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TAMIL CULTURE

A Quarterly Review dedicated to the study of Tamiliana

This Journal of the Academy JUL 1955

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TAMIL CULTURE in its fourth year of publication leaves the press as the organ of the Academy of Tamil Culture which has been recently constituted in Madras by representatives of every field of Tamil scholarship and Tamil interest. The Memorandum of Association and the rules and regulations of the Academy, extracts from which we publish elsewhere, are sufficient indication of the comprehensive aims and objectives of the Academy in promoting the study and development of the Tamil language and literature, the Tamil arts and sciences. As the journal of the Academy, this review will in future have a wider scope and include within its pages the activities of the Academy of Tamil Culture and other allied and affiliated bodies.

This journal aims at reaching as wide a circle of readers as possible. It is being circulated in such a manner that it may come within easy reach of the teaching profession and student population, two categories of readers among whom the review has a mission to fulfil. For this purpose the Academy is also organising the publication of a Tamil edition of the Review which will present to the Tamil reading world the results of modern scholarship and which will serve as a forum of exchange of views and of discussion among Tamil sangams and Tamil scholars.

In its activities and functions, the Academy proposes to be directed by the high principles of scholarship and steer clear of partisan politics and sectarianism, which unfortunately so often invade the hallowed precincts of study and research. The Academy of Tamil Culture hence bids fair not only to become a rallying centre of the Tamil renaissance at a period when all the resources and all the talent of Tamildom are necessary to ward off dangers but also to contribute to the positive growth of the many aspects of Tamil culture.

It has been for a long time the desire of many students and well-wishers of Tamil literature and Tamil culture, that there be some journal in English through the medium of which these subjects may reach the non-Tamil world, and reach also that class of Tamil society which on account of various circumstances finds itself more proficient in English than in Tamil. Requests for such a review came during the writer's world tour five years ago when he met several scholars and persons of general culture who lamented the want of some means of contact with the Tamil world. In Japan, in the United States of America, in Ecuador, in Peru, in Chile, in Argentina and Brazil, in Europe, the necessity of such a review was again and again impressed upon him, and having edited this journal for three years and circulated it amongst scholars and institutions round the world, he has come to know of more and more reasons why this journal should have a long lease of life and be well established. The means of achieving these ends have been found in the Academy of Tamil Culture.

Nearly every generation during the last one hundred years has had a few men in South India and Ceylon who realised the unique features of the Tamil language and literature and endeavoured to have their

enthusiasm shared by others. A good number of these men were foreigners whose appreciation of Tamil culture was all the more precious because of their scholarship in Latin and Greek, and their acquaintance with European culture. The judgements of Walter Elliot, Stokes, Ellis, Gover, Winslow, Caldwell, Pope, Vinson, have been of a most enlightening nature even though they did not have the benefit of recent editions and critical studies; but the complaints they voiced in their day concerning the neglect regarding Dravidian culture in general and Tamil culture in particular, may very well be made even today. So little has been accomplished in the meantime; so vast is the field that is offered for research and study. Dr. G. U. Pope wrote thus in 1910 of British neglect of Tamil literature:

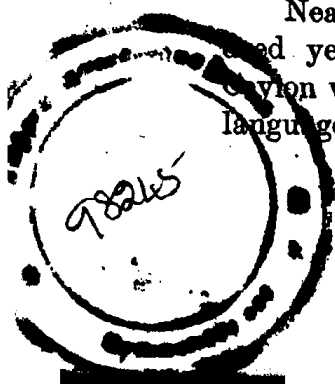
"Although the very ancient, copious, and refined Tamil language is inferior to none, it is regarded by most people as the (probably barbarous) vernacular of a people living somewhere in a remote district of Great Britain's imperial possessions. Neither does our Indian Government nor do our Universities fully recognize the value of Tamil literature; and so those who spend their lives in the study of the great South Indian classics must resemble men seeking for pearls under water." 1

One wonders if these words may not be applied here in India and Ceylon to the neglect that Tamiliana and Tamilology suffer at the hands of those whose duty it is to protect and develop them. What W. W. Hunter said of philology is true also of many other fields of Tamil studies:

"Philology has hitherto concerned herself almost exclusively with Indo-Germanic and semitic speech; with speech that is at a single stage, and perhaps not at its most instructive stage. The study of the non-Aryan tongues of India is destined, I believe, to open the door to the vast linguistic residue, and to furnish the basis of a new science of language, as the study of Sanskrit in India, eighty years ago, afforded the foundation upon which the present system of philology has been reared." 2

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

2. A Comparative Dictionary of the languages of Asia. W. W. Hunter. Preface.



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

There are dark and disconcerting obstacles in the way of a dispassionate appraisal of the Tamil contribution to the culture of India and Ceylon. An American scholar sent by the Rockefeller Foundation returned from India to America five years ago with the impression that the Government of India was not interested in any studies that would prove the non-Aryan origin

of cultural trends and historical events in India. The activities of the Southern circle of the Department of Archaeology have not been conspicuous in the Tamil country. Now that the Indus Valley has been lost to us (and that loss is probably more Tamil's than that of any other language) one would expect more intense work in Adichyanallur, in Arikamedu, in Kaveripoompattinam, but the Archaeological Department lacks either the will or the means, or possibly is deficient in both. Similar complaints have been made by scholars with regard to the neglect of Tamil antiquities and epigraphy in Travancore and Ceylon. The function of the research scholar is not to act as a partisan but to be a witness to the truth. It is fatal to scholarship when it is blinded by prejudice or made to serve the interests of a party. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*. Let the petty politician keep his hands off culture and learning.

* * *

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

Scholars in Tamil should be better conversant with the languages and literatures of the other "cultivated" and "uncultivated" Dravidian tongues, and of Sanskrit and English if they are to make their work truly worth while. Comparative studies in Dravidian languages have not advanced far since Caldwell's time.

Because of its affinities with the North Indian languages, and because of the unique position it has held as a vehicle of religious and philosophic thought, Sanskrit holds a prominent place in Indian culture. Writers like Max Muller, Winternitz, Macdonell, and Keith have revealed to Indians themselves the treasures of the Sanskrit tongue. Tamil cannot expect the same amount of study or spontaneous interest on the part of non-Tamils for the want of such linguistic affinities. No heed has been paid to the observation of Max Muller himself that

"Tamil literature hitherto has been far too much neglected by students of Indian literature, philosophy and religion." 3

Most of the pioneer work, therefore, that will cause interest in the rest of the world must proceed from the Tamils themselves. Some of them should be prepared, even at the cost of sacrifice, to acquire a literary proficiency in foreign tongues so that they may translate the Tamil classics into other languages. So far no translation of a Tamil classic seems to have been incorporated in any series of the world classics in English or in any other language, nor any extracts from Tamil poetry included in the anthologies of world poetry. The Academy of Tamil Culture proposes to sponsor the work of scholars who embark in making original research in the various fields of Tamil culture and will "establish and maintain effective contact

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

and collaboration with University or other academic organisations at home and abroad".

