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TAMIL CULTURE

A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study of Tamilland



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Readers' Forum

VATICAN CITY MAIL

I read with very great interest and profit the September issue (Vol. II. Nos. 3-4) of "*Tamil Culture*." It may interest you to know when my elder brother, the late N. M. Roche-Victoria, and I were students at St. Benedict's College, Colombo, we travelled with Sir Ponnambala Arunachalam and family from Colombo to Tuticorin — about the year 1892. I was then thirteen years old. Though it is now more than sixty years, the impression made on me by that perfect gentleman has never been effaced. If I remember right, he told me that he was going as a pilgrim to visit the Hindu shrines in South India.

Inscrutable are the ways of God. When you asked permission three years ago to start a paper in English I never thought, for that matter you never suspected, that eventually it would be "*Tamil Culture*," unique of its kind in India or Ceylon. You may rejoice and thank God "*Tamil Culture*" has come to stay. The contributors to your learned periodical are not insular in their outlook. They cater to every kind of taste. God bless them.

The gentleman who has sent you a cheque for Rs. 100/- as annual gift subscription for twenty persons deserves hearty congratulations. Let us hope some more gentlemen will take the cue from this anonymous benefactor.

Ever yours

5, Borgo Santo Spirito,
November 9, 1953.

✠ TIBURTIVS
Francis Tiburtius Roche S.J.
(First Bishop of Tuticorin)
Founder - Patron of '*Tamil Culture*'

PRAGUE MAIL

In *Tamil Culture*, Vol. I. No. 2 Mr. C. R. Myleru has published an interesting article on some Dravidian loan-words in English. I should like to add a few notes here about four Dravidian loans in Czech. If it is true that the word *tukiyyim* in I Kings X, 72,

READERS' FORUM

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and II. *Chronics* IX. 21 is derived from Dravidian / Tamil *தோகை* Malayalam *Tōka* / "tail of a peacock," "peacock"*, then the Czech *Páv* "Peafowl" is originally Dravidian:

Greek *tavōs* > *taōs* > Lat. *Pávō* > Czech *Páv* "peafowl"
Páv "peafowl" is originally Dravidian:

Tam. *அரிசி* > Greek *óryza* > Lat. *oryza* > It. *riso* >
> Fr. *riz* >
Czech. *ryze* "rice";

Tm. *பிப்பிளி* > Greek *péperi* > Lat. *piper* > Sl.* *Pbpbrb* >
Old Czech *pper* > Czech *pepr* "pepper";

Tam. *இஞ்சிவேர்* > Greek *zingiberos* / pron. *zingiberos* / > Lat. *zingiber* > It. *zenzovero* > Czech *zázvor* "ginger" / cf. Russian *imbir* and German *Ingwer* /.

Besides these words which are now used like native Czech words quite organically and commonly, there exist a number of words, taken directly or indirectly into Czech in times quite recent,

e.g. *kuli* < Tam. *கூலி*, *betel* < Tam. *வெற்றிலை*, *korund* < Tam. *கருந்தம்*.

Thus we see that also the Czech word-treasure, indirectly of course, through Greek and Latin, has been enriched by Dravidian.

KAMIL ZVELEBIL

*
Dept. of Dravidology,
Oriental Institute,
Prague, Czechoslovakia.

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The Library of Congress,
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(Sd.) FRANCES F. PAGE
for Alton H. Keller
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Ciò premesso, Le propongo di spedirmi regolarmente il sommario di ogni numero della Sua pubblicazione oppure, se lo ritiene più utile, il periodico stesso per mia documentazione. In questo modo potrei soddisfare subito eventuali richieste di dettagli sui vari articoli, e di abbonamenti.

Spero che la mia iniziativa sarà accolta con favore, tanto più che è conosciuta e apprezzata dal Centro Internazionale per la Comparazione a Sintesi (ROMA, Chiostro dei Genevesi - 12, via Anicia), il quale riunisce personalità appartenenti alla più elevata cultura italiana.

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PARIS MAIL

Monsieur,

J'ai bien reçu votre aimable lettre et les numéros de *Tamil Culture* qu'elle m'annonçait. Je vous en remercie très vivement. Votre revue m'intéresse beaucoup et, puisque vous voulez bien me faire l'honneur de me demander un article pour elle, je serai heureux de vous en envoyer un dès que ce sera possible.

JEAN FILLIOZAT

Collège De France,

Paris.

Chaire,

De Langues et Littératures De L'Inde.

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வெல்க தமிழ்

சிங்கப்பூர்
ககஅச புரட்டாசி உயி
6-10-53

தி. கோபாலகிருட்டினன்,
சா. க. மேற்பார்வை
49, மார்க்கெட்டு ஸ்திரீட்டு,
சிங்கப்பூர் - 1.

“நாங்கள் மாட்டு யான் விடுக்கும் பிற்தொரு வேண்டுகோள் ஒன்றும் உளது. அதனைச் சற்றே செவி மடுப்பீர். தமிழ்ப் பண்பு (*Tamil Culture*) என்ற பெயராலே நாங்கள் காலாண்டு இதழ் ஒன்று நடாத்தி வருகின்றீர்கள். இற்றை நாள் வரை யாரும் ஆராய்ச்சி நடத்தாத பகுதிகளாய் தமிழர் நாகரிகமும், திராவிட மொழியினமும், திராவிடக் கலைகளும் அவ்வாங்கில் இதழிலே முதலிடம் பெற்றுத் திகழுதல் கண்டு கரையிலாக் களிப் பெய்தும் பல்லோருள் யானும் ஒருவன். ஆயினும் அவ்விதழிலே வரும் கருத்துக்களனைத்தையும் ஆங்கிலமறியாத தமிழனும் கற்றுத் தெளிதல் வேண்டும். ஆதலின் இவ்விதழின் தமிழ்ப் பதிப்பும் ஆங்கிலப் பதிப்புடன் வெளியிடுவிராயின் முன்னர்த் தமிழர் நாகரிகத்தையும் இமயத்தின் எல்லைகண்ட எந்தமிழன் மாண்பினையும் பண்டைத் தமிழகத்தின் மிகுந்த வளத்தையும் செழித்த வாணிபத்தையும் இற்றைத் தமிழர்க்கு எடுத்துக் காட்டல் எளிதாருமன்றோ? இஃது ஆங்கிலத்தில் மட்டும் அச்சிடப்பெறின் ஆங்கிலம் பயின்றார்க்கேயன்றி ஏனையோர்க்குப் புலனாகாதன்றோ? அதுபற்றியேதான் யானும் எந்தமிழிலேயும் இவ்வரிய இதழினை வெளியிடுங்கள் என நாங்களை மன்றாடிக் கேட்கின்றேன்.

தி. கோபாலகிருட்டினன்,
சிங்கப்பூர்.

COLOMBO MAIL

CLASSICAL TAMIL — A SUBJECT FOR STUDY IN SCHOOLS
AND UNIVERSITIES AND FOR PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

Sir,

In your last issue, on page 220, Mr. V. K. Sivapragasam, in his concluding paragraph, observes as follows:—

"The University of London has not approved Tamil as a Classical Language for purposes of examination. It is unfortunate that the scholars and well-wishers of Tamil do not take interest in this important problem."

2. The matter was taken up by me in 1936 with the Director of Education, The Ceylon University Council, The London University and the Civil Service Commission, London, whose replies are appended for the information of your readers. The Ceylon University or the London University has not yet given classical Tamil an equal place with such classical languages such as Latin, Sanscrit, Pali, Hebrew etc. It is the grouping up of subjects for university education which determines the growth or the suppression of the culture of a people. The grouping up of subjects in these two Universities is different from the Indian Universities. Wherever the Tamils live or where a University serves the Tamil people, the Tamil will must count and prevail, and the Universities must provide what the Tamil people need or want. Tamilians had not much control or influence in the rule making powers of these Universities, and it rested with the non-Tamilians who are ignorant of Classical Tamil. This accounts for the nonrecognition of Classical Tamil as a subject for study in these Universities.

3. Tamil occupies a unique place among the languages of the world. It is one of the oldest languages, more ancient than Latin, Sanscrit or Pali. It is also a living modern language of no mean order. It has sufficient Classics for the young and the old. The past generation of Tamils has prescribed 18 books for the young which should be studied before one takes up to higher Classics. Rt. Rev. R. Caldwell, D.D., L.L.D., considered that Classical Tamil, Poetry or prose, considerably differed from the colloquial Tamil and from the every day speech of the Tamils and cannot be easily understood. I have therefore suggested to the authorities to divide Tamil into "Classical Tamil" and "Modern Tamil" in view of the extent and the vast period involved and to give the "Classical Tamil" an equal place with Latin, Sanscrit, Pali etc, and to permit students to offer both 'Classical Tamil' and 'Modern Tamil' as separate subjects at the same examination. I also suggested that the Classical Tamil shall be studied progressively

from the lower forms as in the case of Latin or Sanscrit or following the system that prevailed under our Gurukula system of education. Neglect of one's own Classics and studying other Classics will not be fruitful. It is therefore necessary that provision must be made to enable one to study his own Classics and other Classics, also the Modern Tamil, at one and the same time. It is now hoped that the scholars and the Parliamentarians will take up this matter further.

Yours faithfully

(Sd.) (K. M. CHELLAPPAH).

Puttur,

Jaffna. 5—10—'53

REPLIES REFERRED TO ABOVE

1. Director of Education, Ceylon.

By letter No. E (E) 21/36 of 6—2—'37.

"The introduction of Classical Tamil as a special branch of study into the school curriculums and the Matriculation and equivalent examinations is considered unsuitable owing to the nature of the subject... This is in accordance with the views of the Principal, University College, and the Board of Moderators."

2. The Ceylon University Council —

Letter dated 18—11—'36.

"The Ceylon University Council, at a meeting held on 11—11—'36, agreed to recommend that the London University authorities be requested to consider the possibility of admitting Classical Tamil as an alternative to Latin or Greek (Classical languages) for the Intermediate examination in Arts. The Council further recommended that, if Classical Tamil and Tamil (distinct from Classical Tamil) are admitted as two different subjects in the scheme of subjects, no student shall be permitted to offer both the subjects at the same time."

3. The London University.

No. 1295. 2 / 29—1—'37.

"The whole question of Singalese and Tamil is being considered by a Special Committee before whom your observations will be laid shortly."

No. J. R. /O. W. 1295 of

17—7—'52.

"I very much regret that no reply appears to have reached you but I write to say that it was left that no action could be taken in the matter."

4. *The Civil Service Commission.*

Letter dated 25—1—'37

"I am directed by the Civil Service Commissioners to say that the choice of subjects which may be offered by candidates at open competitive examinations held under the enclosed regulations is already large and the Commissioners have come to the conclusion that it is undesirable to add to the number."

TAMIL CULTURE

A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study of Tamiliana

The Teaching of Tamil

THE EDITOR

OF THE many recommendations made by the Indian Secondary Education Commission in its recent report, there are some that deserve the attention of not only professional teachers and educationists but also of all those generally interested in the development of our national languages. If Tamil is to become an effective medium of modern thought and an apt instrument for citizenship in a democracy, the teaching of Tamil in our Schools and Colleges, and the training of teachers of Tamil should receive particular attention. "There is no enthusiasm, no creative urge to initiate an educational renaissance" says the report of the Commission, and if this lack of enthusiasm and creativity be true of teachers in general, it is not in any way less true of lecturers and teachers of Tamil.

This state of inertia is partly due to the sense of frustration that prevails among lecturers and teachers because of the poor terms and conditions of service, but it is also due to the low standards and inadequate training of language teachers. With the change over to the mother-tongue medium, one would think it necessary that the teacher of Tamil be well-equipped, well-read, urbane and polished as the teacher of Latin or Greek, or even the teacher of English was believed to be in the colonial period. One would expect that the era is over when the Tamil pundit provided a good deal of mirth and laughter at his own expense, possibly because of his stilted, artificial style, his crude manners, his blissful ignorance of the ways of the modern world and the English

language and his reaction to progress unauthenticated by tradition. One would expect too that the period is past when he used to be a secluded figure in the staff-room and on the campus, rather a museum-piece out of the past than an educationist engrossed in the problems of the present. One has a right to expect that he is now able to use modern methods of teaching and can make a public address or engage in conversation without frequent appeals to authority supported by hackneyed quotations. One has a right to expect all this and more but the Report of the Secondary Education Commission does not find enough justification to sketch an optimistic portrait of the language teacher. It says very cryptically "Any teacher, however poorly qualified, has been considered good enough to teach the mother tongue". And later, "If well-qualified and well-trained teachers can take up the teaching of the mother-tongue in this progressive spirit, it may well raise the whole level and quality of education."

It is difficult to understand why in Ceylon the teaching of Tamil in the higher forms of certain secondary schools is entrusted to persons who have had no training, and who have no higher qualification than a pass in Tamil in the S. S. C. examination. While trained graduates are sought for other subjects, the heads of schools seem to feel that Tamil may be taught anyhow by anyone.

Not only are the qualifications and the training of teachers so unsatisfactory that the hope of a brilliant Tamil Renaissance is denied to this generation, but the tools too with which the teachers have to work, namely, text-books and books of general reading, are poor and insufficient for educational adventure. When dealing with text-books, with books of general reading and with library books, the Commission has pointed out the need for a scientific approach to their compilation and production. "The bulk of the evidence that was tendered, particularly by teachers in schools and colleges, indicated that there was a great de-

terioration in the standard of text-books at present prescribed to students. We have referred elsewhere to the great paucity of books of reference in the regional languages for school libraries. We feel that unless active attempts are made to bring out a number of such publications as well as books in the regional languages and in the official language of the union, the all round development of the pupil will be seriously handicapped. Teachers also should have more books available to them in the languages so that they may with profit refer to them and keep their knowledge up-to-date. . . . We may, in passing, make a reference here to the associated problem of the production of suitable books for children and adolescents. At present there is a great paucity of such books in practically all Indian languages and unless the Centre and the State Governments take well thought-out measures to encourage the production of suitable books for *general reading* the objective in view cannot be realized — books suitable not only from the point of view of contents but also of *printing, binding and illustrations*. This may be done by giving financial assistance to qualified and well established organizations engaged in the production of such books, by offering prizes to the best books published and by arranging translations of good children's books available in English or published in various regional languages.

We recommend that in regard to other languages also, whether the mother-tongue or regional language, there is need for a reorientation of the methods adopted in teaching the language. To try to cram into the young pupil, a number of abstract terms and definitions of grammar and syntax, long before the student has learnt to read fluently simple prose, is to create in the young mind an aversion for language classes. A contributory factor is the dearth of simple and entertaining reading matter in the language capable of creating in the pupil a desire and an eagerness to peruse such books. With the emphasis now placed rightly on the mother-tongue or regional language, we hope that (a) teachers of languages will be given training in the methods to be

adopted in such teaching, and (b) that every encouragement will be given to well qualified persons to produce books in prose and poetry suited to the different stages of education of school children.

We are greatly dissatisfied with the present standard of production of school books and consider it essential that this should be radically improved. Most of the books submitted and prescribed are poor specimens in every way — the paper is usually bad, the printing is unsatisfactory, the illustrations are poor and there are numerous printing mistakes. If such books are placed in the hands of students, it is idle to expect that they would acquire any love for books or feel interest in them or experience the joy that comes from handling an attractively produced publication.”⁽¹⁾

It has been estimated in English-speaking countries that to equip a student for post-school reading of newspapers and books and for intelligent citizenship in a democracy, it would be necessary for the student to have read a total of some five million words during his school career from ten to fifteen years. Thus will he become familiar with the twenty to thirty thousand words which adult reading requires. A total reading of five million words may appear a great quantity, but if the average English book for boys and girls consists of thirty thousand words, all that is required is the reading of some one hundred and seventy-five books⁽²⁾. The best students in some of the Indian and Ceylon schools do more than this required reading in English. Assuming that an equal number of words read would also be necessary for the student who is educated through the Tamil medium (there is no apparent reason why the same amount of reading practice would not be necessary), and supposing that the Tamil books are on an average of ten thousand words each

¹ Report of the Secondary Education Commission, 1953, pp. 114, 70, 96.

² A. F. WATTS, *The language and mental development of children*, p. 106, London, 1950.

(and generally they are slender), it would be necessary for the student to read some five hundred books during his school life. If allowances are made for the reading practice that he will obtain from the Tamil textbooks and newspapers which may total a million words during his course of studies, we shall yet have to provide him with the four-hundred books of general interest, viz : travel, fiction, romance, history, popular science, adventure, biography and religion which will give him the four million words of reading.

It is with the greatest amount of good will that one would be able to draw up a list of a hundred such books in Tamil. As for books of the “Robinson Crusoe”, “Books of insects” or “Voyages of the Discovery”, “A journey to the Moon” type they are, alas, too few. Some of these juveniles have been translated into Tamil, but often the translator summarises the story and restricts the vocabulary to such an extent by a stilted and artificial style that the educational value of the originals is lessened. Further, a large number of original works with a familiar background of life and interest, is necessary for the systematization of experience and for the quickening and enlarging of children’s sympathies. Such original works are required not only in prose but also in poetry. The influence of good poetry on the development of language and feeling is so great that there should be a reasonable output of poetry centering around schoolboy interests and within the range of his aesthetic life. But what is actually now given the student of Tamil is a great deal of gnomic verse and recondite classical poetry better suited for adults and specialists in the history of literature.

To the student who reads English, comics and thrillers fulfil at least this purpose of providing an interest in reading. In Tamil these means of creating interest are generally wanting, and it might not be altogether a bad thing that they are wanting. In vain do we turn to our daily newspapers in Tamil for help. They do not provide that variety of interest and that wealth of ideas which we wish to present to the

pupil. Nor are they noted for precision, accuracy and restraint. One can seldom rely on the foreign news carried by Tamil dailies. One prefers to have them direct from the English newspapers without the intervention of translators that ignore the shades and nuances of the original English words. A study of Reuter messages and their translations in Tamil will show that the translations are more general, more vague and more exaggerated. Further the Tamil newspapers carry only about half the reading matter that English newspapers carry. Journalism in Tamil has yet a long way to go before it can serve the finer needs of language development of the school going population.

* * *

It is unfortunate that the emphasis so far has been just on technical terms and text-books to the exclusion of linguistic power. It may be that even a teacher of science knows all the technical terms in Tamil and has the necessary text-books, but he may be so poorly equipped in verbal expression that his lessons have no great interest or value. Similarly, it would be possible to teach all the terms necessary to Government officials and yet obtain the most bewildering results in official language. What matters is not the number of words a person knows but word power. There is a marked difference between the person who says "He is not sure of the place to which he will be going last," and the person who says "He is not sure of his ultimate destination." The greater number of words used is not evidence of greater linguistic power.

It would be unjustifiable for Principals of schools to send as teachers of the mother-tongue medium, men who have not given proof of their knowledge of the language and literature of the mother-tongue. Since the mother-tongue is taught through every subject taught through its medium, it will be incumbent also on Science teachers to be able to use Tamil as a flexible, free and easy medium of expression. And such a free and easy use of language on the part of teachers of

Science is even more necessary in the lower forms than in the upper forms.

What has been said about English in England is applicable to the mother-tongue in any country. The Hadow Report, for instance, says, "English should not be treated as a isolated subject confined to certain definite periods assigned to it in the time-table. In every branch of the curriculum pupils should be trained to express their ideas either orally or in writing, in accurate and appropriate language. It will be therefore be advisable to exercise a careful supervision over the use of English in every subject." And George Sampson in his usual vigorous manner says that the mother-tongue is a condition of existence rather than a subject of instruction³).

A course of instruction in the mother tongue to qualified English trained teachers is one means of over-coming the dearth in Ceylon of teachers capable of the Tamil medium. But the dearth of text-books as well as of supplementary and general reading material is not so easily met. The obvious solution would be to organise schools of translators under the auspices and direction of the University or of the training Colleges. This was what the Arabs and Europeans of the Middle Ages did to enrich themselves with Greek thought, and the Chinese and the Japanese did to enrich themselves with Indian thought. But in order to write or translate school books, a great amount of research concerning vocabulary and word frequency has to precede their writing. Tamil text-books now in use have paid little attention to the progressive linguistic development of the pupil. And Tamil translations of English originals used in the sixth standard of some of the Ceylon schools may well be prescribed for a class taught at University level. The translators have given full play to their knowledge of classical Tamil and used classical and obsolete linguistic forms and structures without any regard

³ See RYBURN, *The teaching of the mother-tongue*, p. 5, Madras, 1950.

whatsoever to the linguistic equipment of a sixth standard pupil. The result is that the Tamil translation is far more complicated than the original. The study of a text book on history becomes more a struggle with language than a reader which professedly teaches language. Neither have Text-Book Committees been a great help in approving and grading books submitted to them. "It was brought to our notice in this connection", says the Report, "that the commercial side of the production of text-books has also adversely affected their proper selection. The practice in some States is to prescribe only one text-book in each subject for each class. In view of the very large number of pupils studying in these forms, the approval of a book by the Committee meant large profits to the publishers and the financial stakes involved sometimes resulted in undue influences being brought to bear on the members of the Committees. Evidence tendered left no doubt that such influences did interfere with the proper selection of text-books. As a result of this, text-books were often prescribed which were too difficult or too easy for the class concerned or were defective in language and in the manner of presentation and sometimes abounded in factual mistakes." (p. 97)

The compilation of word-frequency lists, both specific (say for subjects like Physics, History, Geography) and general like the lists Thorndike and Dewey have worked out for English are the basis on which instruction through the mother-tongue should be progressively promoted.

As for original works, the Secondary Commission has made recommendations which, if put into practice, will certainly result in more creative works both in prose and in poetry. Not the least important of these recommendations is the granting of suitable honoraria to authors and royalties to publishers whose books are taken over by the Department of Education, and the appointing of Committees of experts who will be impartial in their judgement of books to be approved for use in schools.

The Teaching of Tamil in Colleges and Schools has been too long subject to the malady of mediocrity. Our best men should be recruited as Tamil lecturers and teachers; they should be given the most attractive terms of service and trained along the lines of the most recent research in language teaching. It is then that Tamil will become a condition of existence.

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A Study of Kabilar, the Sangam Poet

C. JESUDASON, M. A.

KABILAR THE MAN

WE KNOW little of the Sangam poets. Distance has dwarfed their personalities. Their histories have become clouded with myth, with legends of gods and goddesses ; even the semblance of truth is not left to them. Had the Sangam poets been subjective, had they been free to reveal their intimate feelings, we would have understood something of the human element lying behind their purely literary greatness. But those were days of kings and chieftains who patronized the men of letters ; the poets were bound by obligations to them. To cramp their literary scope further, appeared a whole series of literary conventions and regulations. There was a set code of rules for Aham or love-poetry, and another for Puram or non-love poetry ; for, the ancients had drawn a line between love and all that is not related to love. In days when war was an exciting daily problem, no wonder a young man could divide his life broadly into love and war. Hence these two aspects of human life were accepted, and developed on strictly separate lines by the bards whose duty it was to sing of life.

Aham poetry, or Sangam love-poetry, gives practically no clues to the personalities of the poets. When they were so much preoccupied with imaginary romances of passionate young people, and forcing them into the convention of the day, what room could there be for self-revelation ? So, natu-

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A STUDY OF KABILAR, THE SANGAM POET 19

rally for a study of Kabilar the Man, we have to go elsewhere. Puram poems found in Puranānūru and Padirruppattu help us better.

Internal evidence in Puranānūru shows that Kabilar was a Brahmin by birth. He says of himself, "I, a Brahmin and a poet". We may take that as the final word, in deciding, as a matter of curiosity, his caste. There is nothing to prove the myth that Kabilar was one of the twelve children born of a Brahmin father and a Pulaya mother.

There is evidence that Kabilar was held in reverence and affection by his contemporaries. Contemporary references to him are uniformly respectful.

*"Renowned Kabilar, in wisdom great
Of silver tongue, creating verse
Surcharged with truth",* says one poet (*Puram* ; 53).
"Kabilar, whose voice is truth", says another.
(*Puram* ; 174).

Kabilar is the Sangam poet to whose greatness we can find the greatest number of tributes in Sangam literature. He must have been a poet really worthy of love.

We need to study Kabilar's *Puram* poems closely, and take their revelations at their face-value. Kabilar shows close acquaintance with several of the great chieftains and kings of Tamilnad. Of these, he pays glowing tributes to Cheraman Selvakkadungo Vazhi Adan, the king of Chera land, and to two chieftains, lesser men in rank, but equally great in renown — Kāri, and the immortal Pāri whose name cannot be separated from Kabilar's. We find Kabilar boldly flinging a reproach on another chieftain, Irungo Vēl, who he believed, had slighted him. Beautiful is the story that all these poems have to tell, and, although we do not have them in the exact sequence of their creation, we may use our discretion in arranging them before we elicit from them the life-story of this great and revered poet.

We have no positive means of deciding whether his acquaintance with Kāri was early or late in Kabilar's life, but the fact is, that after his contact with Pāri, almost everything that he wrote in *Puram* is coloured by that sublime friendship. Since this colouring is absent in his praises of Kāri, we might deduce that at any rate Kabilar met Kāri first, before his friendship with Pāri began. In one little poem, we find a half-reproachful advice to Kāri,

"To know one's deserts is the task"
Regard not poets with an equal eye" (Puram : 121)

Evidently Kari has treated him, not slightly, but not quite according to his deserts. Perhaps he made no difference in the favours he bestowed on Kabilar and the other poets who came to his court. Considering how highly Kabilar came to be regarded in his day, it is not likely that Kāri, being man of sense, should not have given Kabilar that distinction which was his due, had Kabilar been introduced to him as a full-blown poet. Perhaps Kabilar, conscious of his own potential powers, and not being yet given full recognition, resented being treated as one of the many. So we may ascribe Kabilar's first intimacy with Kāri, if not to the poet's extreme youth, at least to the beginning of his poetic career. The above-quoted reproach to Kāri, we find, is not justified by any real want of discretion on the part of that generous patron of letters, for in another poem we find the poet bursting into rhapsodies over the generosity of the chieftain. Obviously, by this time the poet and his patron have come to a better understanding :

"Kāri, thy land
Belongs to Brahmēns feeding sacred fires :
..... thy wealth
Is theirs who come to thee with plea for alms ;
..... Except thy Queen,
Nothing is thine, O noble one !"
(Puram : 122)

There is a poem addressed to Pēhan, a Tamil chieftain, for which by no means can we fix the period of its creation, since it is an isolated instance of his acquaintance with him. It only shows Kabilar exercising his moral authority as a poet, as one of the unacknowledged legislators of the world, and in this office he is not alone, for we find several poets addressing Pēhan on the same subject and in the same time. The point is that Pēhan had neglected his wife for some temporary fancy, and the queen was pining for him. We find a group of poets sympathising with and championing the queen's cause, and fearlessly pointing out to a powerful chieftain the wrong he was doing. The other poets of that group are Paranar, Arisilkilar and Perun-kunrurkilar and by reason of this proof we may safely assume Kabilar to be their contemporary. What we are surprised at is the fact that continued dependence on a patron's favours should not have weakened the morale of the poets, and that they should keep their claim to their sovereign throne all the while that they were no more than mendicants in their society. Fortunately this claim was recognised and honoured by the Tamil Kings.

Now comes the story of Kabilar's friendship with Pāri. It is an idyl of friendship. Kabilar never found his tongue untied so much as when speaking of his beloved patron. They were not as patron and devotee, but as bosom friends. Kabilar is eloquently lyrical in his praises of Pāri, and they are not hypocritical effusions, for Kabilar's voice can be nothing but truth. He stops at nothing in his praises.

"Pāri, Pāri, praise the Silver-tongued ;
Yet 'tis not only he,
But rains we have, to bring prosperity,"
(Puram : 143)

cries the poet, as though it is difficult for him to see that there could be any benefactor in the world other than Pāri.

"Pāri Vel. more yielding-soft than water,"
(Puram : 143)

he says, mentioning his friend's gentle manners to his dependents, the poets.

Pāri's mountain is Kabilar's delight. Its mountain-springs he compares to stars. He never tires of singing of its beauties. The glory of Pāri's name in Sangam literature, is transferred to his mountain, to its mountain springs, to the flowers that bloom in their cool waters.

And Kabilar was no time-server. Pāri's glory fascinated the poets, but, it would seem, not the thriving kings of his day. Perhaps they were jealous of his name. Perhaps they simply coveted his prosperous territory. Anyway they did not shrink from laying siege to his dominions. The three kings of Tamil-nād took part in the siege, which shows that Pāri must have been pretty strong. Kabilar might have seen that his friend was doomed, but he did not change sides. He shouted a challenge down at the besiegers. He told them, if they really wanted Pāri's country, they should come, not as warriors, but as minstrels, when he

"would give them land and hill together!"

The result of the battle was what might have been expected. Pāri was killed; and with him set the sun of Kabilar's happiness. Kabilar would gladly have died with him, but the unfortunate chieftain had two unmarried daughters, whom he could entrust safely to no one but his friend. Pāri, with forethought, charged Kabilar not to commit suicide.

We find the bereaved poet, with an aching heart, taking with him the luckless daughters of Pāri, away from the paternal roof, from the mountain where "the squeezed out honey comb oozes with honey," which no longer affords them shelter. The Sangam anthologies bear evidence to their being no ordinary girls, but gifted with literary aptitude. Their lamentations over their father are part of Sangam literature. It is no wonder, living as they did with a father who was himself a passionate lover of letters, and under the

eye of a poet who was a king in the realm of poetry! However, literary talent did not preclude them from the rights of woman-hood, and Kabilar knew that his duty was to hand them over to suitable husbands. It is pathetic to watch the unworldly-minded poet going husband-hunting for his young charges among the men of the world. Kabilar would not give the noble girls to any but of noble blood, and those who were of high social status evidently did not want the fatherless and helpless girls who had nothing to back them except the sounding name of Pāri. They refused, one after the other and Kabilar seems to have been irritated with one of them. That was Irungo-Vel who probably turned them from his door. The chieftain must have been particularly impolite, and the poet turned his anger on him.

*"I go," he said, "My lord, forgive
The foolish pride of mine, in that these*

Are mighty Pāri's daughters." (Puram : 201). And then like a prophet roused to utter a curse, he reminds Irungo of an ancestor of his who lost lands and living because he had the insolence to insult the poet Kalātalayār.

The failure to find suitable husbands for the girls, seems to have dejected Kabilar to the extent of leaving his wards under the care of Brahmins, (see colophons to *Puram* : 113, 200, 201 etc.), and seeking the patronage of Selvakadungo Vāzhi Adan. Now it is not possible for us to believe that this Chera prince belonged to the powerful trio that besieged the unfortunate Pāri. The first of Kabilar's *Padirrupattu* poems, addressed to this prince, is full of tender references to Pāri, and shows the poet proudly soliciting Chēramān's patronage :

*"I come not begging alms of thee, because
My generous patron Pāri, for that land left
From which there can be no return."*

(Padirrupattu : 61)

All of Kabilar's *Padirrupattu* poems are full of the praises of Cheraman Selvakadungo Vazhi Adan's military prowess,

and his generosity. The same prince, it is to be remembered, is honoured by Kabilar in *Puranānūṛū*. This is how Kabilar addresses the Sun :

*"Swift sphere, how dost resemble him,
King Cheraladan of victorious troops!"*
(*Puram* : 8).

In the same poem, he gives a list of things which the Sun will do and Cheraman Selvakadungo will not.

*"Thou hast a limit ; thou turnest thy back ;
Thou shiftest position ; hidest behind the hill !"*

Another poem was written in reply to Vāzhi Ādan's remark that Kabilar's hands were very soft. They are soft, answers the poet, because,

*"They know no other labour, save to feed
On savoury rice with fragrant meat."*
(*Puram* : 14)

Then, says the poet, the monarch's hands are hard, because they have been employed in hard work, in managing the horses in war, and in giving gifts to the poor ! Is that not a great compliment ?

But there is no evidence of this newly formed bond continuing. Kabilar was not the man to forget old loyalties. *Puram* 236 says briefly that Kabilar fasted to death. The Tirukōvalūr inscriptions say that he gave away Pāri's daughter to the chieftain Malayan, and finally joined his friend by leaping into the flames. Anyway it seems likely that the poet did commit suicide after all, having first provided for his wards.

KABILAR'S LOVE POETRY

We have seen Kabilar's *Puram* poems in the study of his life ; and they are so intimately bound with his life, that despite their subjection to convention, it is not worth while considering them as effusions of art. But when we come to

Aham or love-poetry, we find the exercise of 'art for art's sake'. They seem to have been pretty deeply sophisticated our forefathers of about thousand and five hundred years ago. They had made quite a separate study of love, drawn rules and regulations for it, and compiled them into a grammar book ! So it was, that Tolkāppiyar the wise old grammarian, prescribes exactly the kind of treatment that should be accorded by the poets to every kind of love.

The clandestine love of young lovers, thought those bards, found its most exciting setting in mountain scenery. The lover climbing the beaten tracks up the rocks, braving the elephants, avoiding the snakes and tigers, all for meeting his beloved, made matter for stories of adventure. The mountainous region, in the language of those poets, is called the Kurinji. The sandy waste or Palai was considered a fit background for the unwilling parting of the lover from his beloved, and for the elopement of bold young lovers. Marutham, the land of plenty, watered by rivers, where man finds leisure to spend over and above the time he needs for cultivation, and where luxury is within reach, is the setting for unfaithful lovers. Of course, it is the 'hero' who is unfaithful. There are five such groups into which the land is divided by Sangam convention, and each has a characteristic part to play in the bond between young lovers.

Kabilar chooses Kurinji for elaboration. He is considered the prince of Kurinji literature. The authorship of *Kurinjikkali* is ascribed to Kabilar mainly for this reason. Kabilar wrote his *Kurunji-pāttu* so the colophon says, to instruct an Arya prince in the strange complexities of ancient Tamil poetic convention.

Kurinji-pāttu must be briefly glanced at, because it really reveals something of Kurinji convention. The poem is said to be the words of the heroine's maid to her mother, the heroine's attendant. Mind, the story is said to be a pure fiction of the clever girl's brain made up to smooth mismanaged matters.

Her lady is involved in a love affair, and being probably a mountain chieftain's daughter, is perplexed because her parents are likely to give her away to her lover. Now it is desirable to disclose the love-affair and get the wedding over. The maid, who is in the know of things, is the person to break the news. She dares not speak to her lady's mother, so she speaks to her own mother, who has great influence in the household. This is the gist of her pretty story :

The heroine and her attendant are out in the cornfields, scaring the birds away. They bathe in the springs, and deck themselves with all the wildflowers they can reach. There comes to the spot a young hunter, who is also fantastically dressed and looks interesting. The girls however, are too shy to speak to him. But fate throws the heroine into the hero's arms, in the shape of a stray elephant who comes there trumpeting and frightens the girls. The tusker is driven from the spot by an arrow from the bold young man. Now the hero and heroine feel themselves united by providence and plight troth. So under the circumstances, the maid pleads that the best thing would be to see the two wedded.

Kurinji-pāttu is pretty and youthful enough, but it must not be given undue praise. It has few of Kabilar's usual outbursts of brilliance and it has one defect not elsewhere found in him: that is, the lengthy catalogue of flowers. But it does show the general characteristics of *Kurinji* — the wild romance, the mountain scenery and the adventurous spirit. The lady's maid, we must say, plays a very active part in Kabilar's love-stories, and is more ingenious and attractive than her meek mistress who is only a bundle of nerves.

Kabilar's real achievement is in the field of imagery, rather than dramatic representations from life. Of course, even in these little tit-bits from the drama of life, he keeps his head above water, and does not muddle things. In this chapter we shall consider his purely dramatic approach to love, reserving his wonderful imagery for a chapter by itself.

Ainkurunuru is a collection of five-hundred short poems as the name itself suggests, and one hundred of these were composed by Kabilar. Their brevity makes them sometimes all the more telling. Tamil, with its wonderful monosyllables, is one of the most concise of languages. The *Tirukkural* is an example of the condensation of thought that is possible in Tamil. *Ainkurunuru* is an example of the condensation of feeling, of experience, that the great poets could manage.

The following is one of Kabilar's *Ainkurunuru* :

*"Hail, lady hear ! sweeter than the milk
With honey in our land, the muddied drops
The deer had left beneath
The scrubs in his dry desert land."*

The heroine has come as a guest to the paternal roof. Her husband is in no easy circumstances, and her former attendant, the playmate of her childhood, anxiously enquires after her welfare. The above is the young wife's reply. What pride of wifehood it shows in her !

In yet another, we find the heroine pining for her absent lover. Her parents note her pallor, and are worried about her ill-health, ignorant of its true cause. As common in those days, they enquire of astrologers and men who profess to deal with spirits. They are told that the girl is afflicted by the spirit of Muruga. To appease the troublesome spirit, the devotee of Muruga makes his weird dance, in the sight of the household. But it matters little to the heroine, whereas to her attendant, it affords laughter and an opportunity of delicately breaking the truth to the elders in the house. So, that clever girl in the hearing of her mother, asks her young mistress, amidst a ripple of girlish laughter :

*"He sings of Muruga ; and is that then
Thy lover's name ?"*

If the girl's mother were a woman of the least delicate perception, she would at once have scented the hint,

In one of these poems, an isolated instance of its kind in Kabilar's poetry, we find bitter irony. The injured woman speaks of the faithless husband thus :

*"In this hilly land,
The wild-boar with his crescent horn doth guard
His fine-striped young, whose dam the tiger killed ;
But he forsakes, with me, his golden son !"*

In yet another, there is a cunning little attendant for the heroine. The heroine's movements have awakened suspicion, and she is being watched. The lover, who has not yet dared to make the formal proposal to her parents, comes stealing about the house. The attendant speaks to the lady of the house in a voice loud enough for him to hear. This is what the girl says : "My lady fears to go in the dark. She fears the hooting of the owls. And you say you saw her steal out at night ! Surely that was a hallucination of your brain !" We can imagine the reaction of those words on the three listeners specially on the lover, who would infer that, if he wanted to see his lady, he must first get her hand in marriage.

There is ample variety of mood and situation. The heroine speaks in confidence to her attendant ; the maid works out little ruses ; the mother whose daughter has eloped, mourns that her daughter should have had so little confidence in her. All these are subjected to Sangam convention, but they are dramatically treated, with a brilliant imagination, and a diction of rare sweetness. Diction, of course, cannot be described, nor can it be translated. But the sensitive modulations and the gentle rhythm of Kabilar's style in general, are their best in the poem beginning "Yārum illai, tātē kalvan." The following is a feeble translation of the poem :

*"None else was there, but only he, the thief ;
Should he be false, what should I do ?
And when we met, there was in our sight,
Only the stork, with leg as thin as a wisp of straw,
That into the gliding water peered for prey."*

The same qualities can be found in Kabilar's poems of the other anthologies of Sangam love-poetry. It would only be tedious to go through the same process. The difference is mostly in length and in corresponding elaboration of the central idea. It only remains for us to consider the beauty of the imagery in Kabilar's poetry.

IMAGERY IN KABILAR

Imagery is not everything in poetry ; it is only incidental to poetry, as the flashing spray is to the momentous strength of the ocean. The workings of the mighty spirit within are given expression to in colourful and living pictures and by their vitality and beauty we may more or less assess the power of the driving force.

Sangam poetry is not epic poetry, nor did our ancient poets spend time over the drama, though they sometimes passed over dramatic situations in life ; even in the sphere of the lyric, they did not excel. Those poets seem to have been too self-controlled, too conservative and conventional, to have let themselves go in the ebullitions of the lyric. Their greatness lies in the wonderful pen-pictures they have produced. Sometimes indeed, like Scott, they get themselves to describe a forest from one end to the other, till we are tired and surfeited with the details. Sometimes like Wordsworth, they suddenly find themselves awake to the meaning and the beauty of some particular image, and then the glory of it fills the record of their inspired vision. At other times, not rare in Sangam literature, we find their similes revealing entirely new worlds of profound thought and beauty, for which we are at a loss to find a parallel in another language.

Kabilar, one of the major poets of the Sangam age, displays these qualities in his verse. In surfeit of detail, however, he indulges but once in *Kurinji-pāttu* where a whole catalogue of mountain-flowers is unfolded. Like every cata-

logue, it would have made dreary reading, but the swift strong lilt of the metre carries it lightly through. It may be dismissed however as an isolated instance of weakness, it being not at all like Kabilar to waste words. We have only to consider Kabilar's descriptive gift and his similes.

Like his contemporary poets, Kabilar is daring in his use of imagery, and at the same time faithful to observation. The grotesque conceits which disfigure the pages of later Tamil literature, are absent from Sangam literature. Perhaps the immense discipline involved in the enforcement of convention is responsible for the strict purity of Sangam diction. Imagination is strong, but not out of control. The most audacious step the poet's fancy can take, is perhaps this :

"The wild boar flees splashing around gold and gems"
(Puram : 202).

*"The elephant
Sacred of the mighty tiger, makes furious charge
Upon the black-stemmed vengai tree, and thus
Abates its wrath."*

(Narrinai : 217)

or this :

*"The wine delicious, in the mountain-spring
Among the rocks with pepper strewn, is brewed
By the tout-stemmed mango's fruit delicious, dropped
With honeycombs bee-haunted, and the fruit,
Fragrant, of jack, loosening its seeds"*

(Kurinjippattu)

The Sangam poets do not generally, love ugly conceits. They love truth better, and I shall quote here some of Kabilar's simple faithful observations of nature, to show how lovely truth can be :

*"The crocodile dozes in the woodland stream,
.. So strewn with yower-petals shaken down,
That its own hue is lost"*

(Aham : 136)

*"There was in our sight
Only the stork, with leg as thin as a wisp of straw,
That into the gliding water peered for prey."*
(Kuruntohai : 25)

*"The young one of the monkey, in the Sun
Rolls to and fro the peafowl's egg, laid
Neglected on the rocks."*
(Kuruntohai : 38)

*"The swing's long rope
That scarred the bending bough"*
(Narrinai : 222)

*"The tiger lies in wait
Under the jack-tree's shadows thick, wherein
Its fruit hangs, for the toddling offspring that
In deep dense glades she-elephants brought forth."*
(Aham : 161)

*"The tusker huge
Trumpets, because the mist comes to conceal
His slumbering mate . . . upon the mountain side."*
(Narrinai : 222)

Kabilar's mind teems with images of the mountainous country. Tradition and *Puranānūru* bear evidence to his beautiful attachment to Pāri, generous patron of poets. Pāri's hill, it seems, was very fertile.

*"Think you but lightly of great Pāri's hill?
Four gifts, it gives without man's sweated toil;
First, golden paddy with slim blades yields its grain;
Second, the sweet-fleshed jack-fruit ripens there;
Thirdly, potatoes sweet send down fat roots:
Fourthly, the honeycomb, o'erspread with blue,
Drips honey on the hill!"*
(Puram : 109)

The thought of Pāri, indeed, colours his *puram* poems. Else, why should he compare the looks of a mountain-beauty, to 'cool springs of Pāri's hills?' Also it looks as though

it is from Pāri's mountainside that Kabilar cultivated his taste for the jack-fruit. The mention of the jack-fruit runs through his poems, and it is only saved from being a sickly obsession by the ever-renewing zest which he can bring to the image. No two sunsets are alike in nature ; and often as the images of the jackfruit may occur in Kabilar, no two images are exactly alike. Speaking of Pāri's hill, he says,

*"There from the fresh wound in the jack's ripe fruit
The breezes scatter honey"*

(Padirrupattu : 61)

Describing a woodsman's home, he sees

*"The yard where from the fruitful jack depends
Huge fruit on every bough"*

(Narrinai : 320)

Bounteous Nature is complete only with the jack.

*"The little stone
Sped from the woodsman's catapult, shot
Like an arrow, scattering vengai flowers, spills
The honey from the comb, and then it rests
Within the jack's sweet fruit"*

(Aham : 292)

But wherever, and whenever he mentions the jack, it is always with a gusto, as though he has just tasted,

*"Honey that oozes in the pulp
of the sweet-fruited jack"*

(Aham : 182)

Even dismissing Kabilar's close acquaintance with Pāri's beloved hill, there is reason for Kabilar sticking to the details of the greenwood. Nature is glorious in all her aspects. But Kabilar studied the mountains. For this, Sangam convention is somewhat responsible. The mountains were the conventional setting for the romantic meeting of young lovers. The theme appealed to Kabilar. Kabilar barely touches on the other aspects of love, as though they do not suit his taste. Separation, lovers' tiffs, jealousy, and unfaithfulness, are

comparatively unlovely themes. Kabilar leaves them to other poets. It is Kurinji, that is young love, that he loves to treat, and he is at home with passionate young lovers in sylvan surroundings. This is the land that Kabilar loved to picture.

*"The wind that tears among the swaying grove,
Of hollowed bamboos, makes flute-music wild
The sweeping cataract makes humming sounds,
The deer's cry is a sounding-pipe ; a harp
The bee, that haunts the flowery mountainside ;
And drunk with such sweet music, the monkeys gaze
At the peacock, dancing near the bamboo-clumps
Like a dancer on the stage : Such is his land"*

(Aham : 82)

In passing, we might observe that this passage strikes us with its resemblance to a familiar passage in *Kambaramayanam* — the description of Marutham. Perhaps Kambar drew his inspiration from his predecessor.

