious and literary associations.

It is usual for enthusiastic Telugus to make much of the influx of the Telugu into Tamilnad in the post-Vijayanagara period, and their contribution to culture in Tamil nad, in fields like music and dance. All this is a matter of yesterday. The student of South Indian History knows that in the palmy days of the Tamil Cholas, beginning from the time of Karikāla Chola himself, the whole of the Telugu country was being, time and again, over-run by Cholas and kept under their hegemony. Large numbers of Chola chiefs settled themselves in different parts of the Telugu country, calling themselves Telugu Chodas. The chief place which they thus occupied first was Cudappa and a major part of Kurnool which came to be called Cholappāḍi, and the Cholas who ruled here were called Renāḍu Cholas. Huentsang, the Chinese traveller, refers to Chola rule here. Villages and shrines here, as inscriptions show, had Tamil names. Large numbers of Tamil families must have accompanied these Tamil victors and settled on Telugu soil. While the fighting and working classes among them cannot now be traced, we have evidences to lay our fingers on the families of Scholars from Tamilnad who, at that time, went over to Telugu country, settled there, and made valuable contribution to culture in that land. To cite a few instances, the Telugu Nitiśāstra owes its origin to the Telugu chola Baddana; Gokarna

Cohandas was written by Gokarna Chola; Kalāvilāsa and Kumārasambhava were written by Nannaya Chola; Manma Siddhi who patronised Tikkana was a Telugu chola king of Nellore; in Nellore and Gōdāvarī districts, we have still the distinguishing Tamil house-names, Perūr Drāvidas, Pudūr Drāvidas etc., three miles from Elamanchali, Vizag District, we have a place called *Dimila*; the Karris are Drāviḍa Brahmanas; Pērūru, a Drāviḍa settlement, is in Amalāpuram Taluq; yet another branch of Tamil Brahmanas settled on the Gōdāvarī banks are the Arāma or Tōṭa Drāvidas; some of the stalwarts of modern Telugu literature, Vedam Venkataraya Sastri, Chellapalalli Venkata Sastri, Vajjiahala Chinna Sitaramaswami Sastri and Chilakamarti Lakshminarasimhan are all drawn from Tamil families settled in Andradesa.

Some of the families of the great music masters who settled in Merattūr and other Tanjore villages are known as Tonḍravāḍu. This Tonḍravāḍu is a corruption of Tōṭa-arava-vāḍu, a fact which shows that they were only the old Tamils come back to their native Cauvery from the Gōdāvarī.

There is no dispute about the Tamil chola origin of the Telugu chodas, for they give themselves in their inscriptions the title — 'Urayūr-pura-varādhīśvara' — 'lords of Urayūr,' the Chola capital on the Cauvery in Tamilnad.

In the great days of the two greatest chola emperors, Rājarāja and his son Rājendra, parts of the Telugu country were subordinate to the Tamil kings.

During the days of the expansion of 'Sri Vaishnavism,' not only were members of Tamil Sri Vaishnava

Brāhmin teachers with their families settled in Andhradesa, but a good deal of Tamil Vaishnava vocabulary was also borrowed by the Telugu Vaishnavas.

It is only in the later Vijayanagar period that Telugu appears to an appreciable extent in Veṅkaṭam area. Prior to this, in all the area around Tiruvenkada, Kālahasti and up to Nellore, Tamil is the language of the inscriptions, from which fact, Mr. Venkayya, the well-known epigraphist, draws the legitimate conclusion that this was originally a Tamil speaking area, and that it was Teluguised to some extent in the later Vijayanagara age, especially after Chandragiri became the seat of Vijayanagar chiefs. (Annual Report of Epigraphy 1904, p. 6). Even as late as the middle of the 17th century when the British had settled near Triplicane, a Sanskrit work, the Viśvagunādarsa Champū of Veṅkaṭādhvarī of Araśānippālai, a work of much geographical interest, considers Tamilnad as starting with Tiruvenkatam. In this connection, it may also be borne in mind that the general disfavour with which Sircar Andhras look upon the Southern Telugus of Nellore etc., is most probably, inherited from those early days when these areas were really not Telugu.

Thus taking history as a whole, this movement of population across the frontier of Veṅkaṭam has taken place on both sides, and it should therefore be not urged as an argument for considering the area of Veṅkaṭam as Telugu. If some more time had passed, just as the early Tamil settlers in Andhra naturalised themselves, the Telugus in Tamilnad would also naturalise themselves. Already most of them, whether among Brahman scholars or among Reddis and other groups, are in a process of naturalisation, unable as they are to live on without Tamil the language of the

soil. Some of them, especially in distant southern districts, talk some absurd Telugu, a dog-Telugu, f wei may say so, and they are really more proficient in the regional language, Tamil. They are thus to be considered as part of Tamilians, and not Telugus. Jespersen, the eminent linguist, points out in his work on *Man, Race and Nation from a Linguistic Point of View* that speaking a common language is also not a criterion of peoples being one nation and cites the example of the Americans and the British being two distinct nations, despite their common English. Similarly, here also, the mere fact that a Tamil-Telugu's leadership is resisted by the Telugu as much as a pure Tamil leadership is clear proof that the Tamil-Telugus are to be, for all political purposes, taken to be as good as Tamils.

THE CITY OF MADRAS

The City of Madras which owes its present form to British occupation, comprised a number of what were originally villages, Mylāpūr, Tiruvallikkeni, Nungampākkam, Elumūr etc., all of which figure both in Tamil literature and inscriptions from early times.

It is claimed that the Andhras have a right over this City as its very name Chennapaṭṭanam is after Dāmaria Chennama Nāyudu, whose son Dāmarla Venkaṭappa Nāyudu, is said to have gifted the fort area on the beach to the British. That the City is named after the donor's father is not a fact. There is no greater authority on the history of Madras than H. D. Love, author of *Vestiges of Old Madras*. Love, in that most valuable work, says definitely that there is no evidence for this view. Recently other evidences have come up which definitely prove that this theory is totally wrong.

If we look up William Foster's *English Factories in India*, 1637-1641, pp. 156-8, we find that, strange to say, it is stated that the original of the grant of the Naik to the British, made to one Frances Day, is *not* available; it is explained that the original was blown away by wind on the deck of the ship and that what we have is only a copy of that grant belonging to Captain Cogan. In this grant, the alleged stipulation that the town to be reared on the gifted site should be named after the donor's father, is conspicuous by its absence.

On the site in question, there stood at that time a Chennakesava Perumal Temple; and in 1644 and 1647, one Nāga Pattan and another Timmappan had mad grants to this temple, and in this connection the place is referred to as Chennapaṭṭanam. Even before the gift of the site to the British it appears the place was called Chennapaṭṭanam.

Thirdly, there is the Sanskrit work on the life of Anandaranga Pillai, Dubash of Dupleix at Pondicherry, written in 1752 A.D., which I have edited. Anandaranga Pillai belonged to an old family of Perambūr and Ayanavaram in Madras. In two places in this work, while referring to the Black Town of Madras, the author mentions it as *Chennakesavapura*. Thus *Chennakesavapura* is the full original name of the town, which, for convenience, was referred to as Chennapaṭṭanam also. The name is thus after the presiding deity in the temple which stood in this area, Chennakesavaperumal, the temple which was pulled down in 1757 during the Governorship of Pigot; Manali Muthukrishna Mudali who was Dubash at this time could not reconcile himself to this destruction, and took the initiative to rebuild the temple at its present place in the Flower Bāzaar, along with an additional Chenna

Mallesvara shrine. Thus there is no truth in the statement that the City of Madras owes its name to a Telugu Chief.

It is true that the Madras area was under Telugu sway when the British came. But to claim Madras on this score is like one of the fond desires of Jinnah that, as the Muslims were rulers in the North before the British, India should properly be handed over to him when the British quitted.

It is during the early British days that Telugu Merchants crowded into the city. Later, Telugu lawyers and officials poured in. But from the early days of the City, leading Tamils like Manali Mudaliars, were having a dominant part in the affairs of the City. An interesting Sanskrit work of about 1800 A D, dealing with Madras life, Sarvadevavilāsa, which I am editing from a Manuscript of it in Adyar, describes a number of leading Tamil nobles of the City like Vedāchala of Kalaśapura, Devanāyakam of Nungambākkam and Annāswāmi of Triplicane.

Successive census reports have also noted that Madras, from Pulicat area, is a Tamil speaking region, and the figures for the city too show a consistent excess of Tamils over Telugus. The nature of the poor and lowest strata of the people of the locality is a sure evidence to show to whom a place really belongs. All along the Madras sea-coast, the fisherman are all Tamil speaking people, and similarly, along the streets of Madras the poor workers and Harijan Rikshawalas are also Tamils.

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The Hypocritical Cat

THE REV. H. HERAS, S.J.,
INDIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, BOMBAY.

POPULAR Wisdom in the Tamil land often mentions the உருத்திராக்ஷப் பூனை (*rudraksa punei*) as a prototype of those persons who act hypocritically. A *rudraksa punei* is the cat which devoutly enters a temple, adorned with *rudraksas* as if he were a Saiva ascetic, to deceive the mice of the temple, in order finally to eat them up with much greater facility. A *rudraksa punei* is a deceitful cat, a symbol of a hypocrite.

What are the foundations of this curious expression?
That is what we wish to study in this essay.

I

THE HYPOCRITICAL CAT IN SANSKRIT LITERATURE

There is a series of stories (*itihasas*) in the literature of Ancient India concerning different animals that shammed practices of asceticism in order to deceive other animals for their selfish purposes. Here it is a swan (*hansa*) preaching (*dharmavak*), under whose protection the other birds place their eggs, which she finally eats,¹ which story is in Buddhist literature narrated of a "travelled crow" (*disakakam*).² There it is a crane or a heron, which shams asceticism because he lusts after fish.³ Further it is a tiger who performs lustrations holding sacred grass in his paws, as befits a good Brahmana, but finally devours the credulous wayfarer who confides in his piety.⁴ Then it is a wolf who, accidentally, owing to a flood

¹ *Mahabharata*, Sabha Parva, 1463-1473.

² *Dhammadhaja Jataka*, 384.

³ *Baka Jataka*, 38.

⁴ *Hitopadesa*, I, 3.

of the Ganga, decides to play the ascetic keeping an *uposatha* (sabbath fast)⁵; or a jackal, whose hair being all singed by a forest fire, calls himself Bharadvaja and offers himself to be the guardian of a rat tribe, though in fact he eats the hindmost rat when they come to their hole every night.⁶ Finally in three of these *Jatakas* the sham ascetic is a monkey: in two cases the ape puts on the garments of a holy anchorite in order to be admitted to warm himself within a house in a cold winter night.⁷ In the third case the monkey mimics the air of a holy man seeking alms and worshipping the sun; and his pose seemed to have been so convincing that passers-by, when seeing him, repeated:

"There is no tribe of animals but hath its virtuous one:
See how this wretched monkey here stands
worshipping the sun."⁸

But the parent story, out of which all these seem to be patterned, appears to be the story of the wicked and cunning cat which is narrated in the *Mahabharata*. This feline, being no longer in business (*niscestah sarvakarmasu*) stands with forepaws held high (*urdhvabahu*) on the banks of the Ganga, professing to have attained mental purity (*manuhsuddhi*) and advising all to adhere to the practice of virtue. The cat's fame as an ascetic thus grows far and wide and is spread throughout by the birds which he had used to eat in his young days. Then the mice of the neighbourhood realizing that they were beset by many enemies, came to see that wonder — a cat turned an ascetic — and thinking that he would be the proper one to protect them against the voraciousness of the others of his kind, addressed him as their maternal uncle (*matula*) declaring him to be their refuge and best friend. The evil cat, apparently accepts the task reluctantly, but feigning exhaustion from ascetic exercises induces the mice to carry him to the river side for his pious lustrations every day. "Very well," said the mice; and when going to the

⁵ *Vaka Jataka*, 300.