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

"It has been generally admitted, particularly after a study of both the basis of Dravidian and Aryan culture through language and through institutions, that the Dravidians contributed a great many elements of paramount importance in the evolution of Hindu civilization, which is after all (like all other great civilizations) a composite creation, and that in certain matters the Dravidian and Austric contributions are deeper and more extensive than that of the Aryans. The pre-Aryans of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa were certainly in possession of a higher material culture than what the semi-nomadic Aryans could show."

Again, while estimating the Dravidian and other non-Aryan contributions he points out tersely that

"In culture, speaking in the Indian way, one may say that over twelve annas in the rupee is non-Aryan origin",

meaning that more than three-fourth of Indian culture is non-Aryan and predominantly Dravidian. He proceeds to show that Indian food, the Indian way of thinking, the Indian counting and computation, the Indian marriage and religious customs, and Hindu worship and ritual are mostly Tamil or Dravidian.⁴

It is clear that the neglect of studies and research concerning Tamil India can give room to gross errors

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

and misleading judgements in the writing of Indian history and the exposition of Indian culture and Indian literature. The peculiar characteristics of the Tamil language, its phonetics, its antiquity, its one and only declension and one and only conjugation, its classification of gender so unlike the Indo-European that attributes gender to inanimate objects, and even changes the gender of objects from century to century, its ancient and obsolete particles should arrest the attention of all those interested in the structure and the history of human speech. Tamil is as much a classical language with a classical literature as Greek or Sanskrit with this difference that while her ancient contemporaries have changed beyond recognition or been long regarded as "dead", Tamil continues to be one of the most vigorous of modern Indian languages, and perhaps offers the only example in history of an ancient classical tongue which has survived to this day and yet remains young as it was two thousand years ago.

"It is not perhaps extravagant to say that in its poetic form the Tamil is more polished and exact than the Greek, and, in both dialects, with its borrowed treasures, more copious than the Latin. In its fulness and power, it more resembles English and German than any other living language".

During the last fifty years a number of ancient Tamil works have been edited in print by that prince of editors, the late Swaminatha Aiyer. Knowledge about these ancient literary anthologies has not yet reached those who contribute articles to books of reference in the West. Hence their studies generally are confined to the Kural and the Saivaite and Vaishnavite hymns. The love lyrics of the Tamils, their Nature poetry, the panegyric and ethical poetry of the Puram anthology, the Tamil epics like Silapadikaram and Kambar's Rāmayanam have not been critically

studied side by side with the other masterpieces of the world's literature. There are few languages that can claim such a refined and classical love-poetry as Tamil. Few literatures in the world seem to contain such a large volume of ethical and devotional works. And no other language seems to have been the literary vehicle of the poetry of so many different religions, for in Tamil there are poetical works representative of the Jain, the Buddhist, the Saivaite, the Vaishnavite, the Catholic, the Protestant, and the Moslem faiths.

The Kural, no doubt, holds a unique place in the literatures of the world. Suffice it to quote Albert Schweitzer, and his comparative comments on the Kural:

"What a difference between the Kural and the Laws of Manu... Whilst the Bhagavad-Gita in a forced and chilly manner gives as a motive for remaining in active life that it is in accordance with the order of the Universe, the Kural justifies it—what an advance!—by the idea of ethical activity...There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom...We already find here the knowledge that good must be done for its own sake...Maxims about joy in activity bear witness to the strength of the world and life affirmation present in the Kural...It has appropriated all the valuable ethical results of the thought of world and life negation. But in addition to this ethic of inwardness there appears in the Kural the living ethic of love".⁵

Just as the Kural merits even greater recognition, so does the Siddhanta philosophy, said to be the choicest product of the Dravidian intellect. The fine arts are also fields in which the achievements of the Tamils are conspicuous. In music, in dance, in painting and in sculpture, the Tamils have an inheritance

⁵ Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development*, pp. 200-205, London, 1936.

which must be diligently studied in the interests of gracious living.

* * *

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

This expansiveness resulted in foreign conquests, in colonisation and in the establishment of empires, comparatively shortlived like all empires carved out by Indian dynasties, but of sufficiently long enough duration to admit of a permanent impress on the countries that were conquered. Ceylon, Burma, Malaya Siam and Indonesia have all their tales to tell of the "Greater India" that the Tamils established.

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

We need not insist further on the peculiar features of the culture, the language, the history, the literature, the fine arts and crafts that will form the subject matter of this Review. To bring these to light, to make them available to as many people in the world as possible, is a duty that must be done in the interest of truth. To have had some glimpse of these hidden beauties and not to have shared them with others would be unpardonable selfishness. The Academy of Tamil Culture and its journal are therefore pledged to the noblest purposes and ends that can inspire Tamil speaking peoples. *Faxit Deus.*

A Sculptor's Paradise *In South India: Māmallipuram*

LEOP. BAZOU, S. J.

MĀMALLIPURAM, the City of the Great Malla¹ (Narasimha Varman I, c. 630—660), stands on the eastern shore of South India, near the Palar River, some 35 miles south of Madras. Here on the summit of huge gneiss rocks, piled one upon the other, the Pallava princes of Kanchi had built their summer palace. It overlooked the famous harbour and emporium, known to Roman and Greek traders of old, and commanded the whole country around. Māmalla made his summer residence worthy of the great monarch he was. Scattered debris of bricks and dilapidated basements are all that remains of his palace, but the religious monuments and the sculptural works of art he inspired have survived as so many witnesses to his greatness and his love of beauty. Here, on the rockhill and in its immediate surroundings, lovers of art and students of Tamilagam's religious past will find a unique gathering of sculptural masterpieces seldom met together in such profusion. On the eastern face of the rockhill three large sculptural panels, and many other rocks, large and small, have been carved into cave-temples or monolith shrines, not counting two

1. The name has undergone a great variety of spelling efforts from Mavalipuram to the Sanskritised form of Mahabalipuram. The proper spelling ought, of course, to be Mamallapuram. But it must have proved too much of a mouthful for the ordinary people to pronounce, and usage has softened it into the present Mamallipuram.

more temples built out of dressed stones. These would provide enough sculptural masterpieces to enrich many of the most exclusive museums of art.

The period, 'perhaps the most formative period of South Indian culture'², witnessed a literary, artistic, religious and political upheaval, when controversy inspired divines and poets, when even leaders changed their faith overnight. Saiva and Vaishnava names follow indifferently Buddhist titles in the genealogy of the Pallava princes, Mahendra Varman I (c. 600—630), at first a devout Jain who ridiculed the Saiva mendicants, turned himself a Saivite. The first singer of the Thevaram hymns, the great Appar, a professed Jain monk and at one time, the head of an important monastery, renounced his faith for that of Siva, to end—some say—in a monastery of his original faith and profession. Both the Buddhist and Jain Sanghams, monastic institutions that imparted to their numerous and eager disciples a full University Course—religion, medicine, as well as arts—had just reached the height of their fame. The influence of *bhakti* or devotion to a personal deity (Ishta Devatā) was bringing about a renaissance of Dravidian religious concepts, provoking a 'large crop of ascetics', mendicants, singers, poets and dancers. In the best tradition inspired from the ancient Dravidian Panars, they tried to rival and surpass the Buddhist and Jain wandering monks. This is the period that saw the rise of rock-temple sculpture. Within the short span of a single century, the seventh, under three Pallava princes, Mahendra, Māmalla and Rājasimha, Dravidian art attained its zenith. From this Pallava School, best represented here, at Māmallipuram, temple architects and sculptors were for

2. C. Minakshi, *Administration and Social life under the Pallavas*, Madras 1938, Preface.

centuries to draw their inspiration. Its influence would be felt in the religious edifices of the Far-East, as far as Java, Burma, Siam and Cambodia.