Kabilar, master of description, is also master of simile and metaphorical language ; His similes startle us by their acute observation of truth, and by their colourfulness. See these :

"Her eardrops glancing like a lightning-streak"
(Aham : 158)

*"The Vengai shakes its blossoms down, as sparks
Of fire that in the smithy fly"*
(Narrinai : 13)

*"There in the Vengai tree with bloom ablaze
The long-plumed peacock like a damsel sits,
That gathers flowers"*
(Ainkuru nuru : 297)

*"Feeble her life : but O her love is great
As the mighty jack fruit whose support
Is but a slender bough"*
(Kuruntohai : 18)

*"At that her eyes were filled with tears, like cups
Of hyacinths that opened in the pool,
Bee-haunted, their many petals now disturbed
And filled with chilly raindrops"*

(Kuruntohai: 291)

Perhaps never were similes more astounding than those in the following poem :

*"The Hero from the land, where hanging roots
Of trees pour white among the rocks, like fall
Of cataracts down mountainsides, has sent
His message from his guiltless heart ; and we
Maiden, receive it as the fire the oil
That feeds it"*

(Kuruntohai: 106)

This can how the heroine receives a love-message from her young hero. One needs to pause and observe the beauty of the similes. All the strict conventions of Sangam literature have not annihilated the play of the imagination, they have only purged it of falseness and taught it to select all familiar images, the sparks in the smithy, the oil leaping to the fire the girl gathering flowers—every object of daily observation, provided it is true. It brings us near to Shakespeare, the poet who would not blush to write such a homely simile as "dry as the remainder biscuit after a voyage."

Like every born poet, Kabilar employs metaphor ; or to speak more exactly, breaks out into metaphorical language. The lover begs permission to be absent for a few days, the heroine's attendant, acting as spokeswoman, answers bitterly,

*"The cranes in groups upon the white sand-dune
The northwinds blow : O go thou not, to where
In the rocky country, the humming stream does sweep
Rich jewels in its course down mountainsides"*

(Ainkuru nuru : 233)

Is not the suggestion obvious ?

In another poem, whose kind is rare in Kabilar's poetry, a woman reproaches an unfaithful lover :

*"The cranes in groups upon the white sand—dune
Ranged like the armies of the king, peer down
For luscious, fathead fish, within the cold
And mighty streams in your domains !"*

(Narrinai : 291)

But the peak of Kabilar's achievement in metaphor is in *Ahananuru* 42. Like all the very greatest poetry, it is untranslatable. The surge of feeling and the loveliness of the monosyllables, cannot be recaptured in another language. But first giving the context of the image, I proceed with a feeble translation, the best within my reach.

The lover has long been absent. The heroine and her attendant have been pining. But the maid who is on the watch, spies him one day, returning to her lady's house ; she is beside herself with joy as she runs to her lady with the news. Let us see how she describes her state of mind :

*"Within my soul was showered all the joy,
Of folks, one happy morning, when the rain
In torrents filled the tanks that erewhile lay
Dry, hot, with rising banks, that even the birds
Forsook, when drought prolonged itself, the while
The land lay famished, and idle lay the plough"*

(Aham : 42)

Sons of the soil in the Deccan, whose hope of the harvest is in the clouds, will realize best the force of that image.

Kabilar's imagery is the wealth of his poetry. His pictures are no mere idle ornaments, which can be put on and off at will. They are like flowers, which rich and lovely, and whose sustenance is drawn from the roots of their life deep in mother earth, and they have another quality — they are immortal. Have they not survived the wreck of nearly thousand and five hundred years, and are they not still fresh and youthful ?

Tamil Loan Words in Greek

F. LEGRAND

WHEN READING Greek classical authors, as well as the Bible in the Greek text, I have been surprised many times by a number of words that look more or less like Tamil, or, to be more precise, seem to be of Dravidian origin. In several instances, the similitude is so striking, since the meaning for the word is absolutely the same in both languages.

Is this mere coincidence? Greek itself has no connection whatever with the Dravidian languages: it is of Indo-European origin, having many affinities with Sanskrit and Latin, and other cognate languages; but practically nothing is known concerning their association with the agglutinative languages. Scholars like Albright, Cohen and Cuny have begun the work on the relationship that exists between various languages which they group together under the term "Nostratic" the common ancestor of Indo-European and Semite-Hamitic languages. The existence of certain language families, such as the Semitic-Egyptian group, are at present generally admitted. In the past ten years, two monographs have been published in this field, under the auspices of the French Groupe linguistique d'études chamite-semitiques (GLECS).¹ However, I am not aware of any scientific and thorough investigation having been done up to now concerning the relationship between Greek and the Dravidian languages. To my knowledge, only Autran has given some indications in this field

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¹ A Cuny: Recherches sur le vocalisme, le consonantisme et la formation des racines en "nostratique," Paris, 1943.

A. Cuny: Invitation à l'étude comparative des langues indo-européennes et des langues chamito-semitiques. Bordeaux, 1946.

of work. It is my intention here to show that there is some definite relationship between Greek and Tamil, though at first sight they seem to be languages so different in structure and lexicon.

How is it, then, that many words of Dravidian origin can be found in Greece, so far off from India? We know, through the works of Warmington, McCrindle, Cunningham and others, that the Romans and the Greeks had commercial relations with India about the beginning of the Christian era.² The commerce was so intense that even a temple was erected at Muziris in honour of Augustus, the Emperor of Rome, for the benefit of those Romans and Greeks who were coming to South India. But Greeks, Syrians, Jews and Arabians did most of the trading.

Now, among the products that were exported from India in those days, it is natural to find that imported articles which had not been known previously in Rome or Greece, should be known in Rome and Greece by the same word attached to them as in their place of origin. This is the reason why many of these words found their way into the Greek language. One such word is அரிசி *arisi*, rice, the staple food of South India, as it is of China, Indo-China and other Far-Eastern countries. This word has found its way to Greece, where it is called *oryza*. Everybody acknowledges the oriental origin of the word. From this word have come also the Latin *oriza*, the French *riz*, the English, *rice*, the Italian *rizo*, the Spanish *arrez*. Though it is sometimes traced to Old Persian, there is no doubt about its ultimate Dravidian origin. The word is found without any change in the old Sangam poems: for instance, in Pattinappalai, reference is made to

வாலரிசிப் பலி சிதறி (v. 165)

"the white rice that is strewn as a sacrifice."

To my knowledge, nothing similar is found in Sanskrit, where the word for rice is शालि *sālī*, or व्रीहि *vrihi*.

² Warmington: The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India, p. 38.

Another article that was imported was pepper (*πίπερι* *piperi* in Greek, *piper* in Latin). The name comes from the Tamil பிப்பலி. This spice, according to the Periplus,³ was exported in vast quantities from Muziris and Neleynda, the two ports of Malabar and Travancore. பிப்பலி, *pippali*, means properly the long pepper, which was used chiefly in medicine ; but the word transplanted to far off countries, became the only word to designate all kinds of pepper. Latin authors especially make frequent references to pepper. Thus Horace, with much solemn pleasantry, is apprehensive of his book being taken away to wrap up frankincense, spices and pepper, like impertinent writings which only deserve such a thing :

Deferar in vicum vendentem thus et odores

*Et piper et quidquid chartis amicitur ineptis.*⁴

And in his Satires, he refers to "white pepper finely mixed with black salt :

*Primus et invenior piper album cum sale nēgro.*⁵

The trade was very profitable, and in Pliny's time the black pepper was priced at four denarii a pound, the white seven, and the long fifteen.⁶

Ginger was also imported from India, and with it its name in Greek *zingiberi*, in Latin *gingiber*, coming naturally from the Tamil இஞ்சிவேர் i.e. the root of the green ginger. Dioscurides speaks of it as a good digestive,⁷ and the recipes of Apicius indicate its frequent use as a food.⁸

μαλαβαθρον *malabathron*, in Latin *malabathrum*, is the cinnamon-leaf, coming from the mountains (மலை) of Malabar.

³ Periplus of the Erythr. Sea : 49, 56.

⁴ Ep. II. 1. 269-70.

⁵ Satires, II. 4. 74.

⁶ Pliny, XII. 26-8. Cf. Warmington, op. c., p. 181 3.

⁷ Dios. II, 160.

⁸ Apicius, I. 13,

Sandal-wood is also native to South India, and grows spontaneously in the forests of Coimbatore and Mysore. It was exported at a very early period. Some would even trace its exportation to the Hebrews and would see its name in the almug trees of the Old Testament.⁹ However, this is rather doubtful. The word *valgum* found in Malabar for sandal, comes from the sanskrit *valgu*, in which we may find some resemblance to almug of the Hebrew.¹⁰ But the real word for sandal-wood is given in the Greek as *σαγταλον* *santalon*. This is the same root as the Tamil word சாந்து, from which is derived the sanskrit *chandana*. சாந்து is an old Tamil word referred to in Pattupāttu, for instance in Tirumurugattupadai :

நறு சாந்து அணிந்த கேழ்க்கொர் மரமின் (v. 193.)

¹⁰ "whose chest was adorned with fragrant sandal paste of bright colour."

Some of the preceding words have already been noticed by several authors, and their Indian origin is generally acknowledged. But there are many other words, which cannot have found their way into Greek or Latin through commercial intercourse only. Some other reason must be found, which we shall discuss later on.

One of the most striking words of the kind is *παλαι*, *palai*. It is the same as the Tamil பழைய, old. The original word is *palai*, with the adjective form *palaios*, the feminine form *palaiā*. Pronounced in the modern Greek fashion, which probably is much the same as in olden days this last feminine form *palaiā* is the same as the Tamil பழைய, the *ழ* being pronounced nearly as *l* in many places of South India. In Kanarese, the *ழ* is already changed into *l*; this word becomes *hale*, by changing the *ப* into *ha*, a frequent linguistic mutation. The word பழைய cannot have its origin in Sanskrit. It is already found in many passages of the Sangam authors. Thus we have reference to பழ சோறு, old cooked rice, in

⁹ II Chron. IX, 10 ; II, 8. I Kings, X, 11.

¹⁰ Cf. Warmington, op. c., p. 215.

Perumpanattuppadai (v. 224) ; பழ மொழி, old word, proverb, is the title of one of the 18 கீழ்க்கணக்கு நூல்கள். In Silappadigaram, we find பழங் கடன், a debt contracted long ago (XII, 7) ; and பழம் பிறப்பு, old birth (IX, 56), with reference to a previous life according to the doctrine of metempsychosis.

This word cannot have found its way to Greece through the commercial intercourse at the beginning of the Christian era. The word was already known to Hesiod ; and Homer refers to the kings young and old, νεοὶ ἤδε παλαιοί, *neoi ede palaioi*.¹¹ It is likely to be of Dravidian origin only. Thus it is interesting to trace many words of our modern Indo-European languages to a source that has not been recognized up to now. Such words as : palaeography, palaeology, palaeontography, etc., where the word *palae* is introduced, as far as this part of the word is concerned, have to be traced ultimately to the Dravidian languages.

Another interesting word is the word for water, நீர். This root is found in all the Dravidian languages : in Kanarese, *niru* ; in Malayalam, *niru* ; in Telugu, *nillu*, etc. Now, this word is not directly found in ancient Greek, the classical form for water being ὕδωρ *hydor*, from which are derived many of our English words : hydrography, hydrotherapey, hydraulic, etc. But in modern Greek, the usual word for water is *nero*. νερο *nero* is not of foreign origin as such ; the languages that could have influenced modern Greek in this matter do not include this word in their vocabulary (in Turkish, water is *su* ; in Slav, *voda*, coming from the same root as *hydor*, of Indo-European origin). So, the word comes probably from some old dialect that continued to live in a few words throughout the centuries. And in fact, though we do not find the word in this form in old classical Greek, we find several words derived from it, even as early as Homer. *Nereus*, Νηρεὺς is spoken of already in Hesiod's Theogony.

¹¹ Odyssey, I. 395.

He was the god of the sea, and son of Poseidon, the god of the Ocean. His daughters, the *Nereids*, nymphs of the sea, are already referred to in the Iliad of Homer :

πασαὶ οσαὶ κατα βενθος αλος Νηρηίδες ἔσαν

pasai osai kata benthos alos Nereides esan.

"such as were all the Nereids in the bottom of the sea." (XVIII, 88.) The word is certainly of Dravidian origin, being employed in the old Tamil Classics : in Silappadigaram, X, 79 : நீர் நாய் ; 90 : எறிநீரடைகரை etc.

The word for great, பெரிய, *peria*, can perhaps also be found in the Greek language. There are many words beginning by *περ*, *περί*, *per*, *peri*, in the Greek and Latin languages. Now *περί*, *peri* means sometimes around ; but at times, in composite words especially, it means also above something. Thus we have *περί-αγαπω*, *peri-agapo*, meaning : to love above all things, a great love. This preposition must have had the same origin as the Dravidian *per*, பெர். This word has been read by Father H. Heras in the Proto-Dravidian sign

𐎶 of Mohenjo-Daro, so similar to the Sumerian sign pronounced *gal*, having the same meaning of great.¹² I would go even further, and say that the Sumerian word *gal* itself, comes from the same root as பெர். *g* through *h* comes from *p*, as we have seen before for the word *palai* ; and *l* and *r* are a very common mutation. Thus *per* can have become *gal*, which is, I think, at the origin of *μεγαλος*, *μεγαλα*, *mégalos*, *megala*, forms of *μεγας*, *megas*, meaning also great in Greek. The word is found already as such in Homer, indicating a high antiquity.¹³

Even the word *τυραννος* *tyrannes* seems to come from the Dravidian. திரம் in Tamil means *force*, *ability* ; திற

¹² Cf. Heras : "The Origin of the Sumerian Script," Journal of the University of Bombay, VII, p. 15.

¹³ Cf. Odyssey : IX, 513 ; XVIII, 4 : 382, etc.

வான், a strong man. This applies very well to the tyrannes or absolute master, all powerful, who usurps all power in a State or City. The great word is already noticed in the Homeric Hymns,¹⁴ dating probably from the 8th century B. C. From the Tamil is derived திறை, a tribute paid to a king : திறை கொடுக்கிறது, to pay a tribute.

Another word with very striking similitudes in both languages is παθος, *pathos*, meaning suffering, what affects the body or the soul. It has many derivatives in all the European languages, ex. in English : pathos, pathetic, pathology, etc. This word is nearly the same as the Tamil படுகிறது which means also : to suffer, to endure.

The root of அறுக்கிறது is found also in αρω, *aroō*, to cultivate, to plough. This too is an old word, found in the Odyssey and in Hesiod's works, and from it are derived αρουρα, *aroura*, ploughed land, and αροτρον, *arotron* the plough, and all cognate words : αροτηρ, *aroter*, field-worker, αροτος, *arotes*, field-work, all words already found in Hesiod and Homer.

παρος, *pagos*, the same as the Latin *pāgus*, a region part of a country, comes from the root *pag*, which is found in Tamil in words like பங்கு, பகுதி, பகிர், etc., indicating a portion or division of something.

θεω, *theō*, comes from the same root as ஒடுகிறது, and has the same meaning : to run. The same root is found in θυελλα, *thuella* a storm, and even a derivative is found in θυμος, *thymes* soul, spirit, the root of all similar words being θυ, *thy*. All these words are found in the oldest extant literature of both languages.

Perhaps it will look rather bold to advance the word γυνή, *gunē*, meaning woman, female, as of Dravidian origin too. This word has been introduced into English in words

¹⁴ Edit. A. Gemoll : 7, 5. Cf. also Pindar, Pyth. II, 159, etc.

such as : gynaeceum, gynaeceology, gynarchy, etc. Now the γ, *g*, in modern Greek is pronounced somewhat like *h*. We have here the same process as in Kanarese : the *h* has come from an original *p*. So it is not difficult after all to trace γυνή, *gunē* to the kanarese *hennu*, and from it to the Tamil பெண், having the same significance woman, female. The Tamil word is found without any modification in the old Sangam works, such as Silappadigaram, VII, 13. 4. In Maduraikkanji we have :

பெண் மகிழ்வு வற்றி பிணை நோக்கு மகவிரர் (v. 555.).

“the young ladies with deer-like eyes and full of joy.”
And earlier, the word is found in Tholkappiam : ¹⁵

பெண்மை, indicating the feminine gender.

ஆண்மை, the masculine gender.

The Greek form is also very old, being found in the Iliad and Odyssey, ex. :

Ὡς δὲ γυνή κλαίῃσι φίλον ποσὶν ἀμφὶ πεσοῦσα

Os de gune klaiēsi philon posin amphipesousa.

“As a woman wails falling at the feet of her beloved” (who is dead).¹⁶

The counterpart of this word is ἀνὴρ *anēr*, man, male, and from it comes also ἀνθρωπος, *anthropos*, which have given us such English words as : anthropology, androgyn, etc. *Anthropos* means also *man*, *human being*, by composition to the gods. Both these words have the same root : *ān*. They cannot come, as some say, from the Sanskrit *nar*, which has sometimes also the meaning of man. But in Tamil, the word is found with its full meaning : ஆண், meaning male, as well

¹⁵ Solladigaram, 4.

¹⁶ Odyssey : VIII, 523. Cf. also Iliad : VI, 160 ; VIII, 57, etc.

as in the Greek word. In the previous paragraph, I have already referred to this word in the *Tholkappiam*. In the Greek too, both the words are used by Homer : $\pi\alpha\tau\eta\rho\ \alpha\nu\delta\rho\omega\nu$, *patêr andron*, father of men (passim) ; $\alpha\nu\eta\rho\ \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma$, *basileus*, a king (passim).¹⁷

As words of relationship, we have also $\pi\alpha\iota\varsigma$, *païs*, child, boy or girl. The same root is found in the Tamil word பையன் boy. In Kanarese, the *p* becomes *h* as usual ; but *huduga*, boy, has preserved the *d* which is found also in the Greek in the oblique cases : genitive, $\pi\alpha\iota\delta\omicron\varsigma$, *paidos* ; dative *paidi*, from which is derived the modern form $\pi\alpha\iota\delta\iota$, *paidi*, boy. These words too are very old in both languages. In the Iliad, we find it already :

$\pi\alpha\iota\delta\omicron\varsigma\ \delta\epsilon\mu\omicron\iota\ \lambda\upsilon\sigma\alpha\iota$
paida d'emoi lusai

“give me back my child.” (I. 20). etc.

I shall trace one more similitude from the Greek to the Dravidian languages : that is, the word for *milk*. In Greek, it is $\gamma\alpha\lambda\alpha$, *gāla*, which has given us the English words : galaxy, galactometer. Now, with the permutation of letters shown already in $\gamma\upsilon\nu\eta$, *gunê* we find easily the corresponding kanarese word : *hālu* (the *g* Greek is the same as *h* in many words). The kanarese is derived from the Tamil பால், having the same signification. These words are found also in the oldest extant literature of both languages : in the Greek, Homer used $\gamma\alpha\lambda\alpha$, *gāla*, in the Iliad (IV, 434) and Odyssey (IV, 88, etc.) ; in Tamil, it is found in the Sangam period, for instance in the *Perumpanatupadai* (v. 168.) :

பசுந்தினை மூல் பாலொடுப் பெறுகுவிர்

“you will receive fresh tinei rice with milk” ;

and in the *Tholkappiam*, Solladigaram, 211 :

பாலறி மானிetc.

¹⁷ For *Anthropos*, cf. Iliad : V. 442 ; IX, 134 ; XVI, 263, etc.

This list of Tamil loan words is by no means exhaustive. Many others could be found if we searched for them. It would be difficult to argue that so many Dravidian words have found their way into Greek through commercial intercourse only. Words like : milk, woman, child, man, old, hand ($\chi\epsilon\iota\rho$, *cheir*=கை), etc., are of too common use in all languages to have been introduced into Greek from another foreign language. Moreover, as we have seen before, all these words are so ancient in Tamil as well as in Greek, that they seem original in both languages.

How may we account for these similarities? In my opinion, there is only one explanation. It does not come through commercial contact, but through daily contact with another population, whose language they amalgamated partly into their own. Before the invasion of Greece by the Aryans, there existed in Greece and other countries around the Mediterranean Sea, a race or several races whose language remnants still persist after so many centuries of Greek Culture. Just as we have in English many words of Celtic origin, though the English language itself is mostly of Saxon and Latin extraction, in the same manner, these old words remained in the Greek language as relics of those people who first inhabited Greece and were later subjugated by the Aryans. The Aryans — Achaeans, Dorians, and other races — imported their language, which has developed into Classical Greek, so similar in its roots and fundamental grammar to Sanskrit and Latin. Still, the conquered people could not relinquish all their traditions and languages, and it is these faint traces of their language that we have tried to find. Perhaps the Pelasgians were the people who spoke it ; perhaps it came through the Minoans or the Etruscans. At any rate, I have no doubt about their ultimate Dravidian origin. Later on, I propose to show that, even historically, this fact of a Dravidian settlement along the Mediterranean shores is becoming more and more probable and is admitted nowadays by many scholars.

Translations from Tayumanaver

My heart hath harder grown

*Even a wayside stone may sometimes soften,
After heavy rain, but, alas ! my heart hath harder grown
Brahma, O mighty one, has Thou no power,
To convert this sinful soul that seeks not to atone ?
What Thou decreest is law, why need I argue more ?
Then, Lord, send Thy rain on my heart so hard and sore,
That I might prepare the ground for Thy grace to grow.
Thou art my mother, canst Thou cast away Thy naughty son,
Who hast but Thee and Thy loving care alone ?
If I speak not truth, O Lord, I would soon become
Heirless of grace sunk in the depths of sins ever to groan
In words there is no profit, teach me to sit still,
My God, my all, my eternal light ever to do Thy will.*

Pride of Learning

*The unlearned ones, they are the really good,
The ignorance of all my learning, my sole pride,
My senseless actions, how well shall I describe ?
Wisdom of God is man's concern when some affirm,
I say good actions alone to salvation lead,
This when some ponder deep and discern
I would recommend to them the former creed.
At discussions when a scholar in Sanskrit I meet,
To him I would quote a Tamil verse or two
When arguments with Tamil scholars ensue
I would then with Sanskrit slogans greet.
O Lord, who art beyond dissensions all still
Will hypocrisy ever lead me to attain Thy will ?*

Translated by
DONALD KANAGARATNAM

Somasunthera Pulavar of Navaliyur, Jaffna

K. S. ARULNANDHY, M. Sc. (LOND.)

THE historic peninsula of Yarlparnam (Jaffna), studded with groves of the hardy yet majestic palmyrah palm, which symbolizes the perseverance, industry, uprightness, hospitality and sturdy independence of the Tamils who inhabit it, lies in the extreme north of the still more historic island of Lanka (Ceylon) crowning her as it were. Notwithstanding its geographical and political separation from the Tamil-speaking territories of Southern India, its essential character of being an integral part of Tamilagam linguistically and culturally has not materially changed even to this day. When exactly the Tamils first came to the peninsula from their mother-land and inhabited it is obscure. But there seems to be no doubt that they had arrived in waves at different periods from very early times, sometimes as adventurous conquerors and at other times as peaceful settlers in quest of a new home, and that this periodic immigration ceased not long before the advent of the Portuguese early in the sixteenth century. However, the Tamil settlers of Yarlparnam and their descendants have throughout maintained a close contact with their mother country only about thirty miles distant across the strait that separates them. To this continuous intercourse with the main stock and to the firm foundation of Tamilian culture deeply rooted in the ancient and highly advanced Dravidian civilization has to be attributed the absence of structural or fundamental changes in the language, religion, traditions habits, and cus-

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toms, and in the unique culture comprising all these, in spite of the aggressive and alienating influence of four and a half centuries of foreign domination. No doubt, many changes, more formal than real for by far the most part, have been wrought by this foreign influence in the life of the people, but they have not, in general, penetrated deep enough to reach the foundations and strike at the roots of Tamilian culture and cause it to wither away giving rise to another, a new one, not even among those relatively few people who had changed their religion. There is yet a significant minority among the rural population in particular whose deviation if any from the characteristic Tamilian way of living and thinking, either in form or in content, is hardly discernible. Somasunthera Pulavar, who is our theme, is an exalted example of this wonderful survival of Tamilian culture through all the vicissitudes of the Tamils in their adopted home, Yarlparnam.

Somasunthera Pulavar was born on the 6th of October, 1876, in Navaliyur in the peninsula of Yarlparnam, and he passed away in his seventy-seventh year on the 10th of July, 1953. His known ancestry goes as far back as four centuries to Vanniasagara Mudaliyar, a staunch Saivite who had migrated from the Vanni District skirting Yarlparnam on the south, and settled at Navaliyur. Throughout the four centuries that followed, conformity to the ethics and practices of the orthodox Saiva Sidhanta Religion and the Tamil culture that is intertwined with it characterized the pattern of life of his ancestors. His own father, Arumaiyinar Kadirgamar, was not only ardently devoted to his ancestral religion but also well versed in the two great Tamil epics, the *Mahabaratham* of Villiputhurar and Kachiappar's *Kanthapuram*, and in music and drama. He was thus a fortunate heir to the extremely rare combination of the three distinct privileges of superior heredity, primogeniture, and a dignified and noble home environment presided over by a religious father versed in Muthamil (Language & Literature, Music and Drama). This was not all. He also had in his mother, *Ilakkumipillai*, an embodiment of the noble qualities of piety and hospitality characteristic of the best Tamilian Saivite homes, a fitting

partner to the father in providing their first born son with an early environment and nurture that must certainly have been highly conducive and stimulating to the unfolding of his exceptional qualities, which, no doubt, he had inherited from his illustrious stock. Perhaps, it was fortunate for Tamilagam that poverty was also his lot, a condition that more or less persisted side by side with chronic physical ailments for many years. For, these that might have degraded and tarnished another man served but to sharpen his intellect and purify his life like the furnace that converts coarse ore of iron into hard shining steel. His own words portray this reaction of his in the following stanza :

இல்லாமை யால்வந்த துயரினால் மிகநொந்
திரகத்து ணிந்துமானம்
ஏகாது பின்றள்ள வாற்றுமை முன்றள்ள
விடையூச லாடியாடிப்
பல்லாயி ரந்தரங் காட்டியும் நானினாற்
பயிலாத மொழிபயின்னும்
பணியாத பேரைப் பணிந்துமுன் திறவாத
படலைபல பலதிறந்தும்
பொல்லாத வஞ்சரைப் பாடியும் புகல்கின்ற
பொய்மைமொழி செவிமடுத்தும்
போற்றுமுன் பெருமைபறி போகவிட் டென்மனம்
புண்பட்ட வாறுபோதும்
செல்லாத செல்வமுந் திருவடிச் சேவையுஞ்
சிறியெனுக் கருளுகண்டாய்
தென்பொதிய மலையிலுறை கும்பமுனி மடியில்வளர்
செந்தமிழ்க் குலதெய்வமே.

"With great pain of mind, borne of poverty, did I make bold to appeal for help ; with pride pushing me back, helplessness pushing me on, and oscillating between the two, a thousand times did I my teeth uncover, learn to use language my tongue had not learnt to speak, beseech those whom I had not beseeched, opened many a gate I had not opened, and sing in praise of wicked men and fill my ears with their false words having lost my pride even before I began to praise them ; enough that I have

suffered so much; graciously confer upon this insignificant individual, O exalted Goddess of Senthamil, who groweth on the lap of the pitcher-born Rishi

(Agasthiyar)

resident in the Pothiya Hills of the South, riches that vanish not and service unto the divine feet."

As the eldest son of the family, separated from his next younger brother by over three years, he would have become deeply introverted had it not been for his early intimate contact with children of related families of the immediate neighbourhood, a contact so natural and inevitable in the humble circumstances and surroundings of healthy rural life. This early extroversion thus imparted to his personality, essentially introverted by virtue of his position in the family, was enhanced by the advent of his next younger brother, followed by another brother and a sister, with the result that he developed a very happy combination of some of the best qualities of both the extrovert and the introvert. His introverted nature is manifest in the highly imaginative character of his literary outpourings in Tamil verse, in the remarkable absence of desire for publicity, and in the sustained and intense devotion to his favourite deity, Murugan, and to the Goddess of Tamil. His inner life, surging with poetic imagination and sanctified by religious zeal, could not be subdued in any degree in either respect even by the unfortunate physical ailment, Asthma, which afflicted him for many years to the end of his life. On the other hand, it only made him turn more and more inwards, search within and sing profusely in praise of and in appeal to Murugan, Namahal, and other Hindu Deities. The ten stanzas entitled Arulpathu and addressed to Namahal, for instance, are a clear evidence of the conflict of his spirit and flesh and the assertion of the former amidst the sufferings of the latter. The last of these stanzas is -

ஒருகோடி பெரும்பாவ முணராத புரிந்தேன்
ஒயாத சிற்றின்பத் துழன்றுழன்று திரிந்தேன்
உருகோடு மெய்யன்பா லுன்பாதம் பணியா
வுன்மத்த னெனையாளத் திருவுள்ள மிரங்கு

அருகோடி வந்தெடுத்து மடிமீதி லிருத்தி
அறிவமுக நிறையவளித் தரும்பிணிகள் மாற்றித்
திருகோட மிடிபோடத் தீயவினை யோடச்
செய்யதமிழ்ப் பெருமாட்டி திருவருள் செய்குதியே.

"O lovable Mother Tamil! Millions of time have I gravely sinned through ignorance; into ceaseless sensuous pleasure have I gone on plunging over and over again; to worship thy feet with consuming true love have I, this senseless fool, failed; have mercy on me that I may be saved and hasten unto me; lift me and seat me on thy lap; feed me with the ambrosia of knowledge in plenty and heal me of my immedicable diseases; and on me shed thy Divine Grace that wickedness; poverty and evil may all vanish."

Even when this supplicatory stanza, born of his biform distress, was taking shape within, he turned the searchlight of his devout intellect inwards. He was, perhaps, gasping for breath at that moment and yet his first thought was that he should pray not for relief from physical suffering but for the plenitude of knowledge, enlightenment. This characteristic he shared in common with the majority of the Muse-inspired saints of Tamilagam, of whom the two Saivite saints, Thayumanavar and Paddinathupillaiyar are illustrious examples. These saints are all remembered primarily for their intense piety and ruthless detachment from things worldly and only secondarily for their poetic genius, for they had renounced the world and had been consumed by the one desire to attain eternal bliss. Whereas, Somasunthera Pulavar lived the life of a householder, a loving partner to his equally devoted wife, a fond and understanding father, a warm and affectionate brother, a great teacher, and a friend and counsellor to one and all, who came into close contact with him, irrespective of caste, creed or status. He thus reminds us also of that saintly poet, Thiruvalluvar. His entry into matrimony, however, was not of his own seeking. Intent as he was on a life of devotion to God and dedication to Mother Tamil, wedded state seemed to him a hindrance to the pursuit of his twofold

objective. Yet, impelled by his deep-seated affection and reverence to his parents and Guru, he yielded to their wish and, in his twenty-eighth year, married a maternal first cousin, Sinnammaiyar. This Guru, known as Subramania Swami, had come about eight years earlier all the way from Bangalore to the poet's village in answer as if it were to his silent prayers for guidance and strength to pursue his cherished ideals. The extraordinary spiritual influence then exerted on him by the Swami was profound and lasting, and it was a source of great strength and inspiration ever afterwards in his pursuit of the lofty goals early engendered in his heart. He had no cause to regret his decision to surrender his bachelorhood, for he certainly led a happy life with his devoted wife in the midst of a happy family of three sons and two daughters. Further, he has thus raised a new generation of talented and cultured individuals, which has already made a mark in the field of Tamil scholarship among other things. This is no less a gift of his to the Tamil Nadu than his voluminous poetic creation, which first became manifest in his fifteenth year and, gradually gathering momentum with growing maturity, reached great heights indeed and ceased only when his frail body was no longer a fit abode for his noble and vigorous soul, longing, in accord with his belief in re-incarnation, for a fitter vehicle to continue his already far advanced journey to the ultimate goal of realization of the Supreme Bliss.

His extrovert tendencies were equally manifest in his social living and poetic utterances. In his introduction to Namahal Puhal Malai, that fascinating work, "resplendent with captivating melodies, novel and apt similies and metaphors, copious yet appropriate allusions to Hindu Mythology and ancient history of the Tamil land, familiar, homely and at the same time elegant words and phrases, and above all a rich and sustained variety of all these and yet other beauties exquisitely combined as can only be combined by a poet and a scholar both in one, to produce a Castalian garland of variegated stanzaic flowers," to quote our own words from the foreword, he says

வம்மின் புலவீர் ! வம்மின் புலவீர் !
இம்மையும் மறுமையு நன்மை பயந்து
தொன்மையும் புதுமையு மென்மையுந் தெய்வத்
தன்மையு நிரம்பி யெழுமையுந் தொடர்ந்து
யாழினுங் குழலினும் பாலினுந் தேனினுங்
காணினுங் கேட்பினுங் கருதினு மினிக்கும்
அமிழ்துறழ் தலைமைத் தமிழ்மொழி யுணர்ந்த
மெய்நெறிப் புலவீர் வம்மினெல்லீரும்,
அந்தமு நடுவு மாதியுந் தெரியாச்
செந்தமிழ் செல்வியைப் போற்றுதும் யாமெலாம்.

*Come o Bards, Come ! Virtuous Bards steeped in ambrosia-impregnated, peerless Tamil that begets goodness here and hereafter, is saturated with antiquity, modernity, tenderness and divinity, follows us through the sevenfold incarnation, delights us more than the *yarl and the flute, more than milk and honey, and when seen or heard or contemplated ! Come ye all that we may sing the praises of the Goddess of Senthamil !*

* Yarl : a sweet and melodious stringed musical instrument of ancient origin in the Tamil land.

This, his clarion call to all virtuous bards of Tamilagam inviting them to share with him the joy of devotion to Tamil, is an unwitting revelation of his admirable social attitude, unmistakably illustrated in abundance throughout his life by his deep concern for the well being and happiness of others. While he was yet in his teens, he organised and conducted a vigorous society of young men for the purpose of promoting the study and practice of the Saiva religion, and followed it up with the publication of a paper with the same objective, which he named Saiva Paliya Sampothini. He delighted in teaching religion and Tamil, and his home was a veritable free academy where many a young man sat at his feet and drank freely of the fountain of his culture and scholarship, for he neither expected nor received any remuneration. Nay, he even acted the host not infrequently regardless of the repurcussions on his meagre resources. His choice of the

teaching profession, which he adorned for forty years till he reached the age of retirement, was deliberate. With the knowledge of English he had acquired he could have secured with little or no effort at that time a far more remunerative and secure employment, but his social concern and love of children would not permit him even to think of an alternative to teaching as his life's career. Not only did he nurture with loving tenderness and rare understanding the school children entrusted to his care, but also had a special place reserved in his benign heart for all children of Tamilagam, even for those yet unborn as well. The collection of his songs for the young, சிறுவர் செந்தமிழ், recently published in book form, is an eloquent, tangible index of this. It is indeed a work of rare excellence which bespeaks his insight into the often misread young mind and his extraordinary sense of rhythm and melody. His nature and culture naturally revolted against the social evil of animal sacrifice that is yet perpetrated in the name of misconceived Saivism by ignorant people, whose obduracy made him turn to the young mind and sow in it the seeds of reform by appealing to its emotions. The pathos of the twenty-eight rhyming couplets of the familiar Tamil dirge form, which the poet, with this end in view, has put into the mouth of a mother goat lamenting the death of her beloved, majestic son in the prime of his life, is heart-rending indeed in an unusually high degree. The words and the sentiments they express have been so very aptly chosen that their charm is unique and inimitable. If they are sung as they should be in the appropriate tune, is there a man, woman or child so hard-hearted and impervious as to resist the copious flow of tender emotions which they are bound to evoke? The essential quality of these couplets, their highly emotive quintessence, eludes intellectual grasp, and it is, for this reason, extremely difficult, nay almost impossible, to convey in another language anything but a faint approximation to the feelings which characterize them in the original. Yet a translation of eight of them is herein attempted for what it is worth.

1. ஆசை மகனெயென் அன்பான கண்மணியே
நேசத் துரையே நெடும்பயணம் போனாயோ.
O my darling son, dear pupil of my eye, my affectionate lord, gone hast thou on a long, long journey !
2. நேராத கோவிலெல்லாம் நோந்து தவமிருந்தே
ஆராத காதலுடன் ஐயோநான் பெற்றெடுத்தேன்.
With unabating love, alas, did I beget thee having longed for thy advent in prayer and fasting in many a temple !
3. துள்ளு நடையழகுஞ் சோதி முகத்தழகுங்
கொள்ளுஞ் செவியழகுங் கோமளமே காண்பதெப்போ.
When, Oh, when again, will I be able, O my young beauty, to feast my eyes with the splendour of thy springy gait, the radiance of thy shining face, and the grace thy ears assume ?
4. யாமுங் குழலுமென மின்பக் குதலைமொழி
நாளும் பொழுதுமினி நான்கேட்ப தெந்நாளோ.
When, Oh, when, will I be able to hear, as I used to day in and day out, thy childish chatter, sweet as the yarl and the flute ?
5. கிம்புரிப் பூணணிந்து கிண்கணிப்பொற் றூர்குட்டி
வம்ப ரலங்கரிக்கப் பார்த்து மகிழ்ந்தேனே.
Happy was I when I saw the treacherous decorate thee with bells and festoons on thy legs.
6. வன்னப்பொற் றேரேறி மாப்பிளைபோற் சென்றாயே
இன்னும் வரக்காணேன் எங்குற்றாய் எங்குற்றாய்.
Where, Oh, where, hast thou gone ? I beheld thee go riding on a pretty golden chariot like a bridegroom, and thou hast not returned yet !
7. பெண்ணை மணந்தெனது பிள்ளைவரு வானென்றே
எண்ணி யிருந்துநா னேமாந்து போனெனெடா.
I thought that the girl who had married me, the child who had been my bride, had gone away and I had not seen her since.

*Methought my child would wed a woman and return,
but deceived have I been, Oh my son !*

8. ஓங்கிய கத்தி விழும்போ துடல் நடுங்க
ஏங்கி யெனைநினைந்தென் னம்மாவோ வென்றாயோ.

*When the raised knife descended and thy body
quivered, didst thou quail and, remembering me, cry
"Oh, my mother dear" ?*

Nature also had a great fascination for our poet, but its appeal was often more subjective than objective in the sense that his perception of the beauty, majesty, dignity and grace in Nature associatively synchronized with the appreciation of like qualities in men. This again is a manifestation of the extroverted aspect of his personality, permanently disposed to assess the worth of the individual as a component of society, and take delight in recognizing virtues while condemning the opposite. In his work on Nature's Gifts to Lanka and the Beauty of the Palmyrah Palm (இலங்கை வளமும் தால் விலாசமும்) he sees —

1. *the magnanimity of the Tamil King Ellalan, in the thirsty rain clouds which descend to drink of the Indian Ocean and in carded cotton ;*

எஃகிய பஞ்சினைப் போலத் — தமிழ்
எல்லாள் மன்ன னிருதயம் போல
வெஃகிய வெண்முகிற் கூட்டம் — இந்து
வெண்டிரை மேயவெ முந்திடு மன்றே

2. *the generosity of the benevolent who exact what they can from the miserly rich and distribute it among the poor, in the same clouds which drink deep of the saline ocean, and, combining and rolling, ascend ;*

சயாத வற்சரின் வெளவி — நல்ல
இரவலர்க் கீகின்ற புரவலர் போல
ஓயா வுவர்க்கட லள்ளி — மிக
வுண்டு திரண்டு புரண்டெழு மேகம்.

3. *the ignorance of the illiterate and the jealous, in the intense darkness of the Kaduganawa Pass, and in the dark moistureladen clouds, which, in lightening mock at the sun, and, in thunder, challenge him ;*

கல்லா தவர்மனம் போல — அன்றிக்
கடுகனைக் குவைவரு களையிருள் போல
அல்லா தழுக்காறு கொண்டோர் — மனம்
ஆமென வேயிருண் டங்குசும் கொண்டே
செங்கதி ரோன்துனை யொள்ளி — நின்று
சிரிப்பது போல விடையிடை மின்னி
அங்கவ ரோடறை கூவி — எதிர்த்
தூர்ப்பது போல விடித்து முழங்கும்.

4. *the Grace with which Buddha, the great conqueror of all desires and hatreds, preached to the wide world the knowledge he had gained in the course of six years of meditation under the bo-tree, in the river that takes its rise in the Adam's peak ;*

அரசு நீழலிற் புத்த மாமுனி
ஆறு வற்சரம் பெற்ற யோகனைப்
பரவு பாரினுக் கருளு மாறுபோற்
பாத பங்கயத் தருவி பாயுமே.

5. *the righteousness of the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus, the Enlightened One, in the river which flows from Pedrutalagala hills, having received the bounty of the great clouds ;*

ஏசு வென்றிடும் ஞான பண்டிதன்
ஏறி மாமலைக் கூறு நீதிபோற்
பேசு மாமுகில் சொரிய வாங்கியே
பேது ருமலை யருவி பாயுமே.

6. *the censorial oratory of Arumuga Navalar of Nallur employed by him to propagate the knowledge of Saivism he had imbibed from Tamil Religious Literature, in the flow of the river of the Kataragama hills ;*

உண்ட செந்தமிழ்ச் சைவ நூலமு
தோங்க நல்லைவந் தருளு நாவலன்
கண்ட னப்பிர சங்க மாமெனக்
கதிரை மாமலை யருவி காலுமே.

7. *the seven different thermal degrees of the seven hot springs of Kaniyai, situated in jungle surroundings in the outskirts of Trincomalie, in the minds of (1) the damsel separated from her lover, (2) the bard who sings in praise and receives no boon, (3) one who is insulted and threatened with harm, (4) one who regrets a wrong he had done, (5) the helpless one who is denied justice, (6) the chaste woman whose chastity has been violated, and (7) the green-eyed monster ;*

காதலனைப் பிரிந்தவளின் மனம்போல ஒன்று
கவிபாடிப் பரிசுபெறான் மறம்போல ஒன்று
திதுபழி கேட்டவன்தன் மனம்போல ஒன்று
செய்தபிழைக் கழுங்குமவன் மனம்போல ஒன்று
நிதிபெற வேழைதுயர் மனம்போல ஒன்று
நிறைபழித்த கற்புடையான் மனம்போல ஒன்று
காதுமழுக் காறுடையான் மனம்போல ஒன்று
கனலேறு மெழுநீர்கள் உண்டுகன்னி யாயில்;

8. *the protection, which the crowned monarch affords his realm with drawn sword of steel, in the palmyrah palm, which, wielding the sword-like stalk of its leaf, destroys poverty and thus protects humanity.*

உருக்குவா னேந்திப் பகைசெற்றுலகினை
யோம்பு மணிமுடி மன்னவன்போற்
கருக்குவா னேந்திக் கலியை யழித்திந்தக்
காசினி யைக் காக்கும் ஞானப்பெண்ணே.

Somasunthera Pulavar's interests extended to other fields as well. Astrology, palmistry, mantric literature, medicine and culinary art also attracted him, and he made a special study of them all not because he desired to become a practitioner of any one of them but because his broad-based intellect

demanded for its food as great a variety of knowledge as he could gather. Further these branches of oriental learning, which play not a small part, though not as of yore, in the life of the Tamils, especially the Saivites, enriched his service to the society to which he belonged and contributed not a little to the happiness of its members. This was not all. He was also a dramatist who had written plays and, besides directing their production on the stage, himself acted in some of them. A religious scholar that he was, he avidly devoured books on Saiva Sidhanta Religion and Philosophy. His desire that others also should experience the happiness he thus derived had possessed him so much that, from his death-bed a week before he breathed his last, he regretfully remarked, "Who will, after I am gone, render Gnanamirtham (a Saiva Sidhanta verse work) in the form lessons in sweet and simple prose, and Perungkathai (the story of Uthaiyanan) in the form of a drama?", and added that he would be born again in Tamilagam to perform these two services.

The quantity of Somasunthera Pulavar's literary productions is no less impressive than its quality. Apart from over a thousand isolated verses he had composed on almost as many occasions as they arose, there are to his credit over twenty-five works in verse and a few in prose, many of which are yet in manuscript form awaiting publication. Poet he was, but he was also a man of action. He dreamt dreams and saw visions as all poets do, but, unlike those poets who, for the most part, rest content with indulging in their dreams and visions in the cloister of their own mental life, he recorded most of them for the benefit of contemporary society and posterity in elegant and captivating linguistic form, be it verse or prose. Still more impressive are his character and ideals. At the present time, when materialism and sensualism are spreading much faster than most people seem to realise, underneath a superficial layer of formal religion or displacing religion altogether, personalities such as that of Somasunthera Pulavar stand as beacons illumining forgotten ideals and guiding us towards them. The more important of his social ideals, which he diligently and sincerely pursued and were evident to all who

had the privilege of knowing him intimately were propagation of Tamilian culture and way of living, hospitality, forgiveness and tolerance. He was thus a brilliant poet, an unobtrusive social reformer, a great teacher, and an ardent devotee, all in one, whose inner beauty was magnificently reflected in his lustrous face, gracious eyes, graceful deportment, and charming speech. HE WAS GREAT.

The Tragedy of Ahalya

(A study in Kamba Ramayanam)

BY

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

A

IN THE *Ramayana* the tragedy of Ahalya is narrated after the tragedy of Tataka. The greatness of Tataka was sufficiently brought out in the previous essay to justify the name tragedy as applied to her fall. The tragedy of Ahalya, however, may not be a correct description of the story of Ahalya ; for after her fall she is restored to her husband and lord and to a happy and righteous life. The story, has thus, to be ranked along with comedies because of this happy resolution of the tragic complications. But all the same in essence it is a tragedy, a greater tragedy than the story of Cleopatra, the restoration part of the story coming in here only as a dramatic elaboration of the conception of poetic justice. This elaboration and concrete realisation of the idea, it is true, becomes important in the story of Rama as revealing his character and from this point of view, it is the comedy that has to be emphasised. But as a poetic vision and a dramatisation of problems of life it is more revealing if it is studied as a tragedy.