⁶ *Aggika Jataka*, 129.

⁷ *Kapi Jataka*, 250; *Makkata Jataka*, 173.

⁸ *Adiccupatthana Jataka*, 173.

river side the cat ate some mice on the sly every day. Thus "the mice of the tribe began to dwindle quickly and the wicked-souled wretch began to grow fat endued with strength and energy. Much concerned with this phenomenon, Dindika, who is described as "the wisest among the mice," proposed this plan to the whole crowd: "Go ye to the river side all together in advance; I shall come myself accompanying our maternal uncle, after a while." So it was done, and the cat, not acquainted with the plan, ate Dindika, on his way to the river side, that day. The mice were much concerned with the fate of poor Dindika, whom they did not see for seven or eight days, when they finally held a consultation. Then the oldest of the mice named Kilika disclosed the truth to the members of his race: "The desire of our maternal uncle is not to earn virtue — this is only a disguise." And as a proof of his statement he declared to them this physiological principle which seemed to have been an ordinary belief in ancient India, that long haired animals are never vegetarians; whereupon the mice scutter away and the wicked cat also returned where he had come from.⁹

This story, which was so well known in India in ancient times, has indeed an unknown origin. According to the epic account it was already an old *itihasa* in the time of the Kuruksetra war: the venerable sage Narada had narrated it to king Dhritarastra, as testified by Duryodhana. It came most likely from Dravidian sources prior to the Aryan invasion.

We find the story repeated in the *Pancatantra* though with slight differences. A wild (*aranya*) cat named Dadhikarna ("curd-eared"), called in other copies *Tiksnadantra* ("sharp-toothed"), stands as an ascetic on the banks of the Ganga holding a handful of *kusa* (sacred grass), eyes shut, with a foot lifted from the ground, its face turned towards the sun, always preaching good conduct (*dharma*), detachment from this world of *samsara* and abstention from animal killing (*ahimsa*) and even from animal sacrifice. The partridge and hare who happened to take counsel from him,

⁹ *Mahabharata*, Udyoga Parva, 5421-5449.

eventually suspecting him, they spoke from far. The cat nevertheless tells them that he being old is hard of hearing, that they should come near; they do so and by a stroke of his paw the cat kills them both and eats them.¹⁰

At a later period the *Pancatantra* was practically embodied in the *Katha Sarit Sagara*, wherein the last story is once more repeated with some slight differences. In a certain tree a bird named Kapinjala had made a nest and lived. Once the bird was absent for some days and in the meanwhile a hare took possession of his nest. Kapinjala returned some time after, and an altercation arose as both claimed the nest. Then they both set out in search of a qualified arbitrator. They saw a cat of pious looks on the bank of a lake: he pretended to have taken a vow of abstinence from injury to all creatures, and kept his eyes half closed in meditation. Then the bird and the hare said to one another: "Why should we not asked this holy cat here to declare what is just?" Hence they approached the cat saying: "Reverend Sir, hear our case, for you are a holy ascetic." When the cat heard what they had to say, he rejoined in a low voice: "I am weak from self-mortification, so I cannot hear at a distance, pray come near me. For a case wrongly decided brings temporal and eternal death." Thus he encouraged them to come near him, when the cunning creature sprang at them and killed both the hare and Kapinjala.¹¹

This story of the bird, the hare and the cat is once more found in the *Avadanas*.¹²

The *Hitopodesa* again speaks of the same cat; which is here named *Dirghakarna* ("long-eared"), living on the banks of the Ganga, constantly taking baths, abstaining from flesh and performing in chastity the holy vow called *candrayana* (a fast regulated by the phases of the Moon) and living *brahmacharya* life so that even the birds were ecstatic in his praise. Once he approached a tree where there lived an old

¹⁰ *Pancatantra*, III, 2.

¹¹ *Katha Sarit Sagara*, 121 B (Tawney, II, pp. 102-103).

¹² *Avadanas*, No. 125. Cf. Julien, *Les Avadanas*, II, pp. 152-155; Ralston, *Tibetan Tales*, p. 344.

blind vulture keeping the eggs of a number of birds. The vulture told the cat to go away for cats are usually treacherous and eat flesh. The cat on hearing this, scandalized, covered his ears declaring that he had learned the holy *dharma* and that was the only rule of his conduct, and that consequently he kept perfect *ahimsa*. Encouraged by this sincere profession of faith the vulture makes friends with him and even entrusts him watching over the eggs during its absence; but as soon as the vulture is gone the cat eats the eggs. Whereupon a quarrel ensues between the vulture and the birds, when they come back at night and find their eggs destroyed, and the former is finally killed by the latter.¹³

The story finally passed to Buddhist literature, clearly patterned after the original of the epic, though with two accidental changes. The whole story is narrated of a jackal, (*sigala*) though the title of the story refers to a cat, *Bilara Jataka*. At the end of the same story the stanza does again refer to the cat's treacherous mode of living or nature (*bilaram vatan*). Moreover in this case the leader of the rats is said to be the Bodhisatva himself, "in the time when Brahmadata was reigning in Benares." The jackal took up his stand near the home of the rats his face to the sun, sniffing up the wind and standing on one leg. Seeing him the rat Bodhisatva conceived him to be a saint, and approaching him, the following dialogue soon ensued:—

"What is your name?", asked the rat.

"'Godly' is my name", answered the rascal.

"Why do you stand only on one leg?"

"Because if I stand on all four at once, the earth could not bear my weight. That is why I stand on one leg only."

"And why do you keep your mouth open?"

"To take the air. I live on air; it is my only food."

"And why do you face the sun?"

"To worship him."

¹³ *Hitopadesa*, I, 5.

The Bodhisatva was convinced of the great sanctity of that new ascetic. His doubts began only when the number of rats was fast diminished; for in fact the jackal, when the rats were living their home, "seized and devoured the hindermost one of them, wiped his lips and looked as if nothing had happened." Finally the Bodhisatva decided to ascertain the truth, and next day he remained the last one of the troop; and when the jackal sprang on him, the rat whirled round crying: "So this is your saintliness, you hypocrite and rascal!", and springing at the jackal's throat bit his windpipe asunder whereupon the jackal died.¹⁴

In this case the sham ascetic's hypocrisy ended in misfortune, through the alertness of the Bodhisatva, which is not the end of the cat of the epic. Evidently those who accommodated this *itihasa* to Buddhist needs wanted to emphasize the wisdom of the Buddha even in his previous births to discern faked from true ascetics, a power he often demonstrates in the *nikayas*. Such is also the case in the *Dhammadhaja*, *Makkata*, *Adiccupatthana* and *Kapi Jatakas*. Yet in these four stories the Bodhisatva is never deceived but at once he discerns the hypocrisy of the swan or of the monkeys under the cloak-of saintliness. He is attributed some sort of supernatural power to realize the fraud. This evidently points to a later period. Hence we may affirm that the *Bilara Jataka* is probably the earliest appearance of the story of the cat (later changed into a jackal) among the jatakas. The *Aggika Jataka* wherein the ascetic is also a jackal who dealt with rats much in the same way as in the *Bilara Jataka*, seems to have been the second stage. From this all the other Jatakas referring to faked asceticism may have derived.

II

THE HYPOCRITICAL CAT IN LATER ORIENTAL LITERATURE

The story of the rogue cat has migrated outside the pale of Sanskrit and Pali literatures.

In early Gujerati literature we find it combined with another story which seems to prepare the ground for the fit of

¹⁴ *Bilara Jataka*, 128.

asceticism of the cat. It is said that in the reign of king Sudarsana there was in the city of Sripura a certain Baniya named Sahasradatta who had a shop of *ghee*. Once while he was in the street a cat entered the shop and having put his head inside a pot of ghee he could not extract it. When the shopkeeper returned, he tried to remove the cat's head from the pot but he did not succeed either, yet moved by pity he broke the pot, but its rim remained round the cat's neck. The cat ran to a field where there were a thousand mice. The latter, as soon as they saw their enemy flew away but that excellent rogue told them : "Don't go and entertain no fear for I am totally changed. I have been in pilgrimage to Badrikedar and there I took the necklace of the ascetics, the vow of Brahmacharya and the practice of *ahimsa*, as my mode of life". He thus propounded sound doctrines of ascetic life. The mice heard him and every day they used to come to hear his sermons but the cat always caught the last one when they disappeared and devoured it quietly. But the mice soon realised that their troop was rapidly decreasing in a mysterious way. One of them suspected the cat of being the cause of it and standing afar watched him. He thus saw the cat devouring the last rat and then addressed him thus in a loud voice : "We have now known what your vow was like. You are not going to have your food out of these thousand mice."¹⁵

Once more we find the story of the cat repeated among the Tibetan stories narrated in the *Kah-gyur*, a book which probably dates from the 12th or 13th century. In this Tibetan story the cat is named Agnija. In his youth he destroyed all the mice of the neighbourhood of his dwelling-place ; but having grown old had no longer the skill to catch mice. Hence he decided to have recourse to some trick to obtain the same purpose. So having approached a mouse-hole, he first counted them and found them to be five hundred. He stood there quiet with a pious look ; whereupon the mice in their wanderings to and fro looking at him, cried out from a distance :—

"Uncle, what are you doing," ?

¹⁵ Hertel, *The Panchakhyana-varttika*, VI, pp. 11-12 (Leipzig, 1912).



Mahabalipuram (Madras). The Mahabharata Cat performing *tapas*.

(Copyright. Archaeological Survey of India)



Tarragona (Spain). The cat carried by the rats
to the river bank for his bath.



Tarragona (Spain). The cat turns on the rats.

"As in my youth I have perpetrated many vicious actions," answered the cat, "I am now doing penance in order to make up for them".

Consequently the mice believed that he had given up his sinful life and gave up all suspicions. Thus when they returned home every day the cat always seized and devoured the mouse which came last. After some time, realizing that the troop was constantly dwindling, the chief of the mice observed likewise that the cat was fat and covered with beautiful hair; and keeping watch from a hiding place, he saw the cat eating the mouse that came last. Then, still from far, he pronounced the following verse:—

"As the uncle's body waxes bigger, but my troop on the contrary becomes smaller, and as he who eats roots and berries will not become fat and well covered with hair, this is not a genuine penance, but one performed only for the sake of gain. Because the number of the mice diminished, have you, O Agnija, thrived."¹⁶

The story of the *Pancatantra* is again repeated, with a few changes, in Siamese literature.¹⁷

There is also a story of a very hypocritical cat in Syrian folk tales.¹⁸

III

THE GENEALOGY OF THE STORY OF THE CAT

There does not seem to be any direct relationship between the *Pancatantra* and *Hitopadesa* stories of the cat and the *Bilara Jataka*, for the latter is much more according to the pattern of the epic story than according to that of the *Pancatantra*. The introduction of new animals as departing with the

¹⁶ von Schiefner-Ralston, *Tibetan Tales*, pp. 344-345 (London, 1882).