THE GREAT ROCK-PANEL

What most strikes and captivates the attention at Māmallipuram is the prodigious scene carved out upon the rock on the eastern side of the hill area. This masterpiece of carving measures some 90 feet in length by 30 in height and represents more than a hundred different full size sculptures, 'the grandest expression of plastic Indian art, one of the largest, most beautiful and most dramatically striking masterpieces of all times'.³ There are actually two rocks standing side by side and separated only by a narrow chasm, which the master sculptor has turned into the central part of the whole composition. Here a Nāga and a couple of Nāga spirits are just rising out of the earth, moving upwards, in long gracious strides, their mighty reptilian undulating forms. And towards these central rising figures, all the others, represented in their throng—royal couples, hosts of gods and celestial beings, genii, warriors, artisans, labourers, ascetics and animals—are on the march like a gigantic procession hastening towards the ascending Nāgas.

An artist might feel at first overwhelmed by the enticement of what René Grousset calls a 'tropical Greece, nurtured from too rich a soil and inspired by a theogony that knew no restraint'.⁴ But as the eye lingers on such a large scene that defies the

3. H. Zimmer, *Mythes et Symboles dans la Civilisation de l'Inde*, Paris 1951, p. 110.

4. Grousset, René, *Bilan de l'Histoire*, Paris 1946, p. 128.

imagination and takes one's breath away, one realises the softening Buddhist influence, an inspiration of peace and love because of the pervading confidence that life is good and enjoyable. All the corporeal forms are expressed in such delicate and tender touches that their captivating charms, even when feminine figures stand in the nude, remain above sex. For there is spread over the whole a sense of wonderment, inspired by a *joie de vivre* that has been tempered by a typical softening religious strain. 'Idealism, dignity, gravity, even devotional austerity', are some of the characteristics H. Zimmer finds in the composition, along with 'a typical, moderate, though deep, religious enthusiasm, decidedly peace-inspiring even under the strong stimulant of ardent *bhakti*'. A quiet and sober dignity permeates, so to say, the whole scene, as if it were the outward impression of a soul lost in contemplation of the whole creation'. For this grand scene appears like 'a symposium of life, divine and terrestrial with all its all-enchanting, wonderful and abundant cosmic scenery, as seen in a dream, that would be the dream of an ascetic in his prayer. A prayer inspired by an asceticism at the same time spiritual and sensuous, but of a sensuousness that belongs no more to this material world of ours'.⁵

The forceful grandeur of the whole scene, the masterful lines and strokes from the artist's chisel, make one ask, in one's despair to grasp this large masterpiece and its implications, whether any other genius than the Michael-Angelo of the Sistine Chapel or the French sculptor Rodin, had he in his most restless creative urge dared tackle such a task, could have conceived such a gigantic work of art. And yet it is

5. H. Zimmer, *Ibid.* p. 115—119, *passim*.

not the towering grandeur of the whole composition, nor the masterful strokes that chiselled life itself in stone, that are the subject of our deepest amazement, but the realisation that we have come unexpectedly face to face with the 'Golden Age', that is with the 'sacred' or the 'numen', a world in which gods, genii, royal personages, warriors, labourers and rustics, along with the whole creation that surrounds them, dwelt together in peace and perfect harmony, with nothing to mar their quiet and religious-like enjoyment of all things, terrestrial and divine. An Earthly Paradise before Sin had entered this world: and yet a paradise in which, if not the *Serpent*, at least the *Nāgas*, seem to be the central figures. But more about this later.

Troubled souls yearning for the heterogeneous, highly emotional devotees of an awe-inspiring deity, or perturbed consciences whose remorse dwells in a world of ashes and sackcloth, would find themselves out of place here. If the artist had a dream, begotten by a powerful imagination, his was not a nightmare but a vision of peace and beauty, in which esoteric rites and magical art had no place whatever. If he carved out a Siva with four arms, it is Siva, not in any of his terrific aspects—still to come—but the traditional Dravidian benevolent and youthful Murugan, 'who dances on the hilltops', the fragrant son of beautiful and gracious Kottavai. And the 'Mother' here is no other than the young lovely, serene and devotion-inspiring Dravidian Mother, whom the prolific sculptors of Māmallipuram have carved upon almost all available rocks: the Mother, blissful and bliss-giving *Nāgini*, that rises in the very centre of the great Rock-Panel.



Great Rock-Panel: general view

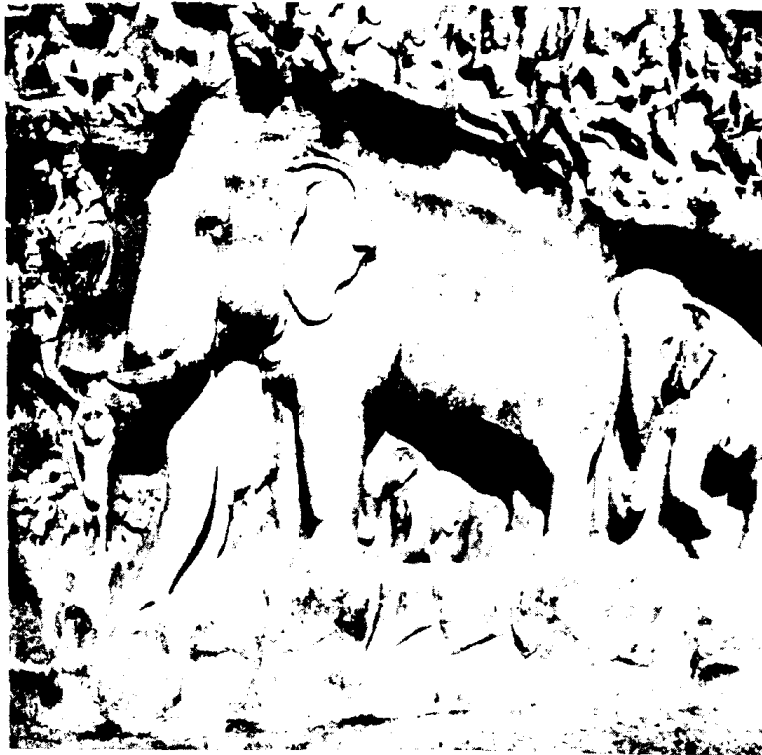


Great Rock-Panel: central portion: the 'Ascending Nagas'

By courtesy of C. W. M. Chetty, Spencerville, Dinidigal.