The main object of our study is the characteristic feature of Kampan's art as best illustrated by his free treatment of the minor episodes of *Ramayana* especially these dealings with the lives of the women. Restricting thus our study to women characters, we pass over the story of the churning of the ocean and the penance of Bhagirata, both emphasising the inevitable nemesis that follows power intoxication and the unfailing and undreamt of victory of

spiritual effort. Kamban, however, connects the story of Tataka with that of Ahalya as revelations of Rama's character *Kai Vannam anku-K-Kanten Kol Vannam inku-K-Kanten*. "I saw there the characteristic feature of your arms I see here the characteristic feature of your feet" thus speaks Kamban's Visvamitra.

Akalikai is the Tamilised form of the word Ahalya. Halya is related to the English word ugly and means an ugly one; 'a' is the remnant of the negative particle 'ha'. Ahalya is the opposite of ugliness — the beautiful — the most beautiful woman created by Brahma. Gautama is the seer who won her. Indra, the King of the Heavens, corrupts her. Ahalya receives the curse and after enduring this punishment comes back as the purified chaste and worshipful wife. Ahalya is one of the seven chaste women of Indian tradition.

This story of Ahalya represents the ever recurring theme of many stories all the world over. It reminds us of a modern divorce suit filed by an aggrieved husband against his false wife. To emphasise the modernity of the theme, we may continue to speak in this legal jargon where Gautama will be the Petitioner, Ahalya the Respondent and Indra the Correspondent. Fortunately there is no denial of the offence but a patient and willing endurance of the punishment pronounced not by a Court but by the husband. The punishment thus endured cease to be mere enforcement of political sovereignty and social peace but rises to the level of moral expiation, mental purification and spiritual conversion. Therefore, the story ends in the reunion of the old couple.

One is naturally curious to know how this most ancient and the most modern theme — an archetype according to Jung — is handled by Kamban walking in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessor Valmiki, the Father of Indian Epics, as contrasted with the varied treatments which this story has received at the hands of other epic poets of India,

B

The story of Ahalya occupies the Forty eighth and Forty ninth chapters in Valmiki's Balakanta. After Tataka's demise, the sacrifice is duly performed by Visvamitra. The Rishi takes the princes Rama and Lakshmana through the road leading to Mithila of Janaka, probably with a view to bring about the marriage of Rama with Sita.

Visvamitra along with the princes enters the outskirts of Mithila. Rama notices an old uninhabited, but a beautiful ashrama or grave and he is naturally curious to know from his guide and philosopher why it lies so deserted. Visvamitra as a good and seasoned teacher well versed in the art of story tellings begins to narrate the story of the curse that befell Ahalya.

Here lived in olden days the great Rishi Gautama — thus narrates Visvamitra — along with his wife Ahalya. One day, Indra, the King of Heavens, mad after her beauty, coming to know of the absence of Gautama from home, entered the Ashrama in the very form of Gautama, to allay all fears of suspicion. But to Ahalya he revealed his identity and confessed his love to her. Knowing that it was the Lord of the Thousand eyes, she lost herself in the thought of being happy with the very King of the Heavens and exclaimed in joy to him "From my heart of hearts I feel I am fortunate" and Indra spent a happy time with her. While he was hurriedly making his exit, he saw entering Gautama that great fire of Tapas. Indra's face turned white with fright and the Rishi seeing the King of Heavens in the garb of a Seer understood the situation and cursed Indra to become fruitless. Then came the turn of Ahalya "You lie here for many thousands of years living on air alone without any more food, burning yourself away on a bed of ashes, invisible to all beings. You will become pure and whole when Rama, son of Dasaratha enters this cruel forest. When you welcome him, all your blots would be removed. You will then assume your old form and come back to me" — thus was pronounced the curse on Ahalya by Gautama. The last sentence reveals that the

volcano of tapas has become transferred into an ocean of mercy, and love which reminds us that in this curse he is himself laying a curse on himself of separation from her and isolation in tapas in the fond hope of living a happy life with a purified and chaste wife.

In the next chapter Visvamitra explains how aided by Devas in whose cause Indra pretended to have suffered this ignominy — for according to him his was an attempt at cursing the tapas of Gautama consuming them and the world away — he overcame his curse with the help of a scape goat of a sheep. There stops the narration and the drama of Ramayana proceeds.

At the request of Visvamitra Rama enters the Ashrama, which the prince has noticed as being desolate and where Ahalya has been burning away all these years. As soon as Rama steps in she becomes visible and the curse comes to an end. Memory returns to her and she remembers the last words of Gautama. She recognises in the prince her promised saviour and she welcomes Rama as the guest in chief showering on him all hospitality. Thus purified she is taken away by Gautama. Thus ends the story of Ahalya in Valmiki's Ramayana.

C

Valmiki is great as a story teller even in narrating this story. Here also Visvamitra shines as a great teacher giving the story only when his students are interested in asking him to explain a situation. The remarks we had made with reference to the narration of the story of Tataka are equally applicable to this narration.

In this version of the story it is the man Indra, who kindles the fire of sin in the heart of the innocent woman. But Ahalya intoxicated by the mere sight of Royalty forgets everything else. It is their misfortune that the husband comes in before Indra walks out of Ahalya's house. Perhaps the Rishi Gautama is also like others a victim to jealousy

but his indignation is a righteous one and rises thanks to his spiritual development to the impartial level of Dharma. Like Dharma after restoring the disturbed equilibrium he relents ; for he is speaking of taking back Ahalya.

Both Ahalya and Indra have erred consciously. Indra's excuse is that Gautama is upsetting the natural order of things by his excessive tapas, and that if he had not disturbed Gautama's victories towards greater and greater volcanic tapas there would have been room for nothing else in this world. The seductive act of Indra has certainly put an end to the spiritual and mental peace and equanimity of Gautama, who is made thus to realise that there is something more to be cared after in this world than himself and his tapas which under the circumstances appears more like self aggrandisement ; it rudely reminds him that there is a world with his own wife as its centre to be saved. This is indeed a sad commentary on the powers of his tapas which could not influence to any extent whatever even the most wonderful creation of Brahma — Ahalya and raise that unexcelled physical beauty with which he has been blessed to his own heights of moral beauty. The curse he utters is the creaking crash of this spiritual personality.

Ahalya as the name itself implies is the very embodiment of feminine beauty which Gautama, the supreme embodiment of tapas aspired for along with Indra the supreme embodiment of power and wealth. But mere physical beauty seems to resonate only to the specific tune of the drum of power and wealth rather than to the music of the harp of virtue, because this harp has not been set to vibrate in unison with the lyre of the feminine heart of beauty. Human greatness however is something more than mere physical beauty and the latter unaided by a moral companion for life, falls naturally as a prey to the glamour of pomp and power. But this mad race after material mirage of seeming pleasure soon becomes sick

of its own imaginary surfeit especially when it meets with an obstruction. Obstruction egged on Tataka to run the race with redoubled but diabolical vigour. Here however, thanks to the childish simplicity of Ahalya who has not known the world, it has inspired in her a repentance. Welcoming the appropriate curse and punishment, she stands converted in the end as the worthy wife of a great sage not only as a mere embodiment of physical beauty but also as a moral beauty at the very moment when the perfect Man, Rama, comes as it were to effect this final divine transformation by his very presence like gold purified and sublimated, after she had gone through the consuming fire of tapas on a bed of ashes.

D

Like all old stories this has become a parable of the triangle of forces of Beauty, Power, Tapas. Some have taken Ahalya to represent Art the Beautiful. Though it may be wedded to morality, when the union is not complete but only an outward formality, art deteriorates and is seduced in to a bedmate of all varieties of power. Is this not what happened to our arts — dancing, music and poetry all developing as temple arts? Have they not been identified with public women? What was the poetry of the Palayagars or chieftains but a poetry of debauchery? This fall is repeated often in the course of history. In the age of Alvars and Nayanmars great authors like Tiruttakka Tevar identified these arts with sexual passion speaking of the wealth and greatness of Vina or lyre as Kama or lust. After this suffering and neglect the art came thanks to these Saints to be truly wedded to morality and spirituality, by becoming one with these great ideals and values of life — not a lecture but a poetry. The modern money hunting films of blood curdling tales reveal crime in all its nakedness, apparently with the idea of scaring away their audience from such vices but ultimately end only in

popularising the crime. The filthy lucre of Indra has seduced art to its own nefarious purposes. From this must arise once again the purified art in communion with higher ideals of Gautama. The story of Ahalya, according to this kind of thought, is really esthetics, the science of beauty, giving through its parable the history of its fall and rise.

(To be continued)

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Dr. Schweitzer, the 'World's Greatest Man' and The Kural

A SENTHAMILAN

THE man, who was paradoxically known as 'the famous man nobody knows', became the famous man everybody knows when on the morning of November 1, 1953, the news of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize for 1952 to Dr. Albert Schweitzer, musician, theologian, philosopher, author and medical missionary was broadcast to the world. His remarkable life and work had already earned him titles such as 'the world's greatest man', 'a saint of our time', 'the truest Christian in Christendom' and a 'Rishi of the 20th Century'. Three years ago, he was chosen by the New York Arts Council as the 'individual living today with the best solution of the world's problems.'

Dr. Schweitzer was born on January 14, 1875, at Kaysberg (Alsace) of Swiss parents. When he was 21, he made a resolve which, to quote his own words, read :—

"I would consider myself justified in living until I was 30 for Science and Art in order to devote myself from that time forward to the direct service of humanity."

His academic career was brilliant ; he became successively Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Theology and Doctor of Music. Whilst still in his twenties, he was recognised as one of the most powerful intellectuals in Europe and, whether as an interpreter of the organ music of Bach, as a Christian

Scholar or as an original thinker and philosopher, his fame amongst the intellectual elite was unique. Amongst his various works, the most famous are :

Philosophy	Theology	Music
Philosophy of Civilisation.	The Quest for historical Jesus.	Biography of Bach.
Civilisation & Ethics.	Paul and his interpreters.	The Construction of Organs.
Indian thought and its development.		

When he reached the age of 30, he deliberately gave up his brilliant career and took to the study of medicine, as a preliminary to a life of 'direct service of humanity' in accordance with his earlier resolve. After securing the Doctorate of Medicine, he left for one of the most primitive areas in Africa to serve a race known to the world as 'Cannibals' and has, for more than 40 years now, steadfastly stuck to his self imposed task and mission. His solution for the world's problems has been admirably summed up by him as

"Reverence for life — for all life, Simply because it is living."

In his book *Indian thought and Development* originally published in German in 1935, he shows a profound insight into the development of Indian thought from pre-historic days right up to the time of Mahatma Gandhi and Tagore, and deals with his subject in a surprisingly sympathetic but not uncritical manner. In the preface, he remarks :

"What I liked about it also was that Indian ethics are concerned with the behaviour of man to all living beings and not merely with his fellow men and to human society."

but frankly adds :—

"Perhaps those who have grown up within the sphere of Indian thought will find it difficult to reconcile themselves to the purely critical nature of my investigation. I ask their pardon in advance"

* * * * *

"What may also give offence to Indian readers is my opinion that world and life negation in itself is devoid of ethics and that the

Ahimsa commandment owed its origin not to a feeling of pity, but to the idea of keeping pure from the world, and that it was only later that Ahimsa adopted the motive of compassion."

What is of interest to us here is that, after a penetrating and understanding analysis of Indian thought as represented by ancient Hinduism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, and the Bhagvad-Gita, he concludes :—

'The fact that Brahmanism, Buddhism and ancient Hinduism teach no ethic of action does not mean that this was an unknown thing to the ancient Indians. Among the Indian people world and life affirmation and ethics are present. Wherever ethics reaches a certain height in the presence of world and life affirmation, the idea of active love cannot fail to evolve. Among the Indians, just as among the Greeks, this ethic of subjective activity has difficulty in making its way alongside the ethic of duties demanded by society and objectively established by tradition and law. In some way or other, nevertheless, it does come into existence.

'The case stands, then, thus — that the idea of active love is probably present somewhere in popular thought, but that Brahmanic, Buddhist and ancient Hindu thought cannot find room for it within their world-view ! Because of the world and life negation which they represent, they cannot have anything to do with the world and life affirmation which is manifested in its greatest strength in the ethic of activity. Consequently the Bhagavad-Gita restricts itself — which at first is so incomprehensible for us Europeans — to the justification of activity which is objectively necessary by reason of birth and caste. It believes, although in reality this does not hold good, that this concession to world and life affirmation, is still compatible with the maintenance of world and life negation. But the world-view of world and life negation cannot acquiesce in subjective activity, especially not to the extent demanded by the ethic of love, without putting itself out of commission. This is the explanation of the exceedingly strange fact that through long centuries Indian thought remains so incomplete in the matter of ethics !

'But finally it is nevertheless compelled by the popular ethic, which is developing without such hindrances, to concern itself with the ethic of active love and thereby to disregard the world-view of world and life negation. Of course it is Hinduism alone that is in the position to face this undertaking.

'That the idea of active love did arise in the popular ethics of India in fairly ancient times we know from many stories we meet in her literature and especially through the ethical maxims found in the Kural, a work which probably belongs to the 2nd century A. D.

'The Kural is a collection of 1,330 maxims in distich form, attributed to the weaver Tiruvalluvar. In the matter of authorship it is probable that not all the maxims are Tiruvalluvar's own, but that he also versified some which were ancient possessions of the people.

'Kural means short strophe. Tiruvalluvar is really not a name, but a title borne by the religious teachers who work among the lower castes in the south of India.

'The work is written in the Tamil language. This, like Canarese, which also belongs to the south of India, is an indigenous Indian language (Dravidian), not Indo-Aryan. We know nothing certain about the life of Tiruvalluvar.

'Legend reports that he was married, and that when a man inquired of him which is the right thing to do, to live as father of a family or as a hermit, he demonstrated the answer. He called his wife who happened to be at the spring. She left her water-jar hanging in the water and hurried to ask him what he wanted. When, according to Tamil custom, she set before him at breakfast cold rice left over from supper, he declared it was burning his tongue. She immediately blew on it to cool it. At midday he let something fall and called for a light to pick it up by. She straightway brought a lamp. Thereupon the inquirer said, "I have the answer! If so excellent a woman falls to one's share, the practice of domestic virtue is more excellent; otherwise it is better to become a hermit."

'What a difference between the Kural and the Laws of Manu, which originated some four centuries before it! In the latter, under the dominance of the Brahmanic spirit, world and life affirmation is still just tolerated alongside world and life negation. In the Kural world and life negation is only like a distant cloud in the sky. In 250 maxims — they form the concluding part of the work — earthly love is lauded. Later times, because they cause offence, interpret them allegorically as concerning the love of the soul to God.

'Christianity similarly interprets the Song of Solomon a love-song probably originally sung at weddings and later absorbed into the Old Testament, as if it described the relations of the soul to its heavenly Redeemer.

'In the ethics of the Kural, as in those of the Laws of Manu, the idea of reward has a place. The way of virtue is recommended because it leads to a better reincarnation or to liberation from re-birth. Alongside of this is found also the naive view which is so conspicuous in Chinese ethics that moral behaviour results in earthly welfare and immoral in misfortune. Nevertheless, ethics in the Kural are not so entirely dominated by the idea of reward as in Brahmanism, Buddhism and the Bhagavad-Gita. We already find here the knowledge that good must be done for its own sake. It shines out from various maxims.**

"Even though one should say, there is no higher world, it is still good to give" (222) — "True liberality asks nothing in return. What does the world give in return to the cloud that gives it rain?" (211)

'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. Work and profit place a man in a position to do good.

**The quotations are from the German translation "Der Kural" by Karl Graul, D. D., Leipzig 1856 (Derfling and Franks) and London 1856 (Williams and Norgate) (Bibliotheca Tamulica).

"All staying at home and waiting on the household have for their end hospitality and alms-giving" (81) — "All property gained by industrious toil is there for good men in order that they may practise well-doing" (212).

"According to the Kural, duty is not confined, as in the Bhagavad-Gita, to what the caste calling involves, but consists in general in "all that is good". Maxims about joy in activity, such as one would not expect from Indian lips, bear witness to the strength of the world and life affirmation present in the Kural.

"Even fate did not permit of success; the striving in itself rewards the exertion of one's body" (619) — "If one accepts the burden as joy, there emerges a splendour for which even one's enemies are eager." (630)

"Like the Buddha and the Bhagavad-Gita the Kural desires inner freedom from the world and a mind free from hatred. Like them it stands for the commandment not to kill and not to damage.** It has appropriated all the valuable ethical results of the thought of world and life negation. But in addition to this ethic of inwardness there appears in the Kural the living ethic of love.

"The loveless man takes everything for himself; the man full of love gives even his own bones to others." (72) — "The life of a soul without love is like the sprouting of a dried-up tree on stony ground" (78) — "What help can all the outer limbs give, if the inner limb of the body, love, is wanting?" (79) — "If one weighs the value of the good deed done without consideration of the advantage: Its kindness is greater than the ocean." (103) — "To assuage the deadly hunger of the poor is the treasury of the rich" (226) — "Wealth in benevolence is the wealth of wealths. Wealth in possessions the mob has also." (241).

"With sure strokes the Kural draws the ideal of simple ethical humanity. On the most varied questions concerning the conduct of man to himself and to the world its utterances are characterised by nobility and good sense. *There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom.*

** In opposition to the Buddha, the Kural decides that one may not eat meat even when one is quite innocent of the slaughter of the animal.

"If a kind man inherits property, it is as if a fruit-tree bears ripe fruit in the middle of a village" (216) — "The child 'Merry' born of love lives by the care of the well-to-do-nurse 'Well-being'" (757) — "The wealth of him who gives nothing to the poor is as if a very fine lady grows old in solitude" (1007).

"The gift is not the measure of the gift: its measure is in the magnanimity of the receiver" (105).

"Better than spending with a happy heart is to carry on sweet speech with a happy face" (92) — "For those who do not understand how to be friendly, the great wide world, even in bright daylight, lies in darkness" (999).

"Among all treasures that may be gained none can compare with attaining to freedom from envying **any man**" (162)

"To forget good is not good; immediately to forget what is not good is good" (108) —

"Holy as a penitent is he who forgets bitter speech from the lips of one who is excited." (159)

"Self-control rushes into thick darkness" (121) — "He who is not eager for pleasure, but knows that pain is natural, will remain free from distress" (628).

"Outward purity comes through water: purity of the heart is manifested in sincerity" (298).

"Those who are considerate and forbearing without letting their duty suffer: the world gladly gives itself to such" (578) — "The world rests on the excellence of the good prince who knows how to change enmity into friendship." (874)

"Even if they are highly placed, those who are not high-minded are not high; even if their station be humble, those who are not low-minded are yet not low" (973).

"If thou dost harm to thy neighbour in the morning, harm comes of itself to thee in the afternoon." (319)

"Asking the way, happiness goes of itself to him who is undaunted in spirit" (594) — "Whoever says, 'I will work for my family', before him there goes at once the goddess of good fortune, her robe well girded-up (i. e. as a fellow-workers)" (1024).

"Take no pleasure, even if thou shouldst win, in gambling. Even winning is as if a fish swallows the metal hook." (1931)

"The friendship of well-conducted men waxes like the new moon : the friendship of fools wanes like the full moon." (782).

"Husbandmen are the axle-pin on the wagon of the world : they give support to all who, not caring for husbandry, are engaged in other work" (1032).

"So a natural and ethical world and life affirmation of this kind was present among the people of India at the beginning of our era, although nothing of it can be found in Brahmanism, Buddhism and Bhagavad-Gita Hinduism. It gradually penetrates into Hindu thought through the great religious teachers who had sprung from the lower castes and lived among and felt with the people."

It should be a matter of considerable gratification to every Tamilian that this unsolicited tribute to Tamilian thought — which in fact is much anterior chronologically to Indo-Aryan thought and which had never surrendered wholly even today to Brahmanic thought — should come from an European Savant of great repute living in the remote Cannibal-ridden jungles of Africa. What is significant but not surprising to us Tamils in this tribute is that, after covering the entire field of Indian thought and philosophy, Dr. Schweitzer could trace the ethic of activity and the idea of active love only in the Kural.

Another interesting fact is that Dr. Schweitzer had studied the Kural from the German translation 'Der Kural' by Karl Graul published in 1856. As is only to be expected in a translation, particularly where the translation is by one to whom Tamil is an alien tongue, the quotations given above do not always bring out accurately the full significance or the terse beauty of the original aphorisms. If fresh translations of the Kural in important languages of the world could be brought out by Tamil Scholars, in collaboration, where possible, with foreign Scholars proficient in their respective languages, it will greatly promote the cause of world peace, in furtherance of which the Nobel Prize was awarded to Dr. Schweitzer.

The Original Home of the Dravidians : Their Wanderings in Prehistoric Times, B. C. 4,500 to 1,500.

H. S. David, B.A., PH.D., (Lond).

THE EVIDENCE : ITS NATURE AND CREDIBILITY

THE evidence for the statements made in this small article has been carefully pieced together from a comparative study of philology, ethnology and archaeology. It is impossible within this small compass to detail all the pieces of evidence : to do so would entail a large volume. I would refer any person who is keenly interested in this subject to Stuart Piggot's *Prehistoric India*, 1952, a Pelican Book.

SUMER AND ELAM.

The earliest civilization we know of is that of Sumer in Mesopotamia, now called Iraq. The rudiments of civilization there can be detected even as early as 5,000 B. C. In the next millennium this Sumerian culture became established on the Euphrates and Tigris and likewise began to expand north-eastwards into Elam, now called Iran or Persia. In the holy Bible, at Genesis 14 : 1, Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, is mentioned as a contemporary of the patriarch, Abraham, C. 2,000 B. C. By that time the Elamites had achieved a high level of culture. But two thousand years earlier they were definitely behind the contemporary Sumerians in culture. Both these

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peoples, however, like the original Egyptians in the Nile Valley, belong to the same Mediterranean race that is responsible for all the early civilizations. At the present day it includes a large number of groups of peoples stretching from Portugal and Spain to India. Here it forms a dominant element in the population of the north and is widespread in the south among the upper social classes. (The word "India" is used throughout this article in the sense of the greater India that includes Ceylon and Pakistan as well.) Such people are medium in stature, olive-brown in colour, with a long head and face, black hair, large eyes and a narrow nose. In Tamil literature there is frequent mention of the very large eyes, especially of the heroine, e. g. *malina malar ttatankan* = eyes as large as the lotus blossom.

THE DRAVIDIAN EXODUS FROM ELAM.

Between 4,500 and 4,000 B. C. the Elamites made their first advances towards civilization : at this stage there was a definite Sumerian influence. At Susa the Elamites made excellent faience beads wherewith their women folk adorned themselves rather liberally. Such an elaborate technique as the making of faience beads bespeaks a high degree of culture. North-east of the Elamites, but within their influence, lived the Dravidian races. A section of them cherished the Elamite civilization and peacefully extended their colonies into what are now termed Afghanistan and Baluchistan, especially into the Indian Makran. But the vast majority of the Dravidians at this epoch were nomadic herdsmen. They roamed from the frontiers of Sumer and Elam to the valleys of the Oxus and Jaxartes, now termed the Amu Daria and Syr Daria respectively, in Russian Turkistan. In these river-valleys the Dravidians learned to develop the city-life or civilization, which their ancestors had seen in their dealings with Elamites and Sumerians.

THE HORSE.

Quite early in their sojourn in Russian Turkistan, the Dravidians came into contact with a very important animal that was unknown for a long time to the ancient cultures,

namely the horse. So unaccustomed were the Sumerians to this animal that when they saw it first, C. 3000 B. C., they called it "the ass of the mountains". It was not an original inhabitant of Mesopotamia. In the steppes of Central Asia, however, it is a common animal. The Dravidians tamed the horse and used it as an occasional drought animal in lieu of the ox ; but they never learnt to employ the horse to draw a war-chariot. This was the contribution of the Indo-Europeans at a much later date, C. 1,800 B. C. The war-chariot drawn by the horse gave them the decided advantage that enabled them to overrun Europe and Western Asia as far as North India between 1,800 and 1,500 B. C. The swiftness of the war-horse, rather than any qualities of the Indo-European peoples, was mainly responsible for the Aryan victories and the consequent Aryan myth.

THE DRAVIDIANS AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS

C. 3,000 B. C.

In the third millennium B. C., however, the Dravidians lived on a footing of complete equality with both the Aryans to the west and the Mongolians to the east of them. It was during this period that the Aryans and the Dravidians first loaned from each other those words which now appear to persons like the late Swamy Gnana Prakasar of Nallur to have a common base, apart from those words which both peoples borrowed from the Sumerians. At the same time the affinities which Dr. Caldwell saw in certain words between the Dravidian and the Mongolian languages stem from the close association of these peoples in the West-Central Asiatic steppes round about 3,000 B. C. The Mongolian family of languages has also been termed Turanian, Scythian, Ural-Altai and so on, by different philologists. A section of the Dravidians in Turkistan migrated northeastwards into Finland, Lapland and Esthonia, while another section went northeastwards into N. E. Siberia, where they are now called "Samoiedes". Professor T. Burrow of Oxford has proved conclusively the common ancestry of the Dravidian with the languages spoken in the above-mentioned areas in Northern Europe and N. E. Siberia.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE DRAVIDIANS IN NORTH INDIA

On this issue a great light is thrown by the archaeological excavations carried through, during the last 33 years, in Baluchistan, Sind and the Punjab, especially at the two sites, Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. But it was neither the Punjab, nor Sind, which was the scene of the first Dravidian settlements in India. It was Baluchistan. This fact shows decisively that the Dravidians, like the Aryans a millennium later, entered India by the N. W. passes, the Bolan and Khyber. Near the Bolan pass are the first Dravidian settlements in India, namely at Mehi, Kulli, Nal and Amri, C. 2900 B. C. There is evidence for Sumerian trade with these regions, as well as for the presence of Indian merchants in the great cities of Elam and Sumer — with ivory, apes and peacocks, precious ointments in strange stone pots, an alien tongue and religious customs. About four hundred years later began the Harappa Empire, stretching for more than a thousand miles, from Baluchistan to the Himalayas and the valley of the Ganges. The Harappa culture is in the main independent of direct Sumerian influence. This is shown by the rarity of the typically Sumerian cylinder-seals in the Harappa Empire, the greatest in extent of territory in the third millennium B. C. The Harappa civilization is known only in its mature form. It had no known beginnings, no tentative early phases before the outlines were firmly fixed. It was an urban and literate culture, using copper and bronze, but not iron, for tools and weapons.

THE OVERTHROW OF THE DRAVIDIAN EMPIRE OF HARAPPA.

This overthrow took place in a series of plundering raids by the Aryans between 1,800 and 1,500 B. C. Their first leader was Indra. The highly-evolved Harappa culture employed massive fortifications and dominated the river-system of N. W. India. Indra came there as the fort-destroyer, in Sanskrit

“Puramdara”. Indra “rends forts, as age consumes a garment”, says a verse of the Rig-veda. The citadels of the Harappa Empire were wrecked and plundered by the Aryan warbands. Like the Amurru in Mesopotamia, the Aryans at this date were “a host whose onslaught was like a hurricane, a people who had never known a city”. Most of the Dravidians who could do so migrated accordingly to South India, where their descendants speak Tamil, Malayalam, Toda, Tulu, Kannada and Telugu. In N. W. India the Brahui-speaking Dravidians became an islet in the expanding ocean of Aryan cultures. In N. E. and Central India there remained Dravidian isles, speaking such languages as Malto, Kui, Kurukh or Oraon, Ghond etc. Among these, the Kota tongue has been the chief field of study for two distinguished Western scholars, Professor Emeneau of the University of California and Professor T. Burrow of Oxford University. These two intend to publish a Glossary of the Kota language. It is time therefore that sons of the soil, whether in India or in Ceylon, become interested in these studies and from secure foundations build up the edifice of Dravidian linguistics.

Place-Names in Tamil-Akam

R. P. Sethupillai, B.A., B.L.

PLACE-NAMES in every land are of great interest to its people and particularly so to its philologists. The ancient Tamils observed that four different kinds of terrain with well-defined features and characteristics comprised the country that was Tamil-akam. Hills and dales and mountain slopes formed one kind. Woods and wolds and wooded glens were another. Watered fields and their immediate environs comprised a third. The sea-shore with its sand dunes was the fourth. These four kinds of land came to be designated by them as *Kurinci*, *Mullai*, *Marutam*, and *Neytal*, respectively. As thus the Earth was seen to comprise four different kinds of terrain, it naturally came to be called *Nāl-nilam* or "Four-some Land". In later times, however, inland sandy stretches with sparse furze and prickly shrubs came also to be recognized as a distinct species (*palai*).

KURINCI

Many a mountain range rich and fertile, lies within the borders of Tamil-Nād. We shall now proceed to examine the names of some of the villages nestling in and about them. Tiru-Vēnkata-malai forms the northern limit of Tamil-akam. A Tamil poet, who was a contemporary of the grammarian Tolgapier has defined the boundaries of Tamil-Nād. According to him "the ancient land where Tamil is spoken is the one that lies in between Tiru-Venkatam in the north and Kumari in the south. As this mountain was the dividing line between the languages spoken north of it and the language spoken south of it, it came to be referred to commonly as Vata-malai or

the Northern Mountain. It also came to be known as Tiru-malai or the Sacred Hill and as Tiru-pati or the Sacred Seat by virtue of its association with divinity.

The Ānai-malai, or the Elephant Rock, the Chirumalais or the Lesser Mountains, the Pasu-malai, or the Cow Hill, all lie in close vicinity to the city of Mathurai, the capital of the Pandya kingdom. Ānai-malai was the abode of Jaina monks who thronged there in large numbers in the distant past. The Chiru-malai which yields delicious plantains is also of ancient renown. "Silappathikāram" or "The Lay of the Anklet" gives a picturesque description of the terrain.

A hill lying close to Madras has been named Parangi-malai. It is reputed to have acquired this name because the Portugese or Feringhees settled down there about two hundred years ago. And in recent times a new town-ship has developed in the vicinity of Tiruchirāpalli; It has taken the name of Pon-malai or the Golden Rock after the hillock standing by it.

Lord Murugan is worshipped in Tamil-akam as the regional deity of Kurinchi or mountainous country. The Tamils consider every hill as Murugan's own. A few among them are however held in special sanctity as the fountain-heads of his benevolence and grace. Palani-malai in the Pandya territory, Swāmi-malai in the Chola territory, Thanikai-malai in the Thondai region, and other hills of this kind are venerated as sacred seats of Lord Murugan.

The peak of a hill is denoted by the word *Kōtu*. A pilgrim centre in the Salem District known as Thiru-Cheng-Kōtu, is a place of great antiquity. Silappathikāram refers to Murugan as the "Lord who ever abides in Chenthil of high renown, Cheng-Kōtu, Ven-Kunru, and Ērakam". It is therefore evident that Thiru-Cheng-Kōtu is one of the ancient spots sacred to Murugan. It is said that the place is so named, because of the ochre-coloured encrustation of the mammoth rocks forming the hill.

The word 'Malai' signifies a lofty mountain range according to the literary usage of the Tamil language. Any eminence of a lesser height than a mountain is named Kunru, or hill ; and still lesser ones go by the name of Pārai, Arai, and Kal, all meaning a rock.

There are a few places in Tamil-Nād having Kunru as their nominal suffix. Tiru-Param-Kunram and Tiru-Kalu-Kunram are hill-temples sanctified by the Tamil poet-saints in their devotional hymns. The word 'Kunram' has been corrupted into 'Kunam' in the North Arcot District. The place-names of Ner-Kunram, Netun-Kunram, and Pūn-Kunram appear now as Ner-Kunam, Netun-Kunam, and Pūn-Kunam, respectively, as a result of this change.

Any place adjoining a Kunru or hill takes name as Kunr-ūr or Kunr-attūr or Kunr-ak-kuti. The stem Kunram in such place-names changes to Kunnam in usage in most cases. The settlement known as Coonoor in the Nilgris or Blue Mountain is really Kunr-ūr. Besides, Kunrathur in Thondai region and Kunrakuti in Pandi are now referred to as Kunnathūr and Kunnakuti, respectively.

The suffix Pārai is seen in the names of many places. Places bearing names as Pūmpārai, Chippipārai, Thattai-pārai, Kuttai-parai etc. are current in Tamil-Nād.

Among the one hundred and eight sacred places held in veneration by the followers of the Vaishnava cult, Thiruvēl-arai is one. The temple in this place, the presiding deity of which has been glorified in hymns by Periyālvār and Tiru-Mangai-Ālvār, stands on a sheet of white rock. Svēta-giri is the white rock and has lent its name to this seat of the tutelary deity.

The suffix 'Kal' occurs in the names of some places. Tindu-k-kal, anglicized as Dindi-gal, is a town in Pandi. It would appear that the name of the rock to the west of the place became the name of the town also. In the past the fort erected on this rock served as a bastion commanding the gates in the boundary line between the Pandi and the Kongu region

(modern districts of Nilgris, Salem and Coimbatore). Nāma-k-kal is a place in the Salem district. Its original name was Ārai-k-kal. The word Ārai means a fortress wall. The fortress now defunct standing on a high rock is significant of the name of this place.

Sanskrit equivalents of the Tamil word "malai" can also be seen in a few place-names. *Giri* occurs in place-names like Siva-giri and Bhuvana-giri, and "*Achalam*" in Virudāchalam, Vēdachalam, Vēnkatachalam, Thanikāchalam and the like. Besides, *Sailam* and *Adri* may also be noticed occasionally. There is a small village lying at the foot of Pothiyamalai in the Western Ghats Tirunelveli district, and it bears the name of Siva-sailam. Nāngunēri known as Vānamāmalai has got yet another name as Totadri in Sanskrit.

The people who dwelt in the hilly tracts or Kurinchi were known as Kuravars ; and their settlement was called a Kurichi. This will be evident from the line : "Kurichi is the abode of ours, the Kuravar tribe, O Lady mine" occurring in a Kura-vanchi or Idyll depicting Kurava life. There are very many places at the foot of the Western Ghats in the Tirunelveli district having this nominal suffix in common in their names. These names are strung together beginning with Ālvar-Kurichi, and sung to tune in the Tirunelveli district. Although Kurichi denoted originally only a Kuravar settlement, yet in later times it came to stand for hamlets occupied by other people also. Kallakurichi is the name of a place in the South Arcot district. There is also a place called Brahmana-kurichi in the Ramnad district.

MULLAI

In the distant past Tamil-nad was covered all over with luxurious vegetation. Tamil classics make mention of the fact that Kari-kāl-valavan and other great kings disafforested many of these areas, and converted them into arable land. All the same the existence at one time of forests in these areas and their characteristic features can be inferred from the names of the places there. It is seen from the sacred lore of the

Tamils that the places held in great sanctity now as places glorified by Poet-saints in their hymns were mostly *Vanam* or wood-lands in the past. The original name of Chidambaram was Thillai-vanam. Mathurai was known as Katampavanam, and Tirunelvêli as Venu-vanam. Puranas mention many more *Vanams* of this kind.

It is also evident from certain place-names in the Tamil land that there was many a *Kātu* or forest. Names like *Ār-k-kātu*, *Ālan-kātu*, *Vêr-kātu* and *Kala-k-kātu* are suggestive of this. *Ār* is another name for the *Ātti* tree. "*Silappathikāram*" refers to the Chola king wearing the wreath of *Atti* flowers as "the Chola of the chaplet of *Ār*". A tract covered by a forest of *Ār* was named *Ār-k-kātu*. This name now stands for both the tract and a town therein. There is besides a hamlet known as *Ār-pākkam* close to *Ār-k-kātu* town. Furthermore, ancient capital of the Chola territory bore the name of *Ār-ūr*. And after it was glorified by the Tamil hymnists, it is now known as *Tiru-ār-ūr*.

There are several places in Tamil-nād with the nominal suffix of *Kātu*. *Tiru-ālan-kātu* lies close to Palayanūr in Thondai region. *Pala-vêr-kātu* lies in the vicinity of Ponnēri. It looks as though this name came to be given to this place because of the *Vêl* or *Acacia* forest characterising this area. The Westerners who colonized this spot have however corrupted the name as *Puli-k-kātu* (*Pulicat*) or *Tiger-Forest*. The forest in the Chola country that witnessed the battle that Nedumchelian the Pandya king gave to the combined forces of all the other Tamil kings, is immortalised as *Talai-ālan-kātu*. There is again the hill-station of *Yōrkād* at a short distance of the Salem town. The place came to be called *Ēri-k-kātu* as the settlement there developed on the shores of a picturesque lake lying amidst an enchanting woodland scenery. The present name *Yêrkād* is thus a corrupt form of the original *Ēri-k-kātu*. The place known as *Kala-k-kātu* on the banks of the *Pachai-arū* in the Tirunelvêli district is of great antiquity. A spot covered by a dense growth of *Kalā* shrubs (wild cherries) came to be named as *Kala-k-kātu*, situated as it is on the banks of the *Pachai-arū* on a high-road connecting South Pāndi

with Malayālam (Travancore), it presents all the features of a hill-terrain and a river-fed plain.

The Tamil word *Kā* means a thick grove. It occurs in another form also as *Kāvu*. See *Āriyan-kāvu* on the Western Ghats beyond Chen-kōttai (Shencottah or Red Fort). *Āriyan* is one of the names of *Ai-yanār* or *Shastha*. *Ai-yanār* passes under the name of *Ai-yappan* in Travancore. *Ai-yappan* is worshipped in *Āriyan-kāvu* with great fervour to this day. It will thus be seen that the place took the name of *Āriyan-kāvu*, because *Ai-yappan* was enshrined there amidst the expansive groves on the mountain slopes of the Western Ghats.

One of the places in the Thondai region held sacred to *Tiru-māl*, (*Vishnu*) is called *Tiru-t-tan-kā*, literally meaning "the sacred coolsome grove". *Tiru-mangai-Alvar* refers to *Tiru-māl* who presides and sheds grace over this verdant beauty-spot as *Tirumāl* of emerald hue, the *Beacon-Light* of *Thiru-tan-kā* etc. This term has come to be adopted, as the name of the temple itself (*Beacon-Light Temple*). There is yet another place in the Chola country sacred to *Tiru-māl* known as *Kā-valam-pāti*. The same hymnist mentions this holy place in the midst of groves as a seat of *Kannan* (*Krishna*).

Any place presenting to the view a luxurious growth of trees, plants and creepers, is denoted by the significant Tamil word "*Polil*". A grove with a thick growth of *Āl* (*Banyan*) trees came to be immortalised as *Tiru-Ālam-Polil* in "*Tevaram*", (literally meaning 'The Lords' 'Wreath', being the common name for a collection of hymns in adoration of *Siva*.) *Tiru-gnāna-sambandar*, the hymnist, has adorned the presiding deity of *Tiru-Ālam-Polil* with a wreath of songs. Then again there is a beautiful little place nestling in the enchanting groves, fragrant and cool, off the slopes of the *Courtallam* hill noted for its water-fall. The ancient Tamils who delighted in the contemplation of the natural beauty of this place called it *Paim-Polil* or "*Emerald-Grove*". Such meaningful and befitting a name has now been corrupted into *Pampuli*.

Tantalai is another Tamil word meaning a grove. It occurs in other forms also as Tantarai and Tantalam. The present township of Kulitalai north of Tiruchirapalli was known as Kuli-th-tantalai in the past. The ancient Tamils gave the name of Kuli-th-tantalai to a settlement that developed amidst the luxuriant groves in a shallow basin on the western bank of the Kavêri. Places like Pūn-tantalam, Palan-tantalam, and Perum-tantalam can still be seen in the Thondai region. All these places must have been the sites of groves at one time in the past.

The word Chōlai (Shola) also occurs as a suffix in the names of a few places. Alakar-koyil to the north of Mathurai was known as Tiru-māl-irum-cholai in the times gone by. Tiru-murugā-rrupatai mentions Pala-mutir-sōlai or "the grove replete with ripening fruits" as one of the six military encampments of Lord Murugan, the War-God of the Tamils. There is besides a place by the name of Talai-ch-chōlai in the Salem district. There is yet another known as Tiru-valar-sōlai near Thiruchirāpalli.

A piece of land laid out as a garden with trees and plants interspersed according to design is called a Tōppu in Tamil. There are places bearing the name "Tōppu". Manti-tōppu can be seen as a place-name in the Tirunelveli district; Man-tōppu in the Ramnad district; Nelli-tōppu in the Tanjore district; and Vauvāl-tōppu in the South Arcot district.

'Curam' in Tamil denotes a barren tract of sand and sandy lawn. The place Tiru-c-churam in Thondai region now goes by the corrupted name of Tiru-sūlam. The original name of another place in the same region is Thiru-itai-c-churam. This name also has been transformed into Tiru-vati-sūlam.

Two Sanskrit terminations meaning a forest, namely, Vanam, and Āraniyam can also be seen in certain place-names. Vanam occurs in place-names like Punnai-vanam, Katampavanam, and Tinti-vanam. And Āraniyam occurs in the name Vedāranyam.

Some places in Tamil-nād take their names after trees of a single variety. Karaviram is one among the several places sacred to Siva, and the deity there has been glorified by hymnists. It is the name of a tree which yields golden flowers. This tree is worshipped in the temple at Karaviram the sacred tree of the locality. Tiru-pain-gnīli, yet another sacred spot enjoying the honour of finding a place in "Thevaram", also derived its name from the name of a tree. Pain-nīli is the name of the green-skinned plantain fruits. A place which abounded with this variety of plantains came to be called Thiru-pain-nīli by the ancient Tamils.

Besides, Vākai (Rain tree), and Punnai (mast wood tree) have lent their names to places in the North Arcot district. Kānjiram (Nux Vomica) and Karunkāli (Ebony) are place-names in the Sivaganga area of the Ramnad district. As trees like Āl (Banyan), Arasu (Pipal), Atti (Fig), Ātti(?), Puli (Tamarind), Punnai (white laurel), Panai (Palmyra), Thennai (Cocanut), Vēmpu (Margosa) and others abound in Tamil-akam, places take their names after the tree which is a characteristic feature of the spot.

Nāval (Jambulensis) is the name of a place. Sundarar, one of the three hymnists who contributed to the *Tēvāram* was born there. The Periya-purānam or "The Lives of the Saints" mentions him as a follower of the cult of Siva of long descent, born in Nāval, who expounded the obtruse sacred lore of the Tamils. His place of birth and parentage are evident from this. This Nāval was sanctified as Tiru-nāval because of Sundarar's nativity there. His admirers who came to know later that he was treated by Lord Siva as his boon companion, renamed this place for a second time as Tiru-nāval-nallūr. In course of time this beautiful name has been corrupted into Tiru-nāma-nallūr.

Again, a place on the Southern bank of the Gedilam river in the South Arcot District densely grown over with Pātiri trees and so thickly covered by jungle as to afford shelter to tigers, came to be called Thiru-p-pātiri-puli-yūr. There is another Puli-ūr south of Viriddhāchalam. Thevaram

hymnists have given this place the name of Eruk-k-attam-puli-ūr. The word Attam means a jungle. Eruk-k-attom denotes therefore a jungle of Erukku or leafy cactus yielding a milky exudation. A township that developed in a thick tiger-infested jungle of Erukku plants was accordingly named Eruk-k-attam-puli-ūr. Erukku plants bearing sweet-scented white flowers so dear to the heart of Siva can still be seen close to the sanctum sanctorum of the temple there. This significant name has however been changed to Rajendrapattanam in later times.

The villages which crop up in Mullai Land or the land of brushwood and shrubbery mostly go by the name of Pāti. The Thevaram mentions Thiru-a-p-pāti as the place where Chandēswarar tended his cows and worshipped the Lord. All Tamil literature in general refers to Gokulam, the place where Kannan grew up, as Āyar-pāti or a village of cow-herds. Long, long ago a small hamlet came into being with the name of Vēla-p-pāti in the North Arcot district. It took that name because it was born in a forest, of Vēla trees (*Acacia Aravica*). In course of time the area was disafforested, and an extensive settlement was established on the site. Another settlement grew up with the name of Vēlūr in the vicinity of Vēla-p-padi in course of time. When however, Vēlūr came into prominence within historic times with bastions and battlements adorning its fortress walls of cut granite, Vēla-p-pāti which had appeared first got absorbed in Vēlūr. The village of Tiru-vali-tāyam, yet another sacred spot in the Thondai region, is now called by the crisp name of Pāti.

It is said that the Tamil word *Patti* also denoted a pastoral village. Although Pattis are a common feature all over Tamil-akam, they are to be seen in the largest number only in Pāndi. Thousands of Pattis of the kind of Kovilpatti, a centre of cotton industry in the Tirunelveli district, abound in the South.

Any pastoral area where sheep and cattle are tended, is called a *Mantai*. Places like Ven-mantai and Punjai-mantai can be seen in the North Arcot district. Every Tōda hamlet on the Nilgris (Blue Mountains) is known as a Manthu. The Tōdas are a pastoral tribe of great antiquity and importance, and their chief settlement is Ottaka-manthu. This place is Ootacamund in English, with a diminutive, Ooty. It is inferred that the original correct form of the name must have been Ottai-k-kal-manthai, or the Cattle pen marked by a single monumental pillar-rock.

(To be Continued)

The Dravidian Question

By J. T. Cornelius, M. A., M. D., M.P.H., PH.D. (Lond).

FROM the earliest times, the Tamil country was known to be divided into three Kingdoms, the Cera or the Kerala, the Pandya, and the Chola. These three were well established Dravidian kingdoms in South India which had survived in to historic times. The Dravidian question raises the problem whether these three kingdoms represent two or three distinct races, or one race type and what race type or types they belong to, and if they are not of indigenous origin, from where they come into South India, and approximately when such immigration took place.