¹⁷ Paksi Pakaranam, XV.

¹⁸ Prym-Socin, *Syrische Sagen und Marchen aus dem Volksmund gesammelt*, p. LX. Cf. pp. 242 and 319.

cat in the *Pancatantra* and the *Hitopadesa* gives a totally different character to the natural atmosphere of the *itihasa*: cats should deal with rats first of all; at a second instance with hares, partridges and birds' eggs.

Parallel to the story of the cat in the *Hitopadesa* seems to be the one of the tiger which we have narrated in the beginning of this essay. Certainly the sham ascetic is not a cat there, but a tiger, another feline after all. But circumstances place the story very near the model of the one of the *Pancatantra*. The tiger performs lustrations near a lake, holds sacred grass in his paws and declares to practice *ahimsa* (as the cat of the *Pancatantra*).

Immediately derived from this story of the tiger seems to be that of the wolf of the *Vaka Jataka* who also stands on the Ganga banks; but the accidental circumstance leading him to the practice of asceticism connects the story with that of the jackal of the *Aggika Jataka* from which it may also be partly derived.

The *Mahabharata* story of the swan seems to form a totally different family, from which that of the fish lusting crane of the *Baka Jataka* and the *Pancatantra* may derive. But it has undoubtedly influenced the cat story of the *Hitopadesa* whose aim also is eating the birds' eggs. Moreover the same swan story seems to be the origin of the fish lusting crane of the *Baka Jataka I* and of the *Pancatantra*, which has been repeated in the *Hitopadesa*¹⁹ and in the *Katha Sarit Sagara*.²⁰ The *Baka Jataka I* seems to have been influenced by the cat story of the epic, in as much as the crane calls the crab his nephew, just as the mice called that cat their maternal uncle. The *Baka Jataka II*²¹ is evidently a brief summary of the *Baka Jataka I* with the sole purpose of emphasizing the cleverness of the Bodhisatva in upsetting the de-

¹⁹ *Hitopadesa*, I, 3.

²⁰ Tawney, II, p. 31.

²¹ The idea of the crane as an ascetic perhaps comes from the natural fact of its usual pose standing on one leg.

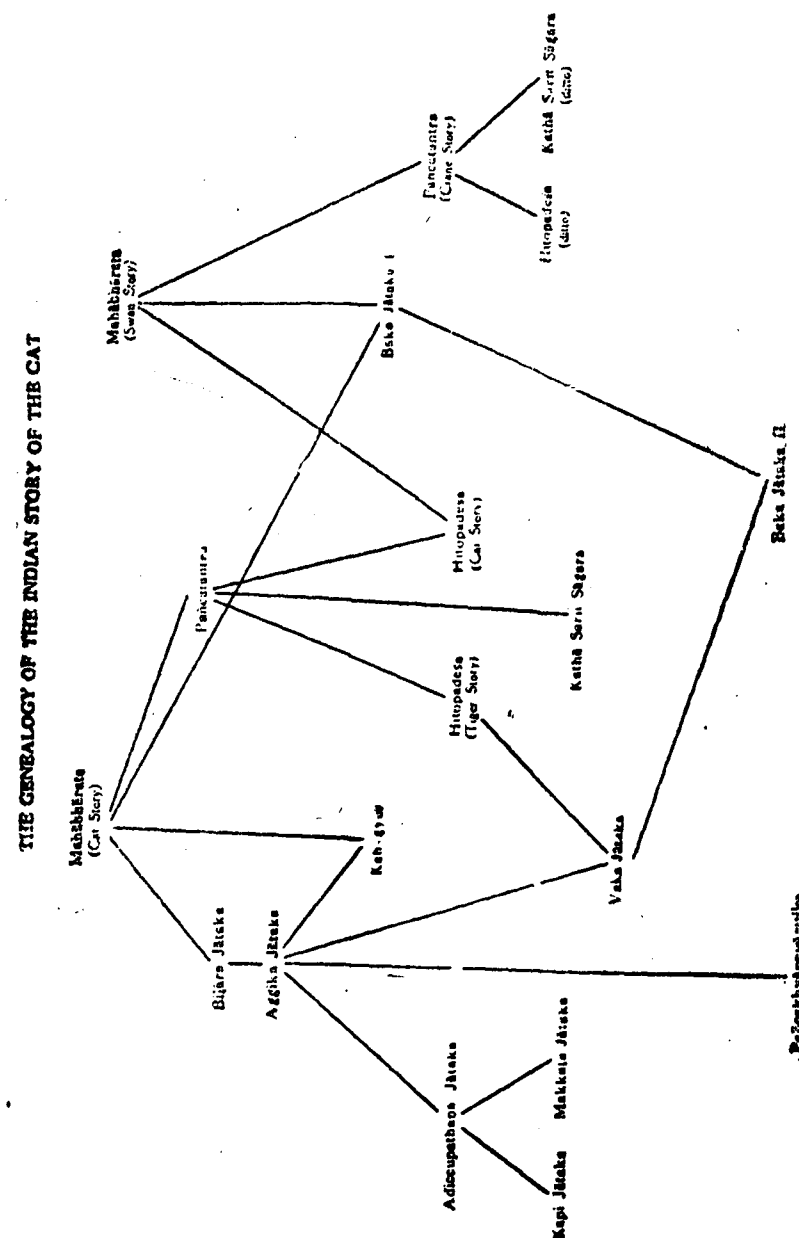
signs of the crane²²; and since the method used is very similar to that used by the goat in respect to the wolf in the *Vaka Jataka*, the influence of the latter is quite evident.

As regards the Gujarati story of the *Pancakhyanavartika*, the circumstance that the cat was eating the last rat of the troop, which is not found in the epic, shows that the story must be derived from the *Bilara Jataka*, wherein the tactics of the cat is exactly the same. The accidental occasion which placed the cat in a good position to practice asceticism—his wearing the neck-lace-like rim of the pot — also seems to suggest certain influence from other *Jatakas* and in particular from the *Vaka Jataka* and the *Aggika Jataka*; in the last of these two *Jatakas* the jackal also devours the hindmost mouse of the band. Very likely therefore the influence comes immediately from the *Aggika Jataka*. Even the beginning of the story mentioning the city wherein the Baniya lived and the reign of the king, as well as the *sloka* ending the story, smack of *Jataka* ascendancy.

On the contrary the Tibetan story of the *Kah-gyur* comes directly from the *Mahabharata itihasa*, as many of its details are only found in the epic: that the cat was thriving in his youth and unable to catch mice in his old age; the denomination of 'uncle' (in this case even before the mice are well acquainted with him). But we must also admit some *Jataka* influence, which is easily discovered in some accidental details, for instance, that the cat seizes the last mouse of the troop, that a verse is given at the end of the story and even that the cat is called Agniya which reminds one of the wolf of the *Aggika Jataka* who was described as a "Bharadvaja, a votary of the Fire-god-". Since the other two circumstances also occur in the same *Jataka*, we consider it probable that the influence comes immediately from this *Jataka*.

²² In one of his dialogues, the Buddha speaks of a scene that takes place before a false Brahma, whom he calls Baka Brahma, with an evident allusion to the Baka stories of the *Jataka*. Cf. "Brahma-Nimantanika Sutta", *Majjhima Nikaya*, I, pp. 334-339.

Hence we may show the succession of all these stories in the following chart, wherein their mutual relationship may be seen at a glance :—



The Indian parentage of the cat story is also confirmed by its widely renowned popularity, as is shown by an indirect statement we find in the *Hitopadesa*. There the crow in order to warn the deer against the shamed friendship of the jackal tells him : "Hast thou never heard of how that vol-
ture paid the penalty of the cat's misdeed ?" ²³ The cat consequently became synonymous with hypocrisy and treachery as clearly stated by *Manu* : "A man, who ever covetous, displays the flag of virtue, who is a hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, intent on doing injury, and a detractor of all men, one must know to be one who acts like a cat." ²⁴ Consequently the law-giver prescribes that Brahmanas should not "honour, even by a greeting, men who live like cats, rogues, logicians, i.e. arguing against the Vedas" ²⁵; and even Brahmanas themselves who are like cats should not be given any hospitality. "A man who knows the law should not offer even water to a Brahmana who acts like a cat." ²⁶ It was very likely on account of this idea of the cat, as a type of hypocrisy and deception, that when Hanuman is said to have entered Lanka, he is described as taking the form of a cat in order to reconnoitre the place more easily. ²⁷ The cat, in fact, became a symbol of duplicity and double-dealing. Even a female cat is represented in another *Jataka* inviting a cock, perched on the top branches of the tree, to come down and take her as wife to be able to eat him as he had eaten others of his kin, ²⁸ a story which supplied a subject to one of the Bharhut artists for one of the most beautiful carvings round the *stupa*.

In one case, the *Hitopadesa* speaks of a cat which, strange to say, appears timid and cunningless ; but this may be the effect of his not being a cat by nature. It was originally a mouse which, being pursued by a cat, was eventually converted into a cat by a saintly ascetic. This is the cat which

²³ *Hitopadesa*, IX, 10. Cf. Story of the cat *Dirghakarna*.

²⁴ *Manu Smṛti*, IV, 195..

²³ *Ibid.*, IV, 30.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, IV, 192.

²⁷ *Ramayana*, Sundara Kandam, Ch. II.

²⁸ *Kukkuta Jataka*, 383.

is shown as timid in the presence of a dog, rather disclosing the natural timidity of the mouse.²⁹

In the whole extensive field of Indian literature, I find only one case, as far as I know, in which the cat is taken as a model to imitate, and that by the Buddhist monks precisely. It is found in the *Milinda panho*, when the famous Nagasena explains the life of the monk to king Menander: "Just, O king, as the cat, in frequenting caves and holes and the interior of storied dwellings, does so only in the search after rats; just so, O king, should the strenuous *bhiksu*, earnest in effort, whether he have gone to the village or to the woods or to the foot of trees or into an empty house, be continually and always zealous in the search after that which is his food, namely self-possession. This is the first quality of the cat he ought to have." And again: "O king, as the cat in pursuing its prey always crouches down; just so, O king, should the strenuous *bhiksu*, earnest in effort, continue conscious of the origin and end of those five groups of the characteristic marks of individuality which arise out of clinging to existence, thinking to himself: 'Such is form, such is its origin, such its end. Such is sensation, such is its origin, such its end. Such are ideas, such is their origin, such their end. Such are the mental potentialities (the confections, *samkhara*), such is their origin, such their end. Such is self-consciousness, such is its origin, such its end. This, O king, is the second quality of the cat he ought to have'.³⁰ Very extrinsic are these similarities of the cat with the good monk. Yet it is refreshing to notice that at least once this useful feline was acknowledged as a good model to imitate.

IV

WESTERN MIGRATIONS OF THE INDIAN ITIHASAS

The story of the cat also travelled westwards. Scholarship has traced the different steps of its journey, which we

²⁹ *Hitopadesa*, IV, 14.

³⁰ *The Questions of King Milinda*, VII, 4, 2-2 (Max Muller's, II, pp. 326-327).

shall briefly point out here, to understand its reappearance in Europe.