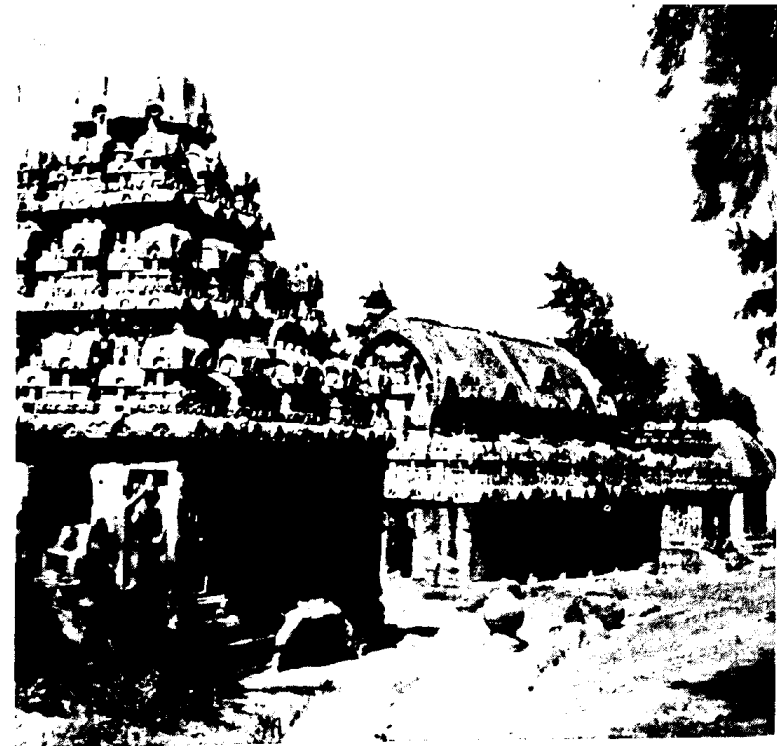


Great Rock-Panel: upper left portion
(from left to right the artist at work, four-arm Shiva, the Panchajanya)

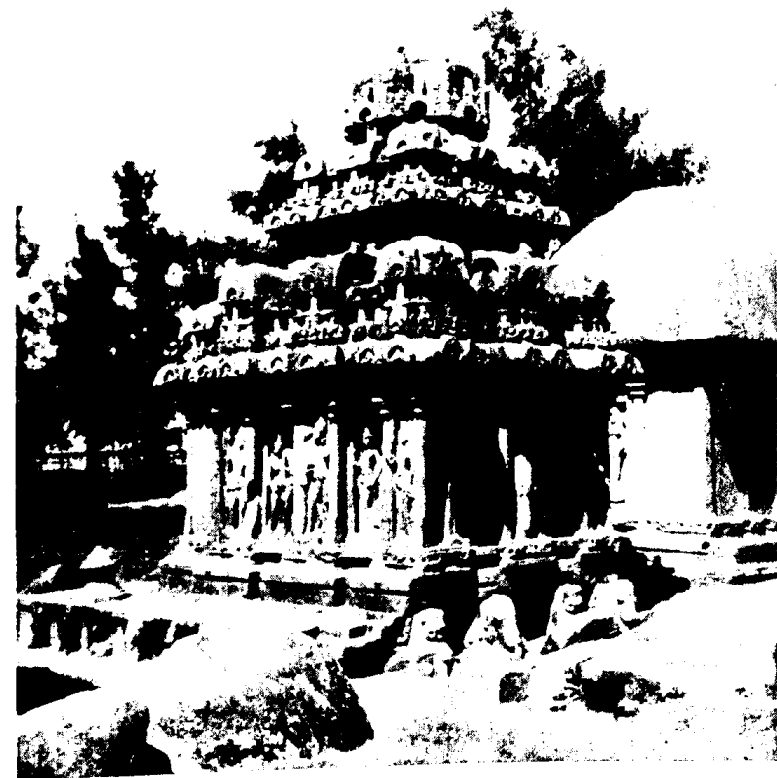


Great Rock-Panel: the Elephants

By courtesy of C. W. M. Chetty, Special Officer, Dindigul.



Monoliths



The Arama & Draupadi monoliths

By courtesy of C. W. M. Chetty, Special Officer, Dindigul.



The Devi in the Draupadi monolith.



THE 'ASCENT OF THE NĀGAS'

But if scholars are all agreed as to the high artistic value of this scene, they differ when it comes to deciding upon its actual meaning. Some have seen in it the 'Penance of Arjuna'. One reason given for this is that there happens to be a particular ascetic seen standing in the typical attitude of the penitents. But, far from being the central figure, this piece is carved towards the upper right part of the left rock where it is lost among a large throng of others in an all-out *mise en scene*. And this is indeed the most lavish display ever designed to mark a grand day, the largest festival ever conceived to perform an ancestral rite.

Another more common, and at first sight more likely interpretation is that the scene depicts the 'Descent of the Ganges'. The remnants of masonry work at the top of the middle gap between the twin rocks suggest that water must have been stored up in a reservoir behind it to provide some sort of artificial waterfall on the occasion of some recurring festival. But such a descent of water, however inspiring a subject it may prove as a typical element of fertility rites, does not seem to be the main subject. A mere passing, transient occasion could not have, moreover, warranted the great display of such a masterly sculptural scene represented in this great rock-panel. We are not dealing here with a mere Puranic lore out of Sanskrit scriptures, but with a traditional Dravidian rite of common or clan worship. It is not actually the 'Descending Waters' but the 'Ascending Nāgas', that are intended to be and have remained the central and most prominent part of the whole masterpiece, the simple and life-like *Naga* or cobra, coming out of the earth—Mother Earth indeed—and the couple of divine Nāgini

and Nāga that are ascending the waters in all their glory. Surrounded by the halo of an expanded *naga* hood, with joined hands in an 'attitude of ecstatic religious fervour, prayerful bliss, joyful and devout ravishment' ⁶ to quote once more H. Zimmer, they seem to be addressing the throng of people and animated beings—nay the whole of Nature—an all-welcoming salutation.

The whole scene has been conceived by a powerful master-mind with a set purpose. All the many subjects, however different they may be, have their attention drawn towards the middle chasm between the twin rocks. The whole scene represents what H. Zimmer calls a 'conventional concept'. It is not merely an 'historical decisive moment', the 'climax of a drama' or the 'summing up of momentous events', but a 'living and progressive action, the successive developments of which—several moments of the passing time as it were—that are expressed here side by side in a single composition as a marvellous lasting recital' ⁷. The crucial event that commands the whole concept, pervading as it does each and every detail, is what attracts and detains our attention. It is the central piece that gives its meaning to the whole, and this—we must say it again—is not the *descending waters*, however much they may be part of the picture, but the *ascending Nagas*. Even if the latter had disappeared, we would be still looking for them with the eye of our imagination. Dravidian tradition, which survives in almost every village of Tamil Nād and South India, holds the Nāgas as spirits of both the earth and the

6. Id. Ibid., p. 119.

7. Id., Ibid, pp. 115—119.

waters, guardians of fabulous riches in the nether world, of which they are the kings and queens, as symbols of cosmic energy that gives the waters their life and the fields their life-giving harvest, the symbols, indeed, of all life and all health.