I shall briefly attempt in this article to answer these questions by producing three lines of evidence from Anthropological, Archaeological and Linguistic sources. As regards the race type, modern Anthropologists and Ethnographers like G. Elliot Smith, Edgar Thurston, Gilbert Slater, and Dr. Furer-Haimendorf regard them as of mediterranean stock and there is general agreement amongst the Anthropologists that the Dravidians belong to the great family of mediterranean stock who inhabited the whole of the mediterranean basin in pre-historic times, and their original home was in north Africa in common with the Egyptians and the other branches of mediterranean peoples. If the Dravidians are a mediterranean people as there is abundant evidence to prove this, and as pointed out by Dr. Furer-Haimendorf on Archaeological grounds in his recent speech at the International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnography in September 1952, the Dravidians brought the megalithic Iron-using culture into India, they certainly are not of indigenous origin, as stated by some Indian scholars according to Tamil traditions.

There are thus two points well established on scientific grounds for which there is indisputable evidence, namely

that the Dravidians of South India are of the mediterranean stock and that they are not of indigenous origin, and that they brought with them the Iron-culture and spoke the Dravidian languages. The Dravidians may therefore be defined as a non-Aryan, non-Semitic people of Mediterranean origin who have spoken what are known as the Dravidian languages from pre-historic times to the present day. The Dravidian languages are agglutinative and are chiefly spoken in South India. They are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Tulu, and other less developed members of this group are Kuli and Kurk in Orissa and Bihar, Malto in Bihar and Bengal and Brahui in Baluchistan.

The eminent authority Dr. Caldwell in his *Comparative Grammar of Dravidian languages* published in 1851 wrote that Dravidian idioms exhibit traces of an ancient deep seated connection with prae-Sanskrit. Nallur Swami S. Gnana Prakasar in his excellent article published in '*Tamil Culture*', January 1953, on 'Linguistic' evidence for the common origin of the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans has brought to light this deep seated connection by discovering the elementary roots of many words derived from both Dravidian and Indo-European languages which were used in ancient times to describe common objects such as metals, weapons, domesticated animals and words for expressing human relationship which indicate a community of origin of the Indo-European and Dravidian peoples. Affinities with Celto-Teutonic languages have also been noted by Dr. Pope. Clemens Schoener in his *Armalurisch* has given a list of 800 place-names which are Dravidian in origin, in Central Europe and Western Asia.

I shall give place-names below of totemistic origin which clearly link many geographical places widely separated with places in South India. This linguistic geographical evidence furnishes indisputable proof of identity of the tribes or clans of mediterranean origin with those of the Dravidians as I shall subsequently indicate.

The eminent Italian Anthropologist G. Sergi in his classical work on the *Mediterranean Race* (1901) analyses it to

consist of four branches known as the Iberians who occupied South West Europe, Spain and Portugal, the Ligurians who occupied Northern Italy and also occupied under the name of Siculi the centre of Italy and all the Islands, the Pelasgians who occupied the Peninsula and Islands of Greece, and the Libyans who occupied Northern Africa. Because of the great antiquity of Egyptian civilisation and its very close resemblance to the Dravidian culture in temple architecture, agricultural customs and traditions we should strongly suspect the Egyptians also to belong to the mediterranean branch known as Libyans.

Sergi refers to the physical characteristics of Libyans as they were known to ancient Egyptians and as represented by them in their monuments. He states, that we find three types represented under the names of Tamahu and Lebu and that all these three differ from each other. He wanted to know which of these three represented the Libyans.

I am reproducing the three types as illustrated by Sergi in his book :

T. 1



FIG. 1. -Tamahu (Rosellini).

Sergi remarks that Tamahu type shows a slightly aquiline nose, a well cut mouth with thin lips, elongated chin, little beard and short moustache ; the hair is worn in little falling tresses like the people of Pun, two Ostrich feathers adorn the head. The second type differs from the first, the

T. 2



FIG. 2. -Tamahu (Rosellini).

Le. 3.



FIG. 3. -Lebu (Rosellini).

nose is strongly aquiline and the forehead receding, the lips thick, beard long. This is described as the 'Desert type'. The third type shows an aquiline nose prominent lips, long beard, and forehead shows prominent supra orbital ridges.

Sergi was inclined to consider Type I as likely to represent the Libyans. All the Italian and other Anthropologists including Sergi had been looking for one type to represent the Libyans. The Libyans were the neighbours of the Egyptians, and were constantly at war with them. As I shall point out subsequently the so-called four branches of the Mediterranean stock are a composite group made up of three elements, two of which are Mediterranean, and the third Anatolian or Armenoid. On the basis of totemistic symbols, these three types may be analysed into four components and classified as follows for purposes of identification :

Skull type	Race type	Totemistic emblems	Tribe
Libyans.	Dolichocephalic (Mediterranean)	Grains Axe, Bull	Pelasgian
	Fish clans (Minoans)	Goat, Bow (Snake) (Palm tree)	Iberians.
	Brachycephalic Anatolian. Bird.	Ram (Wool) (Lim)	Ligurians.
	Clans. (Mycenians) (Carians)	Olive tree or Sesame, oil, Boat (Horse)	Siculi. Tyrsenians. (Etruscans)
Dravidians.	Dolichocephalic (Mediterranean)	Grain. Bull Axe.	Pandavas
	Pandya (fish clans)	Goat, Bow. (Snake) Palmyra.	Pandya Pandus Cula Nagas
	Anatolian (bird clan)	Sheep. (Wool)	Cera ðr Kerala. Kanarese, Telugu. Chola. Pallava.
		Oil lamp. Boat. (Horse.)	Cera Chola

Dravidians are thus identified with Libyans on the basis of totemistic emblems.

It must be mentioned on phonetic grounds that Tamahu is the Egyptian term for Tamalu or Tamil as in Egyptian "h" is used for 'l', and the term Lebu is derived from 'Lim', which means Ram or Sheep in the Sumerian language meaning a shepherd, and Sigara or Siculi or Sacculi is derived from 'Sack' a bag in Tamil and from 'Sekku', the oil press, which is an Anatolian invention. Oil was substituted for animal fat in oil lamps used in quarrying as a source of light in neolithic times. Artificial lighting of houses and of towns had thus its origin, and lamps, and oil have become important emblems. These two terms 'Sack' + 'Sekku' signify a Trader and the tribal name 'Siculi' is derived from this term as well as 'Sekan' in Tamil.

On totemestic basis of 'fish' and 'bird', it is possible to equate the Dravidians and Libyans, 'fish' and 'bird', having been the most ancient emblems of these two races, which founded the ancient Mediterranean civilization in Crete and Taman Peninsula, the civilization which preceded the Aryan civilization in Greece and Italy, Germany, U. K. and in Ireland, and also in Assyria, Mesopotamia, in Asia Minor and in South India.

LINGUISTIC GEOGRAPHY.

The geographical place-names based on the totemestic emblems are as follows:

Fish — 'Dace'. The term Dasus is derived from the term 'Dace' the name of fresh waterfish found in Central Europe. The emblem of the Tamils or Pandyas in South India is Fish. The place-names derived from, Dace or Fish is Dacia, Dagestan, Dagan or South India, and Dacca in Orissa in North Eastern India.

Sheep — Lim (Sumerian) Source of wool, the modern Tamil word for sheep is "Cemmari" and from this root is derived Cimbric or Cimmerian tribes. Cymri is the Welsh name

for Wales. Tamil word "Cemmari" is a transformation of 'Kem' — Red, 'Lim' — Sheep, and Kemli — a Tamil word for — woolen blanket according to N. Swami Gnanaprakasara.

Limyrikê — Is one of the three Divisions of Dravidian India in ancient times according to Ptolemy, the Greek Geographer. This term is derived from 'Lim' meaning Ram or Sheep. There is also a county in Ireland by this name called Limerick noted for textile products. Thus it will be seen that place names like Limerick in Ireland, and Cymri for Wales and Limyra in Asia Minor are connected with Limyrikê of Ancient South India, another name for the Tamil country. Langdon in Vol. V. of *Mythology of all races* shows the place-name Jerusalem as made up of three components: Uru, sa, lim and was known as Salem in 1500 B. C. There is a Tamil city by this name Salem in Madras State. The Tamil word 'Kemli' meaning woolen blanket is derived from 'Lim' meaning sheep in Sumerian, as shown above.

Goat — Sheep called 'Addu' in Tamil, and place-name derived from this are, Adana a town in Turkey, Adalia, a sea port in Turkey in the Gulf of Adalia, Adad for Alappo in Mesopotamia, Adowa a town in Abyssinia, Attica in Greece, Aden in South West Arabia, Atali Desa and Attur in Salem District and Atti-tondu in Tinnevely District in South India.

'Cemmari', 'Lim' and 'Addu' are thus equated: Limyra is an ancient town of Lycia in Asia Minor the seat of the Eastern Pelasgians or Hittites. According to Ptolemy, two places bore the names of Adisdara and Adeisathra in ancient India, South India. The ancient name for the River Euphrates is Nar-pur-Attu. The shepherd is known 'Akkan' Sumerian name from which Akkadian is derived or Kuru. The title for Cera or Kerala Kings is Athan or Akkan or Occan. Malabar was now known as Akkam.

'Ti' or 'Dî'. In Tamil means fire or light and is the emblem of Sideriving its name from 'Sack' a 'bag' standing also for 'trade' culi or the Sakyan tribe. The place-names derived from the root *Ti* are the River Tiber in Italy, Tigris in

Mesopotamia, Thebes, an ancient City in Greece, Thebes an ancient City of Upper Nile, Tyndis, a seaport of Limerycke of South India, Tiryns an ancient city in Peloponese. Thirayans are the title of Chola Kings of Sigarakuli or clan. Caldwell identifies Limericka with Dimirica as one of the three Divisions referred to above of which Tyndis is a seaport.

Birds. These have been the emblems of the Anatolian Race. Birds commonly represented have been the Eagle, Hawk, Vulture, or kite Crane and domestic birds like Fowl, Peacock etc. The cock has played an important role in Greek and Dravidian traditions in South India. According to Caldwell, KORI Koli means in Tamil domestic Fowl, cock or hen. Kukkuta is a Sanskrit term derived from Kori. In Kanarese it is Koli, Tuli Kori, Telugu Kodi. Gond-kor (from Ku or Ku) to call to cry as a bird 'Kural' and Kuyil, Tamil word for the Cuckoo — in Vowel, it is Kore, Ostiek Korek, Kurak, Permian Korech Kuryg or Kuraga.

The place-names derived from this word Kori are Khorasan, a place in the North East area of the Iranian Plateau, Kirkuk on Eastern Tugris Kharkov in Southern Russia, Kerch or Kerchli in Switzerland, Korinth or Corinth in Greece, Koromandal Coast, seat of the Cholas, and Korkai ancient seat of the Pandyas in Tirunelveli District, Karel (Quilon) in the Travancore District, and Kurrukuthurai near Tiruchinopoly, Koli the seat of the Cholas. Kory or Kolis is the name by which Pomponias Mela and Dionysios Pereigatis designate South India. Ptolemy, like the author Periples, regarded Cape Korey as the most important projection of India towards the South. All these geographical place-names are interlinked with South India.

Sufficient evidence on the basis of linguistic Geography and on other grounds has been adduced to identify the Dravidians with the Libyans. We have now to deal with the question as to when there was an immigration of these types into India. H. R. Hall in his *Ancient History of the Near East* refers to the seething turmoil of migrations, expulsions and war in the Eastern Mediterranean in the 12th and 13th

Century B. C. caused by the great Thessalian invasion and the attacks made by the Aegean tribes on Egypt. These tribes were known as the 'Peoples of the Sea' and are mentioned as Pulesatha (Pulesti), Tjakarai, Danauna and Washasha. Hall considers these tribes as dis-possessed Cretans. The Indian equivalents of these tribes according to my classification will be Pulesathi (Pulesti) as Pandya Tamil tribes (Ta, and Ta 2 tribes), Tjakarai from the place name Zakro in Crete can be equated with Chola, Sigarakuli or Si. I tribe, and Akaiwasha with Malayalee, and Canarese, and Danuana (Telugu) with Cera, as Li tribe, and Tyrsenians with Maravar (Si. 2 tribes). Hall states that the aim of these migrations was to find a permanent home, as they came with their women and children and all their belongings to Palestine, the coast of which was familiar to them for centuries, and I presume they were equally familiar at the time with the Western coast and Eastern coast of South India. I put forward the possibility of large migrations of these tribes in India, both by land and sea, as having taken place between 1600 and 1200 B. C.

These four components may be recognised in Crete —

<i>Tribe.</i>	<i>Seat.</i>	<i>Crete.</i>
Pulesathi (Ta I)	Idaen cave	Middle part.
Zackarai (Si. I)	Dictaeon cave	Eastern part.
Kammarais (Li)	Kamarais cave	Middle part.
Phala Sarma (Ta 2)	Western portion of Crete	

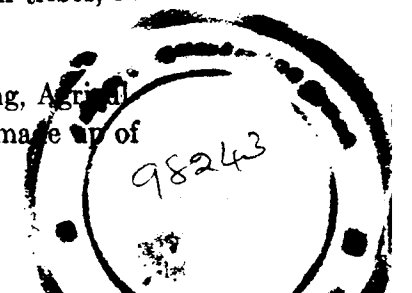
The Aegean tribes, who founded the Mediterranean civilization in Crete in Taman Peninsula and Crimea in Syria and Palestine, in Asia Minor, in Assyria and Mesopotamia, and thence migrated to South India and Ceylon, are found to be made up of two race types, the Anatolian (Armenoid) and the Mediterranean type working in close association for over 3000 years. The only surviving relict of this ancient civilization is the Dravidian civilization in South India. The Anatolians were a sea-faring race, and their adventures started before 3000 B. C. and their home was in Asia Minor, and the

Mediterraneans had their cradle in the Nile Valley around 4000 B. C. The Anatolians came in contact with the Mediterranean Cretans or Minoans about 2000 B. C. as Mycenians in the Island of Crete, and another meeting point was in Central Europe around the Danube region, and they occupied the Southern portion of Greece and the associated Islands in the Eastern Mediterranean, and the Taman Peninsula, in Southern Russia, till they were invaded by the Aryans.

The most remarkable thing is that these two races had lived together and worked together and at times were at war with each other for over 4000 years and they built civilizations in Egypt, in Crete, in Asia Minor, in South India and other centres of the Ancient World. From a biological stand-point the most striking feature is that they still retain their distinctive racial types in South India, owing to the pursuit of hereditary occupations on which their village communities are based from pre-historic times. The caste system has ensured the survival of these races and sub-race types by the prohibition of marriages between members of different tribes, even though they belong to the same race type, if they followed different hereditary occupations, signified by such caste titles as Pillais, Chettiers, Kammalars, and Nadars representing the Ta. 1, Si and Li, and Ta 2, components in the Tamil community. The Caste system insists on the marriage of the members of a caste or of an occupational group, on a hereditary basis, to marry within the caste or group, which custom explains the survivals of these distinctive race and sub-race types in Southern India.

In conclusion, I would propose the name of Indo-Aegeans for the Dravidian tribe of South India who have been equated with the Mediterranean and the Anatolian tribes, in contradistinction to Indo-Aryans.

The Tamahu tribes mainly consist of Fishing, Agriculture and Hunting tribes and the Lebu tribes were made up of



shepherd Trading and warring tribes. They formed confederacies on a totemestic basis. *

* In the preparation of this paper, I have referred to the following works :—

Human History (1930) by G. Elliot Smith. Travels and settlements of early man (1929) by T. S. Foster. Ancient History of the Near East (1920) by H. R. Hall. Aegean Archaeology (1915) by H. R. Hall. Tamil culture, April 1953 — Furer Haimendorf's article. Tamil culture, Jan. 1953 Nallur Swamy Ganaprakasas's article. Ptolemy's Ancient India (1885) by J. W. Mc. Crindle. Comparative Grammar of Dravidian languages (1851) by Caldwell. Origin and spread of Tamils (1947) by V. R. Dikshitar. Tamil India (1945) by M. S. Purnalingam Pillai. Tamils 1800 years ago (1904) Kanakasabai Pillai. Pre-Aryan Tamil culture (1929) by P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar. History of the Tamils by P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar. Castes and Tribes of South India (1909) by Edgar Thurston. Early History of Assyria (1928) by Sydney Smith. The Mediterranean race — A study of origin of European Peoples (1901) by G. Sergi. Ancient India Vol. I (1938) by T. L. Shah. Cambridge History of India Vol. I (1922). Guide to the Archaeological Galleries (1947) Madras Govt. Museum by F. H. Gravely. Abhidana Chintamani (1934) by Sivaprakasa Swamigal. European and other race origins (1916) by H. B. Hanney. Iranians and Greeks in Southern Russia (1922) by M. Rostoutzeff. Origins of agriculture by H. Peaks. Annual Report Survey of India 1902 — 1903.

Ancient Tamil Kings—Their High Ideals *

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

WHEN one begins to talk about the Ancient Kings of the Tamil Country, one naturally thinks of the Kings that ruled the Countries of Chera, Chola and Pandya, nearly 1800 years ago. These kings are commonly called the Kings of the Sangam Age. Though there are certain scholars who would date the Sangam period as the 7th or 8th century A. D. or the 5th Century A. D., there is greater consensus of opinion in regard to fixing it as the early centuries of the Christian era.

The astronomical data in Cilappadikaram regarding the fire of Madura as worked out by Mr. K. G. Sessa Iyer, the absence of any mention of Pallavas in Sangam literature, Ptolemy's description of Musiri as a great emporium, the Gajabahu synchronism which is more kindly accepted nowadays by scholars such as Professor V. R. R. Dikshitar of the Madras University ¹ and Professor R. Satyanatha Iyer of the Annamalai University ² seem to point to the conclusion that the Sangam age was probably the period of the first three centuries of the Christian Era.

Until recently writers on Indian History paid scanty attention to the political and social history of South India. It must be admitted that an error was committed by disregarding evidence from Tamil literature regarding that hoary period. Historians such as Vincent Smith and writers such

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¹ Origin and Spread of the Tamils by Prof. V. R. R. Dikshitar p. 38.

² Indian History : by Prof. R. Satyanatha Iyer M.A., p. 156.

as Professor Sundaram Pillai deplored the omission to trace the history of South India in any well-written book on Indian History. It is gratifying, however, to note that Professor R. Satyanatha Iyer and Professor V. R. R. Dikshitar have not treated South India with any disdain.

I think it was late Professor P. T. S. Iyengar who said, "If Chronology is the eye of History, Ancient Indian History will have to be always blind."³ His idea was that events and accounts of kings could not be given in a sequential order. This is true of South India also. Even though a peep into the age of the Sangam is possible, even though one can know what ideals inspired the kings of the Tamil Country of those days, to put the accounts of these kings in a chronological order has not been successful. A study therefore of early South Indian History is a study of individual personalities and achievements.

But from the materials available, it is possible to reconstruct the probable history of these kings and to show how they lived and had their being.

The sources of information generally are *Purananuru*, *Padirrupattu*, certain stanzas in *Agananuru* and *Cilappadikaram* etc., Evidence from these source should not be set aside, simply because they are from literature. Though epigraphical and numismatical evidence may be more reliable, literary evidence is not to be disregarded. If evidence from the Puranas and Ith'hasas were set aside, the political history of North India would have been a blank, until the time of Asoka.⁴

Therefore, traditions as enshrined in literature have their own value. Poets must have recorded in their writings what they heard about men and things of their times. We cannot and should not dismiss every statement of theirs as a figment of their imagination, or mere sophistry.

³ History of the Tamils by late Prof. P. T. S. Iyengar. p. LVI.

⁴ For instance, the date of accession of Bimbisara as 543 B. C. is obtained from Puranic accounts. (Vide Political History of India by H. Ray Chaudhuri p. 116).

With these few preliminary remarks, let me say something on certain Ancient Kings of our land.

Imayavaramban Perunceralathan, as mentioned in the second ten of *Padirrupattu* appears to have taken certain Greeks captives and appears to have conquered the northerners and implanted his emblem of the bow on the Himalayan ranges in token thereof.⁵

Senkuttuvan (the 5th in the series in *Padirrupattu*) conquered the Pandyas and the Cholas and was making use of their emblems also in the seals used by him.⁶ He had cordial relationship with the Sathavahans, alluded to as 'Nurruvar Kannar' in *Cilappadikaram*.⁷ He appears to have subjugated two Aryan kings by name Kanaka and Vijaya, sons of Balakumara, who spoke in disparaging terms of the kings of Tamil Nad.⁸ Though the reference is not to Kanishka and Vasishka, here we should be charitable to grant that Ilanko adigal has recorded only what he had heard about his brother. Of course, this would have been more acceptable, if there were corroborative evidence from North Indian sources. But it is not always that people frankly admit in their writings or inscriptions that they were conquered by others.

Regarding Chenkuttuvan, it must be stated that he wanted to be loved and respected by his subjects. He was inspired by the ideal of righteous rule, for he said while taking a vow that if he did not arrange to bring the granite piece required for making the image of Kannagi carried on the heads of North Indian Kings, he would become an unrighteous king making his subjects quail under his authority⁹ (Kudi Nadukkuruum Kolen akuga). One might compare *Tirukkural* "Are not the tears, shed as a result of oppression, the weapons which destroy the prosperity of the king."¹⁰

⁵ Padigam of the Second Ten — Dr. Y. Swaminatha Iyer's edn. p. 23.

⁶ *Cilappadikaram* — 25th Canto — ll. 171-173.

⁷ *ibid* Canto 26 — ll. 148-149.

⁸ *ibid*. Canto 26 ll. 158-159; Canto 27 — ll. 50-51.

⁹ *Cilappadikaram* — Canto — 26 — ll. 13-18.

¹⁰ *Tirukkural* St. 555.

Another Chera King, Cheraman Kuttuvan Kothai was always easily accessible to his subjects but was very dear and unapproachable to his enemies. It is said of him that he was to his enemies what a jungle full of tigers was to a herd of sheep.¹¹ This reminds one of the requirements of a king as expected in *Tirukkural*¹² which says "The world will extol the country of the king who is easily accessible and who avoids harsh words."

Yet another Chera, known as Kanaikal Irumporai, refused to take water from unkindly hands, as the supply of it was not compatible with his sense of honour.¹³ When he was taken a captive and was thirsty, he could not brook the wild treatment given to him as a prisoner by his foes and would rather die than drink the water that came to him in an unbecoming way. This is illustrative of the Kural¹⁴ according to which kings are expected not to swerve from virtue and to keep up their honour.

The Chola King Nalankilli was a mighty warrior himself. Though it is generally stated that Tamil kings had no imperialistic ideas, we find that this king thought occasionally in terms of imperialism. He was a composer of verses himself and in one of his verses¹⁵ he has made it explicit that for a mighty man like him the kingdoms of other kings were just as trifling as a dry weed in a water-less tank. His soldiers were as much enamoured of war, as he, and if he were to give orders for a truce or peace owing to possible ill-omens they would be disappointed greatly.¹⁶ But if they were asked to march to distant places through thick woods they would quite willingly do so. And Nalankilli himself liked very much to be with his soldiers in camp.

Though he was a man of such great valour, he had rectitude of conduct. He shunned the company of harlots and

¹¹ Purananuru St. 55.

¹² Tirukkural St. 386.

¹³ Purananuru St. 74.

¹⁴ Stanza 384.

¹⁵ Purananuru St. 75.

¹⁶ Purananuru St. 68.

was faithful to his wife. He said, "If any of my foes despises my prowess, he cannot escape from me, even as a blind fellow who stumbles upon a tiger can never escape. If I do not trample upon him and crush him to death, let me suffer the ignominy of having had union with harlots."¹⁷ One might in this connection compare the king of the Brahmana period who had ordinarily four queens.^{17-a}

Similar sentiments were expressed by a Pandya Talaiyalakanathu Ceru Venra Neduncheliyan on a similar occasion. He said "If I do not take my enemies captives together with their war-drums, let the people who live under my protection lose all protection and cry out "our king is cruel". Let them shed tears and pour reproach on me." This indicates in an indirect way how much regard he had for righteous conduct and proper rule. Tiruvalluvar said that the king whom people speak of as a tyrant will rapidly perish.¹⁸ Then, his vow amounts to saying that he would die, if he did not win the battle.

He prized, besides, comradeship and parley with poets and scholars such as Mangudi Maruthan.¹⁹ He was eager always to lend a helping hand to his subjects that sought his help. Truly, he answers to the description of a good king given in *Tirukkural* as "He is a light among kings who is endowed with liberality, grace, love of his subjects and a desire for just rule."²⁰

He appears to have defeated in battle, in his early age, several of his enemies, including a Chola and a Chera. There are references to him as "Eluvar Nalvalam Kadantoy."²¹

This Neduncheliyan was aware of the need to dig tanks and wells for purposes of better irrigation. He made his name immortal by this means²².

¹⁷ Purananuru St. 73.

^{17-a} Vide Political History of India — by H. Raychaudri page 85.

¹⁸ Tirukkural — St. 564.

¹⁹ Purananuru St. 72.

²⁰ Stanza 390.

²¹ E. g. Purananuru St. 76.

²² Purananuru 18.

Another Pandya, known as Ārya Padai Kadanta Neduncheliyan, has given a verse on the importance of learning.²³ This throws some light on the relationship between king and his subjects, for it states that the king would not summon to his Assembly for counsel the eldest person in each house but would be guided by the counsel only of the learned members of the family. As Tiruvalluvar says, "the prosperity of the ruler who does not consult his advisers but makes them the victims of his fury will dwindle."²⁴

Another Neduncheliyan (probably unidentified), the hero extolled in Nedunalvadai by Nakkirar, had great concern for his wounded soldiers when they were in camp. During midnight, when a chill north wind was blowing he left his pavilion with a few attendants, while it was raining and went round making enquiries of the soldiers wounded in the previous day's fight.²⁵

Butha Pandyan also expressed the view that if he did not take his enemies captives with their chariots, he might be called an unrighteous king who confided too much in an undeserving counsellor. He said further "Let me be separated from my wife, if I do not win the battle; let me be born again not in the Pandya line of kings; let me lose the pleasure and the privilege of intellectual contact with my friends who are as dear to me as my very eyes."²⁶ Here one may compare Tiruvalluvar's words "The life of one with no social contact will be like the overflowing waters of a tank without a bund."²⁷

The Pandyan King mentioned in the Madurai Kandam of *Cilappadikaram* was punishing the wicked and rewarding the good. But when he gave orders for the execution of Kovalan, because of the allegation that he had stolen the anklets of the queen, he had failed to render justice. Kannaki went up to him and proved that her husband was not guilty. The

²³ Purananuru St. 183.

²⁴ Stanza 568.

²⁵ Vide II. 172-188.

²⁶ Purananuru St. 71.

²⁷ Tirukkural Stanza 523.

King stung with shame and remorse fell down dead.²⁸ He thought that he should not live, for he was guilty of killing an innocent person. He did not think of any expiation. Such a voluntary punishment on himself saved the honour of his clan.²⁹

These were some of the Kings of Ancient Tamil Nad, of whom we get accounts from ancient Tamil Literature.

²⁸ Cilappadikaram Canto 20 — ll. 74-78.

²⁹ ibid — 25th Canto — ll. 95-99.

A Pioneer Research Worker in Tamil Music

A. C. PAUL NADAR, B.A., B.L.

A BRAHAM Pandither was a man of dynamic personality and versatile genius. His career was one continuous romance of varied achievements coming one after another. His circumstances were unpromising ; his resources were slender and his educational equipment was slight. He however rose step by step by sheer industry and hard work. He started life as an elementary school master ; became rich as a physician and manufacturer of medicine ; and won a great reputation as an agriculturist. He tried his hand at painting, photography, soap-making, Engineering and handicraft. Though he touched life on many sides, it is for his outstanding contribution to the study of Carnatic music that he will be ever remembered. His researches have revealed new aspects of Tamil Culture.

He was born on the second of August 1859 in the small hamlet of Samburvadagarai not far from the famous Courtallam Falls in the Tirunelveli District. All that his grandfather Subramania Nadar owned was a tiny, little garden. Subramania Nadar sought the solace of Christianity after he had lost as many as eleven out of his thirteen children. Abraham's father Muthuswamy was a gardener in the Mission Bungalow at Surandai and as a gardener he displayed considerable taste and skill. His mother was a Bible woman of forceful character and keen understanding. The young Abraham passed his primary examination at Surandai and the special upper primary examination at Dindigul and became a teacher at the early age of fifteen in a mission school at Dindigul. As a school master, he worked hard and made the school popular. During leisure hours, he devoted himself to the study of music,

medicine and handicrafts. He contacted Karunanantha Rishi, a mystic living in the neighbouring Sruli hills. The Rishi taught him the secret of the famous Sanjeevi Pills which laid the foundation of his future material prosperity.

Later on, after his marriage he and his wife were employed in the Lady Napier's Girls School in the Fort area, Tanjore. He was in the most fashionable quarters of the town and had access to the best that Tanjore could offer by way of music, learning and general culture.

When he was about thirty years old, both husband and wife gave up their appointments and took to the work of physicians and makers of medicine. From a small beginning, Abraham rose to the position of an expert physician, thereafter known as Pandither. He prospered and became rich, his daily income rising to a thousand rupees a day at the zenith of his prosperity. Then he turned his attention to agriculture and worked hard to make his *Karunanandar farm* a model one. It attracted Governors, Collectors and many agricultural experts who visited it for studying his methods of agriculture.

All his activities were a reflection of the awakening in India of the new spirit in all spheres — national, social, economic, cultural and artistic produced by the impact of the West in the last quarter of the last century. Before he was thirty years of age the Tamil renaissance had started under the leadership of Prof. Sundaram Pillai, V. Swaminathier, Damodaram Pillai, V. P. Subramania Mudaliar and a host of others. Pandither's keen insight discerned the new trend in the air before it was realised by the public mind.

The last ten years of his life were entirely devoted to music. Nothing is known about the equipment and the competence of his violin tutor Sadayandi Asari at Dindigul. One thing, however, is certain that Abraham early recognised the greatness of his country's music and had a partiality for it in preference to the western music, mostly the Church music, which he learned from the missionaries. The written notation

for the western and Tamil musical systems gave him an opportunity for comparison and contrast which laid the foundation for his scientific study of music. It does not appear that he made any great progress in the study of Church music. But he took to the study of Tamil music with such assiduity that he quickly attained in it a proficiency sufficient to attract the girls of the Dancing Girl Community to seek his instruction. One of his pupils was the famous Dindigul Janaki, a musical star of the first magnitude, whose rendering of Tamil songs created the impression even in those days that Tamil songs, when properly sung, were in no way inferior to Telugu songs. At that time, Telugu had undisputed reputation as a language most suitable for Carnatic music. The great artists of the second quarter of the nineteenth century — Thiagaraja, Syama Sastri and Muthuswami Dikshitar, all of them residents of Tamil Nad — composed their musical pieces in Telugu as well as in Sanskrit. They captured the imagination of the cultured classes who all became devotees of Telugu. The joy of music became the possession of the cultured few. But the overwhelming mass of people did not and could not enjoy these marvellous works of art created by those master artists. The cleavage between the mass and the cultured few became as wide as the one between the English educated University men and the mass of people. The votaries of Telugu Sahitya persuaded themselves that Tamil was unsuitable for the higher music. Tamil songs were practically driven out of the Katcheries. Musical performances had no attraction for the mass of people. At this stage Dindigul Janaki's wonderful rendering of Tamil songs had a refreshing effect and encouraged the lovers of Tamil to think that Tamil was not after all so unsuitable as the lovers of Telugu pieces represented. This was a small beginning for the Tamil Isai movement.

When Pandither became a teacher at Tanjore, he resided within the Palace area. On one side there was Sahgeeta Mahal, the music hall of the Mahratta Rajas where all through the day and the major part of the night, there was good music. On the other side was the Ramasami Temple where poojah was held with music six times a day. In those days, Tanjore was the unrivalled centre of Carnatic music and one of the most

important musical centres of India. In the midst of such inspiring surroundings, Pandither's ear was trained by hearing the best in music which South India could offer. His discriminative faculty was developed to discern the basic difference of one Raga from another. It set him thinking to find out the principles which underlie and pervade all the Srutis and the method of constructing melodies out of the Srutis.

When he became rich, he engaged the best musical tutors for his children. Jagannatha Bhatgoswami was the first music tutor to be engaged. He was a good Veena player. Then came Venkatachalam Iyer, a Veena teacher and hereditary musician attached to the Palace. He was also a blood relation of the great Thiagaraja. Vocal music was taught by Samia Pillai who was in the tradition of Thiagaraja, his father being the immediate disciple of the great Sahitya Kartha. The last, but not the least was the renowned violin artist Panchapigesa Bhagavathar who was wellknown for the sweetness of his melody on the violin. While all these four taught the children veena, violin and vocal music, Pandither sat long hours with them in the study of the theory of the music.

With the help of the first mentioned three artists, he edited a collection of Tamil songs which he had composed on the model of the Telugu pieces, setting Tamil words to the notation. The book was very carefully edited, and it took nearly seven years for the printers, Messrs. Hoe & Co., of Madras to complete it. The publication was a demonstration that there could be Tamil Sahityams on Telugu models. Pandither felt that this was after all an imitation, and he longed for the day when he himself or any student of music could compose an original piece on the lines of the great artists mentioned above. He started his own press called "The Lawley Electric Printing Press" which he located in a handsome building and equipped with an up-to-date machinery for printing and binding, worked by a powerful electric Dynamo.

Besides the regular tutors above mentioned, he secured the services of the most distinguished artistes of the day such as, Muthiah Bagavathar of Arikesanallur, better known in

latter days under the title of "Gayakasikhamani", Seshanna, the Veena Expert of Mysore Palace and Venkataramadas, the Veena expert of Vijayanagar Samasthanam. Pandither was engaged frequently in the discussion of the theory of music with these experts. To his surprise he discovered that none among the artistes of the Carnatic music had any scientific knowledge of the subject, on its theoretical side. His questions were a source of embarrassment and puzzle to these artistes. Indeed, Seshanna frankly admitted that there could be no answer to Pandither's questions and that in any case, none of his friends was competent to answer them and said that if Pandither persisted in pursuing his enquiry, it might end in his madness. But Pandither persisted in trying to find an answer to those questions, a few of which were :

What is the origin of Carnatic Music? What is its authority? How are Sruthis formed from Swarams? What are the principles which underlie and pervade all the Sruthis? What is the number of Sruthis? How are Ragas constructed out of Swarams? What is the basic principle of the difference between one Raga and another? What is the 'Jeevasuram' for a Raga? Can only a genius create a new Raga or is there a method by which a trained man could create a new one? Is there a rule for composing new Keerthanams, Geethams, Var-nams, Swarajathis etc?

Before the year 1910, Pandither had discovered a new method for making Geethams, Keerthanams etc. Another great discovery was the method of ascertaining the 'Jeevaswaram' of any Raga. On the second visit of Seshanna to Tanjore, he was quite convinced of the value of the rules for making Keerthanams evolved by Pandither and appreciated them. He was amazed to find that Pandither had composed 700 Geethams, compositions for new ragas mostly with the help of his second wife Bakkiammal and partly with the help of his eldest daughter Mrs. Annapoorani Gnanasikhamoni, in accordance with the set of rules that he had formulated. Seshanna, Muthiah Bhagavather and Mr. H. P. Krishna Rao, the editor of the musical journal of those days and an ardent student of the science of music, accepted them unreservedly, in all humility.

Pandither was not satisfied with the mere knowledge of his discoveries; he was most anxious to do propaganda for the benefit of all. Ordinary artistes were not so ready to accept what the experts had accepted. In order to convince a wider public, Pandither, founded on 14-12-1912, the Tanjore Sangeetha Vidhya Maha Sabha of which he was elected permanent president. Under the auspices of that association, he convened as many as seven musical conferences in the course of four or five years. Almost all the eminent musical artistes, scholars and public men of Tamil-nad took part in them. Papers on various aspects of Carnatic music, dealing with Swarams, Suruthis and ragas, were read and discussions and demonstrations were held. These conferences proved important events in the development of the study of Carnatic music and stimulated public interest in it. They laid the foundations of the 'Great renaissance' of Indian music that has since swept over the country.

Pandither got into touch with the experts and students of North Indian music also. He corresponded with distinguished students of Hindustan music such as Bhatkhande of Bombay and Mr. Clements I. C. S., then District Judge of Dharwar, the author of a treatise on Hindustan Music. He availed himself of an invitation to attend the 'All India Music Conference' in Baroda convened by H. H. The Gaekwar and his talented Dewan Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao. Pandither attended the conference with his family and took part in the deliberations, and thereby laid the foundation for his all India fame as an exponent of scientific music.

In all the Music conferences whether at Tanjore or at Baroda, the main question that was debated, and in which Pandither was most interested, related to the number of Suruthis in an octave in Carnatic music. He threw himself heart and soul into that question with all his energy and resourcefulness. In this matter he came into clash with orthodoxy and time honoured tradition. Music, like all other sciences and arts in India, is religious. Any innovation is looked upon as a sacrilege. That is how the Indian mind tenaciously fights against any innovation however reasonable it may be.

Now, a Sanskrit text book on music — *Sangeeta Ratnakara* by Saranga Deva, a native of Kashmir, but residing at the court of Devagiri in the Maharashtra in the beginning of the 13th century, mentions twenty two suruthis. Tradition accepted this without enquiry into the truth of the statement. Pandither maintained that it was not scientifically correct and was not practicable and that twenty-four was the correct number. A fierce controversy ensued. It was a controversy which the general public could not intelligently follow. It was a battle between experts. The contest looked unequal: on one side, a Christian not in the tradition of Carnatic music, and on the other side, were ranged religion, orthodoxy, tradition and wealth of learning. Unequal though the contest was, Pandither came out triumphant. His genius flowered; there was nothing which his painstaking genius could not grasp or delve into, to find out the truth. Nothing but the conviction that he was in possession of the truth and that ignorance only opposed him, supported him in those days of the battle of suruthis not always carried on with equanimity and decorum. (Vide XX P. 864 Vol. I *Karunamirtha Sagaram* of Pandither.)

Pandither made research into the Tamil works long anterior to Saranga Deva's '*Sangeetha Rathnahara*'. In the edition of *Silapathikaram* published by Swaminathayyar with the two old available commentaries, he found an inexhaustible mine for his musical researches. With informations and suggestions scattered here and there, Pandither's genius recreated the past glory of ancient Tamil music submerged by ages.

The results of his researches are embodied in *Karunamirtha Sagaram*, Volume I published in 1917. It is a bulky volume of more than 2000 pages of half-size paper. The mere appearance of the book has scared away many. It contains a lot of materials — archaeological, historical, linguistic and scientific. It is however a treatise mainly on 'Isai Tamil' dealing with suruthis. The chief aim of the author is to show, what the music of the ancient Tamil Nad was and how modern Carnatic music is its counterpart. He proves by apt quotations from Tamil works how in the Ancient Tamil music the octave was divisible into a number of equal tones. This is his

fundamental position. The octave is not only divisible into twelve, but also into twenty four, forty eight and ninety six equal intervals, the series in all cases arising gradually by geometrical progression. He supports this theory by minute mathematical calculations, logarithms, decimals down to eight places, as regards length of string, number of vibrations, cents etc. He condemns the theory of 22 suruthis for the octave and says that its advocates altogether mis-interpret Saranga Deva, who if properly understood (according to Pandither), is not opposed to 24 suruthis.

Pandither constructed a Veena of his own to demonstrate his theory of suruthis. The demonstration was made on several occasions by Pandither's two daughters Mrs. Maragathavalli Durai Pandian and Mrs. Kanagavalli Navomoni. Both these talented ladies demonstrated it at the All India music Conference at Baroda in the presence of a galaxy of experts from all over India. Vynika Siromani Venkatramdas, Samasthana Vidwan of Vijayanagar one of those present at the demonstration at Baroda, wrote in a letter dated 17th May 1917: "My joy reached its utmost limits when Keerthanams were sung where these 12, 24, 48 and 96 suruthis were used. These demonstrations are beyond the imagination of any Vidwan nor could they be sung by any. When Srimathi Maragathavalliammal and Kanagavalliammal sang Keerthanas in the minute suruthis, I was carried into the regions of ecstasy. I have seen many places from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, and I have made the acquaintance of many a musical expert. But I have not found any one to equal Srimathi Maragathavalliammal in musical ear. When the audience at Baroda listened to her singing, how she brought into prominence even the most insignificant suruthi, their joy knew no bounds. Many clapped hands out of sheer joy, spoke words of deep appreciation, and said that a new era had dawned for the musical world. I was lost in admiration when I witnessed all this novelty."

Scarcely had the first volume come out of the Printer's table, when Pandither started writing the second. He was already 58 years old. He had only two years to live. He began to work in right earnest at the second volume. His

health broke down under the stress of heavy work. The feeling of anxiety whether he would live to complete the work overcame him. Many friends deserted him on the publication of the first volume, as they felt that the theory of 24 suruthis expounded therein, was a sacrilege. The few that remained were doubtful of the value of the enquiry and research he was carrying on with single-minded devotion. Undismayed, he carried on the work in the belief that 50 years hence he would be appreciated by experts as well as by the general public. In spite of the physical weakness which confined him to bed, he dictated from his bed. To the last moment of his life, he was grappling with the problem of music with zeal worthy of Brownings' Grammarian : with this difference, Pandither's zeal was directed towards vital problems of music intended to delight, elevate and purify mankind. He entered into eternal rest on the 31st of August 1919.

The second volume was not altogether completed by Pandither. He had however printed whatever he wrote. He desired that his daughter Mrs. Maragathavalli Duraipandian should complete it. Twenty seven years later, in the beginning of the year 1946, the second volume was published, thanks to the energy and zeal of Pandither's eldest son Dr. A. Sundara Pandyan, the present proprietor of Lawley Electric Printing Press. It has an appreciative introduction by that ardent scholar and devotee of music, Mr. M. Anantha Narayanan M.A., I C. S., the District Judge of the Madras Judicial Service.

The second volume has only 352 pages of half size paper. It is a scientific treatise on the basic principles of Carnatic music, perhaps the only one of its kind. It has solutions for the very questions which Pandither himself posed to music experts in the beginning of his studies and research, such as :— How are Suruthis formed from Swarams ? What are the basic principles of Suruthis ? How are Ragas constructed from Suruthis ? What is the basic principle of difference between one Raga and another ? What is a Jeeva Swaram for Raga ? Can only a genius create a new Raga or is there a method by which

a trained man could create a new one ? If so, are there rules for composing new Keerthanams, Geethams, Swarajathies, Varnams ? Pandither discusses all these questions and answers them. He evolves rules and formulates methods for creating new pieces. In the opinion of competent men, the book reveals 'Divine Secrets' never before revealed.

It comes as an eye opener to those who have a contempt for Tamil as a vehicle for music. Pandither's researches embodied in both the volumes, establish beyond all doubt that the music mis-called Carnatic had really its origin in the Tamil language and attained its highest development in Tamil Nad. Only the nomenclature has been altered and the principle misunderstood. (Vide P. 42, Vol. II Part I of *Tamil Culture* for an article by A. A. Varagunapandiyan, the third son of Abraham Pandither on "The Genius of Tamil Music" and his book *Panar Kaivali Enapadum Yel Nool* (South Indian Saiva Sithantha Press, Tirunelveli).

The second volume has some of the original compositions of Mrs. Maragathavalli Durai Pandian in illustration of the theories and principles expounded therein. She has given 15 Keerthanams, 14 Geethams, 1 Varnam and 1 Swarajathi. They serve as specimens of Tamil Sahitia. They are not only in such wellknown ragas as Maya Malava Gowli, and Vachraganthi ; but also in such rare ragas as Kanaganki and Bavapriya and in such new Ragas as Abirami (named after her father and Guru,) and Gnanapon (in memory of her mother) and Sundarangi (called after her eldest brother). All these pieces are analysed and explained with full notes necessary for the student of music.

The true value of Pandither's contribution to Carnatic music is yet to be realised. No doubt, we are passing through a period of musical revival. Great enthusiasm and mass activity have been engendered by the formation of large musical Sabhas and Academies. But we are yet to spread among the people true knowledge, intelligent discrimination and deep

appreciation. The spirit of the times requires greater refinement and richer development. Vidwans themselves are wholly given up to material success and have lost pursuit of the enduring values of music. They scarcely know how to cater to or elevate the popular taste. They complain that music cannot be made to order. To such Vidwans, Pandither's contribution comes as a great boon.*

* M. Abraham Pandither's *Karunantha Sagaram on Surthis* Book I
Rs. 20-0-0
- do - English Translation Book I 20-0-0
" on Ragas Book II 15-0-0
are available with Dr. A. Soundra Pandyan, K. M. Hall Tanjore.

Kulatur, an Experience in Village Antiquity

LEOPOLD BAZOU

IF the research student meets with disappointment at times in the wide field of Dravidian culture, he is often rewarded in finding much more than he could have been bargaining, for Kulattur presents a typical case of such an unexpected reward. The place, some six miles north of Dindigul along the road to Eriyodu and Karur, is but a small, and, to the profane, insignificant village of some Palla families who are the field-menials to the few caste land-owners, Vellalas and Reddis. But Kulattur has a past, and a long one, that was not without glory. To the north-west of the village on the eastern bank of the river, there stands a large mound of earth, the remnants from a 'palaiyam' or mudfort that commanded the northern approach to the important fortress of Dindigul. Of the occupation by the Muslim troops of Hider Ali and Tippu Sultan in the second part of the XVIIIth century some evidence has been found, namely some small copper coins and a 10 pound cannon ball, unearthed from the surrounding fields.

But our concern was the Dravidian past. It was actually to meet the 'Mother' in one of her many forms, the Mother riding a horse, that we had come. We were soon to discover to our great satisfaction that the Mother's presence was felt everywhere as the ancestress of the Dravidian clans, with her symbols of fertility rites and the cult of ancestors that goes back here to prehistoric days.