Between the period of the composition of the *Mahabharata* (1st half of 1st cent. B.C.) and the period of the *Pancatantra* (2nd to 5th cent. A.D.) there existed a book of animal stories, out of whose twelve chapters, the *Pancatantra* has only five. It was probably composed in the first century A.D. This book in its entirety is no longer extant.³¹ The hero of the book was the lion *Pingalaka*, with his confident and minister *Sancivaka* and great part of the dialogue was put in the mouth of two wolfs named *Karataka* and *Damanaka*.

A copy of this work was in the middle of the 6th century A.D. taken to the court of Kushru I Noshirwan of Iran (531-579) by Burzuyeh, who translated it by order of the king's wazir Buzurj-mihr, who signed the preface, as an honour.³²

A few years after, in about 570, this Pahlavi translation was rendered into Syriac (I) by the historian Monk Periodent Bud, whose task was to visit all the Christians of Persia and India. In this translation the names of the two wolfs appear as "Kailag" and "Dannag." 'Ebed-Jesu, Bishop of Nisibis, in the 14th century, who gives this piece of information, says that Bud translated it from "the Indian"³³; but scholars seem to agree in interpreting this language "Indian" in a broad sense, meaning in fact Pahlavi, which was an unknown language to 'Ebed-Jesu.

In the middle of the 8th century this Pahlavi translation was rendered into Arabic, under Amir Almansur, the second Abbasid Kalif, by Abdullah ibn al-Muquaffa, and was entitled *Kalila wa-Dimna*, i.e. the corrupted formes of the

³¹ Benfey, *Pantschatantra*, I, pp. 2-18; Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. XXIX.

³² ath-Ta'alibi, *Histoire des Rois des Perses*, (Translated by H. Zotenberg) pp. 629-633 (Paris, 1900); Jalalu'd-din Rumi, *Mathnavi*, pp. 3641-3680. Cf. Cheikho, *Kalilah et Dimnah, d'apres le plus ancien manuscrit arabe*, p. 5 (Beyrouth, 1923).

³³ Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, pt. I, pp. 219-220.

original names of the two wolves, Karataka and Damanaka.³⁴ This Arabic version was translated into Persian several times: first in 916 by order of Amir Nasr ibn Ahmed, the Samanid, by Rudhaki (I). Then in 1144 by Nizam al-Din Abu 'l-Ma'ali Nasrullah ibn Muhammad (II) who dedicated his work to Behram Shah of Ghazna. Again in 1504 another Persian translation (III) was made by Husain Wa'iz Kashifi, under Sultan Husain Mirza of Herat. This translation was entitled *Anwar-i Suhaili* ("Lights of Canopus") after the patron of the translator, the Prime Minister. It has been the most popular translation in India.³⁵ Finally a fourth Persian translation (IV) was made by Abu-'l Fazl in 1578 by order of Akbar, which bears the title '*Iyar-i Danish*. From this Akbarian translation proceeds one in elegant Hindustani made by Hafiz-uddin Khirad Afroz, in the first half of the 19th century.

From the II Persian translation comes one in Ottoman Turkish (I) done in the middle of the 14th century by an unknown writer. Likewise the *Anwar-i-Suhaili* was also translated into the same language (II) round the middle of the 16th century by 'Ali ibn Salih, and dedicated to Sulaiman the Magnificent with the title *Humayun Nama*. This Turkish translation is likewise the origin of three more translations: one into Castilian (III) by Vicente Bratuti, printed in Madrid, first volume in 1654, and second in 1659; another into French (III) by Galland in 1724; and the third into Eastern Turki in 1888.

We must still mention another Syriac (II) translation from the old Arabic done by a Syrian cleric in the 11th century,³⁶ which was translated into English by Keith-Falconer in 1887.

³⁴ This Arabic translation was published in Paris in 1816 by Mons. Silvestre de Sacy. El-Masudi says that the author of the *Kalila wa Dimna* translated by ibn al-Muquaffa was Daisalem, the successor of Porus, the Indian king slain by Alexander the great in battle. *Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems* (Sprenger's trans.), I, p. 171.

³⁵ Published in London in 1836. Cf. Thakur-Kaha, *Anwar-i-Sukaili*. Edited with an Introduction, complete Translation and Full Notes (Karachi, dateless).

³⁶ Printed in London in 1834 by W. Wright.

Equally fortunate was the Arabic translation of al-Muquaffa. Carried to Spain by Arab invaders, it soon came to the notice of the Christians of the northern kingdoms of the Peninsula, and King Alphonso X, called "the Wise", in the year 1251, one year before his actual accession to the throne, ordered the famous Indian dialogue to be translated into Castilian (I).³⁷ There is no doubt at present that this first translation of the work into a western language was made directly from the Arabic of al-Muquaffa.³⁸ The Castilian title of the work is as follows: *Libro de Calila e Dimna o Fabulas de Pilpay (o Bidpay)*³⁹, that is "The Book of Calia and Dimna, or Fables of Pilpay (or Bidpay)." This name may perhaps refer to Visnu Sarma who is the author or compiler of the *Pancatantra*, unless the prior collection was done by another author.

This Castilian *Calila e Dimna* is directly responsible to a great extent for the first French translation (I) done by the physician Raymond de Beziere by order of Princess Juana of Navarre in 1313.⁴⁰ Thus the *Calila e Dimna* passed to the whole of Europe through the very channel of the school of translators of Toledo, through which passed also the works of Averroes, Avicenna, Avicbron, and other oriental sages.⁴¹

This nevertheless was not the only way by which this book arrived in Western Europe. Two Hebrew translations were made out of the Arabic version, one (I) in the 12th century by the Rabbi Joel (probably in Italy), and the other (II) in the 13th century by Jacob beni Elazar.⁴² Of the latter translation only the beginning is now extant. But the

³⁷ Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *A New History of Spanish Literature*, p. 27.

³⁸ Don Pascual de Gayangos, cited by Menendez Pelayo, *Origenes de la Novela*, I, p. 34.

³⁹ *Textos Biblioteca de Autores Espanoles*, vol. LI. We have on our table an edition collated with the Arabic original published in Madrid in 1915.

⁴⁰ Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 27; Menendez Pelayo *Origenes de la Novela*, I, p. 35. An illuminated MS. of this translation is found in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* of Paris.

⁴¹ Valbuena Prat, *Historia de la Literatura Espanola*, I, p. 98. Cf. Penzol, *Las Traducciones del "Calila e Dimna"* (Madrid, 1931).

⁴² Both published by J. Derenbourg in Paris, 1881.

former was during the second half of the 13th century translated once more into Latin (I) by Joannes de Capua, (an old Jewish convert), with the title *Directorium vitae humanae alias parabola antiquorum sapientum*⁴³. In this translation the two wolves *Calila* and *Dimna* are converted into foxes. There is still another Latin translation (II), probably from the same Hebrew one, made by one Balbo, one century later, which received the title of "Aesop of Old."⁴⁴ It was the (I) Latin translation which was finally turned into French (II) by Gilbert Gaulmin, assuming the style of David Sahib of Ispahan, with the title : *Livre des Lumieres de la conduite des Rois* ; it was published in Paris in 1644 and became so popular that in 1698 a second edition of it was already published. From this version the famous French writer La Fontaine derived inspiration for many of his fables.⁴⁵ From the same Latin translation of John of Capua come three new translations in European vernaculars : one German entitled *Beispiele der Weisen von Geschlecht zu Geschlecht* ("Examples of Wise men from Race to Race") or *Das Buch der Weisheit* ("The book of Wisdom") done in the 15th century by order of Everhard, Duque of Wurtemberg. A second Castillian translation, with the title *Exemplario contra Enganos y Peligros del Mundo* ("Collection of examples against Worldly Deceptions and Dangers") published in Saragossa in 1493. And finally one in Italian named *La prima veste de' discorsi degli animali* ("The first appearance of the Discourses of the Animals") done by Agnolo Firenzuola, and published in Florence in 1548. In this translation the two wolves become two rams again renamed as "Carpigna" and "Bellino."

The original Arabic translation which had already been the source of the Castillian and Greek and Hebrew translations with all their ramifications, was once more done into Greek by one Simeon Sethos in the 11th century, but published in 1786. This translation re-christens the two wolves as

⁴³ Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28 ; Menendez Pelayo, *op. cit.* I, 28 ; Abraham, *A Short History of Jewish Literature*, p. 93 (London, 1905).

⁴⁴ Rhys Davids, *Buddhist Birth Stories*, p. 31.

Stephanites and Ichneutes. Five centuries afterwards this Greek translation was turned into Latin (III) by Fr. Petro Possino, S.J., with the title *Specimen Sapientiae Indorum Veterum* ("A model of the Wisdom of the Ancient Indians") and published in Rome in 1666. This book mentions in its very title the succession of translation of its line thus :

- (a) "*ex lingua Indica in Persicam (Pahlavi) a Perzoe medico,*
- (b) *ex Persica in Arabicam ab Anonymo (sic),*
- (c) *ex Arabica in Graecam a Symeone Seth,*
- (d) *a Petro Possino Societ. Jesu novissime e Graeca in Latinam translatus.*

Thus the two translations which exercised most influence over the European literary world were the I French and the I Latin. Bl. Ramon Llull, the Catalan mystic of Majorca, must have been acquainted with many of these stories, even perhaps with the original Arabic translation, as he travelled through many Arabian countries, and out of such memories wrote his book *El llibre de les Bestias*, recently translated into English by Prof. Alison Peers and published in London in 1927. *The Book of the Beasts* is not a translation of the *Calila e Dimna*. It "is a *Calila* not read but vaguely remembered by heart."⁴⁶

The succession of translations of the *Calila and Dimna* shows the spread of the Indian *itihasas* through the western world in the course of nearly five centuries from the beginning of the 13th down to the close of the 17th. The following genealogical tree will show this chronological spread of the fables according to the succession of translations :—

⁴⁵ Collins, *La Fontaine and Other French Fabulists*, p. 34. (Edinburgh-London, 1898).

⁴⁶ Menendez Pelayo, *op. cit.*, I, p. 37.

V

DRAVIDIAN ORIGIN OF THE ITIHASAS

From the inspection of the above chart we may realize that the stories of the *Calila and Dimna* were not translated into Greek up to the second half of the 11th century ; and yet about a dozen fables of AEsop were already found in the *Jataka* and seem connected with the previous Indian collections.⁴⁷ Now the fables of AEsop were known in Greece long before the Christian era. According to Herodotus he lived in the 6th century B.C.⁴⁸ Plato informs us that Socrates during his imprisonment, kept busy turning some of AEsop's fables into verse.⁴⁹ How could AEsop know the Indian *itihisas* at such an early age ?