These fabulous Nāgas played such an important part in the tradition of the ancient Indian tribes that they could not help passing into Sanskrit lore. The Nāginis acquired such a reputation for their irresistible enticing beauty that heroes of old were credited to have sought alliance with these sub-terrestrial deities. Did not Arjuna himself, whom some would recognise in the penitent ascetic represented here, marry a Nāga princess? Did not Parasurāma command his beloved Nambudiris to contract unions with the 'celestial damsels', among whom Murugan played on the hilltops, and thus raise a posterity? Did not the ancestral hero, founder of the Pallava dynasty of Kanchi, marry a Nāga princess? Well, tradition tells us he did. Whether she actually was a Mahratta princess of the Nāga clan or a mere character in a legendary account, it does not matter. We meet here with an unmistakable ancient tradition—an accepted one anyhow among those concerned—the princess of the ruling Pallava house. This Nāga cult has prevailed as a characteristic feature amongst the less Aryanised tracts of India and more particularly in our Dravidian South. The Nāga cult or the fertility festival of the Nāgas, the life-providing genii by whose help children are begotten and families and clans endure and multiply, is enough to explain the gigantic composition carved out of twin rocks at Māmallipuram and to warrant the inclusion of the whole of the cosmic world as taking an active part in that festival and in these rites. The Dravidian worship, still prevailing in villages is always

a common worship of the family or clan or of the whole village, if not of the whole Nād.

But the fact is that the great rock-panel is a work inspired by the Pallava princes, who were magnificent patrons of art, and prided themselves to belong to the Naga clan. It is not, therefore, a mere coincidence that this masterpiece was carved out of the rockhill upon which the Great Māmalla built his summer palace, and round which he had founded Māmallapuram, the City of Māmalla, the City of the Nāgas. The worship of the Nāgas, symbolized here in the primeval form of a natural cobra and in the Divine Nāga couple, is not a mere chance festival. Nor can such a great masterpiece, which must have taken years to realise, be just a fluke of some aimless, capricious artist. It gives immortal expression to the royal Pallava clan's worship of their clan totem. And the festival and rite, as elaborated here in the grandest style ever conceived and realised, bring into action the full array of the whole royal clan, past and present, with their regal retinues of mustachioed feudal liegemen, court-sculptors, servants and menials, with everything that has life in heaven and on earth.

On either side of the chasm between the twin rocks, along which the figures of the Nāgas are ascending, as many as sixteen different crowned royal couples in their princely attire hasten to come forth, genuflecting and flying, to meet and worship their ancestors and tutelary deities. Most of their attendants wear also a crown, because of their connection with the royal house, as do even now the peers of the realm when a British monarch is crowned at Westminster. And so do the many warriors, the various couples of anthropomorphic birds (half-human and half-winged forms), the gods and even the Gandharva

dwarfs, who quite at ease are enjoying themselves, as children and angels would, in eating sugar-cane. It all looks like a grand *Pongal* celebration⁸. To these high personages must be added typical representatives from the society of the day in their usual guise, ascetics and religious men of all robes—or kinds of undress—artisans and labourers, along with the whole of the animated creation, as if in a cosmic festival in which Nature must have her part—tigers, apes, lions with a lioness feeding her young ones, asses, various kinds of birds, a tortoise, several hippopotamuses; a cat doing penance in the most realistic attitude of the Yogi, thus giving a holiday to the mice: a couple of deer at rest, the male scratching his nose with his hindleg: the apes, quiet for the nonce, gazing at the ascending Nāgas; Siva with his trident and crown; the two Sun-gods in all their glory, but in the same worshipping attitude as the genuflecting and flying royal couples and warriors. The whole of the divine hierarchy is here subjected to the Pallava ancestral deities, the Nāgas.

It is not mere fancy nor chance that has given the royal princes standing nearest to the ascending Nāgas on either side of the middle chasm between the twin rocks the aureola of *naga* hood, as living representatives of the Nāga clan. It is not unintentionally either that the various religious men represented here are going about their own particular concerns, quite unconnected with the great festival. A seated ascetic is lost in meditation—communing with the divine: another doing penance, while others, intent in less-high pursuits, are merely idling away their time chattering. In the lower portion of the left panel, a priest is

8. This is a harvest festival celebrated throughout Tamil country in the middle of January (Ed.)

just emerging from the waters. An able-bodied man of strong and well-proportioned limbs, he stands erect in perfect poise carrying a pitcher upon his left shoulder with the sacrificial water from the stream. He looks well-satisfied with himself and the world. His head is crowned with the quaint head-dress typical of most ascetics, and his attention is being attracted towards the waters. His right free hand, upturned as if in awe, seems to indicate that he is not quite unaware that some portentous event must be taking place. On his right, a standing ascetic with his head shaved is bending low, his hands joined in adoration. Is he saluting the rising Nāgas? On the priest's left, there stands another priest in the nude. Quite a youngster, he is coming out of the waters after bathing and goes on wringing his wet garment, though he is almost elbowing the lower Nāga. His chubby, plump round face precludes all material cares, although his eyes seem to be wondering about some unusual happening. Official Brahmanical Hinduism is shown here as it has remained ever since, standing apart—or pretending to stand apart—from the Dravidian village festival in honour of the not-to-be-ignored ancestral deities.

Most prominent in the whole scene is the herd of elephants, a couple as large as life with their young ones playing between their parents' legs. They occupy the lowest portion of the right rock. By their majestically moving attitude, they seem to be leading the whole procession of worshippers. From whatever angle one looks at them, they appear to be fast moving and heading the royal march, so much so that one wonders whether it is movement or commanding appearance that characterizes them most. The male of the herd has already reached the waters at the foot of the water-

fall and is quenching his thirst, his trunk imbibing the invigorating element.

With so much grandeur and so much beauty, of which one can but give a poor idea, the great rock panel stands an unfinished masterpiece. The chisel of the artist has left half of the left rock, its lower portion, uncompleted. Parts of the uncarved wall have, indeed, been marked as a preparation to chop out the outer surface so as to reach the hardest and most durable stone, as was the usual practice with the Māmallipuram sculptors. Something must have happened in those days of political and religious ferment that put an untimely end to the royal protection that inspired so much artistic beauty. Unfinished also are the cells of the large Pāndava mandabam carved out of the extreme portion of the left rock. Its outer portico is gracefully ornamented with six slender pillars of the squatting-lion style, characteristic of King Māmalla's period; but its cells show but roughly carved walls.

Unfinished, hardly more than a 'rough' out of a 'sketch-book', is another little-known rock-panel further away along the base of the rock-hill area. These scrappy carvings look as if the master-artist of the great panel had tried his hand here before settling to tackle his masterpiece. But be this a mere sketch or not, its sculptor was not yet sure of his technique—or was it of his material? He does not seem to have yet realised the need to treat first the rock-surface by chopping out the upper layer and bare the harder and durable stone that would make his sculptures last for ever.