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The village stands on the eastern bank of the Sandanavardhini Nathi. We shall forgive it its rather long and pretentious name, for is it not redolent of the sweet 'Sandal-like Goddess Varudhini'? Though but one of the many mere seasonal brooks from the neighbouring Sirumalai and Ayalur hills, this 'feminine river' (Nathi) has for centuries brought fertility to the place and inspired various aspects of ancient Dravidian worship. The 'Riding Mother' one cannot miss. She stands in her recent structure of brick and chunnam in the ancestral form of Kottravai, the Dravidian victorious Mother, sword in hand, at the further end of the village, facing north wherfrom came the foe. But though a warrior, riding a horse under the title of 'Rasta Kaliyamman', she is still the traditional smiling benign Dravidian Mother, even if modernity had its say in the addition of a fine Rajapalayam dog by the side of the 'donee', a turbanned villager with coat and shoes plus a wrist-watch. The many hearths for the Puja in front of a small pagoda to the Mother attest that her worship is not a thing of the past, and the iron-cradles hung from a large banyan-tree are eloquent witnesses that she is still honoured as the ancestral goddess of fertility, the Dravidian Mother of the clan and of the village people. We need not wonder, therefore, why a small elephant in stone stands in front of her shrine as her mount. It belongs to the same concept and its presence by the side of the Mother seems to be as ancient as Dravidian iconography. But we soon found much more symbols and survivals of the ancient Dravidian cult.

In the fields west of the Riding Mother there stands a dilapidated small structure, the ruined walls of a former shrine surrounding a simple stone upon which the Mother is carved in a seating posture. Her waist is so slender that the slab has broken at the waistband, as if unequal to bear her bountiful breast, her high and large headdress that expands into a glorious aureola, and her four pairs of arms holding the symbols of her sovereignty. Here again, in spite of all her attributes of power and strength, she keeps her traditional attractive features, characterized by benevolence and benignity. She is the smiling Mother, the classical Dravidian Balamma, the 'Youthful Mother'.

Still among the same fields we find two other slabs with rude carvings, representing one man and the other two, each standing on one leg as if about to throw to the threatening foe the heavy stone held in the raised right hand. These hero-stones are not out-of-place here, almost at the foot of the ancient palaiyam and in the immediate neighbourhood of the Mother, whom they protect. There is still another hero-stone with an archer about to unbend his bow and let out the arrow, but this is almost in the village between a site of megalithic dolmens and new shrines to the Mother.

In the fields again, to the north of the slab representing the Mother, we visit an unpretentious pagoda-like small structure, the *Samadhi* or tomb of a local Reddi. Inside the narrow square cell with its door ajar, the stone slabs that form the flooring over the grave bear no name, no inscription, no sign of any kind to perpetuate the character and personality of this village worthy, some of whose grandsons we know rather intimately. There is nothing inside this otherwise uninspiring mausoleum besides a typical symbol — a Lingam over its Yōni pedestal. In the simplest and at the same time the most-telling manner, is expressed here the belief that death is not the last word. These symbols of creative energy over a tomb significantly emphasize the whole ancestral cult of the dead and the connected concept of fertility, the very fact that life endures beyond the grave as it perpetuates itself in the family. And this is not here mere fancy. The cult of the dead and the worship of ancestors are here alive everywhere, and they have, indeed, kept alive from prehistoric days.

There is in the village itself, within the Palla quarters, a modern small pagoda surmounted by the usual gaudily painted chunnam statuary. It would not be worth mentioning if it were not actually a shrine dedicated to a *Pattavar* — an ancestor. And this humble shrine is but a contemporary expression of an ancestral belief. Broken stone slabs, found here and there on the western side of the village near the river-bank, and other large stones rising from the ground into which their lower portion is deeply implanted, are without question relics from ancient dolmens. This cult survives again in the small

dolmen-like structures to be found in the Palla quarters, in front of the very houses that surround the shrine to the Pattavar. Such symbols, however varied they may be, are all inspired by the same concept. These miniature dolmens, that are not larger nor higher than a stone-seat, may look like so many hencoops; they may occasionally be used for such a purpose, indeed, since in actual life the sacred and the profane are closely connected. But we know — and we have the assurance of the villages — that they stand as religious symbols, as so many altars upon which vows are made and oaths taken. Similar family dolmens are not uncommon among all classes of people in various parts of the country. Their size may at times not exceed one and a half feet in length like those we saw in the courtyard of Hindu Vanniars of Mullipadi, a village just a few miles to the east, and those built by children in their religious mood in the neighbourhood of the Chettiyammai shrine, north of Eriyodu. This Annmai is the protective female deity of a community of Chetties who dwell at Siluvattur some ten miles to the south.

The cult of the Mother must be deeply engrained into the souls of the Kulattur villagers. Not content with all the other exteriorizations, ancient and modern, of their veneration, they have of late raised three more shrines to her. The village Pujari to the Mother may be a Pallar, that is one from the field-menial class as it should, all, Vellalas and Reddiars, have contributed towards the expense of the buildings as they do contribute every year to that of the festival. If whatever concerns the Mother is the concern of the village community as a whole, her priest is usually taken from the field-menial class since it is the field-menials who know how to approach and deal with Mother Earth, the purveyor of all goods and of all life.

To make sure they would not leave out any important aspect of the Mother's many forms, they have dedicated each shrine to a particular characteristic, Lakshmi as the wife of Vishnu, Kali, the wife of Siva, and Sarasvathi, the daughter of Brahma. The chunnam statues that crown these three shrines that have been built one close to the other, include

various representations of the Mother and of her son, Murugan, who is shown both in his youthful and childlike aspects. On the slabs that form the lintels over the only opening to each shrine the Mother appears as she usually does, seated between two elephants with their trunk raised as a mark of honour. Two out of the three shrines have a couple of female attendants while the third one shows male guardians or Virans.

We might have felt some hesitation in attributing to former megalithic dolmens the ancient broken slabs that are still lying about the place in the immediate neighbourhood of the three shrines or used, as we have seen, in the erection of tiny dolmens as domestic altars in front of private houses. But past experience made us expect corroboration from further facts. Unmistakable dolmens slabs of the upper portion of which above ground had almost completely disappeared while the lower portion lie deep in the ground, to be found on the western part of the village, and the many laterite boulders we met along the road on our way back to Dindigul, confirmed our surmise. We had missed the boulders along the road or had attached little importance to them, though students of the Dravidian past ought to know better and keep always on the look-out for something to happen or at least to appear. These scattered boulders are but part of a rather large burial site that lies mainly to the north of the Sellammanadhi village, that is the 'Femine River of the Caressing Prosperous Mother', which is situated about halfway between Dindigul and Kulattur. Some of these stone circles are almost in perfect condition, showing still inside the rings of laterite boulders many debris of a kind of porous *sukkam* lime-stone and flint-stones, that in some remote century had been piled over the grave.

This large burial site has been unhappily disturbed in recent times. Scattered laterite boulders are to be found all over the place, along the road or in the fields. Many boulders have been removed to the further ends of particular plots of land so as to mark the field-boundaries. Some of the tombs have been excavated not so long ago and, sorry to say, not a few of them are being used now as manure pits! We were, anyhow, most thankful that so many of these stone circles have survived so many centuries for us to see.

Further investigations have broadened considerably for us the area of ancient burial sites in this particular tract of the country north of Dindigul, along the tributaries of the Godavanan river and on the bank of the Godavanan itself. Many are, indeed, the places in which are to be found ancient stone slabs that show all the signs of having been removed from megalithic dolmens. They have been broken into pieces to be used as basements to more recent shrines either to the Mother or her companion, the Aiyenar; they have gone to erect small altars in the courtyards of houses in villages. Some of them have been put to profane uses like those black-stone slabs that form now two tubs in which the local Dhobhi soaks in water the village dirty clothes at Vaidesvaram near Eriyodu. We discovered several menhirs or raised stones, some small, not higher than four feet and belonging to a past that cannot be held as very ancient, and others as high as eight feet, rough, irregular and weather-stained by centuries of exposure.

We know of another burial site a few miles to the west of Sellammanadhi, near Malvarpatti, between Marambadi and the Dindigul-Vedasandur road, not far from the Godavanan and on the bank of one of his tributaries, the Varattar that brings the monsoon rain-water from the Ayalur Hills. It is usual enough, as is well-known, to find prehistoric burial sites near water-courses or tanks. We are told that a tomb was excavated some years back in a place west of Mullipadi, on the bank of the river that joins further on the Kulattur Sandanavardhini Nadhi. A large burial urn was actually unearthed. It is still kept in the house of the man to whom we owe the information.

Kottaiyur, at about the eighth mile north of Dindigul on the road to Vedasandur, is nothing now but an extensive mound of earth covering some twenty to thirty acres, on the west of the road and of the Godavanan. Here and there in the basements of the former mudwalls and at the shrine to the Aiyenar in the south-western corner of the fort-area, we found ancient slabs that foretold a burial site. This was not far to seek. On the western side of the fort, on a lower plane stands an extensive waste land with some rare brushwood shrubs and scattered

debris, slabs, flint-stones and sukkam stones. Here and there one notices just above the ground the lower portion of dolmen-slabs forming a regular square, and circles of boulders — regular or disturbed — complete with flint-stones and sukkam stones.

While we were going round the place four men were ploughing the land north of the Aiyenar shrine, and four small heaps of fresh feathers in front of the shrine told their own tale: one cock for each plough that had been sacrificed that very morning to this deity of fertility as an offering and supplication for a good harvest to come.

Proceeding further we met another burial site near the village of Puliampatti north of the Vedasandur-Eriyodu road on a high waste land. Under an old and almost dying banyan-tree there stand two large ancient dolmens in perfect condition with a smaller and much more, recent one between the two. The place is marked also by several stone-beds made out of very sharp small stones pointing upwards...

Ancient burial sites are diversely known in Tamil. The most common appellation in the Pudukkottai country is one that we found ourselves reluctant at first to use until we were made aware it proved to be the best understood, *Kurangu Pat-tadai*, Monkey's workshop. The name must have, no doubt, some connection with the part played in the *Ramayana* by Hanuman in paving, so to say, the way with huge boulders over the Sethu or Ramesvaram strait. Another name is *Pandava Kuli*, which is an admitted corruption for *Panda Kuli* or urn pit. It simply recalls the fact that the Dravidians buried their dead in large urns which they deposited in tombs. *Mudumakshatti* or Old Man Urn is also known in Pudukkottai. *Kallarai* is used for stone-chamber burial. It has survived in Tamil, and a tomb is still called *kallarai* even if it is a mere pit. Here, in the country north of Dindigul, those ancient burial sites are collectively known as *Pandiya Vidu* or Pandiya dwelling.

But under their varied appellations these ancient burial sites have remained in the language of the people as clear sur-

vivals from an ancient almost forgotten past. Pandiya Kuli which is, as we have said, a corruption from *Panda Kuli* or urn pit, has its counterpart in the so-called *Pandava* caves, the natural cavern which in prehistoric days served as places of dwelling or shelter before they were actually used by the first Jain monks in Tamilagam. From *Panda* — to *Pandava-Kuli* there is but a little step to be taken. And so may be said as regards *Pandava* caves and *Pandiya Vidu*. Did not commentators of ancient Tamil poetry establish links connecting the *Pandiya* early princes of Tamilagam with the famous *Pandava* brothers of the *Mahabharata*?

The rich cultural and religious Dravidian past is not far to seek nor as difficult to find as one might imagine. The research field lies almost at one's doorstep, as near as the small dolmens that are still being erected in many a village and among many a class of people, both *Tamilian* — or *Telugu-speaking*, in *Tamil Nad*. Larger dolmens, though smaller in size than those of prehistoric days, are not uncommonly met near villages or in the open country. There is one such just outside *Dindigul*, along the railway line to *Palni*, about half-way between the level-crossing north of the burning ghat and the *Angu Nagaram* farm. There upon a mound of earth that has been left from the excavation work that went to make this part of the railway tract, stand the seven erected slabs, the top one lying at the foot of the mound. Further north, at the entrance of the village of *Chettinayakkenpatti*, there is a similar one. Near *Ahtoor*, on the way to *Akkaraipatti* beyond the river *Godavanar*, some ten miles south-west of *Dindigul*, there is one under a tree that is still held sacred. It bears the *Saiva* red and white stripes and is resorted to occasionally by a group of *Telugu-speaking* folk. And whenever we set out investigating we find still more similar dolmen-like structures, and raised stones too, some among them showing unmistakeable signs of antiquity.

Hindu burial places, either attached to burning ghats or situated in the village commons, present tombs with raised platforms of rude masonry work surmounted by a large stone slab in the traditional dolmen-shape. Times pass, things

change but ancient concepts prevail in spite of all, even if modified in the detail, even if their ancestral meaning has been lost. From prehistoric days the cult of ancestors has survived in its essentials. One's ancestors may be quite forgotten, or be still honoured as *Pattavars* — or *Pattavals* — when he or she has not been actually raised to the honours of the altars and acquired rank of village or group Mother or *Amman*, or that or *Aiyenar*. More times will pass, more things will be forgotten, and it may well happen that one day this village *Amman* or that *Aiyenar* will acquire such a fame as to become exalted above all the other *Ammans* and *Aiyenars*, and above all *Swamys*, and attract the worship of the people of a whole *Nad* or of a whole district as the 'Mistress of the Whole World' or as the 'True God in our Dark Age'.

Any lover of the Dravidian past, however inexperienced he may prove, can easily find by himself, provided he be patient and know how to keep his eye open, many such survivals from the cultural and religious past almost at his very doorstep. Once his interest is awakened he will be rewarded beyond all expectation.

The Importance of Tamil Epigraphy

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

EPIGRAPHY occupies a singular place among the sources of History, for it controls to a certain extent all that we can learn from tradition, literature or art. Epigraphs were not inscribed professedly for the purpose of conveying historical information; on this very account they are trustworthy for their evidence is free from bias. Most inscriptions are contemporaneous with the events inscribed and memory has very little chance of intervening. In palm leaf manuscripts which are copied from one another there is room for errors in the transcription; epigraphs being permanent records have no room for such errors. Even among inscriptions on stones and inscriptions on copper plates, stone inscriptions are more dependable for they are exhibited publicly and are open to daily inspection. On the other hand copper plates like manuscripts are in the possession of individuals and hence provide occasions for forgery and interpolation by interested persons.

Without the aid of Epigraphy the chronology of Tamil kings and important events of the Tamil country would still remain conjectures. As C. Sivaramamurti says "The study of epigraphy, therefore, is a matter of vital importance. The inscriptions throw light on the life of sovereigns and the people over whom they ruled. Important incidents are recorded in them. Sometimes they supply or strengthen a weak link in accounts of dynasties known to us from other literary sources. They help us to locate the sites of ancient places by the geographical material recorded in them. They introduce us to institutions prevailing in the country at the time of their record. They supply us with a complete list of the designation of officers of state to whom different functions

were allocated. The prosperity of the country by sea-borne trade and privileges of merchant guilds are herein pictured. The religious faith, toleration or bigotry, endowments and charities for temples, monasteries, universities, etc., are recorded. Maintenance of charitable institutions, hospitals and colleges is herein mentioned.

The inscriptions furnish a good deal of information regarding weights and measures; tables of measures can be made out by a study of the inscriptions where even the smallest measure is mentioned; similarly also regarding the weights used for gold, silver, copper and other metals. Just as the measure, *drona*, was started by the Nandas '*Nandopakramam dronah*,' similarly some measures were started by Pallava and Cola kings. Sometimes they were named after the kings themselves like *Arumolidevan* after *Rajaraja* or *Videlvidugu* after Pallava Mahendravarman or more often after the gods like *Daksināmeruvidangan* and *Ādavallān*. From the inscriptions we get an insight into the price of articles to be compared with modern prices but it was mostly in terms of paddy, rice, pulse, ghee, oil, etc."¹

Tamil epigraphs are found not only within the limits of Tamil Nad but also in Kerala, Andhra Desa and Mysore, in Ceylon, Malaya and in Takua (*Foreign Notices* by K. A. N. Sastri P. 19).

Commonly copper and stones are used for incision. Hitherto no inscription is found in Tamilnad on bricks, silver or golden plates or on crystals or bones. The earliest available Tamil Inscription is the one on the Thirunathar Kuntru. On paleographical grounds it is generally accepted to belong to the 3rd century A. D. Inscriptions written in Dravidic Brahmi script in the caves of the Southern Districts of Tamil Nad are still earlier in point of time. They are not yet deciphered satisfactorily. But scholars like K. V. Subramonia Iyer read them as Tamil and assign them to the pre-Asoka period. Others read them as Prakrit. The earliest datable

¹ C. Sivaramamurti, *Indian Epigraphy and South Indian scripts*, pp. 1-2, Madras, 1952.

inscription is that of Mahendravarman (615-630) at Vallam in Chingleput Taluq : It merely records the titles of the king on two pillars (S. I. I. Vol. 2 pt. 3).

Only from the 8th century A. D. onwards the practice of recording the date gained currency. Generally the Saka era is adopted. The second popular one is the Kali era. A few Inscriptions are dated in the Vikrama era. In the West Coast the Malabar or Kollam era is very common.

Three kinds of scripts are used in the Tamil Epigraphs. The grantha script is used only for writing Sanskrit words or syllables — to write Tamil Vatteluthu and Tamil grantha Scripts are used. The earliest available Inscription written in the Grantha Tamil dates back to the 7th century A. D. and the Vatteluthu Inscription from the 8th century. There is evidence to show that Vatteluthu script was in vogue throughout Tamil Nad. When the Pallavas dominated the Tamil country they popularised the grantha Tamil script. Later when the Pallava supremacy was displaced by that of the Cholas, they also adopted the same script used by the Pallavas. As a result Vatteluthu was in use only in the Pandya and Chera country. Even in the Pandya country after a few centuries of precarious existence the Vatteluthu fell into disuse. When the Malayalis began to use the modern Arya eluthu script, Vatteluthu was finally discarded in Malabar also. The difficulty in reading this cursive script and the failure of political powers to back its usage were the immediate causes for its falling into desuetude.²

Most of the Epigraphs are donative in character. They may be about the grant of cows, or about an endowment to light a few lamps in the temple, for chanting the Vedas or for the recitation of *Thevaram* or *Thiruvaymoli* verses, or of a donation of land and money to Brahmins, or of a gift of a dancing girl to a temple (M. E. R. 36/1911). Gifts to hospitals which were called Athularsalai (ஆதுலர்சாலை) and to Sanskrit colleges are numberless. A few records mention gift

² A. C. BURNELL, Elements of South Indian Palaeography, 2ed, pp. 33 ff, London, 1878.

to dancers and actors. And yet a few register agreements of Sabhas or lay down rules and regulations for the administration of the Village Assemblies. Memorials to heroes recording their deeds of bravery are not rare. Declarations of women before committing Sathee are also found. A handful of Inscriptions are about the settlements of caste disputes (M. E. R. 479 of 1908) and about the trial by a red hot plough-share.

There are one or two records which give a glimpse of the criminal administration of mediaeval times. One belonging to the reign of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya III (1306) mentions about a number of Brahmins and Vellalas giving up the callings of their castes and becoming high-way robbers at Tirukaccur. They murdered the Brahmins or cut off their ears and insulted the Brahmin ladies. They also committed robbery, got the ownership of properties by force and sold them. The offenders were rounded up, beaten, fined and were in imprisoned : but they did not mend their ways. The people complained to Pottappi Rayar who was in charge of the country and he sent a chief named Valluva Nattalvan (வள்ளுவ நாடாள்வான்) with a band of Malayalam soldiers to aid him. Many criminals escaped to the hills and even succeeded in rescuing a few who had been already caught by the soldier chief. The king ordered the confiscation and sale of their lands. Of the proceeds the major portion was paid into the treasury in lieu of the fines and the remaining amount presented to the temple in the names of the criminals. (M. E. R. 315 of 1909)

A record at Attur Taluq in Salem District is about a political pact between four chiefs who vow not to quarrel among themselves (435 of 1913 M. E. R.). Nishidikas of Jaina teachers having their names and vows are also frequently found in the Tamil land.

Early Tamil Inscriptions are short and their contents do not exceed a few lines. Later they become lengthy. The auspicious symbols 'Swasti Sri' which are invariably affixed to the later Inscriptions do not find a place in the early ones.

Some begin abruptly and some only with 'Sri'. The auspicious symbol is followed in the copper plates by a *prasasti* which may be either in Sanskrit or in Tamil or in both. The Tamil *prasasti* of the Velvikkudi grant of Parantaka Nedunjadaiyan is the earliest of its kind (8th century A. D.). The *meykkirtti* of the stone records are popular from the days of Parantaka Chola; (9th Century A. D.) The *meykkirtti* records the exploits of the king almost chronologically. Later *meykkirittis* are composed by court poets and added to every royal and private inscription. The *prasastis* and *meykkirittis* are not free from self-adulation and exaggeration. The former particularly abounds with them. Mythological kings and the deeds of the fore-fathers of a king have also found a place in both. Yet for historical purposes the *meykkirtti* is more dependable than the *prasasti*.

At the end of the *prasasti* or *meykkirtti* the name of the king is incised with the year of his reign, the day and the position of the stars at the time of the grant. In the absence of the king's name and the regnal year, this astronomical detail gives a clue to reckon the date of the record: this clue in many cases has proved to be true and Sri L. D. Swamikkannu Pillai's '*Indian Ephemeris*' aids us much in reckoning the dates according to the astronomical details.

This introduction is followed by the purpose of the grant and the donation of land or money. Finally the Epigraphs end with a request to posterity for protecting the grant or charity. The common form of such request is that 'the feet of these who protected the charity shall be on my head'. (இத்தன்மம் காத்தார் அடி என் தலை மேலன) It may sometimes be joined with the threat that those who failed to observe the conditions of the bequest incur the sin committed by all people living between the Ganges in the North and Kumari in the South, or incur the sin of slaughtering a thousand cows on the banks of the Ganges or have the shame of having their mothers as their wives. These declarations end with a curse that "anyone violating it shall bear the shoes and betel bags both to his kinsmen and to his enemies" (M. E. R. 435 of 1913). This is the form adopted in a good number of Epigraphs.

The body of the *Inscriptions* is generally in prose though the *Meykkirtti* or *Prasasti* is in verse or in rhymed prose. The language of the inscriptions like the language of the legal documents is conventional and involved. Punctuation is rare. Marking the dots for consonants are also rare. The absence of dots and the punctuation in the Epigraphs enhance the difficulty in reading them. If the scribes are learned, the mistakes in transcription are few. If the mistakes are persistent and regular then they have to be treated as the linguistic peculiarity of the age.

In the Anbil plates of Sundara Chola there is interesting information about the making of a grant. If a grant is to be made, permission is to be obtained from the king. The man who makes the request is called Vignapathi (விஞ்ஞபதி) and the man who executes the grant after the king has ordered it is an Anathi (அணத்தி) or executor. The letter bearing the royal order is to be received by the people of the village assembled with folded hands. The letter shall be borne on the head and then taken out and read. If the royal order is a grant of land, a female elephant is to be let loose to circumambulate in order to fix the boundaries. After the boundary is fixed a record of these is to be incised on a stone or copper plate or on both with the seal of the king and with the signature of the writers and those connected with the document. A palm leaf copy of the inscription was to be sent to the king's archives.

The Tamil epigraphs are of great value in reconstructing the ancient geography of Tamil Nad and in identifying ancient place names. They are equally valuable in reviewing the social conditions of Tamil Nad in the past. For instance the practice of self-sacrifice of human life for varied purposes is spoken of in a good number of inscriptions. The 'Tamil and Sanskrit Inscriptions' (No. 24, Page 100) describes the death of a temple servant who threw himself from the tower of the Madurai Temple as a protest against unfair collection of tax from some tax-free villagers. This incident happened during the time of Chocknatha Nayak and consequently the village officials forthwith abandoned the collection of tax. Another inscription of 1768 A. D. speaks about a similar incident during

the Muslim rule. An European Regiment invaded Madurai, destroyed the temples, seized the town and was advancing further. Kutti, son of Vairavi Muthukaruppan at the request of the temple Manager and local people threw himself down from the tower of the Tirupparamkunram Temple in order to stop the enemy from further progress. The grateful people, as a reward, gave his descendants some lands and shares in the temple offerings. They undertook even to pay the taxes on the endowed lands. (Tamil and Sanskrit Inscriptions No. 28). Yet in another inscription this practice of self-sacrifice is mentioned in connection with the completion of a mandapam (M. E. R. 119/1906). This superstitious belief led a Vijayanagara king to slaughter 60 convicts for the construction of an irrigational canal.

Equally helpful are the Epigraphs to reconstruct the economic condition of Tamil Nad. An Inscription of Raja Raja Deva III, for instance, enumerates all items of village revenue. They are divided into two heads.

- (i) Nellāyam (நெல்லாயம்) i. e. in kind and
- (ii) Kāsayām (காசாயம்) i. e. in cash.

Under the first head are noted pāti kāval (பாடி-காவல்) Cilvari (சில்வரி) Etuthukotti (எடுத்துக்கொட்டி) Arimukkai (அரிமுகை) etc.

Under the second head are included Kārtikai Airisi (கார்த்திகை அரிசி), Kārtikaikkāsu (கார்த்திகைக் காசு), Kārtikaippaccāi (கார்த்திகைப் பச்சை), Vēlippayaru (வேலிப் பயறு), Nirnilakkasu (நீர் நிலைக்காசு), Thari irai (தறி இறை), Kadai irai (கடை இறை), Kālakathappattam (கால கதப் பாட்டம்), Thattārapattam (தட்டாரப் பாட்டம்), Asuvakadamai (அசுவக் கடமை), Cekkukadamai (செக்குக் கடமை), Erimin Kasu (எரி மீன் காசு), Inavari (இநவரி), Pattōlaikkāsu (பட்டோலைக் காசு) etc. (M. E. R. 74/75 of 1887).

The implications of many of the taxes are not clear. However, the incidence of taxation must have been heavy as shown by the number of taxes, too numerous for a period when State responsibility was limited.

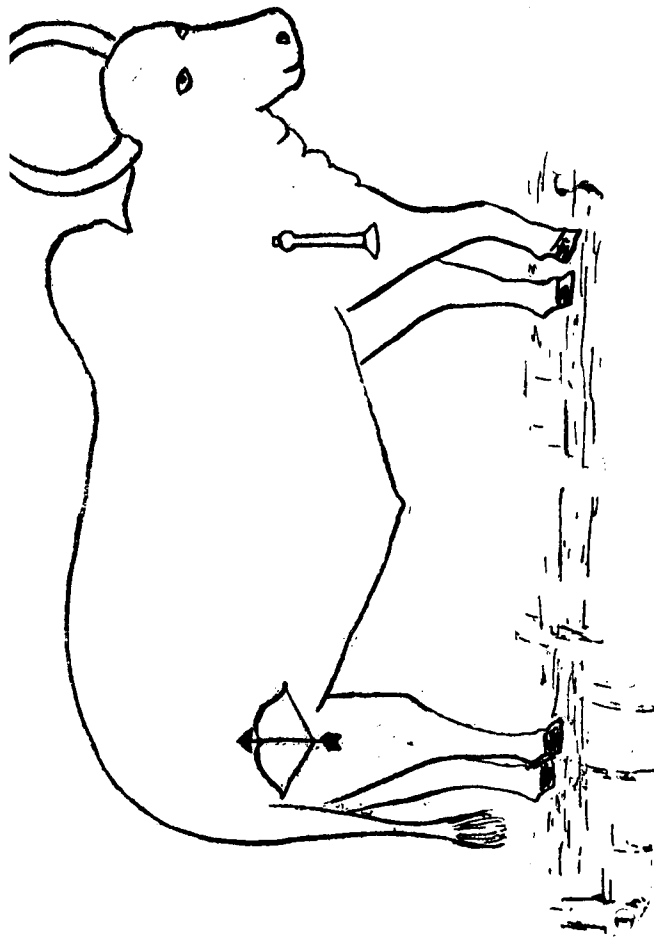
The neglect of Tamil Epigraphy by Linguists, is sad indeed. Linguists of Tamil Nad confine themselves to literature. The language of literature is refined, embellished and archaic. The changes that occur in the day to day speech seldom find a place in literature. The Linguist who is content with the study of literary language is like a Zoologist satisfied with the analysis of an old fossil of a living specimen. In a scientific study of language the living speech should form the main basis of investigation. The language of the Epigraphs is not literary Tamil. Nor is it very colloquial. It can be considered as the standardised spoken tongue of the day with minor dialectical peculiarities of the place where the epigraphs were incised. How far the Epigraphs can aid a linguist may be proved with the help of *Vecra Soliyam*, an eleventh century Grammar. It states that diphthong ai (ஐ) and au (ஔ) are pronounced not as a single sound but as two sounds as ay (அய்) and av (அவ்). Evidence for this practice is little in contemporary literature but is plentiful in the Epigraphs. The question whether old Tamil had both sonants and surds, or surds alone, can also be successfully answered if the epigraphs are phonetically studied.

To write the history of the Tamil language and to settle the chronology of the undated Tamil works, the language of the Epigraphs can be of great utility. This was foreseen by Prof. P. S. Sundaram Pillai, pioneer in the field of Epigraphy in Travancore, and by Shri K. Venkayya.

Epigraphs are priceless guides in giving the exact interpretation of words that occur in literary works. In *Kalingattu parani* for example, the word Vēlam (வேளம்) occurs in *Velam puku madavir kadai Thiraminc* (stanza 40, kadai Thirappu). An annotator thought that the word should mean an elephant and corrected it as Velam (வேழம்) without knowing the real meaning of it. The correction was indeed a mistake. The word Velam (வேளம்) is often found in Epigraphs where it refers to a private house where the wives of vanquished kings are kept.

A North Arcot record belonging to the 13th century, gives a clue to the date of Meykanda Deva, the author of Sivagnana Bodham and thus becomes important to the history of Tamil Literature. A stanza of Thevaram the Thiruvudai-vāyl Thevaram — hitherto unknown is brought to light by an Inscription. In Trichy on the walls of the rock-cut caves an Anthathi running into 104 stanzas is found inscribed. " But for the Epigraphs nearly a hundred poets and more than two thousand poetic pieces would not have been known to us", writes Shri M. Ragava Iyengar in his *Tamil Sāsanankkavikal*.

Tamil epigraphy is yet a rich field for study, and it is hoped that this article will stimulate interest in epigraphy even among the lay readers.



Note the Cattle brand-marks of bow and arrow and bugle

The Sociology of Jaffna— The Nalaver and The Koviari

* M. D. RAGHAVAN

AN unexplored field lies before the inquiring student of society and culture, in the cattle brand marks of Ceylon. In these cryptic symbols stamped on the animal are revealed social origins and functions otherwise obscure. The marks illustrated are the cattle brands of the Nalaver of Jaffna — the bow and arrow on the hind quarters and the bugle on the forepart. The Mukkuver have the mark of the chank ; the Karaya, the boat ; the Potter, the pot ; the Pallas, the plough ; the Parayer, the drum ; the Dhoby, the cloth bundle and the Barber, the pair of scissors. The Vellaler and the Koviari have the same cattle brand mark, a standing brass lamp, a mamoty (spade) and Arukal Vathurai, the six spoked chakra (wheel). These symbols stand out as the very badge of the groups. The bow and the arrow — *ampum vil-tum*, and the bugle of the Nalaver recall the tradition that they were the bowmen in the army of the Tamil Kings. The bugle is the *virutu kuzhal* or *virutu kalam*, the sounding of which calls the troops to battle or announces victory in the battle field. Story goes that they once showed the white feather in the face of an advancing enemy and retreated. This earned for them the scarcely complimentary name *Naluvina-ver* the men who withdrew. Bow and arrow and the bowmen have been a feature of the armies of mediaeval days of all lands, vanishing under the changing conditions of later days. It is thus easily credible that in the normal course of events, the bowmen of the Tamil army would have lost their place in the rank and file of the army without engrafting the story of a withdrawal to account for the name. That they took to the

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cocoanut and the palmyrah for a living failing their martial role may also be understood, displacing the Shanars, the original climbers of the palms as they still are in South India. The Nalaver have ever since been the toddy drawers of Jaffna. This has occasioned another story spun round the "peculiar" mode of climbing trees, though it is hard to see wherein lies the peculiarity. As one watches the Nalaver going up the palm, it does not strike one as anything different from the South Indian mode or even of the rest of Ceylon. A third interpretation, is that of "shuffling" talkers, from *Naluwal* or evasive talking, implying that the words of a Nalava are shuffling or evasive. Yet another line of thought credits them as the original Malaver, functioning as soldiers. These many versions are an index to the interest the people have evoked. Amidst these varied versions the tradition that the Nalaver were the traditional bowmen of the Tamil army gains in credence, sustained by the objective symbolisms which their cattle bear branded on their haunches, symbolisms eloquent of their past functions, standing out conspicuously as the very badge of the tribes. As fighting men, they were reputed to be the Nambis who came to Ceylon with the early Tamil kings and in the retinue of the Vanniyars from South India who swarmed into Ceylon from about 100 A. D. The tradition finds mention in the *Yalpana Vaipava Malai* in these words :—

"Karaip-piddi-vanniyan resided temporarily at Kantharodai then called Odaikkurichchi. He had sixty Nambis in his pay who served him as his swordsmen. Having violated the chastity of a daughter of one of these Nambis, he fell by the hand of the girl's enraged father who took him by surprise while he was engaged in prayer. His Vannichchi not knowing what to do with herself ran out into an open plain and there stabbed herself to death. The murder of the Vanniyan was avenged by the hand of the law, but his wealth was transferred to the royal treasury. The remaining Nambis sent to Sanarak-kuppam, a neighbouring village, and, having no means of livelihood, hired themselves out to the Sanar and were trained by them in their hereditary occupation, namely, that of climbing the palmyra palm. From the circumstance of the Nambis

having thus degraded themselves they came to be called Nalavar, from *naluvukirathu*, to fall off, now corrupted into Nalavar; and these Nalavar have ever since taken to climbing as their caste occupation."¹

More than any other single factor, what differentiated Jaffna Tamil society, was the institution of Kudimakkal, which held sway over the lives of the peoples regulating the interrelation of the higher and lower groups functioning in a stratified social structure. Of the incidence of this system prior to the Thesawalamai code of 1796, nothing much is known. Codified for the first time by Claasz Isaacs at the instance of the Dutch Governor Simmons, the Kudimakkals of Jaffna figure in the code as the Koviars, Chiandos (Shanar), Paller and Nalaver. How far the Kudimakkal concept prevailed in early Tamil society to the extent that it is revealed to be in the Dutch times, we have no positive knowledge. That the Kudimakkal constitution was obviously not of a uniform pattern, but varied with the varying epochs, we may rightly conclude. Tolkappiyam speaks of the Parayer, the Paner, the Kadambar and the Tudiayar as the four Kudimakkal. The Portuguese and the Dutch were both interesting in fostering a system which suited their own needs, pressing into the service of the State every able bodied man, extracting labour largely from the reputedly lower classes functioning under the powerful land owning Vel-lalas. Of the four groups mentioned in the Thesawalamai, the Shanar have obviously had little of the slave in him, implied in the remarks² that they were "but few in number and such of this caste as were in slavery were not registered in the Thombo as Chiandos but under the denomination of cowias; so that the remaining part of them are free, and perform Government services in the same manner as the Bellalas and perform their ordinary Olian or Government services during one day every month." Shanar may thus be disregarded as one of the Kudimakkal group. The Pallas and Nalavas are stated to have been "slaves from their origin and remain so till the

¹ BRITO — C; 1879, *Yalpana Vaipava Malai*, p. 34.

² MUTTUKRISHNA, HENRY F.; 1862, A New Edition of the Thesawalamai, Section VIII, p. XXVI.

present time, unless any of their masters out of compassion happen to emancipate them which very seldom takes place." Both the Nalaver and the Paller seem to have taken jointly to the industry of the palmyra and cocoanut palms. Too numerous to be absorbed by this one and only avenue of employment, many obviously attached themselves to the Vellalas in the role of domestic slaves. The Kudimakkal concept in its essentials, corresponds to the essential functional equipment of early Tamil society with a plurality of interacting groups oriented to the socio-economic structure of the Tamils. These functions involved obligations on the one part and rights and privileges on the other. Their role in the society of the past and to a modified extent in the present has been of an institutionalised character with a differentiation of functions. Generally speaking the functional classes are to-day under the influence of forces which quicken a reorientation of social values. The Nalaver are no longer dependent solely on their traditional role of toddy tapping, employment in casual labour stepping up the economics of their life. Theirs is a free life promoting a growing sense of social independence, a free status out of tune with the Kudimakkal concept. And yet the past is still with the present animating their daily lives. He does his duty by himself and by the society. Nalaver women were the midwives of Jaffna in the past when there were no licensed midwives. Even today she has her role as the midwife in villages not served by licensed midwives, staying in the house of confinement attending on the mother and child. On the eleventh day she performs the ceremony of expelling the *Kothipai*. Placing the child in a winnow the woman sings its praises, after which the soiled stuff in the room is collected in the winnow and taken out with food stuffs, a young cocoanut and a lighted torch, and left in a gap in the hedge. This simple ritual safeguards the mother and child against evil influences.

The gods of a people often reveal something of their character. In the cult of the Annamar, the Nalavar have fostered a mode of worship peculiarly their own. A Nalava man performs the puja. Offerings to the Annamar are not food and drink, but wooden clubs about 2½ feet long, or the *gata*.

The traditions of this folk cult are for further study. That it is *prima facie* a warrior cult seems obvious. It is possibly reminiscent of the cult of the spirits of the ancestors or departed heroes.

The Nalaver have their own washerman, the Thurumber — a word possibly derived from the Malayalam word *tirumbuka*, to wash, — who are the washermen for the other lower groups also.

The Koviars enjoy a social status higher than the Nalavar. The comparatively higher position is implicit in the observations of the Thesawalamai code that "It would be a matter of great difficulty to find out that they were slaves from their own origin, though the greatest part of them are slaves at present". In the social life of the Vellaler, the Koviars have a large part to play. At Vellala marriages, he acts as the mediator. Both the bridegroom's and the bride's party repose confidence in the Kovia intermediary. Preliminary talks are carried on and the terms of the dowry considered and settled through him. In the marriage procession he holds the canopy over the bridegroom. As the bridegroom arrives at the bride's house, a Kovia woman performs the simple but essential ritual of Alathi waving a tray of lighted wicks before the bridegroom. This dispels the evil eye and everything evil. Kovia women prepare the Poothathalam, for the ceremonial rice feeding of the couple and a Kovia woman attends on them at the ceremonial feeding. In Vellala society when a girl attains age, a Kovia woman serves as her companion and helpmate through the period of her seclusion and the whole duration of the puberty ceremonies. Rasanayagam no doubt had these and other customs in mind when he summed up the social standing of the Koviars in the words that "their original status was equal to that of the Vellaler as can be inferred from certain customs which are still in vogue in Jaffna." Of the two tests of caste reciprocity, the higher castes have commensality with the Koviars, stopping short of connubium or inter-marriage.

Both the Nalaver and the Koviars give their services to the Vellaler at funerals. The Koviars take a leading part.

They bathe the body and carry it to the cremation grounds. The principal mourner who is to light the funeral pyre, walks under a canopy held by the Koviars. The Nalaver cut the firewood and prepare the funeral pyre. They head the funeral procession, carrying billhooks and mamoty, symbolic of agriculture in the life of the Vellaler. Notwithstanding these services it will not be right to designate the Nalaver and the Koviars as Kudimakkals of the Vellaler. At a Vellaler funeral on the eighth day of the funeral ceremonies, the Vannan, the Ambattan and the Parayer receive cash presents, the Kudimakkal kasu, and these sit for meals on the day in the same *panthi*. Nalaver do not as a rule eat at the house of the dead until after the 31st day ceremony.

The essentially functional services of the Nalaver and Koviars and their integration with the Tamil Social system precludes speculations of origin. And yet theories and suppositions have been rife. Thus Rasanayagam speaks of the Nalaver as remnants of the Sinhalese climbers who received the Tamil name on account of their way of climbing trees. That the socio-economic groups centering round the palms and their products, known under the several names in Ceylon, Travancore, Malabar and S. Kanara developed an affinity in culture, does not warrant our jumping to the conclusion that any section is a "remnant" of the other. Widespread migrations and diffusion of culture have been dynamic in the life of peoples of contiguous lands from the prehistoric to the middle ages, leaving in their wake a certain correspondence of traits and habits of life.

Of a piece with the handling of the Nalaver, has been the wielding of the Koviars problem. Turning historical incidents to suit his theory Rasanayagam pronounces his *obiter dictum* on the Koviars in the following words:—"After the massacre of the Christians, Sankili's insane fury longed for more victims and he fell upon the Buddhists of Jaffna who were all Sinhalese. He expelled them beyond the limits of the country and destroyed their places of worship. Most of them betook themselves to the Vannis and the Kandyan kingdom and those who were unable to do so became the slaves to the

Tamil chieftains and are now known as kovia, a caste peculiar to Jaffna. The term is no doubt a corruption of the Sinhalese word Goviya or Goiya and that their original status was equal to that of the Vellalas can be inferred from certain customs which are still in vogue in Jaffna."¹ If Koviars as a group emerged only from the time that they became enslaved to the Tamil chiefs, following Sankili's campaigns, they could not have been both slaves of the Vellaler and at the same time co-ordinate with them in status. If, as Rasanayagam admits, their original status was equal to that of the Vellaler, it would have been no less so in the later days judging from what it is to-day and from their present social functions and services. These customs obviously go back to early ages and go deep into the social structure of the Tamils. It little avails to fit the name to speculative derivations. And according to Rasanayagam there were no Koviars as such before Sankili's times, (early Sixteenth Century), but only Sinhalese Goigama, who as a group are distinct from Tamil Vellaler, between whom no question of status would arise. Others too have indulged in fanciful derivations at the expense of the Koviars. Thus the author of *Yalpana Vaipava Malai* theorises² that "the name is a corruption of the word Kovilar, i.e. slaves of the kovils, for these people had been originally servants of the temples, is a corruption of the word Kovilar, i.e. slaves of the temples, but afterwards through poverty sold themselves as slaves to temples. When the temples were destroyed by the Parangis, the temple managers sold the Koviars to private purchasers as they had no occasion for their services. Sometime after this a number of poor but good caste people were brought from Vadathesam and sold here for slaves and they have acquired the name Vadasiraik Koviya. As the slave trade increased gradually, the Government have taken it into their own hands in order to increase their revenue." If they were already servants of the temple, it is scarcely credible they would have sold themselves as slaves to the very temples which they served.

¹ RASANAYAGAM — Ancient-Jaffna — 1926. p. 382.

² BRITTO C. — Yalpana Vaipava Malai, 1879, p. 56—57.

Speculations apart, let us examine the philological derivation of the word Kovia a little closely. Goigama and Kovia are both traceable to the same root — go in Sanskrit, or “ko” in Tamil. “Go” or “Ko” means cow, cattle, and by extension has come to mean cultivation, intimately related as it is to cattle, Gopalar or Kovalar means herdsmen. A synonymous term for herdsmen is Kovinter. Gopiko is a farmer. Koviār may just as well be derived from the root “ko” as Goigama from “go”. Neither is a corruption of the other. Speculative derivations are a smoke screen to cloud the issues. That Koviār were the original herdsmen and served as such in the economy of the Tamils is the most sensible view that we can take of the group in the context of the Tamil social system of the early days when each group severally fulfilled its function to the community. That both have the same cattle brand mark to-day — the standing brass lamp, a mammoty and the arukal vatturai or the six-spoked wheel, goes to show that the Vellaler and the Koviār are associated units, two limbs of the same body. The same washerman serves the Koviār, Vellaler, Vanniar and Chettiars. The guardian god of the Koviār is Virapattira, whose vahanam is the dog, and a dog vahanam is the offering to the deity. To the herdsmen that the Koviār are, the dog is an appropriate symbol.

Besides the play on the word Kovia, that it is a corruption of the Sinhalese word Goviya or Goiya, Rasanayagam¹ speaks of what he considers as “the peculiar dress of Kovia women who wear the inner end of their cloth over the shoulder in a manner quite strange to the genuine Tamils”. The reference here to “the genuine Tamils” is hard to understand. Vellaler women too may occasionally be seen draped in the same manner as in Vadamarachi division, the end part of the sari wrapped over the breasts, tying a corner of the cloth either on the necklet or knotting a key or coins in the corner of the sari and throwing the end over the shoulder. No far-reaching conclusions can be drawn on a single trait of culture, which may very possibly be an instance of cultural diffusion, even assuming it to be a Sinhalese influence. Considering that it

¹ RASANAYAGAM C. Ancient-Jaffna — 1926 — page 384.

has had a wider vogue among the poorer classes even of the higher castes, it is more likely to have been a local development than an extraneous trait. Speaking on “the women’s fashion of dressing their cloth across their breasts”, does not Rasanayagam express the opinion that it is a custom introduced by the Malabar immigrants? Rasanayagam will be equally justified therefore to call them Malayalees, as to call them Singhalese. It is obvious no conclusion can be drawn turning round this trait. The story of early Jaffna has been a favourite topic of versifiers and composers of an age noted for its singers and poets. Most of these early compositions have been lost. A few have survived, reposing in certain families who treasure them as the very epics of groups of peoples in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. One of these early compositions is the *Vaiya Padal* by Vaiyapuri Aiyer, the court bard of King Sekharaja Sakera, singing the traditions of the early colonisation movements. Four of the verses are quoted below :—

வையாபுரி ஐயர் இயற்றிய வையா பாடல்

59 அங்கவன் வந்திவர்கள் தமை ஓடமீதிலன்புடனே யேற்றிக்
கொண்டிலங்கை காணப், பொங்குகடல் மீது வரும் வேளைதன்
னில் போரணிகொள் தேவி மாரிதத்தினோடு, திங்கள் முக நல்ல
தேவன் சிறந்த சீரான சோபகிரி சுக்கிரீபன், அங்குசன் சிங்
கத்தி மாப்பாணன் தற்பராயனரசன் செல்வக் கொடியோன்
தேவன்.