We must, first of all, repudiate the AEsopian origin of many of the fables that are actually attributed to him. There lived in Constantinople, in the first half of the 14th century a learned monk named Planudes, the author of several works. One of the works he composed was a collection of moral fables generally of animals, in which he embodied a number of stories current in the eastern Mediterranean from ancient time. Some of his stories are actually taken from Babrius, a Greek poet of the 1st century B.C. Others may be genuine fables of AEsop of old. Others he may have taken from the *Calila and Dimna* itself, which was already known to the Syrian and Greek world several centuries before. But he entitled them all "AEsop's Fables".⁵⁰

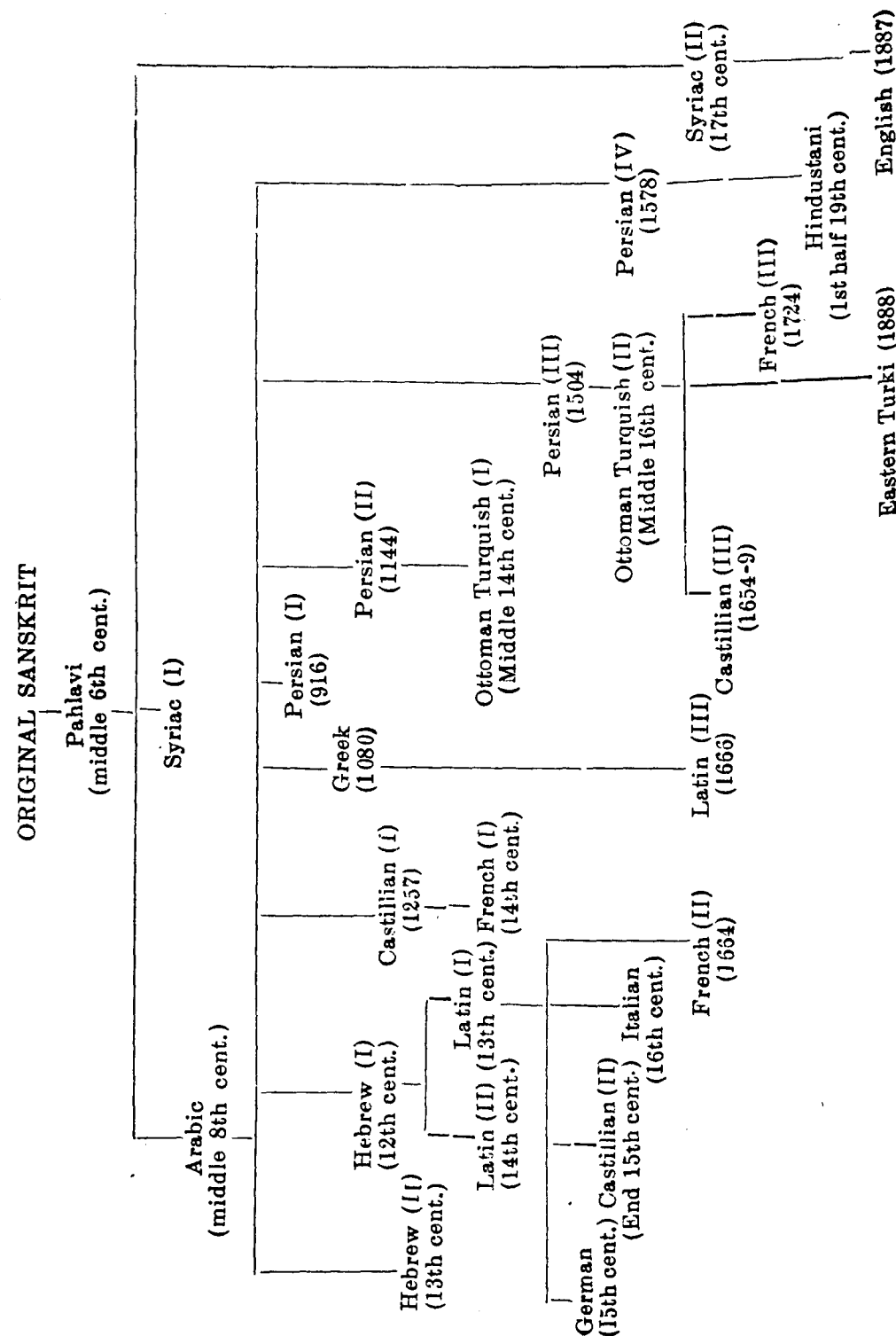
The title of this work of Planudes, so unjudiciously given, has caused an extraordinary confusion in the literary world.

47 Jacobs, *History of the AEsopic Fable*, p. 108 (London, 1889).

48 Herodotus, II, 134.

49 Plato, *Phaedo*, 60 and 61.

50 The work of Planudes was first printed in Milan towards the close of the 15th century. Many of his stories were translated, perhaps, retranslated, into Hindustani and Sanskrit and other languages and published by Mr. J. Gilchrist in Calcutta 1803. The Sanskrit translation was published again separately by its author Mr Narayan Balkrishna Godbole, B. A., Master of the Govt. High School, Ahmednagar.



"From the work of Planudes," says Rhys Davids, "all our so-called AEsop's fables are derived".⁵¹ Hence many of the fables which are appended to AEsop, may in fact not be his, and consequently being of a later origin might have been very easily influenced by the later translations of the *Calila* and *Dimna*.

Yet it is not impossible that AEsop himself might have been influenced, not by any translation of the Indian *itihasas*, but by oral accounts or recitations of the Indian fables, as the fruit of the commercial and social intercourse that existed between India and the Mediterranean world, especially the Eastern Mediterranean, from very ancient times. During the life-time of Socrates himself we know of a visit paid to him by an Indian philosopher⁵²; and we are rightly entitled to suppose that he was not the only Indian who reached the shores of Hellas. Mr. E. J. Thomas in his introduction to the *Jataka Tales* describes this ancient intercourse between India and Greece with much erudition.⁵³

Moreover it is now satisfactorily proved that the *Mahabharata* is not the oldest source of stories out of which the *Jatakas* and other collections might have derived their own fables. There existed another collection or collections of stories prior to the epic,⁵⁴ and before these *samhitas* were effected those stories must have been recited orally from generation to generation perhaps for four hundred years. This will easily lead us to pre-Aryan times; from which we may also be led to acknowledge that the main bulk of these stories, if not all, is the inheritance of the Dravidian race. In fact a circumstance that has been noticed by the Spanish scholar Don Marcelino Menendez Pelayo in connection with the *Calila e Dimna*, seems to confirm this conclusion. In this work which, as is well known, is a collection of animal fables, there is not a single one in which a horse takes part in the action of the story, a very remarkable absence, indeed, in the midst of the

51 Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

52 Aristoxenus Tarentinus, *Vita Socratis*, frag 31, in Muller, *Fragmenta ... Historicorum Graecorum*, II, p. 281.

53 Thomas, *Jataka Tales*, pp. 6-7.

54 Franke, "Jataka Mahabharata Parallelen", *WZKM*, XX, pp. 317 ff.

wonderful *menagerie* of the fabulous personages that appear in those stories. In particular, domestic animals, cats, dogs, cocks, goats, bulls, cows, etc., are very frequently met with in that collection; but the horse is always absent. It has been suggested that the book may have been composed at a time when the horse was held in great veneration (perhaps an allusion to the Brahmanic period when the *asvamedha* was much celebrated). Yet this would not explain this phenomenon satisfactorily, for the bull and the cow were also held in respect from Rgvedic times when even Agni,⁵⁵ Indra⁵⁶ and even Brhaspati,⁵⁷ were called bulls and the cosmic power was compared to a cow.⁵⁸ The reason of this absence of the horse seems to be a different one. In the ruins of the cities of the Indus Valley neither images of the horse have ever been found, nor zoological remains of this animal have been unearthed. The horse is also absent there. It is well known that the horse spread throughout the world with the Aryas. The absence of the horse in India points to the period of pre-Aryan history. Moreover if, as is now admitted as extremely probable, Puranic traditions belonged to a non-Aryan Dravidian period, which "tradition in legends and stories was later on Aryanized",⁵⁹ we may also admit that many of these *itihasas*, if not all, especially those in which the horse does not appear, must also belong to a pre-Aryan age, being the inheritance of the Dravido-Mediterranean peoples which spread from India towards the west, and are known in Crete as the Minoans and in continental Greece as the Mycenaeans and Minians, and generically as the Pelasgians or Termilai.⁶⁰ Thus the fables of the genuine AEsop and the *itihasas* of the original *Calila* and *Dimna*, may be two separate and distant offshoots of the same primitive trunk of Dravido-Mediterranean myth didactics.

55 Rg., III, 21, 15; VI, 1, 1; VII, 3, 3; VIII, 23, 16; X, 5, 7, etc.

56 Ibid., VIII, 6, 40; 10, 11, etc.

57 Ibid., III, 62, 6; X, 92, 10.

58 Ibid., I, 180, 3; III, 55, 1, etc.

59 Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, p. 52.

VI

SPECIMENS OF THE WESTERN STORIES

It is not therefore strange that one of AEsop's fables would reproduce the same double conduct of the cat to deceive the mice as in the original story of the Indian epic, though having recourse to a new device. Asceticism was not in Greece so frequent as in ancient India, consequently the practice of asceticism on the part of the cat would have perhaps appeared exotic in that Hellenic setting.

The fable in question narrates that a cat came to a certain house and ate many mice which had settled there. Consequently the mice decided not to come down where the cat was and remained quiet in their hiding places. When the cat realized the game of the mice he saw no other means to catch them than deception; he suspended himself from a peg and pretended to be dead. But some of the mice, who seemed to be cleverer than the mice of the Indian *itihasa*, said from a distance "Look at him; even if thou becomest as limp as a sack, we shall not approach thee".⁶¹

The Latin fabulist Phaedrus also has a story of the eagle, the cat and the boar, which is clearly inspired in that of the partridge, the cat and the hare of the *Pancatantra*, which is repeated in the *Katha Sarit Sagara*. The eagle had built her nest on the top branches of an oak while a she-cat hidden midway in the trunk had given birth to a number of kittens; but the she-boar had placed her young at the foot of the tree. The cat climbing to the top declared to the eagle the danger in which the young birds were, for the boar continuously digging a hole at the foot of the tree wanted to fell it to destroy her progeny. Then climbing down to the hole of the boar acquainted her with the evil intentions of the eagle who wanted to catch the young ones of the swine, when she would go roaming about for food. Thus the eagle fearing disaster remained the whole day watching and the boar afraid for her

60 Cf. my forthcoming work *Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture* Vol. 1, chapter V.

61 AEsop, *Fables*, XXVII.

young, did not leave her hole the whole day. While the cat kept quiet during the day, and went about for food every night. Thus both families of the eagle and the boar perished by starvation; and the young kittens had a splendid banquet thereof.⁶²

For the same reason as in the preceding case Phaedrus changed the tactics of the cat, which in the original appeared with ascetic holy looks. Yet Phaedrus's story lacks in the dramatic effect of the original. By eliminating the ascetical appearance of the cat great part of the charm of the Indian *itihasa* has likewise disappeared.

The famous French fabulist La Fontaine has also reproduced the story of the cat according to AEsop, though the success of the cat in the French story seems to be more according to the Indian model. A cat, who was styled a Cerberus in the whole world of mice, had recourse to a trick to catch them, when after knowing him, they never issued from their hole. He one day appeared dead hanging by one of his hind feet from a plank of wood. There was great rejoicing in the mouse family when they saw this spectacle: they thought that the cat had justly been hanged as a punishment for his great crimes. They promised themselves a great laugh when attending his funeral. Consequently without fear they were moving about as in the days before the cat had come, when suddenly the latter *resuscitated* and devoured those who were slow in their flight.⁶³

More similar still to the Indian original, even in the bringing of the saintly looks of the cat, is another fable of the author, entitled "Of the cat, the weasel and the young rabbit". A quarrel arose among the two latter for the weasel had taken possession of the home of the rabbit during his absence. Finally the weasel proposed to appeal to "Whisker-waul" as an arbitrator.