But from whatever hand these scrap-carvings may have come, they must be older than the real

masterpiece, be they the work of the same artist or the work of some other artist, from which the master-sculptor of the Great Panel took his inspiration. The general concept and the most characteristic details are similar, anyhow. The four-armed Siva and the penitent ascetic are there as most of the important subjects, kings and queens, gods and goddesses, genii and warriors, who appear to be all moving onwards above the clouds as do the birds. The elephants are here too, not merely marching, but trumpeting and charging from the lower part of the left rock towards a middle gap, which here also separates twin rocks.

Both rock panels come, indeed, from the same concept, each of them constituting in a large comprehensive tableau a complete theophany of fertility rites with the full cycle of fertility symbols, Nāgas and Nāginis, the feminine nudes, trees, stone, water and animals. The latter include, not the horse, the traditional mount of the northerner foe—the ever unsettled wandering barbarian invader—but the ass, the humble servant of the village washerman. In one word, we find equally in both panels the full array of cosmic forces at play in the great festival of Nature in conformity with the most faithful tradition of Dravidian rites, Dravidian symbols and Dravidian culture.

THE KRISHNA MANDABAM

Along the same rock-hill, between the two rock panels, there is another panel now enclosed within a mandabam. This important masterpiece, though somewhat on a smaller scale, is perhaps much more intimate, and manifests a much deeper touch, too, than its more famous neighbours. It represents Krishna

among his kith and kin, the shepherds, and goes officially under the general title of 'Krishna Lifting the Mountain', as an immense umbrella, to protect the shepherd clan against the awful storm, said to have lasted a full week, raised by angry Indra. But, here again, the title is misleading.

As in the great rock panel, we find here a 'panoramic story' evolving before our eyes in all its details. The Lifting of the Mountain, relegated to the right portion of the panel, looks like a mere episodic scene, nor is it technically speaking the best conceived or the best wrought element of the whole. Far from it, the scene occupying the centre of the masterpiece is at once most homely and most artistic, being one of daily occurrence among shepherds. It represents them in their most intimate ordinary life, free from any artificial reserve, pretence or convention. It shows us real shepherds and real shepherdesses, even if the artist happens to have been in his most inspired mood and drew his inspiration from the depth of his religious soul.

The familiar and well-known Milking Scene and, just above it, the hardly noticeable though most admirable representation of the Flute-player, form a complete tableau both very realistic and highly symbolical. The milking of a cow by a squatting figure, while the cow in a most natural gesture goes on licking her own calf, provides the typical surroundings of a shepherd's life. A young woman listening to a flute-player is another such daily occurrence; and this may explain why she has hardly been noticed so far. Even usually alert scholars have overlooked her, failing to recognise that, in this scene, we meet with the work of an artist who has conceived and realised a masterpiece of highly religious, nay, mystical value.

The mother is quite young and her child, her first child, but a tiny babe, just opening its eyes to the enticement of a newly discovered world, even though that world be but a rustic scenery. And so should it be; for, according to traditional Dravidian concepts, both mother and child must be in the prime of that ever-new fact, that life is eternal. The child must, therefore, breathe the very freshness of the newly-born infant, and its mother—the *Mother*—express the beaming, graceful and incomparable beauty of a recently acquired motherhood. Such are Mother and Child in all the religions of the *Great Mother*, and such are they everywhere here, at Mamallipuram—in the carved out upper cell of the Dharmaraja Radha, in the central cell of the Mahishamardini cave, in the fragments preserved in the open-air museum, and in the three small panels of the Shore Temple.

The young mother in the Krishna Mandabam, is seated, with her child on her right knee. But the natural pride and contentment of a recently acquired motherhood is here tempered by a still deeper emotion, if one may be allowed to say so, an emotion inspired not by any worldly sentiment but by divine music, the music from a flute, the purest of all music. Both the mother and the flute-player have typically crowned heads, for she is a princess and the flute-player is a prince, nay more, they both are divine. Almost forgetting her newborn child—and which newly consecrated mother could do that?—though actually holding it with her right hand, she is to all intents lost in the ecstatic ravishment of the divine music. In a most gracious and sculpturally most daring attitude, her whole body is turned upwards, listening to the Divine Player. The latter stands erect behind her and almost touching her, but quite unconcerned, it would seem,

about anything but his music. But while the mother's features are unmistakably those of rapture, her lifted and upturned left hand shows that her joy and contentment have reached that depth when the soul can bear no more. Of such a deeply inspired scene any artist would feel proud. It is by far the best work, here and at Mamallipuram, where masterpieces abound. Though it is but one 'short piece' among many others representing as many as forty different figures—gods, heroes, human beings and cattle—it has been given by the artist the most prominent place in the very centre of the rock panel.

The lifting of the mountain by Krishna comes from a well-known Puranic account, which, as so many other Indian myths, has a Dravidian or, at least, an ancient Indian origin. The monsoon months that bring back life to the scorched earth prove too often also a time of desolation, when floods and epidemics threaten the lives of men and cattle. Krishna, whether we consider him as a young hero from some shepherd clan of old, as a vegetation spirit or as a Sun-god, is traditionally a rival to Indra, the Master of cosmic forces and of equally unaccountable magical arts. A Dravidian vegetation spirit, Master of the Herd, like Siva and Vasudeva, Krishna is the 'Black One', the Dravidian Karuppan, still worshipped in many Tamil villages; the Indian Heracles known to Megasthenes, and the spouse of Queen Pandia of Dravidian Madurai; the Pasupati, Lord and Protector of cattle, the Player of the Flute and Dancer, an evolved form of Murugan, the god sporting on the hilltops, the son of Kottavai crowned with peacock feathers, the brother of Balarama the Holder of the Plough. His most popular aspect, which has survived in Murugan, is that of the Child whose pranks are always forgiven, and he is

invoked in childbirth when his story is recited to ensure a happy delivery. On his birthday images of his made out of clay are bathed in a river. Like Murugan and the Aiyanar, he is credited with having two wives, Rukmini the bride he eloped with and Radha his sweetheart, who recalls the Dravidian Valli, the beautiful mountain-girl favourite of Murugan.

The Sistine Chapel frescoes Michael-Angelo painted with such masterful strokes of his brush, look, it had been remarked, as so many sculptural scenes. Here, on the contrary, the great rock panel and the Shepherd scene appear like huge paintings upon an almost unlimited canvass. One would so much like to know the name of the master sculptor whose hammer and chisel carved out from the living rock so many masterpieces. But names have never meant much in South India⁹. If the artist has not signed his name to authenticate his work, he or some disciple has left us his image while at work. His bearded face and crowned head show dignity and concentration while with a long chisel in his left hand and the hammer in his right, he is carving the foot of a dwarf. He is shown as a prince among sculptors. But self-depreciation, tempered with a deep sense of humour, has ever been a virtue of the Tamils. Quite typically, therefore, our master sculptor, while admitting, so to say, that he is not quite a stranger to the work of stone-carving, appears more at ease with such minor subjects as mischievous though benevolent goblins.