60 தில்லை மூவாயிரவர் செட்டி வாணி
திசை கொண்டார் கூடலூர் சேர்ந்தவாழ்வார்
மூல்லைநாட்டார் பரவர் முதன்மை பெற்ற
முக்கியர்கள் பறையர் விலைவாணர் மூவர்
கொல்லர் மதமறவர் நாவிதர் கோமட்டி
கோவியர் தச்சர் கன்னூர் குடிகளாகச்
சொல்லு மூவாறு வகைச் சாதியோரும்
தொகை பெருந்தாதர் சங்கமரே தானும்.

61 குச்சிலியாகம்படியார் (கோத்திரத்தார்) கோவலர்கள்
குயவர் கோபாலரானோர், நச்சுவிழி நாட்டியஞ் செய்வோர்கள்
தானும் நாகநயினாழ்வில் வாழுவோரும், மச்சமுறைகடலில்
மாமுனைத்தீவாரும் வருணகுலத்தவர்கள் மலையகத்தார்தானும்,
அச்சிசமிருக்கும் சிலியரினோடே ஆரியவங்கிஷ மரையராயினோ
ரும்.

62. மானவர் ஓட்டியர் தொட்டி மங்கைமார்கள் மாகனகச
மசாடு பெற்றுவாழ்வோர், வாளுடைய வன்னியர்கள் மூவர்
வாணர் வாழ்வுபெறு வில்லவர்களாயினோர்கள் சூழ்வுறு தாளக்
காரர் மேளம் வாங்கா சொல்லரிய பேரிகை மற்றுள்ளநாதம்,
ஏழ்பெருங்கடலும் மதிர்ந்திடவேயென்ன இயம்பிட மங்கையர்
கனெழுந்தருளினரே.

A rendering in English of the above stanzas faithfully to the original, is difficult. An approximate translation gives us the following :—

59. Meekaman voyaged over the rising waves to Lanka,
In the ship were the beautiful royal ladies,
Nallathevan, high ranking Sobagiri, Sukrivan, Ankusan,
Sinkathi Mapanan, Thatparayan arasan, Selvakodiyon Thevan,
60. Thillai muvayiravar, Chetti Vani, Thisaikondar,
People of Kudalur, Mullainattar, Paraver,
The original Mukiyar, Parayar, Vilaivanar, Muvar, Kollar,
Mata Maravar, Navitar, Komatti, Koviya, Tachchar, Kannar,
Eighteen castes of kudies and numbers of Tatar sangamer.
61. Kuchiliyar, Akampadiyar, Kothirathar, Kovalarkal, Kuyar,
Kopalaranor, Dancers, people of Naga Nainativu and of
Manmunai tivu abounding in fish, people of Varunakula descent,
Malayakathar, Siliar of Achichamai, and Arya Vankisa Maraiyar.
62. Malaver, Oddiyar, Tottiyar women,
Sword-girt Vanniyer, Muver Vanar, powerful bowmen,
Flutists and cymbal players, drummers, players on vanka
And other reputed instruments, with splendour and pageantry
Resounding the seven seas, the ladies arrived.

The dynamism of the spirit of colonisation and the assorted character of the social factors embarking on a career of new life in a new land, cannot be more graphically conveyed than in these words of the poet. So far as the purpose of the present paper is concerned, the specific reference to Koviya is abundant evidence of their having been a constituent unit among the colonists from South India. The allusion to the omnipotent Villaver or the bow-men, testifies to the high place they filled in the Tamil social structure, at a stage in their life when the name Nalaver of later days had not evolved.

Among the interesting groups are those termed the Mullainattar, signifying peoples inhabiting Mullai tracts as defined in the *Chudamani Nikandu*. The physiographical classification of the Nikandu, groups lands into Mullai, Kurunchi, Neithal Marutham, and Palai. Mullai is jungle land, kurunchi the hill country, neithal, the sea coast ; marutham, paddy land ; and palai the dry land common to all classes. The Northern Peninsula was largely mullai land, more so in the early days. The constituent humanity of this type of soil, as given in Chapter 11 *Makkalpeyarthokuti* — “Peyarppirivu”, are thus enumerated :

முல்லைவர் பொதுவரண்டர் முந்து கோவிந்தரேயான்
வில்லவர்குடவர் பாலர் மதித்தகோவலர் கோபாலர்
சொல்லியவமுதராயர் தொறுவரே யிடைய ரென்ப
முல்லையின் மாக்கன்பேர் தாமுந்நான்கு மொன்றுமாமே.

முல்லைநில மக்கள் பெயர்—முல்லைவர், பொதுவர், அண்டர்,
கோவிந்தர், ஆன்வில்லவர், குடவர், பாலர், கோவலர், கோபாலர்,
அமுதர், ஆயர், தொறுவர், இடையர்.

Taken individually all the thirteen names are more or less synonymous, signifying the group of shepherds and herds-men. Among the names are Kovalar, Kopalan, and Idaiyar. The term Kovalar would in time have lent itself to be turned into Kovilar falling into the error of fabricating an association with kovils or temples. The truth is, the root “ko” meaning the cow, has given rise to several group names, with the function of cattle-rearing as the common cultural factor. In fine therefore, a functional approach to the subject leaves the Koviya in no doubt as the herdsmen of the Tamils, the people tending the cattle, a function which is not altogether absent to-day, when the strictly functional structure of society is changing fast. In the village of Tunnalai as elsewhere, people who prepare and sell curds in the market are the Koviya.

These discussions should not blind us to an understanding of the economics of the groups, which varies from village to village. So far as the Nalayer are concerned, the economics of their life largely turns on tapping for toddy. The Tree Tax

system which obtains in Jaffna from 1937 abolishing taverns, has been the silver lining in the bleak lives of these people, giving them a certain measure of economic relief. The tapper sells the toddy direct from the tree to the consumer without passing through the toddy renters and tavern keepers, who elsewhere fatten on the labours of the tapper. Each man is licensed to tap twenty trees, and on the proceeds of each he makes a margin of profit. The opposition this has evoked reflects the conservative reaction, raising the cry of increased and widespread drunkenness, an allegation which is not borne out by facts or by observations on the spot. The condition is certainly better than what prevails under the obnoxious system of public taverns.

The present condition of the Koviars also presents a variable picture. Education is exercising its own levelling influence, advancing them socially and economically as seen in Weligamam West, North and South. Among them are proc-tors, doctors, Government officers and teachers. Elsewhere the social position remains largely static. Whether Nalaver or Koviars, no one who visits their villages can leave them without the feeling that their great need is land, land for housing relieving their crowded settlements and land for cultivation. Another of their great needs is freedom of worship, which they greatly deserve as children of the soil leading clean and honest lives. These are but a few of the many aspects of welfare planning, which calls for a co-ordinated approach educational, social and economic. The progress of a land is the progress of every element in its social structure.

The Problem of Ganapati

By

THE REV. H. HERAS, S. J.

A PROBLEM of divine filiation occurs in Hinduism which has not received due attention up to now : the existence of two sons of Siva in the mythological figures of Ganapati and Skanda.

I

THE SON OF GOD IN THE VEDA

The existence of one son of God is for the first time announced in the 10th *mandala* of the *Rgveda* :—

Ānit avātām svadhayā tat ekam
*Tapasah tat mahinā ajāyata ekam*¹ ;

which verses may be translated into English thus :—

“That breathless one by his own nature breathes ;
By his great thinking he generated one.”

Some commentators of this passage are of opinion that the “one” mentioned in both these verses is one and the same person, thus the second verse would be an explanation of the generation of that one whose self-subsistence is proclaimed in the first. But this view cannot be maintained seriously, for in this very second verse two persons are clearly brought forward, one who generates and another who is generated and naturally the generated one cannot be the same as that who generates. In point of fact this generator is not generated at all, according to this text. He simply breathes, *ānit*, i.e. exists, and that by himself *svadhayā* without the intervention of any other person.

¹ *Rgveda.*, X, 129, 3-4.

That this is the real meaning of this passage later vedic literature clearly evinces. The *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* describes more minutely this generation of the son of God in an unmistakable way : "He (God) loved (*akāmayata*) : 'that a second myself (*dvitīya ātma*) should be generated (*jāyeta*) from me.' (Consequently), as the fruit of his intellect (*manasā asanāyā*) the Word (*Vācam*) not spoken (*mithunan*) appeared".² In a parallel passage we read : "Prajāpati, the Lord of the whole creation, loved (*kāmayate*) : 'That I could be more than one ; that I could reproduce myself.' And then he made Brahman the first of all."³

These two passages leave no doubt as regards the difference between the generator and the generated ; they are two clearly different persons. What is the nature of the generated one ? The same as the nature of the generator. He is *dvitīya ātma*, "a second myself" ; a reproduction of the generator. A son generally resembles the father ; but in our case it is something more than a resemblance. It is equality, "a second Himself." That is the reason why this generated one is styled *rūpam*, an image, a reflexion⁴ ; but this image and reflexion must not be a dead image or a dead reflexion, as is the image of a person reflected in a mirror, for in that case the generated would not be a second generator, absolutely like him. It must therefore be a living image and reflexion, for being the generator *Svayambhū*, life is the foundation of all his characteristics.

The generation described in these three passages is besides most extraordinary, for if we pay attention to the words we find that no woman or goddess is ever mentioned as a necessary counterpart of the generator. This after all is but natural ; for God is sexless (*alinga*).⁵ The generation is therefore spiritual, as God is a pure spirit (*ātman*). Hence the

² *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, X, 4, 5, 6.

³ *Ibid.*, VI, 1, 1, 3.

⁴ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, I, 6, 3.

⁵ *Maitri Upaniṣad*, VI, 35 (Hume, p. 449),

generation is done by the mind, by his great thinking, *tapasah tat mahinā*, as we read in the *Rgveda*. Consequently the generated one is called "the fruit of the intellect" (*manasā asanāyā*) in the *Brāhmaṇa*, or simply *mānasa putra*, "son of the mind"⁶, or *manobhuta* "generated in the mind"⁷, or *tapaso jātam*, "generated by brooding"⁸.

Though a spiritual generation, this generation is a real one, as all these texts clearly show, while using verbs coming from the two roots *jan*, "to be born, to be generated" and *bhu*, "to come into existence." Consequently the person generated is a real son, and as such he is called in the *Upaniṣads* : "God is a witness of the generation of his son"⁹ ; and accordingly the son calls God his Father : "on the world's summit I bring forth the Father"¹⁰. After all we are used to speaking of our own literary productions as the children of our intellect, generated by us through thinking.

Thus finally this son of God receives the name of *Vāc*, that is 'the Word,' but as the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* puts it, "the word not spoken." The Sanskrit word *mithunam* is thus translated by Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.¹¹ *Mithunam* in fact means something which is a necessary complement of another thing. Now the unspoken word, that is the mental thought, is the necessary complement of the spoken word, because without the former the latter cannot exist, while the former may exist, without the latter. "The mind (thought) is the earlier form, speech is the later form"¹². When you pronounce a word a thought corresponding to that word has already been issued by your mind ; but if the word is not pronounced at all, your internal word, your thought, remains

⁶ *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, II, 7.

⁷ *Mahābhārata*, Sānti Parva, 12005.

⁸ *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, II, 4, 6.

⁹ *Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, V, 2.

¹⁰ *Rgveda*, X, 125, 7.

¹¹ Coomaraswamy, *A New Approach to the Vedas*, p. 22.

¹² *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*, III, 1, 1.

unmanifest. Such is God's Word, *Vāc*, internal, *avyakta*. That is the reason why it is said that "Prajāpati moves within the womb, invisible but evidently generated"¹³; and again: "He who is the unborn image (*ajasya rūpa*)."¹⁴

These are very high metaphysical conceptions which the human mind may hardly attain by itself, without the help of God Himself. This is one of those truths which must have been revealed by God Himself in the beginning of the history of man and which Indian *sruti* has diligently kept for the instruction of future generations. Some ancient Sumerian texts also speak of a similar conception among the Sumerians. They call it *enem*, which is translated as "word". It is the voice of the god Enlil, the creative word, the most important primitive source of the New Testament conception of the *lógos*.¹⁵ Even our vedic *Vāc* has been rightly equated with the Alexandrian *lógos*.¹⁶ In the same way in the Egyptian Triad, Thoot is supposed to be the son of Rā and is called "The God-word".¹⁷ His eternal generation was well known to the Egyptians.¹⁸

II

THE GENERATION OF THE SON OF GOD

When did this generation of the Son of God take place. The *Katha Upanisad* says only that the generation was "very old," *pūrvam*,¹⁹ or in the beginning.²⁰ The beginning of this generation is further specified by announcing that *Vāc* "was

¹³ *Atharvaveda*, X, 8, 13.

¹⁴ *Rgveda*, I, 164, 6.

¹⁵ Dürr, *Die Wertung des göttlichen Wortes in Alten Testament und die antiken Orient*, pp. 153-159.

¹⁶ Cf. Weber, "Vāc und lógos", *Indischen Studien*, IX, pp. 473-480.

¹⁷ Wallis Budge, *From Fetish to God*, p. 14.

¹⁸ Rougé, "Explication d'une inscription égyptienne prouvant que les anciens Égyptiens ont connu la génération éternelle du fils de Dieu", *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, 1851.

¹⁹ *Katha Upanisad*, II, 4, 6.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, IV, 6.

born from Brahma before the *devas*."²¹ That is to say; before the *devas* or angels were created,²² the generation of *Vāc* was already a fact. The epic says that He is "the first who sprang into existence".²³ But this generation is not like the generation of other children. They were generated at a certain time and then the generation was over. The generation of *Vāc* never ends. "He is already generated, and He will be generated in future".²⁴ Origen explains this endless generation of the Word most beautifully. "The Word was not generated by the Father in a temporary manner, but He is continually being generated. He is the reflexion of the glory of the Father; now this reflexion is not generated by the light once and for all; and then stops being generated; for while the light shines, this light continually produces the reflexion. In a similar way the reflexion of the glory of God is being generated eternally".²⁵

The *Svetāsvatara Upanisad*, which is relatively one of the most recent among the thirteen principal *Upanisads*, contains nevertheless very old doctrine. We have already referred to the *Upanisad* several times explaining these high mysteries of the life of God. In connection with this generation of the Word the *Svetāsvatara* informs us of the wave of *ānanda* existing between the Father and the Son. "Isāna (the Lord) contemplated *Hiranyagarbha* (another name for *Vāc*) while he was being generated."²⁶ In this contemplation there could not but be much pleasure of the Father while seeing His Son. This pleasure is still revealed in a higher degree in another text, already partly quoted: "God is the witness of the generation of His Son, who is a seer

²¹ *Vajasaneyi Samhitā*, XXXI, 20; *Katha Upanisad*, IV, 6.

²² Cf. Heras, "The Devil in Indian Scriptures", *J.B.B.R.A.S.*, XXVII, p. 216.

²³ *Mahābhārata*, Vana Pārva, 12602.

²⁴ *Svetāsvatara Upanisad*, II, 16.

²⁵ Origenis, *In Jeremiam*, Hom. IX, 4: Migne, P.G., XIII, cols 356-357.

²⁶ *Svetāsvatara Upanisad*, IV, 12.

of golden colour, and nourishes him with wisdom".²⁷ The text signifies how the Son appears to the Father, as if He were golden, that is bedecked with the best possible material apparel ; and the Father, seeing Him so beautiful and rich, feeds Him with the best possible food. Kings choose the most precious and substantial food to be given to their sons. God selects for His Son the best food imaginable considering his spiritual nature. Such food is wisdom. This is to say that the Son is the repository of the Wisdom of the Father. Two marvellous words of the *Upanisad* summarise this tale of wondrous communication between the Father and the Son. The Father is named *bhoktā*, "the one who enjoys" ; and the Son is called *bhogyam*, "the enjoyed one".²⁸ As if it were saying : "This generation of the Golden Son is the cause of great enjoyment in the Father. He communicates all his wisdom to Him. For the Son being the joy of the Father, the Father does not know any other enjoyment than the Son." Of this divine *ānanda*, the Son also participates, for if He is the joy of the Father, the Father is also the joy of the Son. That is the reason why it is said that Brahma is *Vāc paramam vyoma*, "the highest heaven of Vāc",²⁹ that is to say the highest and purest enjoyment of the Word.

Vedic literature still gives us a few more details about this generation. When sons are born to the kings in this world, they are not born kings themselves, but they are babies like any other babies in the world. The kingly blood is their only difference, princely upbringing develops that royal element little by little and only when their fathers die, they may finally become kings. But it is totally different with our *Vāc*. "In the beginning rose *Hiranyagarbha*, born only Lord of all created things."³⁰ At the time of his generation He was already the only Lord of the whole creation ; that is the reason why, He is often called *Prajāpati*. Again the

²⁷ *Ibid.*, V, 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 12.

²⁹ *Rgveda*, I, 164, 35.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, X, 121, 1 ; *Vajasaneyi Samhitā*, XIII, 4 ; XXXIII, 1.

Svetāsvatara gives the Father and the Son two names which are full of extraordinary meaning. The Father is called *Īsa*, "the Lord." The Son is styled *Anīsa*,³¹ "one who has no Lord"³² ; now "one who has no Lord" is one who is the Lord himself. Hence the *Upanisad* by giving them two different names, openly declares that the Son is different from the Father ; but while studying the meaning of the Son's name one easily realizes that even the Son is as good Lord as the Father is. Even in this is the Son a perfect *rūpam* of the Father ; both are Lords of the whole creation..

But the relation of *Vāc* to the whole creation is still deeper. "Everything was made by *Vāc*."³³ He is "that one who as the unborn's image hath established and fixed firm these world's six regions".³⁴ For *Vāc* being the image of the Father is the prototype or model of the whole creation. So He, as "the unborn's (Father's) image, established and fixed firm these world's six regions." Hence it is said of Him that "the Babe unborn (*garbha*)"³⁵ supported this world's burden."³⁶ *Vāc* himself is once introduced saying :—

"Through me alone all eat the food that feeds them
each man who sees, breathes, hears the word outspoken ;
They know it not, but yet they dwell beside me.
Hear, one and all, the truth as I declare it."³⁷

On account of this intimate connection of the creation with *Vāc*, the latter is called the creation archetype, *visvacah-sāh*,³⁸ and more commonly *Hiranyagarbha*, "the golden seed"³⁹, for He is the seed out of which the whole universe

³¹ *Svetāsvatara Upanisad*, I, 8.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, VIII, 1, 2, 9 ; IX, 1, 5, 18.

³⁴ *Rgveda*, I, 164, 6.

³⁵ Such is Griffith's translation, according to Sāyana's interpretation : "garbha does not mean "seed" here, but foetus."

³⁶ *Rgveda*, I, 152, 3 ; *Atharvaveda*, IX, 10, 23.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, X, 125, 4.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, X, 81, 1.

³⁹ *Passim*. Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, p. 82 calls the Son of God *Visvarūpa*, "the Form of the Universe."

has sprung, a denomination which may be equated with the "lógos spermatikós", "the seminal word," of the Greek philosophers. The *Rgveda* treasures a hymn in honour of Hiran-yagarba, as one of the most precious poetical specimens of the whole book.⁴⁰

III

THE PHILOSOPHY OF GOD'S PATERNITY

A few philosophical notions concerning the life of God will be of some help to understand the fact of God's Paternity.

There is no doubt that the Paternity of God (not the paternity concerning all creatures by virtue of the creation, on account of which he is called Prajāpati ; but the Paternity concerning this Son whose filiation we are studying) is a Paternity totally different from the paternity in human generations. God is proclaimed *alinga*, sexless⁴¹, and it should be so being a pure spirit.⁴² From the moment myth introduces sex in the sphere of the godhead, truth is being besmeared by the darkness of ignorance.

Moreover there cannot be any doubt either about the intellectual nature of God. The Creator of the wonderful machinery of the whole world must be endowed not only with an omnipotent power by which every thing has been created, but also with an eminent intellectual vision by which every thing was planned with unparallel wisdom. "The supreme Brahman", says Sankara, "is eternal knowledge".⁴³ St. Thomas Aquinas avers that God is a pure intellectual act,⁴⁴ i.e. that He is eternally thinking without potentiality or power to think, but actually doing so, for otherwise there

⁴⁰ *Rgveda*, X, 121.

⁴¹ *Katha Upanisad*, V, 8.

⁴² *Maitri Upanisad*, II, 5 ; VI, 15 ; *Svetāsvatara Upanisad*, VI, 16.

⁴³ Sankara, *Brhadāranyaka Upanisad Bhāṣya*, II, 9, 28, 7.

⁴⁴ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 3, a. 2, in c.

would be a change in his mind, which cannot be conceived in the Immutable ; and, indeed, thinking not a succession of thoughts which cannot exist in eternity, but having always one and the same thought.

Ancient Indian philosophers substantially agreed to the views of St. Thomas when they crudely but truthfully stated that God is unable to think, for He has no potentiality. God is being introduced saying : "I am without all things headed by intellect (i.e. intellectual operations). I am the highest, the greatest of the great. I am always the form (*rūpa*) of thought ; I am without thoughts."⁴⁵ They admit moreover that he is in eternal meditation (*tapas*), that is to say eternally thinking without interruption, and consequently without succession of different thoughts, having always one and the same thought. For since Brahma is in reality *nirguna*, without qualities, this thought is not a quality attached to Him, but it is Himself, his own Being.

We are now in a position to understand what is the subject of this thought. God eternally knows Himself, neither is there anything worthy of his thought beyond Himself. "It knew only Itself as 'I am Brahman'".⁴⁶ And Sankara agrees : "The Supreme Brahman, being eternal knowledge, ever knows itself as Bliss Absolute."⁴⁷ It is essentially the knowledge of the Oneness. Otherwise there would be a succession of thoughts which cannot exist in the Eternal. This thought of Himself is the knowledge he has of Himself, known philosophically as the Word, the *lógos* in Greek, *Vāc* in Sanskrit. That is the reason why St. Paul calls the Word "the splendour of God's glory, and the figure of His substance"⁴⁸ ; and also "the image of the invisible God"⁴⁹ ; and the *Brāhmaṇa* calls the *Vāc* of God, "a second Himself,"⁵⁰ for

⁴⁵ *Maitreya Upanisad*, III, 10.

⁴⁶ *Brhadāranyaka Upanisad*, I, 4, 10.

⁴⁷ Sankara, *Brhadāranyaka Upanisad Bhāṣya*, III, 19, 28, 7.

⁴⁸ *Hebr.*, I, 3.

⁴⁹ *Coloss.*, I, 15.

⁵⁰ *Brhadāranyaka Upanisad*, I, 6, 3.

"Vāc, the World, does not say but what the intellect contemplates".⁵¹ "It is essentially the knowledge of the oneness of Self".⁵²

Now the knowledge that God has of Himself being most perfect, the Word must be a most perfect image of Himself, without any blemish or flaw, just as He is "a second Himself." In this world when a portrait of a person is taken, there is always room for improvement; there may be another photographer who may take a better likeness than the preceding one. This is the reason why many portraits of the same person are taken. Moreover persons change, grow mature and old. That is another reason why many portraits of the same person are taken at different stages of one's own life.

But such reasons cannot be given in God. There cannot be any improvement over the reflexion and portrait of God, which is called the Word, *Vāc*. And since God never changes nor does He grow old, there is no room for a second portrait either. Consequently there is no need of a second *Vāc*; one is enough.

Now this Word is produced in such a way as to receive the full substance of the Divine Intellect in himself, and thus this may be rightly called "generation", which is but the transference of a being's own life into that of another. Thus the Generated Word may fully be called the Son of the Generator, who is therefore his Father.

But this generation never ends, for it is eternal. "He is already generated, and He will be generated in future", says the *Svetāsvatara*. In this world once the generation of a son is finished, there may be room for the generation of another son. Not so in God, for the generation of His Son is never finished, it is eternal. There cannot be a new son generated while the generation of the first son is still going on. Hence God cannot have more than one Son.

⁵¹ *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*, V, 6, 7, 10.

⁵² *Māndūkya Upaniṣad*, 7, C1. Sircar, *Hindu Mysticism*, p. 64.

This is not to say that the paternity of God is limited. The Word, because it is infinite (the same as the Father), is complete, so to say; we may even say in a human way of speaking that the infinite capacity of God, after the generation of his own knowledge, is fully exhausted. In the generation of His Son God has displayed His infinite fecundity, for the Son is as infinite as the Father.

IV

THE BEGINNING OF THE INDIVIDUALIZATION OF THE SON OF GOD

Between the early age of theological conceptions and the much later period of mythological development of epic and puranic literature, there is a transitional period when myth is already introduced into philosophical speculations as an embroidery to enliven a dry subject. The abstract metaphysical ideas of the early philosophical period were not easily grasped and not remembered without difficulty by the common man in the street. The personal individualization of those ideas with proper nouns and characteristic actions was equivalent to communicating life to dry bones, making them live. In this period the Son of God is called *Sanatkumāra*, that is "the eternal Son", or "the ever virgin".

The earliest mention of *Sanatkumāra* is found in the very Upanisadic period. The Brāhman Nārada wants to know the doctrine of the Ātman, and, in order to obtain this knowledge, goes to *Sanatkumāra*, who enlightens him accordingly.⁵³ In this passage this *Sanatkumāra* is styled "the God of War." But in another passage of the same Upanisad, he is identified with *Skanda*⁵⁴ which identification is confirmed by Sankara. "This same *Sanatkumāra*, people also call the deity *Skanda*—people who know his real character."⁵⁵ The

⁵³ *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, VII, 1, 4.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, VII, 26, 2.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Sankara, *Bhāṣya*, p. 412.

same identification is found in the epic.⁵⁶ And a modern commentator Shri Hari Narayan Apte confirms this identification when affirming that Sanatkumāra is supposed to be the same as Kārttikeya.⁵⁷ Now Skanda and Kārttikeya, are two different names of the son of Siva, otherwise called Subrahmanya, Kumāra, Murugan, etc.

It is after all natural that the Son of God, so much spoken of in the Vedic period, should correspond to the son of Siva of the epic and Purānas. For the latter do not mention any son of Visnu. This would incline us to believe that the doctrine of Vāc and his generation from God is one of the dogmas that Vedic books derive from the old Dravidian religion. In point of fact, it is only mentioned in the last two *mandalas* of the *Rgveda* chronologically speaking, acknowledged now as influenced by Dravidian thought, and in later Vedic literature.

Why is Sanatkumāra given the title of "God of War" on this occasion? Sanatkumāra's identification with Skanda explains this title quite well. The Purānas and the epic introduce a lengthy account of the war waged by Tārakāsura and Grasana against Siva. In this war Skanda is finally deputed by his father to march on the enemies of God, and he succeeds in defeating and killing Tārakāsura.⁵⁸ In the *Rgveda* there seems to be an allusion to this event when Vāc says: "I bind the bow for Rudra, that his arrow may strike and slay the hater of devotion."⁵⁹ This heroic feat, which seems to take us to the first times after the creation,⁶⁰ surrounded Skanda with warlike reputation, which seems to be totally different from his original attributes.

⁵⁶ *Mahābhārata*, Salya Parva, 2716. Cf. Sørensen, *Mahābhārata Index*, p. 461.

⁵⁷ Apte, *Chāndogya Upanisad*, p. 180.

⁵⁸ *Mātsya Purāna*, CLIII-CXL; *Mahābhārata*, Anusasānika Parva, 4212.

⁵⁹ *Rgveda*, X, 125, 6. Cf. Heras, "The Devil in Indian Scriptures", *J. B. B. R. A. S.*, XXVII, p. 225-226.

⁶⁰ Cf. Heras, "The Devil in Indian Scriptures", *J.B.B.R.A.S.* XXVII, (1952), pp. 227-228.

Sanatkumāra is also often called in Sanskrit literature, "the son of Brahma."⁶¹ In this transitional period God is still at times called Brahma, as in the *Upanisads*. In the *Tejobindu Upanisad* Siva says: "I am Brahma,"⁶² or "I am Brahman",⁶³ or "I am the sole Brahman",⁶⁴ or "All this is Brahman alone. There is none other Brahman and that is 'I'".⁶⁵ The *Skanda Upanisad* referring to Achyuta (the Imperishable), says: "He is Mahādeva (Siva). He is Parabrahman".⁶⁶ At times He is also called Siva or Visnu, according to the sectarian influence of the writer. Hence Sanatkumāra, who is supposed to be the son of Siva, as he is identified with Skanda, may also be called son of Brahman. In fact, he is styled "the mind's son of Brahma," his *mānasa putra*,⁶⁷ which denomination establishes a perfect equation between Sanatkumāra and the son of the mind of God spoken of in Vedic literature.

Sanatkumāra is always associated with light, for being the son of God's mind, he is evidently the Wisdom of God; and wisdom is always the source of enlightenment. In the epic he is said to be "bright".⁶⁸ In the *Dīgha Nikāya* "light and radiance" are described as appearing before Sanatkumāra, as if they were his heralds.⁶⁹ Similarly in the *Samjyutta Nikāya*, when once Sanatkumāra appears to the Buddha on the banks of the Snake River at Rājagrha, he is described as "shedding radiance by his effulgent beauty."⁷⁰ Mārkan-deya relates the epiphany of Sanatkumāra to him, thus: "I saw...the divine Āditya (the sun) and an effulgent being, bright as fire itself, and small as a finger. The sun and

⁶¹ Cf. Keny, "The Nagas in Magadha", *J. B. B. R. A. S.* XXVIII, pp. 163, 168, 168.

⁶² *Tejobindu Upanisad*, II, p. 85. (Aiyar's ed. Madras, 1914)

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, III, p. 85.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁶⁶ *Skanda Upanisad*, p. 41.

⁶⁷ *Visnu Purāna*, II, 7.

⁶⁸ *Mahābhārata*, Sauptika Parva, 636.

⁶⁹ Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II, pp. 243, 264.

⁷⁰ *Samjyutta Nikāya*, I, 62. (Kindred Sayings, I, p. 191.)

this being together looked like twin fires, one joined to the other."⁷¹ This second being manifests himself to the sage as Sanatkumāra, "shedding almost incomprehensible lustre, like a second fire-god".⁷² Quite reasonably therefore did Nārada go to Sanatkumāra to receive from him enlightenment concerning the doctrine of the Ātman.

In fact among all the qualities of Sanatkumāra, his wisdom is especially emphasized. He is openly called "the preceptor".⁷³ Consequently even the ancient sages are said to go to the Sanatkumāra to consult him about their doubts.⁷⁴ And Sanatkumāra himself is often introduced giving instructions to different persons. Now it is Purūravas who is taught by him on different occasions;⁷⁵ then Visvāvasu is also instructed by him;⁷⁶ here Mārkaṇḍeya gets the solutions of several problems from Sanatkumāra;⁷⁷ there Govinda, the steward of the kingdom of Kosala, is enlightened by Sanatkumāra about the advantages of world renunciation for reaching the heaven of Brahma.⁷⁸ Vrtrāsura,⁷⁹ Sankhyāyana,⁸⁰ Vyāsa⁸¹ and the *rsis*⁸² also received lessons from this foremost among *gurus*. Even Prajāpati⁸³ and Rudra⁸⁴ learn the essence of religion and philosophy from Sanatkumāra. The *Chāndogya Upanisad* relates that after Nārada had been cleansed of all impurities "the holy Sanatkumāra shows to him the opposite side (bank) of darkness",⁸⁵ i.e. the bank

⁷¹ *Harivamsa*, *Harivamsa Parva*, XVII. (Bose's, p. 51).

⁷² *Ibid.*, XVIII (Bose's p. 58.)

⁷³ *Mahābhārata*, *Sabha Parva*, 441.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, *Aranyaka Parva*, 12700.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, *Ādi Parva*, 3145-3147; *Viṣṇu Purāna*, III, 14.

⁷⁶ *Mahābhārata*, *Sānti Parva*, 11784.

⁷⁷ *Harivamsa*, *loc. cit.*, and XIX.

⁷⁸ Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II, pp. 272-274.

⁷⁹ *Mahābhārata*, *Sānti Parva*, 286.

⁸⁰ *Bhāgavata Purāna*, XIII, 8, 7.

⁸¹ Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. LXXXVIII.

⁸² *Mahābhārata*, *Sānti Parva*, 227.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 13587;

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, *Anusasānika Parva*, 165-169.

⁸⁵ *Chāndogya Upanisad*, VII, 26. 2.

beyond darkness. This darkness, is, according to Apte, the darkness of ignorance.⁸⁶ From which it is clear that Sanatkumāra has the power to dissipate the darkness of ignorance with the light of his wisdom; for God's "self effulgence always dispels the darkness of ignorance".⁸⁷ On another occasion the same Nārada learns the science of the Ātman (God) from Sanatkumāra, as commemorated above.

One of the most favourite subjects taught by Sanatkumāra is the subject of world renunciation in order to reach God. With Vrtra he discusses the subject of emancipation.⁸⁸ On a certain occasion he tells Nārada: "Do not be so taciturn; be joyful in your mind. There is means to acquire happiness here." And then he teaches him the secret of bhakti-jñāna, accompanied with disgust for all material pleasures.⁸⁹ To Mārkaṇḍeya Sanatkumāra conferred "spiritual vision", "that knowledge which was difficult of attainment even by the *devas*".⁹⁰ In the *Sekha-Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* the Buddha quotes, explains and praises a sloka of ascetical meaning said to have been composed by Sanatkumāra.⁹¹

The epic has happily kept a lengthy discourse on emancipation and asceticism, which according to tradition had been given in ancient times by Sanatkumāra himself.⁹² Our limited space does not allow us to quote this passage. We shall only transcribe the summary of Sanatkumāra's doctrines as given by Prof. R. D. Ranade. "In the first place", says he, "Sanatkumāra seems to teach a spiritual hedonism. Happiness — and in Sanatkumāra's hands, happiness becomes the equivalent of spiritual happiness — is the spring of all action;

⁸⁶ Apte, *Chāndogya Upanisad*, pp. 179-180 (1915).

⁸⁷ *Bhāgavata Purāna*, I, 1, 1.

⁸⁸ *Mahābhārata*, *Sānti Parva*, 10030-10086.

⁸⁹ *Padma Purāna*, *Uttara Kanda*, CXC, 54-64.

⁹⁰ *Harivamsa*, *Harivamsa Parva*, XVIII.

⁹¹ Chalmers, *Further Dialogues of the Buddha*, 1, p. 258. The following works go on as written by Sanatkumāra: *Vāstrusāstra*, *Sanatkumāra Samhitā*, *Sanatkumāra-tānta* and *Sanatkumāra-kalpa*. Cf. Sastri, *Prācīna-Caritrakosa*, (In Marathi), p. 603.

⁹² *Mahābhārata*, *Sānti Parva*, 9990-10097.

action is the cause of faith ; faith, of belief ; when a man believes, he thinks ; when he thinks, he knows ; and when he knows, he reaches the truth. In this way, happiness, action, faith, belief, thought, knowledge and truth constitute, in Sanatkumāra's hands, a moral ladder to realisation. Secondly, it is Sanatkumāra who teaches the doctrine of Bhūman. "*Bhūman*" is that infinite happiness which arises by the vision of the divinity all around. When anything else is seen, that is "*alpa*". Thus all possessions in the shape of cows and horses, elephants and gold, servants and wives, lands and palaces, are of little consequence as contrasted with Bhūman. Thirdly, the realization of Bhūman occurs when an experience such as is implied in the expression "*Sohamātma*" is attained. Lastly, Sanatkumāra teaches, that *Ātman* is the source of all things whatsoever. From *Ātman* spring hope and memory ; from *Ātman* spring space, light and waters ; from *Ātman* everything unfolds, in *Ātman* everything hides itself. *Ātman* is the source of all power, all knowledge, all ecstasy".⁹³

Sanatkumāra, being the *rūpam* of God, is accordingly held as Brahma himself. Govinda, the steward of the kingdom of Kosala, enters into a retreat to finally receive a revelation from Brahma. Yet Brahma does not appear to him. Sanatkumāra appears in his stead, and yet Govinda is as satisfied as if the revelation had been of Brahma himself.⁹⁴ To see Sanatkumāra was the same as to see Brahma. In point of fact the Buddha calls Sanatkumāra Brahma.⁹⁵ Again the *Mahābhārata* states that Siva himself among the *yogins* is Sanatkumāra,⁹⁶ thus showing in a practical way that Sanatkumāra is a perfect image of his father Siva.

There are some texts which speak of other sons of the mind of Brahma, mentioning them, besides Sanatkumāra. They are five in all and are mentioned by their respective

⁹³ Ranade, *A constructive Survey of Upanisadic Philosophy*, pp. 52-53.

⁹⁴ "Maha-Govinda Suttanta" : Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II, p. 273.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 264. Cf. *J.R.A.S.*, 1894, p. 344.

⁹⁶ *Mahābhārata*, Anusāsana Parva, 916.

names. They are Sananda, Sanaka, Sanandana or Sanatana and Ribhu.⁹⁷ Rather than four different brothers of Sanatkumāra, they seem to be four different names of the same Sanatkumāra himself. As regards the fifth Ribhu, this word happens to mean "clever," "skilful," "inventive" and "prudent", which are all qualities that befit Sanatkumāra in his special attribute of wisdom. Moreover these additional four sons of Brahma are always spoken of as great ascetics,⁹⁸ in the same way as Sanatkumāra. Besides Sanandana is said to be a great sage,⁹⁹ and is described as being in profound meditation,¹⁰⁰ and always living in *Janaloka*¹⁰¹ ; which details fully agree with the characteristics of Sanatkumāra. Also Sanaka is said to be living in *Janaloka*.¹⁰² It is also of interest to know that the *Harivamsa* limits the primogeniture among these five sons to Sanatkumāra : "I am the first born of Brahma," he himself says to Mārkaṇḍeya.¹⁰³ Sanatkumāra is, in fact, the most spoken among the five sons of Brahma. This seems to suggest that he was supposed to be the only son of Brahma in ancient times, and that at a later period, four other sons, doubles or replicas of the first were added.¹⁰⁴

Besides the suspicion that these four names might have originally been four different names of Sanatkumāra or Skanda, which finally became four different personages (a not

⁹⁷ Wilson, *Vishnu Purāna*, I, p. 77. note 1.

⁹⁸ *J.R.A.S.*, 1895, p. 344 ; 1897. pp. 385-388.

⁹⁹ *Visnu Purāna* I, 4.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, V.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, I, 4 ; II, 7 ; *Skanda Purāna*, Kasu Khanda, XXII, 8-9.

¹⁰² *Visnu Purāna*, I, 4, VI, 4.

¹⁰³ *Harivamsa*, *Harivamsa Parva*, XVII.

¹⁰⁴ The *Linga Purāna*, I, 170-171 makes Sanatkumāra and Ribhu the first born of all. Cf. Wilson, *The Visnu Purāna*, I, pp. 77 ff. Since Ribhu in Sanskrit means clever, skilful, inventive, and prudent this perhaps may suggest that Ribhu was originally an epithet of Sanatkumāra, which was finally taken as the name of another son of Brahma when the other three replicas were added. Thus the five mind-born sons of Brahma may finally be the personification of the five characteristics of Sanatkumāra : 1. He as a man ; 2. He as a sage ; 3. He as an ascetic ; 4. He as a prophet ; 5. He as having divine nature.

uncommon phenomenon in ancient mythology); there may be, if we understand properly ancient Indian customs and ideals, a very high reason for the introduction of these other four sons. Number five in ancient India means 'plenitude' and 'fulness'.¹⁰⁵ The existence of five mind-born sons of Brahma seems to suggest that it is the fulness of Brahma's sonship, and since all five seem to be equal, that is to say, four being equal to the first, who is Sanatkumāra, one may easily understand that Sanatkumāra is the plenitude and fulness of Brahma's sonship; in other words, that he is the only son of Brahma and that there cannot be any other one. This seems to be the august mystery hidden behind the symbolical number of five mind sons of Brahma.¹⁰⁶

The epic informs us that all creatures will merge in Sanatkumāra at the time of the dissolution of the world.¹⁰⁷ This privilege of being the end of all creatures is based on the fact that he is the individualisation of Vāc Hiranyagarbha. Himself being the Golden Seed, the Archetype, after which all the creatures were made, all will return to him. He is the beginning and He will be the end.

V

MURUGAN = SKANDA IS THE SON OF SIVA

The identification of the only son of the mind of God spoken of in *sruti* with Sanatkumāra of the transitional period,

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Heras, "India, the Empire of the Svastika," *Coronation Souvenir*, Bombay, p. 40.

¹⁰⁶ At a later period the number of sons of Brahma increased. Since they were five great *rsis*, and the seven great *rsis* were already traditional in India, the mind-sons of Brahma became seven. They are also mentioned in the *Padma Purāna*. Cf. Wilson, *op. cit.* II, p. 200, n. They are also spoken of in the *Mahābhārata*, Santi Parva, 13077-13080. Later one more is added. Sanatkumāra himself says: "I have seven brothers all younger to me" (*Harivamsa*, Harivamsa Parva, XVII). These seven brothers united with Sanatkumāra himself, make eight, which is a consecrated number in the history of Saivism. Siva is *astha mūrti*. An, his protohistoric counterpart, had eight forms. Cf. Heras, "The Religion of the Mohenjo-Daro People", *Journal of the University of Bombay*, V, pp. 7-9.

¹⁰⁷ *Mahābhārata*, Santi Parva, 12907 (Calcutta ed.).

leads us to identify the former once more with Skanda or Subrahmanya, son of Siva, in the purānic and epic period, Sanatkumāra being already acknowledged as Skanda. The Indus Valley inscriptions also speak of one son of Ān (the prototype of Siva), who receives the names of Ānīl, "the son of Ān"¹⁰⁸, *Murugan*, "the boy"¹⁰⁹ and *Vēlan*, "one who holds the trident."¹¹⁰ The equation therefore is perfect throughout the religious history of the country:

<i>Sruti</i> period	Indus Valley period	Transitional period	Purānic and epic period
Isvara	Ān	Brahma	Siva
Mind-born son Vāc	{ Ānīl Murugan Vēlan }	Sanatkumāra	{ Skanda Subrahmanya Kumāra Kārttikeya }

Of all these names of the Indus Valley period the most typical and characteristic seems to be Murugan. Ānīl is only a record of his divine filiation; and Vēlan a description of his likeness. Murugan has remained unchanged in South India. The Tamilians call Subrahmanya *Muruga*, which, according to them means 'the tender child', and is represented as a beautiful child or at most a youth, thus emphasizing the idea that he is "the son" of Siva. (Figure 1).

Dr Karmarkar is of opinion that Murugan is spoken of in the *Rgveda* under the name *Muradevah*.¹¹¹ This view seems very probable, for he is called a "foolish god"¹¹² one of "fools' gods" about whom the Āryas pray to Indra: "Let the fools' gods with bent neck fall and perish and see no more the sun when it arises".¹¹³ Sāyana calls him a Raksasa. Karmarkar's

¹⁰⁸ Heras, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁹ Heras, "The Vēlālas in Mohenjo-Daro", *I. H. Q.* (Calcutta), XIV, p. 53.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

¹¹¹ Karmarkar, "The Vratyas in Ancient India", *Journal of the University of Bombay*, XI (N.S.) (1942), p. 83; "Muruga or Karthikeya", *Journal of the Rama Varma Research Institute*, XII, pp. 12-13.

¹¹² *Rgveda*, X, 87, 2.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, VII, 104, 24.

views are not improbable for, as seen above, the Rgvedic *rsis* of a latter period knew of the spiritual generation of God's son,¹¹⁴ recorded his name *Vāc*,¹¹⁵ and even commemorated his participation in the victory over "the hater of Brahma,"¹¹⁶ who is referred to as *Tārakāsura* in the epic and purāṇic period. The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* unhesitatingly affirms that "Subrahmanya is *Vāc*".¹¹⁷

Three definite characteristics are mentioned in relation to Murugan :—

1. *His association with Wisdom* : Mythology states that he issued from the frontal eye of Siva as six sparks of fire,¹¹⁸ i.e. born of Siva's head, having an extraordinary radiance from the very beginning. Accordingly he always holds the Trident, which typifies his energy of wisdom (*Jñāna-sakti*).¹¹⁹ That is the reason why he is called *Velan*, from the Proto-Indian times, and also *Vēlayudha*, "He who carries a vel" (Fig. 2). Subrahmanya therefore represents God as a guru, the teacher of the universe.¹²⁰ He is the embodiment of *Jñāna-sakti*, and is as such called *Kumāra-Guru-Para*, 'the Supreme Son Teacher'. He is said to have taught the sage Agastya and other *rsis*. In order to show the excellence of his wisdom they affirm that he even declared truth to his own father Siva. Some of his images, as he is being worshipped in Palni, depict him in *kataka-hasta*, the gesture of communication, by which he is imparting the fruits of his wisdom to others.

2. *His unilateral birth* : Vedic works clearly declared his generation from the mind of God, without the intervention

¹¹⁴ Cf. above, p. 70.

¹¹⁵ Rgveda, X, 125.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., X, 125, 6. Cf. *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, III, 4, 39; *Jaiminiya Upanisad Brāhmaṇa*, I, 18, 5; *Jaiminiya Brāhmaṇa*, I, 60, 1-7; Heras "The Devil in Indian Scriptures", J. B. B. R. A. S., XXVII, pp. 225-226.

¹¹⁷ *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, VI, 1, 3.

¹¹⁸ Somasundaram Pillai, Palni: *The Sacred Hill of Muruga*, p. 12, n. I.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 10 n.

¹²⁰ Shivapadasundaram, *The Saiva School of Hinduism*, p. 184.



Fig. 1
Muruga, as worshipped in Palni
Indian Historical Research Institute,
Bombay.



Fig. 2
Velan
Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay.

Fig. 3
Shanmukha (Marble)
Indian Historical Research Institute,
Bombay.