"This was a pious hermit of a cat,
A cat who posed as mildest of his race,
A saintly cat, sleek-coated, strong and fat,
Skilled arbitrator whatsoever the case.

62 Phaedrus, *Fables*, II, 4.

63 La Fontaine, *Fables*, III, 18.

"Yes, let him judge," said Jack, and lo, with her
He stood before his Lordship,
'My friends,' the humbug said, 'come near, come near
I'm growing old and none too well I hear.'

Fearless, the suitors nearer to him drew,
And when within his reach he saw the two
The Judas right and left shot out his paws
And reconciled the parties with his jaws."⁶⁴

In another fable it is precisely a young mouse who is deceived by the good looks of a cock and a cat who were going together in the opposite direction. He was frightened at the sight of the cock and fled away to his great chagrin, for he had felt great attraction towards the cat which looked like a larger member of his own family. When on returning home he narrated all this to his mother, he blamed the cock for not allowing him to make the cat's acquaintance.

"Ah! but for him, I might have got acquainted
With that sweet creature,
Who bore attractiveness in every feature:
A velvet skin he had, like yours and mine,
A tail so long and fine,
A sweet, meek countenance, a modest air—
Yet what an eye was there!
I feel that, on the whole,
He must have strong affinities of soul
With our great race—our ears are shaped the same
I should have made my bow, and asked his name,
But at the fearful cry
Raised by that monster, I was forced to fly."
"My child," replied his mother, "you have seen
That demure hypocrite we call a cat:
Under that sleek and inoffensive mien
He bears a deadly hate at mouse and rat."⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Ibid., VII, 16 (Transl. Carter, *Fifty Fables from La Fontaine*, p. 62, (Oxford, 1928).

⁶⁵ Ibid., VI, 5 (Transl. Collins, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97)

In still another fable La Fontaine describes an animal hermit, but in this case the animal, strange to say, is not a cat, but a rat; but the story is evidently influenced by the stories of the cat to the extent that the hypocritical ascetic is introduced protesting that his old worldly customs have already been given up, as did the cat of old. The author moreover clearly signifies the eastern origin of the fable in its very first verses. Here it is:—

THE RAT TURNED HERMIT

"A certain Rat, weary of this world's strife,
(So the Levantines in their legend say),
Into a large Dutch cheese, one day,
Retired from public life:
The solitude was most profound,
Extending over the whole cheese's round.
Within our hermit fixed his cell,
And worked with teeth and claws so hard and well,
He quickly had provided ample store
Of food, safe shelter—what could rat want more?
He soon grew sleek and fat;
When one turns hermit, Heaven takes care of that.
He had not long embraced his new vocation,
When one fine day,
From the Rat people came a deputation,
Entreating of the saint, to help them on their way,
Some small donation;
For they were journeying forth in search of aid
Against a fierce attack the Cats had made;
Ratapolis was under strict blockade;
And, what was worse,
So low their treasury was, they had to start
Without a penny in their purse.
Some very small assistance on his part
Was all they asked; for he must understand,
In a few days, allies would be at hand.
"My friends," the Solitary said,
"To this world's interests I have long been dead;
Nay, of what use

Could I be in such strait—a poor recluse ?
 Except my prayers—they're yours, of course, you know—
 May Heaven preserve you from those Cats ! and so
 Pray take my blessing, friends, and go.'
 Not a word more,
 But shut his door".⁶⁸

VII

THE STORY OF THE CAT IN SPAIN

It has been said that the Latin version made by John of Capua, and the Spanish translation done in the middle of the 13th century are "the two versions which reproduce more faithfully the original Arabic of al-Muquaffa."⁶⁷ Yet the differences existing between the original Sanskrit stories and these western reproductions may be great, from what we may realise by comparing them with the Indian stories we still possess.

In particular the story of the Hypocritical Cat as found in the *Mahabharata* is not found in the Castilian version, though we may find reminiscences of it here and there.

The nearest one is one which is evidently derived from the *Pancatantra* story of the pious cat set as a judge between the partridge and the hare. In the Castilian version the quarrel is also between a hare and a *gineta* (an animal which defies all identification, as this old word has no similar one in modern Spanish). The description of the hypocritical attitude of the cat is superb : "When the cat saw the hare and the *gineta* coming from afar he stood on his hind legs praying ; and the hare was astonished when realizing his goodness and his humility. And they approached him with great humility, but not in such a way as to allow him to do harm to them, and they made him acquainted with their quarrel. Said the cat : 'I am very old and hard of hearing. Come near and shall hear what you say, for I do not see and hear well'. After hearing what they have to expose the cat gives them

⁶⁶ Ibid., VII, 3 (Transl. Ibid., pp. 31-32).

⁶⁷ Alemany Bolufer, Prologue to *La Antigua Version Castellana del Catila y Dimna*, p. 30 (Madrid, 1915).

a long speech on moral matters ; and the story is never ended.⁶⁸

The story of the hypocrisy of an animal is repeated concerning a snake, which owing to old age could not catch frogs, and by a trick obtained a ration of two frogs a day from the king of the frogs.⁶⁹

Another story of a cat and a rat develops in an unexpected way disclosing the cleverness (strange to say) of the rat, which philosophises on the qualities of true friendship at length, emulating the author of the dialogue *De Amicitia*.⁷⁰

There is still another story of a wild wolf which "led the life of a religious, professing chastity". But the story lacks in the dramatic development of the Indian stories, for this wolf does not sham holiness and virtue, but he is actually patient, trustworthy and detached from honours and the vain honour of the world.⁷¹

Yet in spite of all that the story of the cat who shamed virtue in order to catch rats must have been known in Spain in some way or other, in the 13th century, as the two carvings reproducing the story of the cat, which we shall describe presently, evidently show. Whether the story reached Spain in the ascetical array of India, or similar to the fable of the cat by La Fontaine is a matter of controversy, as we shall see later. One thing nevertheless is certain, that the Indian story was popular in Spain and came to be known not through the channel of the *Calila e Dimna*.

VIII

A CRITICISM OF THE ITIHASAS

The extraordinary spread of the Indian books of these fables throughout the world and the influence it exercised over the literature of so many nations may be a matter of

⁶⁸ *Calila y Dimna* (ed. cited above), pp. 269 - 271.

⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 296 - 298.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 326 - 333.

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 406 - 411.

wonder to many. For, as Collins well says, the moral of those fables "is no moral at all, according to our ideas of morality. The lesson suggested is more or less a selfish one : it is the glorification of cunning."⁷² There is besides nothing extraordinary in the exposition of religious ideas, which are "of a most simple theology, and may be reduced to an elementary theism, without any depth of thought, except some attempt to solve the contradiction between God's prescience and man's free will."⁷³

In point of fact, though the original Indian *itihasas* seem to be of pre-Vedic times, yet they were not admitted within the sacred precincts of Vedic literature. *Rsis* and philosophers had nothing to learn from those simple animal stories whose lessons mainly were lessons of selfish cunning and temporal cleverness, very seldom transcending the world of matter. Those who recommended the destruction of *ahamkara* as the first step to enter *jnana marga* could not pay much attention to such *itihasas* leading to the glorification of selfishness.

The stories of the *Calila and Dimna* and of its successors the *Pancatantra* and the *Hitopadesa* were written for those to whom the teaching of Brahman was not to be entrusted, as unworthy to possess that gift greater than "the whole of this sea-girt earth full of treasure."⁷⁴ And for them, not accustomed to lift their eyes to a transcending world, the wisdom propounded in those *itihasas* was good enough. "The Hindu as a rule," says Dr Lionel Barnett, "dearly loves a story, and still more dearly a story with a moral, for he is naturally sententious and fond of sententious speech, and usually an appropriate adage, 'the wisdom of many and the wit of one', will be in his heart at once."⁷⁵ The stories of the *Kalila and Dimna* were the congenial literature for their thirst of knowledge and of virtue. "They embodied a primeval though not much enlightened phase of practical wisdom ; though they

⁷² Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

⁷³ Menendez Pelayo, *op. cit.*, I, p. 36.

⁷⁴ *Chandogya Upanisad*, III, 11, 5 - 6.

⁷⁵ In the Introduction to *Hitopadesa, The Book of Wholesome. A Translation from the Original Sanskrit by Francis Johnson*, p. vii.

exercised influence not as much through their doctrine, as through their examples conveyed in the picturesque and attractive way of a story."⁷⁶ These two elements were undoubtedly the cause of their popularity among people engrossed in worldly affairs. Such generally are kings and royalties. And indeed we find a galaxy of them among the patrons of the *Calila and Dimna*. Kushru Noshirwan, Amir Almansur, Amir Nasr ibn Ahmad Behram Shah, Sultan Husain Mirza, Akbar, Sulaiman the Magnificent, Alphonso X, Everhard of Wurtenberg and Princess Juana of Navarre are some of those who ordered the translation of the book or sponsored its publication in some way or other. That is the reason why Nasrullah ibn Muhammad, the translator of the book from Arabic into Persian (II), says concerning this book : "Than which after the books of the Holy Law there is no more valuable book."⁷⁷ Abu-'l Fazl, Akbar's friend and courtier, said likewise about it : "The original is a masterpiece of practical wisdom."⁷⁸ It was undoubtedly for the same reason that the book was styled "a tree, of whose fruit whoso takes and eats grows not old, nor ever dies."⁷⁹ For such worldly people the *Calila and Dimna* "embodies a number of fables of clear moral teaching : humility, temperance, friendship, veneration of God are exalted in and through them."⁸⁰

As regards Spain the influence of the book on later literature, specially on the Infante Don Juan Manuel, the Arcipreste of Hita and Berceo and later on Raymond Llull, is so extraordinary that it has been considered as one of the corner stones of the national literature of the country. "In Spain itself," says Fitzmaurice-Kelly, "it became the prototype of all works that sought to instruct 'por exemplos de homes o de aves e de animalias' (by examples of men or birds and of animals)."⁸¹ The success that the *Calila e Dimna*

⁷⁶ Menendez Pelayo, *op. et loc. cit.*

⁷⁷ Cf. Tawny, *The Ocean of Story*, II, p. xx.

⁷⁸ Abu-'l-Fazl, *A'in-i-Akbari*, I, p. 106 (Brockman's translation).

⁷⁹ Jalalu'd-din Rumi, *Mathnavi*, II, 3641 - 2.

⁸⁰ Diaz-Plaja, *Historia de la Literatura Espanola*, p. 52 (Barcelona, 1943).

⁸¹ Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

had in Spanish soil may also be due, at least partially, to the peculiar character of the people of the country. "When Alphonso the Wise ordered the book to be translated," says a modern Spanish author, "Castillians found in it an eloquent expression of such thoughts which are essential in the history of our ideology".⁸² Such was the ideology that culminated in the drama "La Vida es Sueno" ("Life is but a dream") by Calderon de la Barca, one of the greatest masterpieces of Spanish literature.

IX

THE STORY OF THE CAT IN SCULPTURE

Considering the tremendous success of the book of Bilpay or Visnu Sarma, it is not strange that besides the number of translations and editions some of its stories should have been represented in sculpture from ancient times. We have already referred to one of the *Jataka* stories reproduced round the stupa of Bharhut, wherein there are still others full of ingenuity and artistic skill. But the story of our hypocritical cat, shamming ascetic spirit is not found there. To find it in plastic forms we must go down South on the rocks of Mahabalipuram.