But, however arresting may be the eastern walls of the rock-hill, we must detach ourselves from its fascinating attraction. There are so many master-

9. Even the authors of great Tamil works like *Tholkappiam* and *Kural* are not known by their real names. (Ed.)

pieces, so many diverse works of art, completed or only begun, here in the hill area, in the sandy wastes and on the shore, that one must hurry along or miss a good deal of that wealth of beauty.

THE ROCK-CUT CAVES

In the hill area we meet with some minor sculptural scenes or subjects that would anywhere else attract one's attention. Such is, on the right of the great rock panel, a charming family group of apes, the male squatting behind the female and 'doing her hair', while she goes on giving her breast to her little one. Such is, a little further away on the corner of another rock, a family of elephants with the young ones disporting themselves under the eyes of their parents to the detached amusement of a monkey and peacock. Such is, too, the Pallava throne with a magnificent lion carved into a royal seat standing upon the platform in what must have been the open court among the palace gardens. Such is, again, a one-piece small cistern, of which the inner part of a large boulder has been carved into the form of an immense bowl. It goes under the name of Gobi's Churn, but suggests the Age of the Giants.

The rock-cut caves are to be found in the hill area and mostly within the palace gardens. One only, the most primitive Mahishāsura shrine, stands on the shore, north of the great Shore Temple. It is but a narrow simple quadrangular cell with a small entrance flanked by roughly carved lion-pilasters and female door-keepers. Characteristically enough in a shrine washed by the ocean waves, it is dedicated to the Mother, represented on the back wall of its cell with eight arms. This shrine is part of twin rocks, and

their very position upon the shore, surrounded as they are by the waves at high tide, may explain why this unfinished sanctuary was never carved into a *radha*. But though it must be ranked as the Cinderella among so many masterpieces, this small cell standing as it does among such an impressive scenery catches one's imagination.

It must have proved a fine monastic cell for a hermit of the *Nāga* type, 'air-clad' as the expression goes. The waves would give him a free shower-bath whenever he ventured out of his retirement, which must never have been for long in such congenial surroundings so very conducive to meditation. How happy must have felt the marine hermit of the *Māmallipuram* shores! Gone are the sailors who traded in his days with most countries of the East; but one may still see by the still existing hamlet the small fisherman crafts, the *Kattumarams* which, though himself absorbed in other-worldly thoughts, his eyes must have followed as, rocked about like floating sea-birds, they returned home borne shoreward by the mounting tide.

Did the hermit of old witness the seasonal departure of the Great Fleet that traded South Indian luxuries with all the countries of the East and West? He could not help knowing about the cultural missions that took Dravidian culture to such distant lands as Cambodia. But could he have guessed that the famous temple of Ankor-Vat would reproduce the pinnacles and various other architectural designs from the Shore Temple that was part of the scenery he saw from his cell? Here Dravidian architecture was born; here had Dravidian foreign history begun many centuries before either Portuguese or English had attained the stage of provincial vernaculars. Here the Greek

language of the Roman Empire, so many thousands of miles out of the reach of the famous Roman Legions, had been for several hundred years the traders' *lingua franca*. Historians will still go on forgetting that the problem of how to open new sea routes towards the fabulous eastern country of the spices had been settled—and lost sight of too—centuries before such luxuries for sophisticated gourmets could have been thought worthwhile fighting for in still uncivilized England and Portugal.

The rock-cave carving process, an art of which King Mahendra Varman claims to have been the proud inventor, is, indeed, the first attempt, in Tamil Nad, at architecture in stone. While, others before him had made use of timber, bricks and lime, he discarding all such perishable materials, used the very rocks Nature affords and carved them into everlasting shrines. There remains at *Māmallipuram* as many as thirteen different rock-caves to which must be added nine monoliths, each with its characteristically peculiar style and form. To the student of archæology they represent so many typical examples of the art of scooping out cell-shrines inside a rock, and of carving magnificent temples out of a single huge block. And each stands as an unsurpassed masterpiece for the lover of art to admire.

Diversely elaborated and decorated, the rock-caves show a variety of sculptures, doorways with carved male and female attendants; front and, at times, inside rows of pillars and pilasters—massive pillars of the Mahendra period, slender and beautifully decorated ones, supported by squatting or roaring lions of the *Māmalla* and *Rajasimha* styles. The front verandah takes here and there the proportion of a hall with three

or five inner shrines, the walls of which have—we are thankful for it—tempted the artist to carve as many as three or even five different panels forming a rich variety of subjects. Here the Mother stands in all her glory and youth: there she is seated upon the lotus-throne, attended by a couple of elephants with raised trunks. Elsewhere she is represented seated with her child on her knees by the side of the male deity; she is seen rising from the ocean or riding the lion to fight the ancestral foe from the North. Siva appears in his various forms, always beautiful and serene: Vishnu is seen reclining upon the Sesha or fighting the demons with his raised foot: unperturbed Brahma is lost in meditation; Mahendra and Simhavisnu, his father, are represented in life-like portraits each with his two main consorts.

MONOLITH SHRINES

Of the nine shrines, each carved out of a single rock, five are to be found together among the sands not far from the shore, and are known as the 'Five Radhas'. But, though the most famous, they are not the only examples of this kind of religious structure at Māmallipuram. There is another such shrine within the hill area and three more a little apart on a rock to the west. The artistic value of the Māmallipuram monoliths, that are real sculptural beauties in stone, is enhanced still by the fact that each of them present typical features, not only because of their difference in size and shape, but also in style and design. If the scope of the artist was somehow restricted by the actual bulk of the original rock he decided to tackle, his creative imagination and his never-failing artistic sense inspired him to surmount all such restrictions.

In his impatient creative urge he seems to have accepted no limitation to what his genius could undertake and achieve. When the greater rocks had been disposed of, he could not refrain from making use of even the smaller pieces that lay about the place, and turning one into a majestic lion, another into an elephant, and a third into a fine crouching Bull, one of the earliest representations of the Nandi.

Of the five monolith shrines the Arjuna, the Nakula-Sahadēva and the Dharmarāja Radhas show, in spite of difference in shape and designs, a similarity of sculptural skill and richness of ornamentation. The largest and by far the most impressive for its sculptural value is the Dharmarāja shrine. While the three of them present cubical forms, the Arjuna monolith shows a frontal mandabam, and the Nakula-Sahadēva Radha, which has also a frontal mandabam, ends in a most graceful, though uncommon, apsidal form. The three of them, though different also in size and height, offer a three-storey pyramidal structure, terminated in what became the classical lotus-flower cupola of most temples in Tamil Nād. The small graceful Nakula-Sahadēva Radha is surmounted by a complex and most elegant waggon-shaped dome that combines both the half-round lotus-flower cupola at the back-end and the frontal side of a grass-hut over its tiny delicate mandabam. This waggon-shaped roof, inherited from the Buddhist caves of the Ajanta school, drew ultimately its inspiration from the semi-circular roof of the Toda grass-hut as well as from the richly decorated wooden constructions—carved beams, transoms and pendants—of former palatial mansions. The Bhīma shrine, which has been carved out of a large rock, ends also in the semi-circular Toda-hut shape, completed with ornamented *Kudus* or false windows.