Fig. 4
Shanmukha on the Peacock
Indian Historical Research Institute,
Bombay.

of any goddess. This great dogma of God's life is reflected in the mythological mirror in different ways. According to one story, which we referred to above, Subrahmanya was born from the eye on Siva's forehead. Another legend says that the seed discharged (*skanna*) by Siva, produced a *sveta* (white) mountain where Skanda was born. In this case Pārvatī is reported as bitterly complaining that she was denied the pleasure of becoming a mother.¹²¹ Another account avers that Siva's seed was transferred to the six Kṛttikas (the Pleiades); when the latter went to bathe, each of them conceived and begot a son; all these children were combined in one, when Pārvatī embraced them all together.¹²² That is the reason why he is called *Kārtikeya* and *Shanmukha* or *Arumugan* (in Tamil). (Fig. 3.) The idea of these six heads may also have sprang from the tradition of Subrahmanya's embodiment of wisdom. Great sages are often endowed with big heads. Six heads must therefore be the seat of divine wisdom. (Fig. 4)

3. *His perpetual sonship*: He is ever called *Kumāra* and *Murugan*. He is shown as a very little boy between Siva and Pārvatī in the beautiful group of the Dravidian Triad known as *Sōmāskanda* (*i.e.* *Sōma* = Siva + *Umā* + *Skanda*). (Fig. 5) In the stone carvings the little boy is shown seated on one of the knees' of Pārvatī.¹²² Three of these remarkable sculptures may be seen at Mahābalipuram. (7th and 8th cent) (Fig. 6 and 7) In the metal images, Skanda is shown standing still as a little boy. The Madras Museum has a most beautiful specimen of this group. Another one may be seen in the Museum of the Indian Historical Research Institute. (Fig. 8) Accordingly Subrahmanya is supposed to be a *Brahmachāri* (celibate), and he is as such shown as a young boy, his head being shaved, a tuft of hair only being left, wearing only a *kaupīna*, (small cloth), a *yaj-nōpavita* (sacred thread) and a *maunji* (grass girdle). This statues, which are very rare, depict his left hand in *Katyava-*

¹²¹ *Rāmāyana*, Balakanda.

¹²² This association with Pārvatī is purely accidental. In another article we may develop "The case of the Mother Goddess".

lambita-hasta. We possess one in the Indian Historical Research Institute.¹²³ (See Fig. 1) Mythology shows him living a life of celibacy in Mount Krauncha, adding the dramatic trait that this was as an effect of disappointment after the marriage of his brother Ganapati.¹²⁴ Perhaps on account of this association with Mount Krauncha, he in the Tamil country, receives the titles of *Kurinji Āndavar*, "the Lord of hilltops", *Kurinji Vendan*, "the King of hilltops", *Kurinji Irāivan*, "the god of hilltops" and *Kurinji-man*, "the one of the mountains." Many of his temples in South India are on the tops of hills, Palni, Tiruparankunram (Madurai), Tiruvengam (Malabar), Swāmimalai (Kumbakonam), Tiruttani, etc. The last but one canto of the Tamil poem *Tirumurugāruppadai* is entitled *Kunruthoradal* and describes Subrahmanya "sporting on all hills".¹²⁵

At a later period the purity of this tradition concerning the celibacy of Kumāra was darkened with the faked account of his marriage first to Devasena; and then in South India to the Kurava girl Valli-amman. Accordingly when he is depicted as *Senāpati* he is often shown with one wife Devesena. The Madras Museum has a beautiful stone specimen in which *Senāpati* is riding the peacock, his usual *vāhana*. In South India he is at times shown with his two consorts Valli-amman and Devayanai, of whom the former rides a lion and the latter an elephant. Specimens of Subrahmanya with these two spurious wives may be seen at the Nagesvarasvāmin temple of Kumbakonam or at the Siva temple of Tiruvorriyur (Fig. 12).

4. *His Leadership of the army of the Devas*: Vrtra, the opponent of Indra in the *Rgveda*, becomes Tārakāsura in the epic and purānic period. When he, helped by Grasana, arises against Siva, Indra was feared not to be a match for them. Siva was in need of a son to oppose the evil one. It was then that Kārttikeya was born. In the Mahīsamardhinī

¹²³ Cf. reproduction of a popular picture in Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Iconography of Southern India*, pl. XXXII.

¹²⁴ *Siva-Mahāpurāna*, Rudra Samhitā, Kumāra Khanda, ch. 20.

¹²⁵ Somasundaram Pillai, *Palni*, pp. 44-45.



FIG. 5
Somaskanda, from the Mahisasura
Mandapa, Mahabalipuram
Copyright, Archaeological Survey of India



FIG. 6
Somaskanda, from Sea Shore Temple,
Mahabalipuram
Copyright, Archaeological Survey of India.

FIG. 7
Somaskanda, from
Dharmaraja's Ratha,
Mahabalipuram
Copyright, Archaeological
Survey of India.



FIG. 8
Somaskanda (Bronze)
Indian Historical Research
Institute, Bombay.

cave of Mahābalipuram there is a large panel representing this scene. It has generally been wrongly described as Nārāyana or Sesabhāgvan.¹²⁶ (Fig. 9.) Tārakāsura and Granana are shown as two colossal giants plotting to destroy Siva while the latter is peacefully sleeping on Ananta (eternity). On this occasion Skanda is born. He is seen in front rising from the earth; his thighs are still half hidden in the ground. He wears the *yajñōpavita*, the *maunji* and the *kaupina*. He holds the *sakti*, a weapon he is going to use against the *asuras*, in his right hand. He is talking to one who is half kneeling to his left, probably Indra or Agni, while a *devi*, probably Pārvatī, is behind him in a worshipping position. The epic narrates that when Indra heard of the birth of Siva's son to defeat Tārakāsura "he was troubled thinking that his kingdom was taken away from him"; but he recovered his peace of mind when he heard Siva saying to his son Skanda: "Thou wast born in order that thou mightest slay Tāraka and protect the realm of Indra. Therefore do your duty." Then Skanda received from Agni a weapon of extraordinary efficiency, the *sakti*, for his combat with the *asuras*. It possessed great lustre and seemed to blaze with light; when during the conflict Skanda repeatedly hurled this blazing missile, meteors and thunderbolts dropped upon the earth and millions of darts came out of it. Thus Skanda reduced millions of *asuras* to ashes and finally killed Tārakāsura, their leader.¹²⁷ That is the reason why he "was particularly hated by all the daityas".¹²⁸ When Skanda is depicted

¹²⁶ The cave is a purely Saiva cave nor would a Vaisnava argument have been depicted in such a prominent place when Visnu himself is shown as a small *deva*, in the same way as Brahma, in the background of the Sōmāskanda shrine. Cf. Keny, "The Image of Nārāyana," *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, XXIX (1948), pp. 215-226. In the so-called Ananta-Sayana group of the Undavalli cave, near Vijayavada, the two giants Tārakāsura and Grasana are also seen at the feet of the supine god. They are in the same inimical attitude. In fact the Mahābalipuram asuras seem to have been copied from these.

¹²⁷ *Mahābhārata*, Āranyaka Parva, 14311-15, 14402, 14368-86; 14423-38; 14520-14627; Salya Parva 2455-61, 2498, 2523, 690-94; Sānti Parva CCLXXXI-CCLXXXII; Anusāsana Parva, 4212-14; *Mātsya Purāna* CLIII-CLX; *Skanda Purāna*, XX-XXIX; *Katha Sarit Sāgara*, (Tawney's ed.), I, p. 5; II, p. 102.

¹²⁸ Venkatakrishna Rao, "The Ganapati Cult", *Q. J. M. S.*, XLI, p. 99.

as *Tārakari-Subrahmanya* he is shown riding on a peacock holding the *vajra* and the *sakti*. There is a remarkable specimen of this image at Aihole, Bijapur District. In connection with these military activities he receives the names of *Mahāsena*, 'great Captain' and *Tārakajit*, 'the slayer of Tāraka.'

It is undoubtedly on account of this leadership of the hosts of heaven that Kumāra is also called the leader or the lord of the *ganas*, the attendants to his father Siva. Hence the title of *Ganapati* was also born by Kumāra. When the *ganas* were defeated by Arjuna, Skanda is depicted addressing them as his subjects, enthrusting them to fight courageously and not fleeing away from his enemy like cowards.¹²⁹ As leader and protector of this army of celestials, whom he hides and shields against the *asuras*, Skanda is also called *Guha*.¹³⁰

The cult of Subrahmanya seems to have been very old in South India, specially in the Tamil-nādu. He is very often mentioned in Sangam literature, being called the "Red god."¹³¹ He was especially worshipped in the mountainous region of the Kuravas, whose orgies in his honour are described in the *Tirumurugārruppadaḥ*¹³² and in the *Pattupāṭṭu*.¹³³ His main shrine in Palni dates from a very early period. He was not only worshipped by jungle people but also by high class people, as the name of Vijaya Skandavarman, one of the Pallava Kings, clearly shows. These kings carved his image in the shrines of Mahābalipuram. In an old Pallava relief embedded in the Rājarājesvara Temple of Tanjore there is a unique representation of Kumāra.¹³⁴ The relief reproduces Bhāravi's story of Arjuna's penance. Next to the images of Siva and Pārvatī on Mount Kailāsa one sees this couple going

¹²⁹ Bhāravi, *Kiratārjunīya*, XV.

¹³⁰ For instance in the *Kumāra Sambhava*.

¹³¹ *Tolkāppiyam*, por. 5.

¹³² Cf. Somasundaram Pillai, *Palni*, pp. 44-47.

¹³³ *Pattupāṭṭu*, I, 220-249.

¹³⁴ I owe this information to my intimate friend Shri T. N. Ramachandran, Joint Director General of Archaeology, whose knowledge of South Indian temples and iconography is unparalleled. I understand that a book on Arjuna's Penance in Indian Art by Mr. Ramachandran will soon be published.



FIG. 9

Birth of Skanda, from the Mahisasura Mandapa, Mahabalipuram
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Fig. 10
Shanmukha on a coin
of the Yaudheyas



Fig. 11
Kumara seated on the
Peacock on a coin of
Kumara Gupta I

Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London.

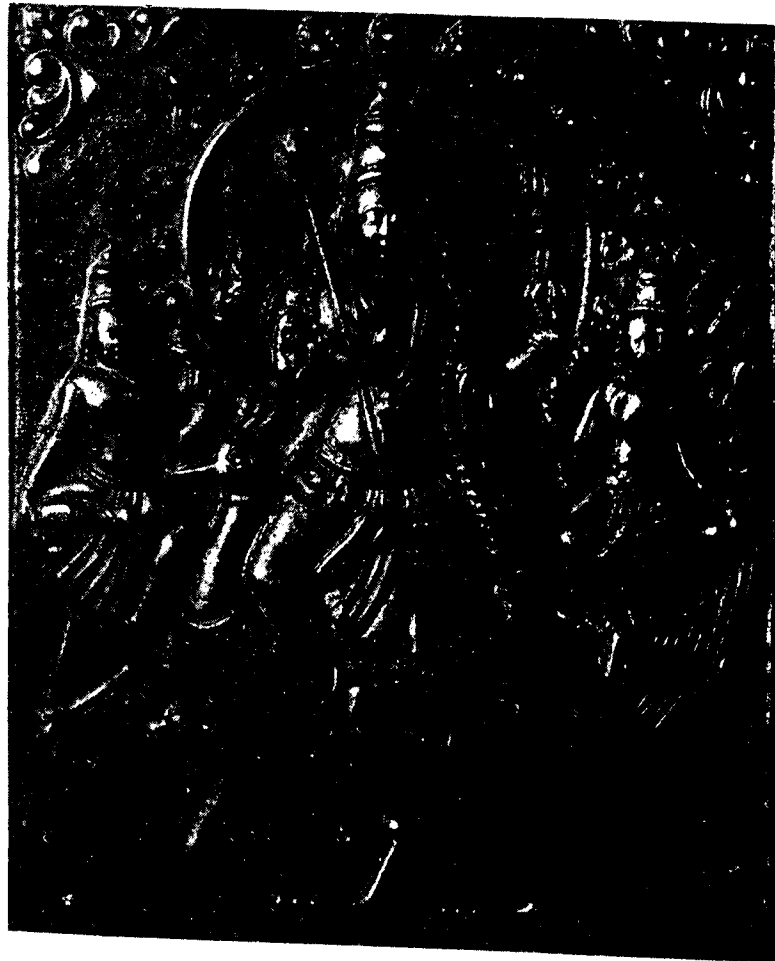


FIG. 12
Karttikeya seated on the Peacock and a Naga, with his
two wives (Copper Plaque)
Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay.

to the forest where Arjuna is performing his *tapas*. Pārvatī is, on this occasion, shown holding little Kumāra on her right arm. The same composition is repeated next to the field where the fight between Siva and Arjuna takes place. Pārvatī continues holding Kumāra, when witnessing the fight. This attachment between Kumāra and Pārvatī is all the more significant in the growth of Kumāra's myth, if one considers the unilateral birth of Siva's son. But his earliest representation and the earliest dedication of a separate temple to Siva's son was at Kannanur (old Pudukkottai State), which belongs to the early Cōla period.¹³⁵

Not less known was Skanda in northern India in ancient times. Patānjali mentions Siva and Skanda.¹³⁶ Numismatic evidence declares him as a popular deity in the beginning of the Christian era.¹³⁷ One silver coin of the Yaudheyas, of the 2nd century A. D., (Fig. 10) bears his six-headed image, holding a long spear in his right hand, the left resting on the hip. The inscription says: "Of Brahmanya (a name of Kārttikeya) the divine lord of the Yaudheyas". Another inscription says: "Of Kumāra, the divine Lord Brahmanya-deva".¹³⁸ The country of the Yaudheyas was called Rohitoka. This country of Rohitoka was said to be especially favoured by Kārttikeya.¹³⁹ A seal of Mahārāja Gautamīputra who had conquered the Vindhyas, avers that he "had made over his kingdom to the great lord Kārttikeya".¹⁴⁰ The Gupta family was apparently much devoted to this son of Siva, as among the six great imperial Guptas, three bear names of this God, two Kumāra Guptas and one Skanda Gupta. One of the former in one of his inscriptions mentions a temple of *Swāmi Mahāsena* (another denomination of Skanda) to which a grant had been made.¹⁴¹ Even a thief is spoken of by the

¹³⁵ Soundrarajan, "The Joint Development of the Early Tamils", *Journal of Indian History*, XXXI (1953), p. 255.

¹³⁶ Patānjali, *On Pāṇini*, V. 3, 99.

¹³⁷ Banerjea, *The Development of Hindu Iconography*, pp. 154-160.

¹³⁸ Allan, *Catalogue of Coins of Ancient India*, pls. CXLIX, CL.

¹³⁹ *Mahābhārata*, Aranyaka Parva, 1442.

¹⁴⁰ Banerjea, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

¹⁴¹ Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, III, pp. 44-45.

name of Sarvilaka who used to invoke the blessings of Skanda before beginning the work of his profession.¹⁴² Kumāra Gupta I's coins bear the image of Kumāra seated on the peacock on the reverse. (Fig. 11) Finally the famous *Mahākavya* of Kālidāsa, the *Kumāra Sambhava*, which poetically narrates the birth of Skanda, and the *Skanda Purāna* highly testify to the veneration of this son of Siva in northern India.¹⁴³ In particular, according to Kālidāsa, Guha seems to have been the only son of Pārvatī (*sic*), certainly the first.¹⁴⁴ A very famous stele, owned by the Bharata Kala Bhavan of Banaras, is a further iconographical evidence of this veneration, (Fig. 12) Skanda is shown in the *mahārājatīla* pose, seated upon his *vāhana*, the peacock, whose tail, spread behind the god, forms a sort of *prabhāvali* for the figure. Skanda has the *sula* or javelin in his left hand, while the right one holds a fruit, which looks like a pomegranate. The peacock, resting on the ground, wants to eat the sweet grains of the fruit. Skanda is shown wearing a low but ornate headgear, large circular earrings that come down upon his shoulders, and a rich necklace out of which two decorative tusks and a *cakra* are pending. The face of the god is youthful, peaceful and very pleasing.

And yet at a later period all devotion of northern India to Skanda or Kārttikeya died out. In some places it is surrounded with a certain superstitious fear. In the Bombay State no woman whose husband is alive would ever visit a temple of Kārttikeya Swāmi.¹⁴⁵ "In Bengal it is stated that the temple of Subrahmanya is favoured by disreputable women on certain occasions for favour peculiar to their interest".¹⁴⁶ Thus Skanda is now almost exclusively a South

¹⁴² Sudraka, *Mrccha Katika* III, 14, 1. This very thief calls all thieves "Skanda putras," "the children of Skanda." (III, 12, 2). One wonders why Skanda is made the patron of thieves.

¹⁴³ The oldest ms. of the *Skanda Purāna* has been found in Nepal. It is in Gupta script of the 7th cent. Cf. Winternitz. *History of Sanskrit Literature*, I, p. 71, n. I.

¹⁴⁴ Kālidāsa, *Kumāra Sambhava*, V, 14.

¹⁴⁵ Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, II, pt. 2, p. 415.

¹⁴⁶ Mahadeva, "Lord Subrahmanya: His Many Names," *The Hindu Organ* (Jaffna, Ceylon), 1937, April 13, p. 1.



FIG. 13
Kiratarjuniya Panels in the Second Gopuram of the
Brihadisvara Temple, Tanjore
(Parvati holding Skanda in her arms is seen in the middle and
last row)

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Indian deity. "There is not a village, however small, which does not possess a shrine for Subrahmanya."¹⁴⁷ He is, in fact, adored at times as the supreme God, "the all pervading spirit of the Universe, the Essence from which all things are evolved, by which they are sustained and into which they are involved."¹⁴⁸ What a contrast with the indifference of northern India!

VI

THE APPEARANCE AND DEVELOPMENT
OF GANAPATI

But we have now to account for another element in the worship of the Son of God; for in the historical period of India, both in epics and Purānas, Siva is supposed to have two sons, Ganesa and Karttikeya. That is the great problem, which we have to solve. Who is Ganapati and where does he come from?

A few very early facts of what we may call the pre-history of Ganesa may help us to find the final solution to this problem.

Some names of Ganapati are heard in the literary history of India before he actually appears in our great sub-continent. It appears for the first time in the *Rgveda*. Brahmanaspati is given the title of Ganapati, "the lord of the Ganas," *ganānām tvā ganapatim havāmahe*,¹⁴⁹ the latter forming the host of demigods, which were later on supposed to be the attendants of Siva. Brahma or Brahmanaspati is naturally proclaimed their lord and king from very early



Fig. 14
Skanda on his Peacock
Courtesy of the Bharata Kala Bhavan, Banaras.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ Somasundaram Pillai, *Palni* p. 32, n. 1. Among the Grāma-Devatas or village deities of South India there is one called Ayanar, who also claims to be the son of Siva and of Visnu, under the form of Mōhini. Accordingly he is called *Hariharaputra*. Though he seems to be an old indigenous deity, some characteristics are typical of Murugan. He has a trident upon his head always. He is supposed to be a soldier *Nallasevaga*, but he also uses a stick only used by ascetics.

¹⁴⁹ *Rgveda*, II, 23, 1.

days. In the same way Indra is also called "Ganapati among the *ganas*."¹⁵⁰ Yet the title migrates to indicate Siva at a later period, for in the epic Siva is styled Ganesa and Ganesvana, ("the lord of the *Ganas*.").

By an extraordinary antithesis the other name is attached to four demons by the name *Vināyaka*, malignant beings who created obstacles and difficulties,¹⁵¹ but who were easily propitiated.¹⁵² Purānic literature of a much later period explains that the group of four *Vināyakas* was merged into one definite god whom Rudra constituted the "Leader of the *Ganas*," *Ganapati*.¹⁵³ Was this *Ganapati* — *Vināyaka* already endowed with the elephantine face as in the later icons? It seems so, for in the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* there is a mystical prayer addressed to a god called *Dantīn*, "the one of the tusk," who is said to possess a twisted trunk (*vakratunda*) and who holds a corn-sheaf, a sugar cane and a club.¹⁵⁴ The description is so characteristic of *Ganapati*, that we cannot resist to accept his full identification with this Vedic *Dantīn*, a name which is also given to him in the historical period.

After this reference, a decorative frieze round the Kantaka Cetinga stūpa, near Mihintale, in Ceylon (a monument which is mentioned in inscriptions of the 1st and 2nd centuries) depicts a double procession of dwarfish *ganas*, carrying gifts, converging to a central point, wherein there is another dwarfish figure with the face of an elephant, with his trunk turned to the left, as most of his images of a later period are.¹⁵⁵ This undoubtedly is the *Ganapati* — *Vināyaka* having a *vakratunda*, of the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*. In the *Smṛti* of Yājñavalkya, written in the 6th century, he is definitely mentioned as a demon exalted to the rank of a *deva*;¹⁵⁶ but

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, X, 112, 9.

¹⁵¹ *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, I, 21.

¹⁵² Bhandarkar, *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and other Minor Sects*, pp. 147-8.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

¹⁵⁴ *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, X, 1, 5.

¹⁵⁵ Getty, *Ganesa. A Monograph on the Elephant-faced God*, p. 25, pl. 22, c.

¹⁵⁶ Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

he is not described as elephant-headed till the eight century.¹⁵⁷

This is a very humble origin of the great *Ganapati*. As leader of the *ganas*, he was supposed to be an aspect of Siva and he appears as distinct from Siva, endowed with divine qualities, in the introduction to the north India recension of the *Mahābhārata*. In this work Siva himself is named as *Ganesāna*, thus still showing his connections with our Ganesa.¹⁵⁸ Accordingly in the rock-cut temples of Aihole, which are supposed to be some of the oldest of India, he is shown as an attendant of Siva.¹⁵⁹ This lowly origin of Ganesa is corroborated by this statement attributed to Manu: "Sambhu (Siva) is the god of the Brahmins, while Ganesa is the god of the *Sūdras*."¹⁶⁰ Considering all these points Miss Getty is led to affirm that he "seems only to have been known to the uneducated classes up to the sixth century".¹⁶¹

But precisely in this century, during the Gupta period, the first image of Ganesa appears in India, and that with very remarkable features. The image was discovered at Bhumāra, a village in the old Nāgaudh State, in Madhya Pradesh, and is now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Three of his hands hold the axe, his broken tusk and a *modaka* (or cake), the fourth being round the *sakti* (his fingers appear touching her left breast). The most extraordinary feature is the *sakti* or *devi*, seated on the left thigh of *Ganapati*. She offers him a bowl of *ladhus* (sweets), which he takes with his trunk. The right upper corner of the stone behind the image is broken, but on the opposite side one sees a *gana*, which image makes one think that the sculptor still wanted to emphasize the fact that this god was the "Lord of *ganas*".¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

¹⁵⁸ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁶⁰ Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 487.

¹⁶¹ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

¹⁶² Coomaraswamy, "The Origin and use of Images in India," *International Studio*, 1929 (May), 23.

This image discloses an extraordinary development round Ganapati not only in the sphere of art, but in the very world of religious speculations. The appearance of his *sakti* on this occasion clearly suggests the existence of other images and texts concerning Ganesa, which have not come down to us up to now.

It was precisely at about the same time or a little earlier than the sect of the Ganapatyas arose in Northern India, though they came into evidence only in the 10th century with the appearance of the book *Sankaradigvijaya*, written by one Ānandatīrtha, which discloses the history and tenets of the sect. It was undoubtedly this sect that gave an extraordinary impulse to the cult of Ganapati in Northern India. The Ganapatyas worshipped Ganesa, as the "Lord of the Universe" with the exclusion of all other gods, even Siva himself. Such was one of their prayers :

"Praise be to thee, Ganapati.

"Thou art the visible Reality. Thou art the Creator, the Preserver, the Destroyer, the Supreme Brahma, the spirit Manifest. The universe is born from thee. The Universe is manifest in thee : earth, water, fire, air and ether. Thou art Brahma, thou art Visnu, thou art Rudra. Thou art superior to the Trimūrti.

"Om ! Praise be to thee, Ganapati".¹⁶³

The Ganapatyas worshipped the *sakti* of Ganapati as well as his *linga* ; some phalic images of this god connected with his *sakti*, which will be mentioned later, may be the product of this double additional cult. Even after the division of the sect into six sub-sects, all acknowledged *Ganapati* as the First Cause "through whose *māyā*, Siva and the other gods were created." Accordingly they worshipped him endowed with ten pairs of arms and holding his *sakti*, styling him *Paramatma* (Supreme Spirit) and *Mahāganapati*.¹⁶⁴ (Fig. 15.)

Ganesa, being thus the supreme in the Indian pantheon, could reduce all other gods to nothingness. The *Ganesa*

¹⁶³ *Sankaradigvijaya*, pp. 106 ff. (Bibl. Ind., Calcutta, 1868).
¹⁶⁴ Colebrooke, *Miscellaneous Essays*, I, 212 (London, 1837).



FIG. 15
 Mahaganapati with his Sakti
 Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay.



FIG. 16
 Heramba Ganapati on the Lion
 Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay.

Purāna relates that he once granted Tripurāsura to conquer the three worlds. Accordingly he conquered Brahma and Visnu ; when he requested Siva to descend from Mount Kailāsa, he was not obeyed immediately. Instead Siva, accompanied by Brahma and Visnu appeared to Ganesa to save them from utter destruction. They finally succeeded owing to Siva's faith in Ganesa's power.¹⁶⁵

It was doubtlessly the influence of this sect that introduced Ganapati and his myths into the *Purānas*, which were finally redacted all along this period. The *Brahmavaivarta Purāna* contains many stories about him (*Ganesa Khanda*).¹⁶⁶ The *Agni Purāna* speaks of his cult (Ch. 71). The *Vamana Purāna* narrates the origin of the god. The *Varāha Purāna* refers likewise to his birth. In some recensions of the *Srsti Khanda* of the *Padma Purāna* there is also much about the cult of Ganesa. The *Garuda Purāna* includes him among the five gods whose rules of worship are declared, viz. Visnu, Siva, Durga, Sūrya and Ganesa. Needless to say that the *Ganesa Purāna* is fully a fruit of the spirit of the Ganapatyas. Siva is introduced in it as waiting on Ganesa with the most austere devotion for a stretch of ten years and thereby winning from him the boon of victory over the demon Tripurāsura.¹⁶⁷

The influence of the ideas of the Ganapatyas was so great that they made him, as it were, at home in every other sect, combining him with almost all other gods, so that now "all sects unite in claiming him as their own".¹⁶⁸ Thus Saktism adopted Ganesa as their especial deity with the exclusion of all other gods even of Siva and Pārvati.¹⁶⁹ We have seen how Ganesa appears with his *sakti* even in the first image we have of this god. In Ellora there is a figure

¹⁶⁵ Cf. *J.R.A.S.*, VIII, (1845), pp. 319-323.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Wilson, *Essays on Sanskrit Literature*, I, pp. 103-106.

¹⁶⁷ A very good analysis of this *Upapurāna* may be seen in Stevenson, "Analysis of the Ganesa Purāna", *J.R.A.S.*, 1846, pp. 319-329.

¹⁶⁸ Srikanta Iyer, "The Popular View of Ganesa in Madras," *Indian Antiquary*, XXX, p. 255.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Getty, *Ganesa*, p. 20.

FIG. 17

Dancing Ganapati

Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay.



FIG. 18

Nataraja with Ganapati learning
his Father's Dance
(Aihole, 6th cent.)

Copyright, Archaeological
Survey of India.

of Umā (Pārvatī), having four hands, in the upper pair of which she balances a small statue of Ganesa in one and a *linga*, in the other, thus equating Siva and Ganapati.¹⁷⁰ At Bhera-ghat, near Jubbulpore, there is a temple where there is a female form of Ganesa, a Ganesānī, whose left bent leg is supported by a small Ganesa, half kneeling underneath.¹⁷¹ This is the only image of a female counter-part of Ganesa in the whole of India ; but female forms of Ganesa are known in Tibet.¹⁷²

The *saktī* accompanying some of the images of Ganesa is at times called Lakshmi, thus showing this god invading the boundaries of Vaiṣṇavism. Such is the eight-handed Ganapati accompanied by Lakshmi, which is found in the Viṣvanātha-svāmī temple of Tenkaśī in the Tirunelveli District. More clearly Vaiṣṇava is still a pre-Angkorian figure of a standing Ganesa in Cambodia, whose two upper hands hold the *cakra* and the *sankha* of Viṣṇu.¹⁷³

Our little god is also much at home in Kṛṣṇaism. The *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* equates Ganesa with Kṛṣṇa himself originally in the human form. Accordingly in the *Ganesa Khanda*, Radhā, Kṛṣṇa's wife, is being depicted adoring Ganesa.¹⁷⁴ In the spirit of this identification a *Ganesa Gītā* was likewise produced, which is not different from the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the name of Ganesa being only substituted for that of Kṛṣṇa.¹⁷⁵ Consequently it is not strange to find icons of *Bāla Ganesa* crawling in the same way as *Bāla Kṛṣṇa*,¹⁷⁶ or denominations as *Navanīta Ganesa*, which has given foundation to one of the subjects of the Ganapatyas.

Ganapati is also being worshipped by some Jains of Gujerat in some rock temples.¹⁷⁷ The Museum of our Indian

¹⁷⁰ Burgess, *Report on the Elura Cave Temples*, pl. XXX. fig. 2.

¹⁷¹ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 50. pl. 250.

¹⁷⁴ Cfr. Wilson, *Essays on Sanskrit Literature*, I, p. 117.

¹⁷⁵ Monier Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, p. 139 (London, 1875).

¹⁷⁶ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 8 and pl. 15 b.

Historical Research Institute possesses a few metal images of Ganesa which came from places of Jaina worship, among them one of Mahā-Ganapati with his *saktī*, of which the Museum is rightly proud. (See Fig. 15). These Jaina images have their *prabhāvalis* always crowned by a *kalasa*.

The cult of Ganesa has especially been spread by the Buddhists.¹⁷⁸ Their devotion is founded upon a mystic *mantra*, called the *Ganapatihṛdaya*, ("the heart of Ganapati"), which was supposed to have been given to Ananda by the Buddha himself, but whose origin is evidently much later.¹⁷⁹ The *mantra* in question contains an invocation to be used at the time of the dedication of a statue of a dancing Ganesa, endowed with three eyes. Ganesa being thus officially, though surreptitiously introduced into *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, it is not strange to find his images ornate with Buddhist characteristics ; one of Champa has the *usnīsa* or skull protuberance (one of the *mahāpurusa-laksanas* adopted by the Buddhists)¹⁸⁰ ; in another Ganesa is seated in *padmāsana*, as seen in statues of Gautama ;¹⁸¹ a third one depicts him in *bhūmisparsamudrā*, so often reproduced in the figures of the Buddha.¹⁸²

The cult of Ganapati travelled on a *Mahāyāna* Buddhist ticket to very far foreign lands. Burma, Siam, Champa, Cambodia, Nepal, Tibet, Chinese Turkestan, Khotan, China, Mongolia and Japan admitted Ganesa into their pantheon, spread his cult throughout and created new artistic manifestations of his in sculpture and painting.¹⁸³ How deeply did Ganapati go into the heart of the people the following legend will show. Before the birth of the Tibetan saintly missionary P'ags-pa, who carried Mahāyāna Buddhism to Mongolia and converted Emperor Kublai Khan to the new faith, in the 13th century,

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁷⁹ Mitra, *The Nepalese Buddhist Literature*, p. 89-90 ; Bhattacharyya, *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, pp. 157-158. (London, 1924).

¹⁸⁰ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 52 and pl. 24 b.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*,

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 53 and pl. 24 b.

¹⁸³ Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 37-54 ; 67-87 and pls. 24-39.

it is said that his father invoked the assistance of Ganesa. The latter appeared to him, took him up with his trunk and carried him to the top of Mount Meru and showing him the country of Mongolia, announced to him: "Thy son will subjugate this whole country."¹⁸⁴

This successful intrusion of Ganapati into the Buddhist pantheon, provoked nevertheless a reaction. He was finally shown as a demon under the feet of other deities. In Nepal he appears trodden by *Vighnāntaka*, the "Destroyer of obstacles."¹⁸⁵ The irony of fate! It was Ganapati's own title! In Nepal and Tibet he is shown under the feet of goddess *Aparājītā*, who is consequently styled *Ganapati-samākrāntā*, "she who tramples on Ganapati."¹⁸⁶ Again in Tibet he is also depicted under the feet of the black *Manjusri*, the Tibetan god of wisdom possessing three eyes,¹⁸⁷ again a title and endowment which appertained to Ganesa himself. Once more in Tibet he is shown under the feet of *Mahākāla* who crushes him "as the Hindu demon *Vināyaka*,"¹⁸⁸ thus finally coming back to the original state of his existence. This was a crushing defeat for the little elephantine god who knew only of successes in his daring career.

Yet these were not the only foreign lands visited by him. On the ships of the Hindu merchants and settlers he voyaged to the far off islands of Indonesia, Java, Borneo and Bali, where he was also worshipped by the Buddhist. Some of Ganesa's images of Java, both in stone and in bronze, are among the most ornamented icons of this god.¹⁸⁹

If Ganapati has been so successful even in the realm of other religious sects, it is no wonder that he should have thriven within his own Saiva sect. His attempts at conquer-

¹⁸⁴ Grünwedel, *Mythologie des Buddhismus*, pp. 64-65. (Lupzig, 1900).

¹⁸⁵ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 43 and pl. 43 a and b.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 8 and 43.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-66 and pls. 29-34.

ing the highest post in Saivism, by supplanting his supposed father, are clear to the student of Hindu iconography. He has, little by little, adopted all the characteristics of Siva making them his own. *Uchchhista Ganapati* is shown with the *urdhva linga*,¹⁹⁰ as some of the images of Ān (the prototype of Siva in the Indus Valley) and some of the Bengali images of Siva are represented.¹⁹¹ Siva's third eye on the forehead appears in many statues of Ganapati: *Uchchhista Ganapati*,¹⁹² *Haridrā Ganapati*,¹⁹³ *Laksmi Ganapati*,¹⁹⁴ Tantric images,¹⁹⁵ Nepalese images¹⁹⁶ and a recently discovered image at Paharpur, Bengal.¹⁹⁷ We have also some in our Indian Historical Research Institute museum. Siva is depicted with three faces as Mahesamūrti; Ganesa is shown in India with two faces in icons of *Ganapati Jayanti*; ¹⁹⁸ and with three faces in Japan.¹⁹⁹ More common are, especially in Nepal, the images of *Heramba Ganapati* having five heads, four facing the four cardinal points and a fifth one on top.²⁰⁰ This is precisely the very way how the five heads of Sadasiva are ranged, or at times the other way about, displaying four faces directed to the four cardinal points on a sort of hair-knot upon the head. Heramba Ganapati is usually riding on a lion, which he seems to have borrowed from Pārvati. (Fig. 16) Yet very far from Nepal in Tiruvannaikkāval, Tiruchirapalli District, a five headed Ganapati, called *Pancamukhi Ganapati*, is being worshipped. He is represented without a vehicle. We have already seen how Ganapati is very often represented with his *śakti* in the same way as Siva. Like Siva he is at

¹⁹⁰ Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, I, 1 pt. p. 58. See one in the Nāgesvaraswāmin temple, Kumbakonam.

¹⁹¹ Battasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures*, pls. XLV, XLVI, XLIX (a) and L (1).

¹⁹² Gopinatha Rao, *loc. cit.*

¹⁹³ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁹⁷ Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur in Bengal* (M. of the A. S. I.), No. 55, p. 40, pl. XXXII d.

¹⁹⁸ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

times wearing a *jatā-mukuta*, viz. made with his own hair.²⁰¹ Not a few images of Ganesa both in India and abroad, in Nepal and Tibet, display him dancing in the same way as Siva when dancing the *Tāṇḍava*. He is, as such, styled *Nṛtta-Ganapati*.²⁰² (Fig. 17) The museum of the Indian Historical Research Institute possesses five of these images. The dance of Ganesa is totally different from the dance of Kṛṣṇa, in his *Venugopāl* images. Ganapati stands on one leg as Siva does. Outside one of the Siva rock-cut temples of Bādāmi, of the time of Pulikēśi I, one of the earliest rock-cut temples of India, (Fig 18) there is a small figure of Ganapati, shown in a slightly dancing pose, as if he were learning how to dance from his supposed father. In fact the dance of Ganapati is Siva's dance. Finally in the same way as Siva is at times represented nude (Bhairava, Bīkṣanāmūrti, linga of Gudimallam, etc.), Ganapati is also shown nude.²⁰³

As regards apparel, Ganesa is also given the jewel head-dress of Siva, as well as the crescent;²⁰⁴ while his hands hold Siva's symbols, the trident,²⁰⁵ the *ankusa* and the rosary. In Nepal and Tibet, some images of Ganesa carry the *cintā-mani*, or symbol of the germ of life,²⁰⁶ whose significance is not very dissimilar from the meaning of the *linga*. In Java there is a statue of Ganesa that holds a small Nandi, the *vāhana* of Siva.²⁰⁷ His hips are in India at times covered with a tiger skin, which is very dear to Siva in his role as a *yogin*. Many images of Ganapati found in Java are ornamented with skulls,²⁰⁸ which is one of the symbols of Siva as the Destroyer. Just as Siva usually has the Nandi, his *vāhana*, in front of his temples, Ganapati also has temples with the

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 57.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 38 and 45.

²⁰³ Banerji, *The Haiheyas of Tripuri*, (M. of the A. S. I., No. 23), pl. XXXIV; Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

²⁰⁴ Getty, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40, 57.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*,

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 40 and 57, pls. 30 a and 34 a and *passim*.

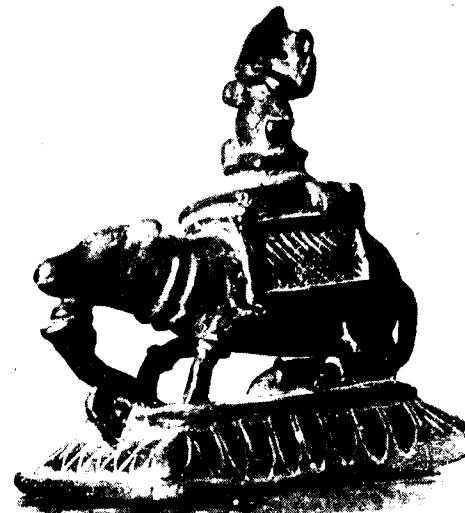


FIG. 19
Ganapati on his *Vahana*, the Rat
Indian Historical Research Institute,
Bombay.

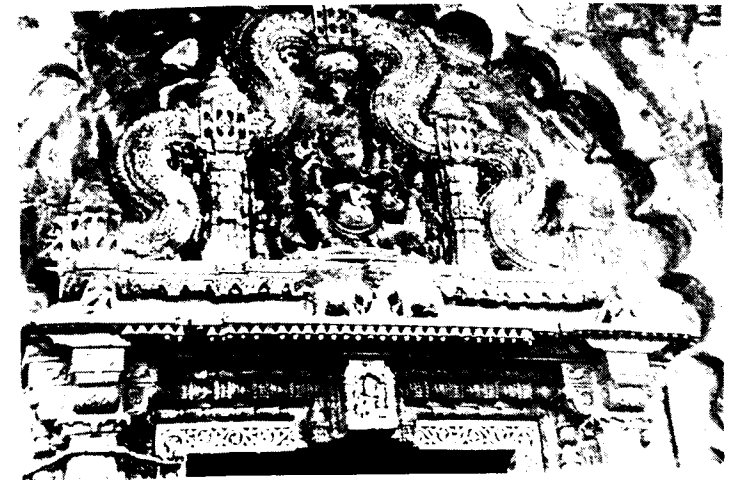


FIG. 20
Ganapati upon the entrance
of Siva's shrine, Narushankar
Temple, Nasik.
(Photo by
Fr. J. Coll, Bombay)



FIG. 21
Sivapanchayatan with
Ganapati, a Naga,
Anna Purna, Bala Kṛṣṇa
and Siva's Linga with
the Nandi
Indian Historical
Research Institute, Bombay

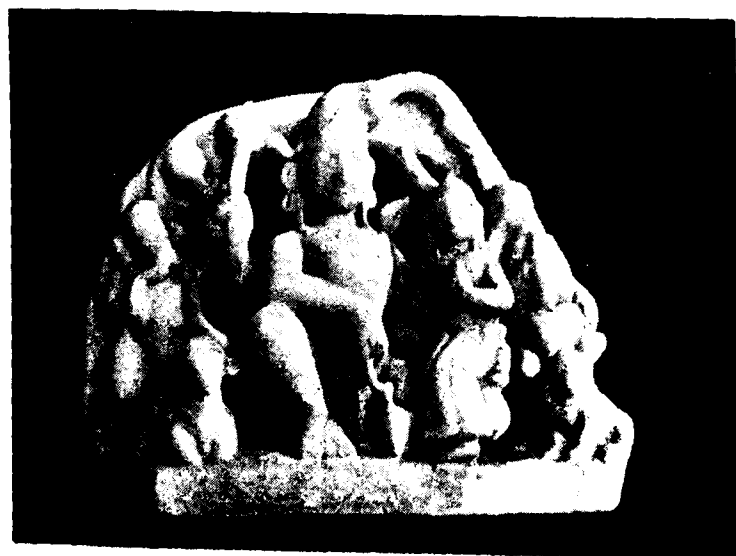


FIG. 22
Siva and Parvati with
Ganapati and Shanmukha
(Marble sculpture)
Indian Historical Research
Institute, Bombay.

rat in front of the entrance door. (Fig. 19) Miss Getty finally affirms in this connection : " In all countries, where he has been worshipped, images of Ganesa have been found in which he is identified with his father Siva." ²⁰⁹ He is also supposed to be a transformation of Bhairava. ²¹⁰ Like Siva, Ganapati also is proclaimed to be the " Protector of Cowherds". ²¹¹ Popular worship impersonates him in a shapeless stone, called *svayambhū mūrti*, in the same way as Siva himself.

Needless to say that the cult of Ganesa spread parallelly to the cult of Siva all over India. In South India, in all the Saiva temples there is a shrine dedicated to Ganesa. ²¹² The largest of all these temples is at Tiruchirapalli. It is called *Ucchipillayar Kōvil*. It comprises the whole area of the famous rock in the centre of the city, and the main shrine dedicated to the elephant god is on the summit of the rock. In Malabar there are special shrines where special sacrifices are offered to Vinayaka for the prosperity of the country. They are called *Ganapati Homas*. Occasionally much greater celebrations are being held at a great cost, which are called *Mahā-Ganapati Homas*, " great sacrifices of Ganapati ". ²¹³ The largest images of Ganapati are found in South India in the neighbourhood of Hampi. They belonged to the old city of Vijayanagara. One of them 20 feet high, called *Kadalaikallu* " the grain-of-gram stone " is enshrined within a beautiful Dravidian temple of almost classical appearance. ²¹⁴ In its vicinity stands the other, also ironically called *Sāsivikallu*, " the mustard-seed stone. " (Fig. 23) It is a monolith 30 feet high, which could not be enclosed within a temple. It is only covered by a several-plain-pillared mandapam. Both are on the saddle of the rocky hill overhanging the Pampāpati temple of



FIG. 23
Sasivikallu Ganesa from
Vijayanagara, Hampi
Copyright, Archaeological Survey
of India.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 40.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 13.

²¹¹ Vogel, *Indian Serpent Lore*, p. 253.; Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

²¹² Srikantha Iyer, " The Popular view of Ganesa in Madras, " *Indian Antiquary*, XXX, p. 255.

²¹³ *Travancore State Manual*, II, p. 51 (1906).

²¹⁴ Longhurst, *Hampi Ruins*, pp. 97-98.

Hampi. Among the temples of North India we may mention one of Banaras called Sakhi Vināyak, which is the last temple visited by the pilgrims who go to the sacred city. It was built by a Maratha in 1770.²¹⁵ But the most famous temple of Ganesa in northern India is at Chinchvad, near Poona, where a kind of living incarnation of Ganesa dwells. The dignity is hereditary in the family for the last three hundred years.²¹⁶ The importance of Ganapati in the Saiva temples is evident from the fact that his images are often carved on the dedicatory block and above it at the entrance to the shrines of Siva, thus Ganapati becoming like the guard at the entrance of his supposed father's house.²¹⁷ (Fig. 20).

It is not only this public cult, but even the private personal devotion to this god that discloses the influence he has exercised in modern Hindu minds. In South India he is invoked the first of all the gods at the morning ablutions, and again at noon and at night before going to sleep.²¹⁸ Ganesa is the god whom the pious Hindu "invokes when he begins all sacrifices and religious ceremonies," says a Hindu author, "all addresses even to superior gods, all serious compositions in writing and all worldly affairs of moment".²¹⁹ "Every merchant," says another author, "enters on his business after first propitiating this deity. In marriages and in

²¹⁵ Greaves, *Kashi, the City Illustrious, or Benares*, pp. 63, 81, 84, (Benares, 1909).

²¹⁶ *Poona Gazetteer*, III, (1885), pp. 125-127.

²¹⁷ Getty, *op. cit.*, pp. 31 and 42. Actually Ganesa is found as Dvārapala at the entrance of Buddhist monasteries in Nepal. Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 40; and above the main entrance to Buddhist and Brahmanic temples in Tibet. *Ibid.*, p. 42. In Halebidu, Mysore, his image is also seen just outside the entrance to the Hoysalesvara temple to the left.

²¹⁸ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

²¹⁹ Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, I, pt. 1, p. 46.

every kind of religious ceremonies Ganesa is the first god whose help is invoked".²²⁰

In the month of September the feast of Ganesa is celebrated through the country, as an official feast even with the honours of a 'Bank Holiday.' In the South, it is called *Vinayacavuti*; in the north *Ganesa Cathurti*. Clay or mud images of the god are installed in the houses and adored and feasted with merriment and joy. After that the image is immersed into the sea, tank or river. In the South the domestic feast lasts one day only. In Maharashtra, several days, up to a fortnight. The preaching of the great Indian leader Shri Bal Gangadhar Tilak made this feast very popular in the whole of Maharashtra.