The Pallava King Narasimhavarman Mahamalla, after having built numerous cave temples and rock shrines in that picturesque cluster of huge rocks, caused a large relief to be carved on the face of two joined boulders. Numerous scenes are depicted in this famous carving. Suffice it to say for the present that the vertical crevice existing between the two boulders, was very ingeniously imagined to be the river Ganga, which was at times made natural, and so to say, living by a flow of water descending from a reservoir on the top of the boulders. *Nagas* and *naginis* are shown sporting in the sacred waters. The main scene on the field to the left of the river is the penance of Arjuna who is shown on one of the upper layers of the carving standing on one leg with lifted arms

⁸² Valbuena Prat, *Historia de la Literatura Espanola*, I, p. 97, (Barcelona, 1937).

while Siva appears before him ready to give him the *pasu-pata*, as is narrated in the *Mahabharata*.⁸³

This austere pose of the great warrior together with the proximity of the Ganga very likely brought the memory of the ascetic cat on the banks of the Ganga to the mind of the artist. We have said elsewhere that that unknown artist, who was "a wonderful master in depicting the natural scenes of the forest, and the neighbouring haunts of the river . . . had also a keen sense of humour".⁸⁴ Following therefore the dictations of the latter he placed the ascetic cat on the foreground of the field to the right of the river. There he stands erect on one of his hind legs (his right leg is hanging as limp as a rag), with his forepaws uplifted over his head, facing the rising sun and looking upwards, as if it were enraptured in a vision of things celestial. His ribs may be actually counted as the fruit of his ascetic exhaustion, in reality as the result of his enforced fast in not having caught any mouse for a long time owing to his old age. The little mice of the forest are shown round him in poses quite unfamiliar among mice in the proximity of a cat. Some sleep quite unconcerned, others look at him in astonishment, two stand rampant in a worshipping attitude. The naturalness of all the poses, in both cat and mice, reveal a masterful hand in that unknown artist of the Pallava sea capital.⁸⁵ Unfortunately the subsequent episodes of the famous *itihasa* were not reproduced by him. This deficiency nevertheless is supplemented by two carvings existent in a western European country, wherein the same story inspired an equally masterful artist.

In the cloister of the Cathedral of Tarragona, Spain, there are two reliefs carved on the abacus of two capitals, which are famous in that city and its neighbourhood with the denomination of "the procession of the rats". One of them represents a number of rats smartly walking on their hind

⁸³ *Mahabharata*, Vana Parva, 1541-1662.

⁸⁴ Heras, *Studies in Pallava History*, p. 92.

⁸⁵ Another rough representation of the hypocritical cat is found in a carved panel on the enclosure wall of the sea shore temple also at Mahabalipuram. Cf. Longhurst, *Pallava Architecture*, III, pl. III (a).

legs, four of which carry a stretcher over which the cat is lying. One of the mice in front of the stretcher carries a basket in his right arm. The artist has very cleverly filled the gap under the stretcher by placing there one of the mice walking on his fours but holding with his right forepaw a stick or rod leaning against his shoulder; from the end of this stick a triangular object hangs, which cannot be clearly defined. Perhaps it is the staff and flag which all the ascetics or *sannyasis* usually carry in their daily wanderings in India. People call this carving "the burial of the cat". Yet the way how the cat is carved clearly shows that he is not dead. His legs are not limp; his mouth is open as if talking; his eyes are full of life. The carving represents the episode of carrying the cat to the river bank to take there his daily bath, as described in the *Mahabharata*.

The other carving represents the final episode of the story. The cat has thrown away the mask of asceticism, has suddenly jumped from the stretcher, which is seen leaning against the wall, and has actually caught one of the little mice unawares, while all the others are seen flying for their lives in all directions. There is only one standing afar, holding something like a weapon in his left hand, as if he were admonishing the hypocritical rogue. He may be the old Kilika of the *Mahabharata* account. We sincerely think that the popular explanation which identifies the episodes represented in these carvings with the much later version of La Fontaine's fable lacks in solid foundation.⁸⁶

The Cathedral of Tarragona was built during the second half of the 12th century and first half of the 13th century. Naturally the cloister was added when the Cathedral was finished. We may rightly surmise that the cloister belongs to the second half of the 13th century. The publication of the *Calila e Dimna* was then fresh in northern Spain, as it had been translated in 1257. By the same time the Indian epic story must have spread throughout Spain and the freshness

⁸⁶ In the same southern wing of the cloister two other apologues are likewise illustrated in a series of abaci: the fox which allows the cocks to peck him, as if he were dead, to finally catch them, and the fox and the crow holding a cheese in their mouths.

of the story of the villain cat transpires throughout those carvings even after seven centuries. It is not therefore strange that, as is said by the Marques de Lozoya, "their humour reminds one of the apologues of Indian style which were then being spread throughout the world of Romanic languages".⁸⁷ Six centuries had elapsed between the carving of Mahabalipuram (7th century) and the two carvings of Tarragona, and thousands of miles intervened between these two places. Yet the Spanish artist seemed to have inherited the spirit of his predecessor of India. The plastic representation of the drama of the cat begins in Mahabalipuram and ends in Tarragona.

⁸⁷ Contreras, *Historia del Arte Hispanico*, II, pp. 28 - 29.

TAMILIANA—NEWS & NOTES

TAMILS FORM CULTURAL SOCIETY IN CEYLON
JUNE, 1952.

The need for study of Tamil was stressed when the Tamil Cultural Association was inaugurated recently at a meeting held at the Tamil Union pavilion. Mr. Justice C. Nagalingam presided. Mr. Nagalingam explained to the members the aims of the Association as formulated by the organisers of the movement. Mr. Nagalingam added that the Association would not clash with any of the existing organisations imbued with similar ideals, but would seek to win their co-operation. He hoped that members would take a keen interest and do their utmost to foster the aims and objects of the Association.

The objects of the Association are to promote the study, development and advancement of the Tamil language, literature, history, arts, archaeology and culture in all aspects.

Messages were read from Mr. R. O. Buell, General Secretary of the Y.M.C.A., and Mr. A. M. K. Kumaraswamy, Registrar of the University of Ceylon, promising their co-operation and best wishes for the success of the Association.

Mr. K. S. Arulnandy said that Tamil culture had remained static for some time. He promised to the new-born Association, support on behalf of the Colombo Tamil Kalagam.

Mrs. Ratna Navaratnam, who spoke on the role of women in the cultural domain, referred to the contributions made by the great Tamil women to ennoble the Tamil way of life. Mr. S. U. Somasegaram stressed the need to study Tamil history in the correct perspective.

Mr. K. Nesiah drew the attention of the members to certain recommendations of the official Languages Commission and questioned whether it was within the purview of this society to explore the possibility of co-ordinating the Tamil code script needed in the transmission of telegrams in South India.

The following were elected office-bearers:—*President*: Mr. Justice Nagalingam; *Joint Secretaries*: Mr. S. Sivabramaniam, Mrs. Ratna Navaratnam; *Treasurer*: Mr. S. Ratnanathar.

PUBLICATION OF POET BHARATI'S SONGS
MADRAS, JULY 3.

The Government has authorised the Director of Public Instruction to deal with requests from authors and publishers of text books for the inclusion of poems or songs of Poet Bharati in text books, adopting the rates of royalty fixed in its order on February 12, 1951. Applications from authors and publishers other than text books also will be dealt with by the Director of Public Instruction. Those from film producing concerns, gramophone companies, etc., will be dealt with by the Government.

TAMIL QUESTION IN PARLIAMENT
NEW DELHI, JULY 4.

A supplementary in Tamil startled many members of the House of the Peoples at question time today.

Mr. S. K. Kandaswamy, better known as "Babie Kandaswamy", a member from Madras, asked the Railway Minister, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri, in chaste Tamil when it was proposed to restore the Morappur-Hosur railway line on the Southern Railway.

Mr. K. Anandan Nambiar (Com.) and Mr. C. R. Narasimhan (Cong.) offered to translate the question, but the Speaker passed on to the next question.

Mr. Kandasamy said in the lobby that he had informed the Speaker that he would like to speak always in Tamil.

"I want to speak in Tamil," he told press men, "as a counterblast to Hindi enthusiasts."

LINGUISTIC HARMONY

NEW DELHI, JULY 6.

Mr. M. P. Sivagnana Gramani, M.L.C., Madras, today suggested that the Government of India should invite a team of poets and other men of letters from the South to tour the whole of North India for an exchange of ideas and culture.

Speaking at the Delhi Tamil Sangham on "Language and the Country," he said differences are bound to exist between the various languages in a country like India. But these differences should not be allowed to create hatred in one lingual group against the other. There should be a "give and take" attitude in the movements of people of different languages and culture he added.

Welcoming the reported proposal for embossing postal covers and cards with pictures of Indian poets, Mr. Gramani said this step would go long way in giving fillip to the cultural renaissance in the Country. Pictures of South Indian poets and writers, like Tiruvalluvar and Subramania Bharathi, should also be included in the scheme, so that there was real exchange of ideas and culture among the various lingual groups.

Mr. T. D. Krishnamachari, Minister for Commerce and Industry, who presided said people who talked of language differences perhaps had nothing bad at heart, but were only doing so because of their political affiliations.

Dr. K. S. Krishnan, President of the Sangham earlier welcomed the Minister and the Speaker.

ORGANISATION TO DIFFUSE TAMIL CULTURE
FORMED IN SINGAPORE.

SINGAPORE, JULY, 17.

An organisation dedicated to spread Tamil Culture, civilisation, art, and all other rich attainments of the Tamils, among the peoples of the world, was incepted in Singapore recently with Mr. S. K. Shanmugam, M.A., B.T., as the President and S. Soundara Rajan as the Secretary and Treasurer and Messrs C. V. Kuppusamy, M. Chidambaram, K. C. Arun, V. Thirunavukkarasu and T. Selvaganapathy as the members of the council of the organisation.

This organisation which is known as the "Tamil Diffusion League" will tell the peoples of the world about the Tamil contribution to world letters and to world culture, and will also create an awareness in them that the Tamilians have got a culture and civilisation of their own, inimitable and singularly original. The activities of the League are proposed to be directed through the media of press, platform, radio and individual contacts. The League while attempting to diffuse Tamil among the peoples of the world, will also attempt to understand and appreciate the cultural attainments of other peoples. It will also work in harmony with other organisations of similar motives. One of the objects of the league includes the teaching of Tamil to foreigners through correspondence study course. The official address of the League is : 165, Serangoon Road, Singapore, Malaya.

UNESCO AND THIRUKKURAL

To Mr. K. Ganesh, enterprising Tamil Journalist of Talatuoya, Ceylon, the UNESCO Office in Paris sent the following reply regarding the publication of translations of *Thirukkural* by the UNESCO.

"I cannot unfortunately, send you a complete list of the world's classics which Unesco is preparing to translate because there is no such list. We shall have one only when all nations have sent in their own list of books recommended for translation. Unfortunately, there is still a large number of missing ones.

I thank you for your suggestion regarding the translation of *Thirukkural*. Unfortunately again, India or Ceylon have not so far responded to our proposals that they should co-operate with Unesco for translation into and from the Indian or Ceylonese languages, and we cannot do it otherwise than through such co-operation."

(Sd.) J. J. MAYOUX,
Arts and Letters Division,
Unesco Office, Paris.

TAMIL FESTIVAL AT MADRAS

MADRAS, AUG. 23.

Sri C. Rajagopalachariar, Chief Minister, today categorically declared that Madras City belonged and would continue to belong to Tamils, and there need not be any anxiety about it. It was a matter of fact, and there was, therefore, no need to invoke the aid of all the galaxy of great Tamil saints and poets of old that had flourished in and around this great City to establish that fact.

Sri Rajagopalachariar was inaugurating the 5th Tamil Festival at the Teynampet Congress grounds. Over 5,000 people, including 120 delegates from Ceylon, Malaya, and other places attended.

Mr. M. Bhaktavatsalam, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the delegates, explained it might seem unusual to celebrate the festival of a language which was their mother tongue.

In countries like England and France, patriotism and love of language were intertwined forming the basis of the political, economic, social and spiritual life of the people.

The importance of the mother-tongue had suffered because of foreign domination, and after independence there were signs of resuscitation and revival in every sphere of human activity, including the development of their own language. Tamil, he declared was eternal, vital language.

Mr Bhaktavatsalam traced the history and development of Tamil in Thondaimandalam, in which Madras City was included.

Great Tamil poets and saints like Tiruvalluvar, Sekkizhar, Peyazhwar and Sri Ramanuja had contributed to the development of Tamil in this area. Triplicane and Mylapore were historic spots, known abroad from the first century of the Christian era. Tamil literary evidence showed that Madras had contacts with countries abroad centuries ago.

He emphasised that they had no hatred towards any other language or culture nor were they belittling them, by celebrating the festival.

Steps should be taken to reconvert the numerous temples in the land into centres of social, educational and cultural activity, where schools, art demonstrations and philosophical disquisitions had taken place in the 100 and 1,000-pillared mantapas therein. Temple managements should undertake to spread knowledge of Tamil classics, publish cheap editions. He appealed to religious Mutts to intensify their activity.

Tamil, he emphasised, transcended religious and sectarian limitations. Newer and newer books in the various departments of science and art should be encouraged. The first volume of the Tamil Encyclopaedia would be published soon.

Sri Rajagopalachariar said that when he heard the fine Tamil speech of Mr. Bhaktavatsalam, he felt that hitherto Mr Bhaktavatsalam had been in the wrong place. (Laughter).

Rajaji added that Tamil, as a language, had retained its pristine purity and identity along with its glory to this day, which made it easy to understand the ancient classics without difficulty. That was not the case with other languages like English.

They could develop their language, not by merely worshipping it, not by hating and belittling other languages, but by real service to it with concentration and single-minded devotion.

Anger and animosity led to disintegration and failure. They should stop comparing their language with others and entering into futile disquisitions.

Tamil had such a vitality that attempts, made by well-meaning people, and encouraged by him, to reform its script to suit modern printing processes had failed. Those who tried it had reverted to the old method of Tamil script. In speaking and writing Tamil, they had to follow the grammar, and that enhanced the beauty of the language.

The Chief Minister referred to the scurrilous and obscene writing in some Tamil journals and said it was unworthy of them and appealed to the people not to read them.

On the question of the future of Madras City, Rajaji said the figures given of the number of Telugus and Tamils in Madras City were all incorrect and misleading.

Some people who spoke Telugu had been living in the City for 10 generations and more and they had forgotten the old Telugu but spoke only Tamil now. They could not be called Telugus, but they were also included as Telugus in this enumeration. For instance, such a Telugu was Mr. Purushottama Nayudu who had rendered a fine Tamil edition of the invaluable Yeadu (work) the Manipravala commentary on Nammalwar's Divyaprabandam. Would anyone call him a Telugu? All this controversy was misleading and they should avoid it. They need not be anxious and afraid. Madras City belonged to Tamils and none else.

Mr Bhaktavatsalam tried to invoke the aid of Alwars and others, and all that was not at all called for and necessary. From what Mr Bhaktavatsalam had said, it appeared that Madras was all Tamil Nad and there was no Tamil Nad apart from Madras. (Laughter).

Rajaji said whether Andhras were to leave them or remain with them, it was all the same. He was the Chief Minister of a common State and if they were bent on separating they should be allowed to do so. But if one should cling fast to the pillar and cry "I want to get away," it meant that he was not really wanting to go. (Laughter). Madras City was like a pillar to them, the Tamils.

Mr C. R. Srinivasan and Mr T. P. Meenakshisundaram Pillai introduced the President to the audience.

TAMIL CULTURE

Thiru V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar, in his presidential address, explained that the essence of Tamil and its culture was socialism and not imperialistic. Therefore, he could never visualise Tamil language spreading to other countries. But the culture imbedded in the extensive Tamil literature should be spread and interpreted in lands abroad for the benefit of the people. Development of language and real culture was

possible only where honest differences of opinion was tolerated, and only in such a climate could Tamil develop.

He wanted research into the basic philosophy behind the various sciences, and the study of humanities more than the Science subjects. Emphasising that the system of education should be reformed he pleaded for the revival of the old Gurukula system. The valuable works of the Great Tamil Siddhas should be investigated and the treasures made available to all.

EXHIBITION OPENED

Dr P. Subbaroyan, President, Tamil Nad Congress Committee, yesterday opened a Tamil Exhibition organised in connection with Tamil Festival. He said the exhibition was the second of its kind the first having been held at Jaffna. A visit to Bali would show how Tamil civilisation had gone beyond the seas and taken root in far-off lands. In Bali they saw Bommalattam (punch and judy show) at its best. In Java though the population was mostly Muslim, they were fond of reading the ancient Indian classics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

DISCUSSIONS AND LECTURES

MADRAS, AUG. 24.

At the fifth annual Tamil Festival at the Teynampet Congress grounds today, "The Astronomy of the Tamils" was the subject of a discussion in the morning.

Srimathi E. T. Rajeswari, who presided, explained the great advances made in the study of astronomy by ancient Tamils, extensive proof of which was available in the Tamil literature and classics.

Mr P. N. Appuswami spoke on "Ideals and attempts" and Mr K. Srinivasaraghavan on "Our Ancient Astrology".

Discussion on "Tamil and its Literature" began later. Mr. P. T. Rajan, President, could not be present and Dr P. Subbarayan presided, and read his address. Mr. Rajan referred to recent developments in Tamil literature and drew pointed attention to the present condition of Tamils in Malaya, South Africa and Ceylon. He appealed to the Tamils to try their best to help their brethren abroad.

Mr. T. P. Meenakshisundaranar spoke on "The Culture of the Tamils", and Prof. A. Srinivasaraghavan on "Tamil Drama". Mr. P. Sri Acharya discussed "The Bharathi Era in Tamil Literature."

The Conference then adjourned for lunch.

CEYLON-INDIAN CONTACTS

Yesterday afternoon the Conference discussed "Art and Painting". Mr. T. K. Shanmukam sang a prayer. Introducing Mr S. Natesa Pillai, Ceylon Minister, to the audience, the Finance Minister, Mr C. Subramaniam, explained the cultural contacts between the Tamils of Ceylon and Madras.

Mr R. Krishnamurthi paid a tribute to Mr Natesa Pillai's services to Tamil.

Mr Natesa Pillai explained the development of sculpture and architecture in Tamil Nad and there was vast scope for research about ancient Tamil civilisation. The temples in South India were supreme examples of Tamil art and architecture. Atheism would mean the death-knell of Tamil art, and therefore, they should nip atheism in the bud.

Mr. T. M. Deivasikhamani Achariar, M.L.C., spoke on "Indian art and sculpture."

Mr K. Chandrasekharan spoke on "The language of art", and Mr T. M. Bhaskara Tondaiman on "Temples and art".

Mr T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar explained the need to develop Tamil literature in modern scientific fields, and distributed prizes and certificates to authors of books selected for the purpose. Mr K. V. Jagannathan spoke on "Painting in Tamil Literature".

WORK ON TAMIL ENCYCLOPAEDIA

MADRAS, AUG. 24.

The possibility of bringing out the first part of the Tamil Encyclopaedia containing matter arranged under the first four letters of the Tamil Alphabet (அ, ஆ, இ, and ஈ) in December this year or early in January next year, was envisaged by Mr T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar, President of the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam, on the occasion of the distribution of prizes and certificates for the best publication of the year in six branches of Tamil literature, last evening, in connection with the Tamil Festival.

Mr M. Periasami Thooran, Secretary of the Kazhagam, presented the fifth annual report of the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam.

The report stated that the main function of the organisation was to encourage Tamil writers to break new ground by awarding prizes and certificates to the best publications in each year. For this purpose, publications were broadly classified into twelve sections and prizes were awarded each year to the best works in six of the sections.

The report next dealt with the progress made in the compilation of the Tamil Encyclopaedia. It would be a publication of 9,000 pages divided into a number of parts. The most important part of the work was to decide upon the subjects to be included in it and to arrange them in the alphabetical order. Subjects included would come under forty odd sections like Science, Arts, Literature, etc., and they would have to be classified under 13,500 odd headings. So far material had been prepared for over 3,500 pages or four parts. Over 1,000 pictures had been got ready for inclusion in the encyclopaedia. This was the first attempt at compiling such a comprehensive work and, therefore, it involved enormous labour. Tamil equivalents to millions of technical and scientific terms had to be coined. In this task, the Kazhagam had received the help and co-operation of several persons. To them all the thanks of the Kazhagam were due. They were also thankful for the liberal grant promised by the Government. To entitle them to receive the grant, public donation

to the extent of Rs. 50,000 should be forthcoming. The report hoped that the public would make generous contributions.

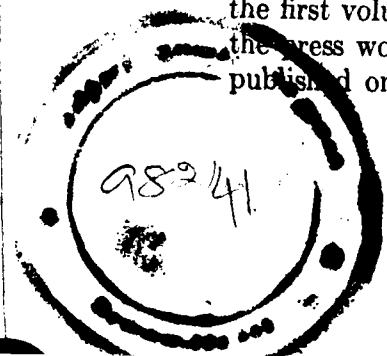
Mr T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar then addressed the gathering. He said that when they started the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam five years ago, they undertook a heavy responsibility. At that time, they did not think that the annual Tamil Festival held under its auspices would develop into such magnificent proportions. That encouraged them to proceed with the work they had taken on hand.

OBJECTS OF THE KAZHAGAM

The main object of the Kazhagam was the development of the Tamil language. Two schools of thought stood in the way of the progress of Tamil. One consisted of those who thought that there was nothing new in Tamil literature and that the works that really counted could be put in one shelf. The other school consisted of those who held the view that there was nothing new to learn beyond what was contained in ancient Tamil literature. Both the schools could not contribute to the growth of Tamil. What was required was a happy blending of reverence for the old and a quest for the new. There were high thoughts and a fund of knowledge in the literature that had developed from the age of Tolkappiyam. That had to be learnt through the medium of Tamil alone. There were new ideas and knowledge, particularly on scientific subjects, outside the Tamil literature. That had to be brought within the ambit of Tamil literature and made to serve the needs of Tamilians. This was the great task which the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam had undertaken.

They hoped to bring out a comprehensive Tamil Encyclopaedia in nine volumes at a cost of Rs. 10 lakhs. Work was progressing satisfactorily and they hoped to bring out the first volume in December or January next and thereafter the press would be fed regularly and the remaining volumes published one after another.

END



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