Thus now Ganesa is worshipped in company of the great deities Visnu, Siva, Pārvatī and Āditya (the sun), symbol of Brahma. His image is not uncommonly found in the so-called *Sivapanchayatans*, little altars of adoration for the household (something like the old Penates for the Romans). (Fig. 21) When Ganesa is chosen as the main household god he is placed in the centre of the altar, Visnu to his right, Siva to his left, Pārvatī to the right of, or in front of, Visnu and Āditya to the left of, or in front of, Siva.

Ganesa has finally become "the most popular of all the domestic deities of India".²²¹ A modern Hindu writer pro-

²²⁰ Srikanta Iyer, "The Popular view of Ganesa in Madras," *Indian Antiquary*, XXX, p. 255. This author gives a few specimens of the prayers addressed to Ganesa. This is one: "Who rides on the rat, who has a *modak* in his hand, whose ears are like fly-wisks, who wears a long sacred thread, who is dwarfish in size, who is the son of Siva, who dispels difficulties, salutation to his feet." *Ibid.*, p. 255. This is another prayer of a Brahman boy: "The elephant-faced god who is accompanied by the group of beings, who eats excellent fruits like the *kapita* and *gwaba*, the son of Umā who destroys misery, I salute the lotus of the Lord of difficulties" (*Vināyaka*). *Ibid.* As may be easily seen there are no theological conceptions at all in the wording of such prayers.

²²¹ Srikanta Iyer, "The Popular view of Ganesa in Madras." *Indian Antiquary*, XXX, p. 255.

claims him as "the Primordial essence ; the absolute supreme principle by which the whole universe is regulated is named Ganapati. . . . The supreme being who protects the collection of all things is Ganapati. The leader of angels and other such beings is also called Ganapati. . . . He who presides over the assemblance of the transcendental and perceptible elements is Ganapati. . . . He who rules over all the aspects of Brahma, whether manifest or unmanifest, is Ganapati".²²²

VII

SKANDA AND GANESA

And what were in the meantime the relations between Ganapati and his supposed brother Kumāra, Kārttikeya, Skanda or Subrahmanya ? Purposely we have avoided speaking of this subject in the preceding pages to study the question here as thoroughly as possible. This second son of God who appears in the purāṇic and epic period seems to be, let us put it clearly, an intruder. How does he behave with the *real* son of God ? That is the question. The study of Saiva myth and art will disclose many interesting revelations.

Miss Alice Getty after the study of numerous images of Ganesa, both in painting and sculpture, draws this final conclusion :—

"Pārvatī holding the child Ganesa on her lap is practically never found either in stone sculptures or in Kāngrā miniatures, for although Ganesa and Kārttikeya were often represented with Pārvatī, it is invariably Kārttikeya who is seated on her lap while Ganesa is playing beside her".²²³

This is the relative position of the two brothers in two Kāngrā paintings of the Indian Museum, London, which are worth a detailed study. In both Kārttikeya as *Shanmukha* (with six heads) is shown in Pārvatī's lap.²²⁴ In one which

²²² Sarasvati, "Greatness of Ganapati," *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, VIII, p. 41.

²²³ Getty, *Ganesa*, p. 34.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, pl. 10b.



FIG. 24
Siva's Family in Mount Kailasa, Kangra Painting
Courtesy of the Director, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



FIG. 25
Siva as Bhutesvara with Parvati,
Shanmukha and Ganapati, Kangra Painting
Courtesy of the Director, Victoria & Albert Museum,
London.

depicts Siva as the Destroyer Ganapati is seated behind his father, half hidden, as if he were not daring to approach the family circle. Further still, one may see the rat, Ganapati's vehicle; while the peacock the vehicle of Kārttikeya is perched on the branch of a tree over the cave where they are sheltered.

In the other painting there is more movement and family pathos. (Fig. 25) Siva as Bhūtesvara ("The Lord of Spirits") is shown stringing a garland of skulls which he usually wears under this denomination. Both children help the father. Ganesa, who looks taller than his brother, is standing to the left holding the string stretched to facilitate the work of his father; while Shanmukha, who is shown more developed than in the preceding picture hands over one of the skulls, picked up from a heap, to his father, wishing not to be less than Ganapati. This seems to be the real childish feeling of jealousy, for while the hand that holds the skull is directed to his father, he is unmistakably staring at his brother.

The same feeling of shame on the part of Ganesa seems to be discovered in a beautiful Rajput drawing of the British Museum. (Fig. 26) Siva nude and with matted hair as a yogin is represented leaning against the trunk of a tree. Pārvatī, dutifully, pours milk into his own cup. Behind his father, in the same family circle, Shanmukha as a boy, also nude, is offering food to his *vāhana*, the peacock, which is standing high on the trunk of the tree. In the foreground but separated from the other three one sees Ganesa, seated between the bull Nandi and a lioness. Imitating his brother he seems to have brought some of his *ladhus* to feed the *vāhanas* of his parents, but owing to his elephant's head, or to his low origin there seems to be in him some sort of inferiority complex which makes him sit, let us say, within the animal kingdom rather than on the carpet occupied by his parents and his brother. The artist of this drawing seems to have had a highly developed sense of humour.²²⁵

²²⁵ Miss Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 35, does not seem to interpret this drawing properly.

Unlike these specimens there are numerous representations of the two brothers wherein they appear on the same level. Such is the case of another Rajput drawing of the British Museum, wherein Siva appears as *Gaṅgādhara*. While the sacred river flows from Siva's hair at the request of the sage Bhagīratha (who appears in the lower left corner of the picture), the two boys Shanmukha and Ganapati try to collect a few drops of the holy water in some little *lotas*.²²⁶ (Also see Fig. 24).

One more painting of the collection of Miss Alice Getty, beautifully reproduced in colours in her monograph, shows the two brothers next to each other in adoration in front of Siva and Pārvatī in a *darbar* on Mount Kailāsa. Resourceful Ganapati, painted fully red, has taken his position in the first row of gods next to Brahma, leaving Shanmukha in the second row next to Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu.²²⁷

A marble sculpture of our Indian Historical Research Institute, coming from northern Gujerat displays Siva and Pārvatī in the centre, Siva having Ganga issuing from the top of his *jatā-mukuta*. (Fig. 22) To the right of Siva there is Ganapati reclining on the Nandi which appears between him and his father. Shanmukha is seen to the left of Pārvatī, having the lion, Pārvatī's *vāhana*, in front. Both Ganesa and Shanmukha appear as the dutiful children of the couple, the former looking older than the latter.

Another stone sculpture of the Dacca Museum shows the two brothers in the same position of equality. Pārvatī is lying on her left side having a child on a lotus-flower in front. That child is Siva, who, according to a purāṇic myth, took the shape of a babe when she came to the Assembly of Gods to choose a husband. This is clearly shown by the *linga* carved on top of the image of the goddess. To the left of the *linga* there are two small figures of Ganesa and Kārttikeya.²²⁸

²²⁶ Getty, *op. cit.*, pl. 10a.

²²⁷ Getty, *op. cit.*, frontispiece.

²²⁸ Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures*, p. 138 and pls. LIII and LIV.



FIG 26

Siva's Family, Rajput Drawing

Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London.



FIG. 27
The Tandavan at Elephanta
with Karttikeya and Ganapati
to the left
Copyright,
Archaeological Survey of India.

The beautiful panels of the big Saivite cave of Elephanta reproduce also the two brothers on the side of their parents, almost in every panel, (Fig. 28) the only difference from the above specimens being that in these sculptures Kārttikeya always looks older than Ganapati.

Contrary to what Miss Getty says²²⁹ in all groups of the *saptamātrkāś*, or *astamātrkāś* I know, for instance the one of Elephanta, the goddesses are flanked by the two brothers.

The two brothers are also found together in the frescos of two of the caves of Bāzāklīk, Chinese-Turkestan, viz. Nos. 7 and 32.²³⁰ Two images of Ganesa and Kārttikeya were also found together in a cave at Kombeng, Borneo, showing thereby that they were combinely worshipped.²³¹

Once more they are shown together attending the *pari-nirvāna* of the Buddha on a small fragment at Sārnāth. They are grouped with other Brahmanical deities, and Ganapati appears riding on the rat.²³²

The Hindu popular mind, accustomed to depict their gods subject to the same feelings and passions that exist among men, could not but suppose that some rivalry and bitterness must have sprang between the two brothers. This is clearly revealed in two popular stories that are narrated concerning their relations. When it was a question of their marriage their parents decided that he would marry first who would go first round the world. Subrahmanya on his peacock sportively attempted the contest; but tricky, casuistical Ganapati went round, his parents telling them that the world is typefied in Siva, Siva being the Creator of the world: "What is the world but your own holy self?" Siva approved of the statement of Ganapati, who accordingly was married forthwith. (When his brother came back from his long journey,

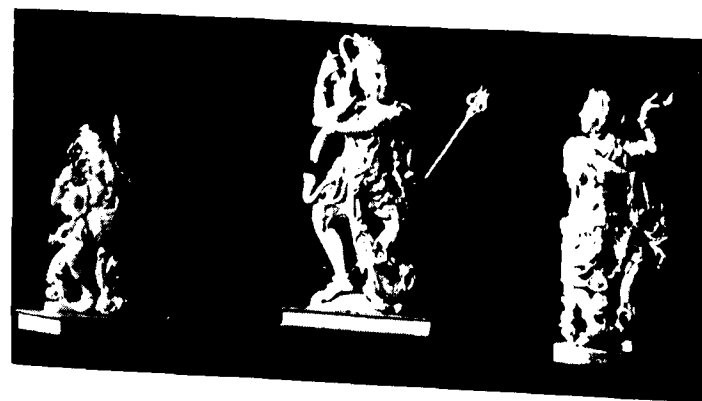


FIG. 28
Siva, Parvati and Ganapati
Dancing (Ivory)
Indian Historical Research Institute
Bombay.

²²⁹ Getty, *op. cit.*, pp. 11 and 27.

²³⁰ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 63.

²³² Foucher, *Iconographie Buddhique de l'Inde*, I, fig. 30.

he was furious against his elephantine brother, and he in spite retreated to Mount Krauncha where he lived as a *brahmacārīn* for the rest of his life.²³³

Another similar story concerning a pomegranate is also narrated, wherein the ill feeling of Subrahmanya against Ganesa is also clearly emphasized.²³⁴ In point of fact Venkatakrishna Rao acknowledges that "the Purānas are replete with stories in which he (Ganesa) fought with Skanda and emerged victorious, though with the loss of his tusk."²³⁵

The growing importance of Ganesa in the appreciation of the people is discovered through the works of art. We have seen how Shanmukha is always depicted on Pārvati's lap in former days, but this place was finally given to Ganesa. Miss Getty mentions a Northern Indian bronze in which Ganapati is seated on the right knee of Pārvati; while in a very rare porcelain group the boy is seated on the left knee of Siva. We know of a painting in a temple in Vaikom, Travancore State, of the early 16th century, which displays the boy Ganapati seated on the left leg of Pārvati.²³⁶

A new step in Ganapati's successful career is marked by the fact that in modern times when the two brothers are being mentioned, Ganapati is supposed to be the elder and Skanda the younger. The roles of both were finally exchanged. It was but natural, for as Srikantha Iyer says about Ganapati, "as the favourite son of Siva, he receives honours equal to him".²³⁷ Mons. Jean Herbert gives a philosophical aspect of the two brothers which may perhaps explain this preference of the Indian people for the elephant-faced god: "The younger, Skanda, generally represented as the war god, one who loves violent activity, symbolizes the appeal to the brutal

²³³ Srikantha Iyer, *op. cit.*, *Indian Antiquary*, XXX, p. 255.

²³⁴ Somasundaram Pillai, *Palni*, p. 2, n. 1. The full story will be narrated in one of the following chapters. Cf. below, p. 212.

²³⁵ Venkatakrishna Rao, "The Ganapati Cult", *Q.J.M.S.*, XLII, p. 94.

²³⁶ Kramrisch, *Drāvida and Kerala in the Art of Travancore*, pl. 41.

²³⁷ Srikantha Iyer, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

physical force as means to attain liberation; he is not much honoured by the Hindus, who are not much in favour of such action and feel more inclined to the practice of *ahimsa* The elder, Ganesa, on the other hand . . . represents the appeal to the spiritual force in the course of the soul towards liberation".²³⁸

The fact is that in Northern India, Skanda, Kumāra or Kārttikeya is absolutely overlooked in the religious life of the people. For the majority of the people Siva has only one son and that is Ganesa or Ganapati. Accordingly he receives the titles of *Sivaputra*, *Sambhutanya* and *Sambhusuta*.

Two specimens of the Museum of our Indian Historical Research Institute show Ganapati in this last stage of his successful career. (Fig. 29) One is a copper image of a four-armed Siva, coming from the southern Maratha country. It is dated 18th century. The two upper hands of the god hold the trident and the *damaru* (drum). With the other two hands he embraces Pārvati to his left and Ganesa to his right, who are thus seated on his legs.

The other specimens is a very modern one. (Fig. 28) It is a group in ivory imitating the statues of the Hoysala school of sculpture representing Siva, Pārvati and Ganapati dancing. It has been carved by Shri Anandu Manjanath Shetty, a teacher of the Sir J. J. Jeejibhoi School of Art, Bombay.

We have been studying the sudden rise of Ganesa in the Indian pantheon, his early humble appearance, his daring attempts against Skanda, his final ousting him from popular Hindu mind and worship. His whole career is a great mystery which we shall try to unravel in the following pages. Perhaps the secret of this mystery had to be counted amongst those which could not be pronounced in front of Ganesa and Skanda themselves, as narrated in the *Mahānirvāna-tantra*. Pārvati

²³⁸ Herbert, *Ganesa, précédé d'une étude sur Dieu chez les Hindous*, p. 23. (Lyon, 1946.)

much troubled with doubts and mind obscurity once approached Siva and said: "Who else but thee, O Lord of the three Worlds, is able to solve these doubts of mine? Thou who knowest all." Siva then replied: "What is that thou sayest, O Great Wise one and Beloved of my heart? I will tell you anything, be it ever so bound in mystery, even that which should not be said before Ganesa and Skanda."²³⁹

The *Skanda-Purāna* reveals the deep feeling of the votaries of Skanda against the growing cult of Ganesa, when it depicts the crowds of unworthy people, *sūdras* and barbarians worshipping Siva at Somnāth in order to attain to the heavens of the *devas*. The minor deities headed by Indra protested to Mahesvara. The latter then created Vināyaka, the "Lord of Obstacles" to impede those low people to enter heaven.

VIII

THE STORY OF GANESA'S ORIGINS

Several theories have been advanced to explain the origin of Ganesa, as he is the only animal-headed god in the Indian Pantheon.²⁴⁰

It has been supposed that Ganesa is a *Yaksa*,²⁴¹ i.e. one of the demigods attending on Kuvera.

It is mostly admitted that the lower part of his thick-set body may be the body of a *yaksa*²⁴²; but as a whole Ganesa is not a *yaksa* in the least: none of his names are found on *yaksa* lists,²⁴³ nor is he associated with *yaksas* in any purāṇic myth.²⁴⁴

²³⁹ Avolan, *The Great Liberation*, (Second Ed.), p. 5 (Madras, 1927)

²⁴⁰ The animal *avatāras* of Visnu, Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Lion, are of a different character. They are only manifestations of God. The *vāhanas* are not gods.

²⁴¹ Coomaraswamy, *Yaksa*, Part I, pp. 7-14.

²⁴² Deb, "The Durga Pooga: a Federation of Divinities," *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, 1932, October.

²⁴³ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

Miss Getty is inclined to believe that "he was primarily the totem of a Dravidan tribe".²⁴⁵ But there is no evidence concerning the existence or such totem. There certainly existed in India the tribe of the *Gājas* or *Kasas*, who very likely had an elephant as their *lāncana*, but there was never a composite *lāncana* partly human and partly animal, resembling the figure of the elephant god.²⁴⁶

Similarly it has been said that he originally belonged to an animal cult.²⁴⁷ And Miss Getty seems to like the theory "since his image is found in Hindu temples worshipped in company with the animal avatars of Visnu".²⁴⁸ But there is no clear evidence of any animal worship in ancient India. The very serpents were never worshipped, but propitiated only.

Some authors believe that Ganesa was originally "a Dravidian deity worshipped by the aboriginal populations of India".²⁴⁹ We must say first of all that the so-called aboriginal populations of India are different from the Dravidians. There is certainly not the least evidence of such a divinity in the Proto-Dravidian cities of the Indus Valley; nor have anthropologists ever brought forward such an elephantine god from any aboriginal tribe.

A South Indian legend describes him as a demi-god who threw his broken tusk to a giant demon named Gajamukhāsura; the latter forthwith became a rat which was taken by Ganesa as his *vāhana*.²⁵⁰ The early stages of the career of Ganapati which were described above show him

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

²⁴⁶ The rat, Ganesa's *vāhana*, seems to have been a totem among the Mundas and other aboriginal tribes of Chota Nagpur. Cf. Risley, *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, II, p. 113 (1891).

²⁴⁷ Crooke, *The Popular Religion and Folk-lore of Northern India*, I, p. 184.

²⁴⁸ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Archeologie du Sud de l'Inde*, II, p. 44 (Paris, 1914).

indeed in this character of demi-god of the legend, but this does not explain his origin in the least.

Nor is the opinion of those who call him a "Dravidian Sun-god" satisfactory. Certainly the Proto Dravidians worshipped the Sun, but it was identified with Ān, the Lord, the Proto-type of Siva. Nor had any of the eight forms of Ān any shape similar to an elephant.

Very recently Mr. T. G. Aravamuthan has propounded the theory that though Ganesa as worshipped now is not found in Vedic works he is "in spirit" in the very *Rgveda*, because his powers and names are associated with the Maruts-Rudra-Bṛhaspati- Indra conceptions.²⁵¹ Yet his argumentation is faulty, because since Ganapati was admitted to the Hindu pantheon, he naturally was in the course of time given different powers which were conceived as divine powers from very ancient days ; but this is on no account a proof that Ganesa is a very ancient Hindu deity as he affirms.

All these opinions about the origin of Ganesa which we have recorded try to explain the beginnings of this puzzling god by facts which are obscure and unknown, as the nature of the *yaksas* and of the totems, and the prevalence of animal cult in the aboriginal rites. It is not a satisfactory method. An unknown thing must be explained by well known facts and clear ideas. Otherwise the mystery increases and the problem becomes more entangled. We shall follow this method.

Of the three names that are given to the son of Ān (the proto-type of Siva) in the inscriptions of the Indus Valley there is one which, as seen above, doubtlessly identifies him with Skanda = Subrahmanya. That name is *Murugan*, the oldest Dravidian name of Subrahmanya. But there is another name which is worth studying while looking into the origins

²⁵¹ Aravamuthan, "Ganesa : Clue to a Cult and a Culture" *Journal of Oriental Research*, XVIII (1949), pp. 226-230, 233.

of Ganesa. Murugan is also called *Ānil*. What is the meaning of this name ?

Ānil simply means "the Son of Ān." It is a clear confession of the divine filiation of Murugan. But *āne* may also mean "elephant," and the suffix *il* added to a noun (now *il* has become *in*) means "of." Thus *āneil* would mean "of the elephant." This compound word, after the usual vowel elimination, becomes *ānil*. So the name *Ānil* besides meaning "the son of Ān" may also mean "of the elephant." This double meaning of this name seems to have been the origin of Ganapati. That this meaning was understood for some time in connection with Ganesa, the Sanskrit name of this god *Gajasya* clearly shows. *Gajasya* means "of the elephant." It is a perfect translation of *ānil*.

This meaning given to the name *Ānil* was the cause of the production of images of the son of Ān having an elephant's head. Naturally the whole figure could not be an elephant, because the son of Ān was the son of God, and God was conceived and represented in human form. The image therefore was the image of a god, in human form, having the face or head of an elephant. A series of names, both in Dravidian and in Sanskrit shows this composite nature of this new production. They are all names by which Ganesa is mentioned :-

Dravidian :	<i>Anaimukavar</i> , "One with the face of elephant"
	{ <i>Nāgānana</i> , "One having the face of elephant"
	{ <i>Gajānana</i> Ditto
	{ <i>Gajāśya</i> Ditto
	{ <i>Hastinmalla</i> "One who has the cheek and temples of an elephant"
Sanskrit :	{ <i>Gajamukha</i> "One having the face of an elephant"
	{ <i>Karimukha</i> Ditto
	{ <i>Gajavaktra</i> Ditto
	{ <i>Gajavadana</i> Ditto

This new image adorned with the face of an elephant was not, it is understood, in the beginning, a new son of Ān, different from Murugan. It was the same Murugan, the only son of Ān, with a new appearance, with a new face,

This phenomenon of face changing is hinted at in several myths concerning Ganesa. Pārvatī, it is said, was in despair for not having had offspring from Siva. After many prayers and sacrifices she heard a voice from heaven which advised her to betake herself to her apartments where she would find her son. She full of joy ran to her own room where she found a beautiful youth whom she and Siva accepted as their son. To commemorate this great event they celebrated a feast to which they invited all the gods. All were admiring the beautiful youth, excepting Sani (Saturn) who had his eyes fixed persistently on the ground. Pārvatī could not stand this indifference. She bade him gaze upon her son. Hardly had he raised his eyes when the head of the youth was converted into ashes. Great was the consternation in that assembly of gods; but Visnu, mounting on Garuda, his *vāhana*, flew to the banks of the river Puspabhadra, where he found an elephant asleep. He cut off his head; flew back to where the gods were assembled and putting the head on the shoulders of the beheaded youth, return him to life.²⁵²

Another story says that Siva himself cut off the youth's head while fighting with him not knowing that he was the son of Pārvatī. Then on learning the truth he ordered the *devas* to cut off the head of the first being they would find near by, which happened to be an elephant, and placing that head on the headless trunk, Ganesa was produced.²⁵³

A third myth says that after the emanation of this son of Siva from his mind, when Pārvatī saw him produced without her participation, she cursed him; as a result of this curse, the elephant's face appeared.²⁵⁴

These three stories clearly show that the god whom we now call Ganesa had originally a man's head, which was at a later period substituted for the head of an elephant.

²⁵² *Brahmavaivarta Purana*.

²⁵³ *Siva Purāna*.

²⁵⁴ *Varāna Purāna*, Cf. below, p. 207

Who made this substitution? or in other words: Who were the first who produced images of Murugan with the head of an elephant?

Besides the so-called aboriginal tribes of India and the Dravidians who appeared at a later period, there was in India an ancient nation of very high civilization, of extraordinary intellectual attainments which we have now to acknowledge as one of the foundations of Indian culture. That is the Nāga nation.²⁵⁵ The Nāgas, or Serpents, were spread all over India. A number of tribes are now acknowledged as Nāga tribes: the *Garudas* (hawks), the *Makaras* (crocodiles)²⁵⁶ and the *Gajas* (elephants) undoubtedly belonged to this race. In fact the word *nāga* also means "elephant" in Sanskrit.

The idea of giving the head of an elephant to Skanda, the God of War, according to the meaning of the name Ānil, is not so extraordinary after all. "The elephant", says Dr. Gokhale, "is one of the most celebrated animals in the literature of ancient India. His strength, majesty and wisdom and also his terrible madness are of common reference in literary texts".²⁵⁷ Socially the elephant was considered one of the most useful animals in creation, and even from the aesthetic point of view the elephant is held as a type of beauty down to the present.

It is not therefore strange that one day was set apart every year in Ancient India to commemorate all these excellent qualities of this pachyderm. The feast was called *Natti-mahā*. It was the feast of the elephant.²⁵⁸ Accordingly

²⁵⁵ The present writer after protracted studies in that ancient period is now fully convinced that the Nāgas were different from the Dravidians, though they were soon mixed with them. Nāga traditions and recollections are faithfully recorded in the *Mahābhārata*.

²⁵⁶ *Mahābhārata*, Ādi Parva, 1235-1303. Cf. Heras, *Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture*, I, pp. 361-395.

²⁵⁷ Gokhale, "Some Obscure Cults." *J.B.R.A.S.*, XXVII, p. 170.

Cf. Blochmann, *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 121.

²⁵⁸ *Commentary on the Pāli Jātaka*, No. 455.

the four genii who were supposed to support the heavens had the shape of elephants, creatures of great strength. These four *dig-gajas* were probably at a later period identified with the four *Vināyakas*, or demons who created obstacles, about whom we spoke above. In a place called Ghatiyālā, 22 miles north of Jodhpur, there is a column on whose top there are four images of Ganapati facing the four quarters of the earth. Evidently they are the four *dig-gajas*. And yet the inscription engraved on the column opens with an obeisance made to *Vināyaka*.²⁵⁹ The four so-called Ganapatis are therefore the four *dig-gajas* and the four *Vināyakas*.²⁶⁰ There was besides the giant-demon called *Gajamukhāsura*, "demon with the face of an elephant," whom Ganapati defeated, as seen above.

All this elephant mythology was most likely the product of the activity of the *Gajas*, the *Nāga* tribe of ancient India. It is our considered opinion that the first images of Skanda or Murugan having the face of an elephant were imagined and produced by sculptors of this tribe. And it was after the production of these images, when they were numerous all round, that some stories about the origin of this elephant god sprang among the people. This *Ānil* or *Gajasya* was the son of an elephant to whom *Pārvatī* had given a potion of her own confection. *Pārvatī* claimed the child as her own offspring, and *Siva* accepted him as a son of *Pārvatī*.²⁶¹ The popular mind realized that *Siva* had already *Murugan* as a son. He could not have another. This elephant-faced boy was declared to be the son of *Pārvatī*, and a queer son, at that.

Yet this was to admit that *Ānil*=*Gajasya* was different from *Murugan*. There were therefore two gods, one the son

²⁵⁹ *Epigraphia Indica*, IX, pp. 277 ff. (Bhandarkar, *Vaishnavism* p. 148-9)

²⁶⁰ Although the date of the inscription is very late, viz 862 A.D., they figures and the invocation may chrystalize an earlier idea descended to the people of the 9th century by tradition.

²⁶¹ *Jacobi*, "Brahmanism," in *Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, p. 807.

of *Siva*, the other the son of *Pārvatī*. Yet a new myth proclaimed the new elephant god to be the son of both. *Siva* himself is introduced explaining to *Ganesa* why he is *Gajānana*: "I, in company with *Pārvatī* once retired to the forest on the slopes of the *Himālaya* to enjoy each other's company, when we saw a female elephant making herself happy with a male elephant. This excited our passion and we decided to enjoy ourselves in the form of elephants. I became a male elephant and *Pārvatī* a female elephant and we pleased ourselves; as a result you were born with the face of an elephant".²⁶²

We may besides recollect the fact that according to the myth related above, when *Ganapati* lost his original head by the destructive influence of the gaze of *Sani*, the one who brought the elephant head to the beheaded boy was *Visnu*. Now *Visnu* has in modern times been acknowledged as a non-*Āryan* god²⁶³; and owing to his many connections with *Nāgas* (*Sesa-Bhagvan*, *Kurmāvatāra*, *Varāhāvatāra*, etc) we may probably assign a *Nāga* origin to him.²⁶⁴ This is again a new connection between *Ganapati* and the *Nāgas*.

All this development of the figure and myth of *Ganesa*, seems to have taken place within the *Nāga* nation. Traces of this *Nāga* participation in the early evolution of *Ganapati* may be easily discovered in the later images of this god. The majority of these images bear one of two snakes round the belly and round the neck of *Ganesa*. (Fig. 23) *Miss Getty* refers to "the serpent *Sesa* (one of the famous *Nāgas* of epic reputation) adopted in *Nepal* for certain representations of *Ganesa* in dancing attitude".²⁶⁵ Besides she publishes a drawing of a metal image of *Ganapati* worshipped by the esoteric sects, that has a five-headed *nāga* overshadowing his head.²⁶⁶

²⁶² *Gopinatha Rao, Elements of Hindu Iconography*, I, pt. 1, p. 53.

²⁶³ Cf. *Hornell*, "The Shank shell Cult of India," *Antiquity*, XVI, pp. 113-133; *Prziluski*, "The name of the God *Visnu* and the *Kṛṣṇa*-Legend," *Q. J. M. S.*, XXV, pp. 39-48.

²⁶⁴ Cf. *Zimmer*, *Mythis and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, pp. 59-68.

²⁶⁵ *Getty op. cit.*, p. 39 and pl. 18c.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

In the collection of images of Ganapati, of the Museum of our Indian Historical Research Institute, we have several specimens (Figs. No. 31, 32) one of them very primitive, with a *Nāga* spreading its hood over the head of the icon. In another image the heads of two *nāgas* appear from behind the elbow of the two arms of the god.

Miss Getty also notes that when the images of Ganapati are found in the open under trees or in the fields are very often accompanied by *Nāga* slabs.²⁶⁷

We may also remark here that the image of Ganapati is associated with crocodiles both in Ellora²⁶⁸ and in Burma.²⁶⁹ The tribe of the Makaras is one of the ancient *Nāga* tribes.

That the *Nāgas* were well acquainted with Ganapati is well proved by the fact that even *Nāga* kings were named after him. One of the kings dethroned by Samudra Gupta after returning from his southern expedition was called Ganapatināga.²⁷⁰

IX

GANAPATI'S CONNECTIONS WITH SKANDA

In spite of the extraordinary development of Ganapati, his cult and his myths in the course of centuries, we may still trace numerous traits of his original days when he was one with Murugan = Skanda. Those original characteristics of Skanda have been inherited by Ganapati and have been kept round him with very suggestive persistency. We shall study these traits presently.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

²⁶⁸ Cf. Burgess, *Report on the Ellora Cave Temples*, pl. XXX, fig. 2.

²⁶⁹ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

²⁷⁰ Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta: *Fleet, Gupta Inscriptions*, p. 6.



FIG. 29
Siva with Parvati and Ganapati
Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay.



FIG. 30
Three Eyed Ganesa standing with a Naga
coiled round his belly
*Indian Historical Research Institute,
Bombay.*

1. NAMES OF GANAPATI

(a) *Pillayar*. This is a Tamil name of Ganapati. It means "Noble Child." This is exactly the meaning of the Sanskrit word *Kumāra*, one of the names of Skanda.²⁷¹

(b) *Makan*. Another Dravidian name meaning "son." It is also the meaning of *Kumāra*.

(c) *Vināyaka*. It means "Lord of obstacles," but the *Vāmana Purāna* gives another meaning, viz. *Vi-nāyaka*, "One who has no Lord".²⁷² This is precisely the meaning of the word *Anīsa* which the *Svetāsvatara Upanisad* gives to the Son of God.²⁷³

(d) *Ganapati*, "the Lord of Ganas." Kārttikeya or Skanda is supposed to be the Lord of the heavenly hosts in his fight against the *asuras*.

(e) *Visvaksena*. This is a title Ganapati is given in some Vaisnava temples of South India.²⁷⁴ It means "the Lord of all" Cf. (d).

2. POSITION OF GANAPATI

Generally he is shown seated but Miss Getty remarks that "in his most ancient images he was more often figured standing".²⁷⁵ (Fig. 31) The Madras Museum has a beautiful specimen of a standing Ganapati. (See fig. 25) Such images

²⁷¹ Prof. Bagchi, "Some Linguistic Notes", *I.H.Q.*, IX, p. 263, says that this is not the original meaning of the word *pillaiyar*, for in Pāli the word *pillaka* means "a young elephant." Hence according to him *pille* originally meant "the young of the elephant." *Pillaka* does not mean "the young of the elephant" in Pāli, but "the young one". In the "Vaddhakisūkanajātaka" the *sūkanapillake* is mentioned, i.e., "the young of the pig." *The Jātaka*, II, p. 406. The word *pilla* in Pāli is evidently derived from Dravidian.

²⁷² *Vāmana Purāna* Cf. Aravamuthan, "Ganesa: Clue to a Cult and a Culture", *Journal of Oriental Research*, XVIII (1949), pp. 229 and 241.

²⁷³ Cf. above, p. 157.

²⁷⁴ Srikanta Iyer, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

²⁷⁵ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 19.



FIG. 31
Primitive Ganesa protected with the
hood of a Five-Headed Naga
Indian Historical Research Institute,
Bombay



FIG. 32
Ganesa and his Sakti covered with
the hood of a Five-Headed Naga
Indian Historical Research Institute,
Bombay

are called *Prasanna Ganapati*, when he is shown perfectly erect. The Museum of our Indian Historical Research Institute has also some specimens. The images of *Murugan* or *Palni Kurinji Andavar*, which are some of the oldest images of Subrahmanya, show him always erect in this position.

3. THE ARMS OF GANAPATI

In India it is customary to represent the gods with four or more arms. Ganapati is often shown with four, six, eight, ten and more arms; but a number of very primitive images of Ganapati, following the type of the carving of the Mantaka Cetinga stūpa of Ceylon, are two armed only. Miss Getty publishes four of them which are very characteristic. One is Singhalese, two are from the Nahar Collection, Calcutta, a fourth one is in the British Museum.²⁷⁶ The Museum of the Indian Historical Research Institute has one image with two arms only, which is not so early. (Fig. 34) His left hand is in abhaya-mudrā. We consider it to be a South Indian specimen dated 16th cent. It is an atavic manifestation of an early form. The earliest images of Skanda as Kurinji Andavar have always two hands only. So is the stone carving from Banaras described above. Apparently the early Ganapati had two arms in the same way as Skanda

4. THE FIVE HEADS OF GANAPATI.

The images of Ganesa as Heramba having five heads have already been described, four in the four directions of the earth, and the fifth above; but we know one coming from Munshiganj District, Dacca, which has the five heads in the same tier, as the six heads of Shanmukha.

5. GANESA RED

We have seen how Skanda is called "the Red God." The images of Ganapati are supposed to be painted red. In the Rajput watercolours Ganapati is always painted red, at least his face.

²⁷⁶ Getty, op. cit., pls. 2b; 13b and d; 13a.

6. GANAPATI THE SON OF THE MIND OF SIVA

Certain Hindu sects look upon Ganesa as born from Siva's mind, so as to be "the personification of Siva's divine *manas* or mind".²⁷⁷ One of the myths recorded in purānic literature is a crystallization of this idea. It is said that while Siva was immersed in profound thought, a great radiance issued from his forehead and there sprang into existence a wonderful youth endowed with all the qualities of Siva. When goddess Umā saw this Son of Siva created without her participation he pronounced the following curse: "May thy head resemble that of an elephant, and thy body be deformed by a huge belly." This curse was accepted by Siva and the elephant-faced dwarfish Ganesa is the result of it.²⁷⁸

This myth reflects the vedic ideas concerning the filiation of God's son; he is mind-born without the participation of any goddess. This son of God, moreover, endowed with all the qualities of Siva, was "a second himself," to use the expression of the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*.

7. GANAPATI THE GOD OF WISDOM

We saw how Murugan or Skanda, being born from the mind of God, was supposed to be "the Universal Guru." Ganapati is called "the God of Wisdom".²⁷⁹ He is also styled *Kavim Kavīnam Vipratamam*, "the wisest of the wise".²⁸⁰ He is, in fact, supposed to be a "fountain of knowledge", "beaming forth light and knowledge".²⁸¹ In many of his statues one of his hands holds the *modaka*, a large cake which is the symbol of *Mañā-Buddhi* (Supreme Wisdom)²⁸² In some of the Vaisnava temples of South India

²⁷⁷ Getty, op. cit., p. 52.

²⁷⁸ *Varāha Purāṇa*.

²⁷⁹ Srikanta Iyer, op. cit., p. 255, Cf. Bhandarkar, *Vaishnavism, Saivism and other Minor Sects*, p. 149. Bhandarkar's view nevertheless does not seem to be correct.

²⁸⁰ Venkatakrishna Rao, "The Ganapati Cult", *QJMS.*, XLI (1949), p. 98.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²⁸² Getty, op. cit., p. 18.

Ganapati is worshipped under the denomination of *Tumbikkai Alwar*, which means "the Sage with the elephant's tooth". In the same way as in the case of Sanatkumāra he is also surrounded by brilliancy and light. One of his titles in Nepal is *Sūrya Ganapati*.²⁸³ The very head of an elephant with which he is endowed is said to be an emblem of sagacity.²⁸⁴

Ganesa, therefore, being the god of wisdom is supposed to be "the Patron of letters."²⁸⁵ He is, as such, invoked in the beginning of any writing to insure literary success.²⁸⁶ "Almost all the standard works in the Sanskrit and vernacular languages begin with an invocation of the help of this God of Wisdom".²⁸⁷ In fact all Hindu books generally commence with these words: *Ganesāya namah*, "Reverence to Ganesa." In many parts of South India and especially in Travancore State, children on being put to school begin their writing lesson with a similar invocation: *Harih Shri Ganapataya namah*, "Hari, Reverence to the Holy Ganapati".²⁸⁸ Some of his images represent him holding a book.

Ganapati, being the Patron of all literary work, easily became himself a scribe, and as such he has been represented writing (at times using his own broken tusk as stylus) in India,²⁸⁹ Nepal²⁹⁰ and Indo-China.²⁹¹ In the *Mahānirvāṇa-tantra* he is described as writing down the Tantras at the dictation of his father Siva. In the same way he is said to have been writing the *Mahābhārata* at the dictation of

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1 and 39.

²⁸⁴ Srikanta Iyer, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

²⁸⁵ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁸⁷ Srikanta Iyer, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

²⁸⁸ *Travancore State Manual*, II, p. 51.

²⁸⁹ Getty, *op. cit.*, 4.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*,

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 18. In Egypt, the Egyptian god Toth, the second god of the triad of Thebes, himself also considered as the God of Wisdom, is also depicted as a scribe and supposed to be the inventor of writing and patron of letters. (Cf. Getty, *op. cit.*, pl. 1a).



FIG. 33
Standing Ganapati
Courtesy of the Curator, Madras Museum.



FIG. 34
Two-Armed Seated Ganapati
with his left hand in Abhaya-Mudra
Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay.



FIG. 35
Ganapati seated on the Rat, this being upon the Peacock,
Kumara's *vahana*
Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay

Vyāsa.²⁹² It is narrated that while Vyāsa was praying to Brahma asking for help to write his poem, Ganesa appeared to him. He offered himself to Vyāsa to write the whole poem at his dictation ; a task which he accomplished with extraordinary speed.²⁹³ There is a Rajput painting showing this scene in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.²⁹⁴

His character of God of Wisdom makes him also connected with agriculture,²⁹⁵ as the latter is the fruit of wisdom. His title of *Vighnesvara*, "Lord of Obstacles", is also founded upon wisdom, for wisdom, surpasses all difficulties. The same is the origin of his other name *Siddhidātā*, "Bestower of Success."

8. GANESA A BRAHMACARIN

He was supposed to be a Brahmacārin, according to an ancient tradition.²⁹⁶ So was also Murugan. But legend gave him two consorts Buddhi (wisdom) and Siddhi (success). The latter is some times called Riddhi (perfection). Such was also the final fate of Subrahmanya.

9. GANESA WORSHIPPED IN THE MOUNTAINS

An inscription of Champa speaks of a donation made to Ganesa of Candanagiri (*i.e.* "the Sandal Mountain").²⁹⁷ In fact there exists a tradition in India that his cult is practised

²⁹² Al Bīrūnī, *India*, (Translated by Sachau), I, p. 134.

²⁹³ Winternitz, *History of Indian Literature*, I, p. 468, n. 4, opines that the passage containing this legend in some copies of the epic is an interpolation. The legend does not seem to be earlier than the 9th century.

²⁹⁴ Coomaraswamy, in *Bulletin of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts*, XXVI, p. 30.

²⁹⁵ Cf. Gupte, "Harvest festivals in honour of Gauri and Ganesh," *Indian Antiquary*, XXXV, 1906, p. 36.

²⁹⁶ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 35. "La couleur rouge de son corps est celle que donne aux grandes yogins la pratique intense de la méditation." Herbert, *Ganesa*, p. 27.

²⁹⁷ Bergaigne, *Inscriptions Sanscrites de Campā*, p. 362.

in mountains, a tradition which accompanied him from India to Japan. Such is also the cult of Murugan.²⁹⁸

10. A NEW VAHANA OF GANAPATI

Though the rat is supposed to be the *vāhana* of Ganapati, yet at times he is also represented riding on a peacock, *mayūra*, the *vāhana* of Kumāra. On such occasions he is styled *Mayū-raganapati*.²⁹⁹ An image in the Museum of the Indian Historical Research Institute displays him riding on his rat, who is likewise placed on the peacock of Kumāra. The rat is busily engaged eating a *ladhu* of his master, as he is not engaged in locomotion (Fig. 35).

11. THE DIGNITY OF GANAPATI

The main dignity of Ganapati, his essential character I should say, is that he is the Lord and Leader of the *ganas*. Even this character seems to have been usurped, for Kumāra had also been the Lord of the *ganas* before him. So Ganapati seemed to have been promoted to the position of the leader of the *ganas*, which Skanda had held so far.³⁰⁰

Ganesa therefore was originally the same as Āṇil=Murugan. The different shape his images took at an early period was the cause of the later differentiation. Yet this second god kept many characteristics of the first.

X

TRUTH ABOUT GANESA'S BIRTH

The myths of the birth of Ganesa, in the midst of much useless foliage, discover some extraordinary truths in their background which are worth serious consideration owing to its persistency.

²⁹⁸ Getty, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

²⁹⁹ Venkatakrishna Rao, "The Ganapati Cult", *Q.J.M.S.*, XLI, pp. 95 and 96.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94. Cf. above, p. 174.

1. GANESA MADE BY PARVATI WITHOUT THE INTERVENTION OF SIVA.

One legend says that Pārvatī after gently rubbing her body caused a youth to be produced, who had four arms and the head of elephant.³⁰¹

Another story relates that Pārvatī made Ganapati out of the impurities of her own body giving him the face of an elephant; but it was only a lifeless figure. Then she sprinkled it with the water of the Ganges, which communicated life to it.³⁰²

In a third story which we have already related Ganapati is said to be the son of an elephant to whom Pārvatī gave a potion to drink.³⁰³

One of the carvings of Elephanta seems to represent the birth of Ganesa in Mount Kailāsa. A nurse carries the little elephant child to Pārvatī who is seated on the same level as Siva but at a certain distance from him as showing some disagreement.³⁰⁴ The artist evidently wanted to show the Siva had nothing to do with the birth of the elephant god. The sculpture is much damaged, but even as it is the picture is full of feeling.

2. GANESA PRODUCED WITHOUT THE INTERVENTION OF SIVA AND PARVATI

We have already narrated the purāṇic story that relates the appearance of Ganapati as a beautiful youth in the private apartments of Pārvatī. He was finally accepted as their son by Siva and Pārvatī.³⁰⁵

³⁰¹ *Skanda Purāṇa*

³⁰² *Mātsya Purāṇa*

³⁰³ Cf. above, p. 202.

³⁰⁴ Cf. Sastri, *A Guide to Elephanta*, pp. 45-46.

³⁰⁵ Cf. above, p. 200.

Even in far-off Nepal the advent of Ganesa was supposed to have taken place without the intervention of Siva and Pārvatī, for he, of his own accord, became visible in a ray of sunshine. The Brāhmins said that he appeared in this shape as an incarnation of the son of Brahma.³⁰⁶

Thus purānic myths and popular legends testify to the falsehood laying behind the popular belief, that Ganapati is the son of Siva. Not only Siva cannot be called the father of Ganesa, but not even Pārvatī herself may be called his real mother; for even in the two cases, which emphasize the non-intervention of Siva, the action of Pārvatī in relation to Ganesa is not generation in the least, but a mere external production.

On the contrary there is a South Indian story which is narrated to explain the name of Palni, the main shrine of Subrahmanya, which accidentally shows that the only and real son of Siva was Murugan or Skanda. Once upon a time, they say, Siva had a beautiful fruit in his hand, *pala* "fruit." (It happened to be a pomegranate). His two sons Skanda and Ganapati wanted the fruit each one for himself with exclusion of the other. In order to settle the dispute Siva told them that the fruit would be given to the first who would go round the world. Skanda ascended his mount, the peacock, and started his long journey. Ganesa, on his rat, considered himself totally unfit to compete with the peacock of his brother. Accordingly he went round Siva himself, saying: "Thou art the world." Siva much pleased with the sagacity of Vināyaka, gave him the fruit. When after many years, Skanda arrived he was very angry against his brother who had won the contest owing to a trick. But Siva told him, "Do not be angry for having lost the fruit. Thou art the fruit. *Pala-ni*." Skanda is therefore the real fruit of Siva. Ganapati is not his fruit, that is, his son.

³⁰⁶ Lévi, *Le Népal*, II, p. 384-8. It may be remembered that Sanat-kumāra is also said to have appeared to Mārkaṇḍeya in a ray of the Sun. Cf. above, p. 163-164.

XI

CONCLUSION

Ganapati is a deity without a foundation in the Veda. He has supplanted his supposed brother and has the tendency of supplanting his own father, Siva. In fact he was actually succeeded in his attempt, in some quarters.

The very character of the development of his person, his myth and his cult discovers the doubtful beginnings of his existence. He puts on the apparel of other gods and prides over the raiment borrowed from others. But in the midst of all this confusion created by his deeds, one discovers a few facts which unveil his life of mystery :—

1. In the period which we may call the pre-history of Ganapati, he had not the head of an elephant. His face was the face of a beautiful youth.
2. The appearance of the head of an elephant seems to have been due to the action of the Nāgas.
3. He keeps many characteristics of his supposed brother Skanda; one, most important, being that he is the son of the mind of Siva, without any female intervention.
4. Yet in this elephantine form he is clearly said not to be the son either of Siva or of Pārvatī.
5. While comparing him with Skanda or Subrahmanya, the latter is the only son of Siva.