Both the Arjuna and Dharmarāja Radhas are ornamented with a rich profusion of sculptures, that look like so many portraits of royal personages. Such are the representations of Narasimha in the Dharmarāja Radha, and the various royal couples of the Arjuna Radha. These royal couples, though standing and at rest, show quite natural and graceful movements of the body, chiefly the queens. They are much more natural and lively, indeed, than the princesses of the Varāha Cave I. While the couples of queens are standing by the side of seated Simhavishnu or following Mahendra Varman in the Varāha Cave I, the princesses of the Arjuna Radha are not mere attendants or followers of their royal master and lord. They are unmistakable queens. Each king is here represented with an only queen—the royal consort—and she is shown either confidently leaning against or quite close to her royal spouse, who is also standing. Art has reached here its full mastery. There is no longer place for even royal conventions. Polygamy is left to the seraglio.

The many sculptures of the Dharmarāja Radha include the various forms of Siva as Natarāja, the Master of the Dance. When Rajasimha II (c. 690-715) and after him the great cholas of Tanjore will raise the first temple structures made out of stones, the architects will draw their inspiration from the general outlines, even if modified and evolved, of the Dharmarāja Radha. Such are, at Māmallipuram, the Shore Temple with its two gracefully ornamented pinnacles, and what remains of the Ulakanātha shrine built upon the summit of the highest rock in the hill area. The bottom of this rock had already been carved into one of the most beautiful cave-temples, which includes among its rich sculptural works two graceful rows of

pillars forming a portico and a large mandabam with an inner cell. Three sculptured panels represent the Mother riding the Lion to fight the foe, Seshasayi Vishnu and the Dēvi group with her Child and Siva. However-much scholars admire this admirable Seshasayi Vishnu, we very much prefer the no less grand reclining Vishnu to be found in an almost contemporary cave at Malaiyadipatti in the north-eastern part of Pudukottai. This almost unknown masterpiece is the work of an artist who knew undoubtedly how to handle a chisel and a hammer. The imposing head of the reclining Vishnu over-shadowed by the five-hooded Nāga, at Malaiyadipatti, is all by itself a study of strength in repose, a strength that is softened down by the lingering smile upon the lips of the dormant deity.

All the monolith shrines have an inner cell cut out in the rock structure. The Dharmarāja monolith, which is the most richly ornamented, has two little cells in its upper storeys. In one of the cells the Mother with her Child is seated with Siva, the sculptural outlines and the style recalling those of Simhavishnu with his two consorts in Varāha Cave I. The other cell has nothing to show but a square hole in its floor. It was evidently meant for a Lingam, but there is no Lingam left. The square Lingam, surmounted by a now partly damaged head to be found in the cell of the Arjuna Radha might have been intended to be placed here. The features of the Siva-Lingam belong undoubtedly to the same artist who chiselled or inspired most of the fine sculptures of the Dharmaraja shrine.

The Draupadi monolith, the very first one meets on entering the enclosure of the Five Radhas, seems at first to be but a mere copy in stone of the square

mud-wall peasant-hut with a thatched grass-roof. But the plainness of the general outlines in this simple, sober and homely structure, the smallest of the Five, is relieved by its finely chiselled ornamentation—the couple of female attendants guarding the entrance to the shrine, the sculptures of the standing Mothers that adorn its niches, and the inner panel representing the Mother with four arms surrounded by male attendants and flying Gandharvas. This plain composition recalls in style and outlines the seated and the two standing Mothers of the Varaha Cave II. But, here as everywhere else in Māmallipuram, in her most primitive or in her more evolved forms, in the panels that represent her as she triumphantly comes out of the Ocean, or riding the Lion, or again with the eight-arm form of the Victorious Mother carved out of the large rock near the Trimurti Caves, she is always serene and beautiful in features, benign and benevolent in the purest Dravidian tradition. We are still far, indeed, from the 'Fierce Kālī', inspired from the rites of decadent Saktism and Tantrism.

If we had to choose one among the monolith shrines, we would let our choice rest upon this Draupadi temple, because of its classical lines. Except for a discrete carved ornamentation at each corner and lower ends, and for the flat lotus-flower top, its roof has been given faithfully the appearance of a quadrangular grass-thatch, as true, indeed, to actual facts as art makes it possible. The artist has spared us, here, the Kudus or false-windows to be found in both the Nakula-Sahadēva and the Bhīma monoliths. While keeping close to his model, the real peasant-hut of his time, the artist, mastering fully his art as well as his material, has given us a discrete classical masterpiece that stands unrivalled.

Of another type and style is the Ganesa monolith to be found in the hill area, a little beyond the Monkey Group, not far from the Great Rock-Panel. Its carved reproduction of the thatched roof, not dissimilar to that of the Bhīma Rādha, is also ornamented with Kudus. But, alone in Māmallipuram, it is surmounted by decorative urn-shaped finials, that were destined for centuries to crown the summit of every temple gopura in Tamil Nad. Of another type still are the three small unfinished monoliths, square in form, that stand a little apart to the west of the hill area near the Buckingham Canal, the twin Pidari monoliths and the Valayankutai shrine. In their reduced forms they are not unlike the Arjuna Radha, but without its projecting front portico and without any carved figure. One of the Pidari monoliths has an inner cell, and the Valayankutai shrine possesses a small hall with two pillars.

We know of a somewhat similar small shrine—unfinished too—carved not from a single rock but out of a large rockhill, as far south as Kalugumalai in the Tinnevely district. It seems to have escaped the attention of the scholars. Finely chiselled, it might be on a smaller scale a good copy of the Mamallipuram Arjuna Radha. It shows, anyhow, how extensively felt was the influence of the Pallava school. The presence, towards the summit of this Kalugumalai Rock-hill, of several panels representing seated Jain holy men as well as another panel with the nude standing Mother with her Child, surrounded by dwarfs and the Lion, is another proof that Kalugumalai was an important centre, far from the seats of the Pallava princes of Kanji and Mamallipuram. And this is not an unexplainable exception, for in the same region, that was part of the prehistoric Pandya kingdom, relics of

Buddhist and Jain influence abound. We know of another carved shrine at the base of another rockhill, near Sendamaram, about halfway between Sankaranayanarkovil and Tenkasi, a rock-cave with inside its cell a Trimūrthi figure of the Pallava school. But this is, of course, the area of Adichyanallur and Korkai culture, and this brings us to a still more ancient past.

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To summarize. Buddhist influence of the schools of Amravati and Ajanta is typically noticeable at Māmallipuram, but with a striking difference that shows the characteristic independence of its master-artists. And so it should be, for genius is always independent even when it takes its inspiration from its predecessors in the field. The Māmallipuram chisel is, indeed, more—much more—varied, and the inspiration that guided it broader in its concepts. Its touch is also more telling, far more vigorous and appealing than the too soft forms of the northern schools. The nudes of Māmallipuram, of which there are many examples—goddesses, queens, maids of honour, dairy women, etc.—are never softened down into voluptuousness. The fact is that the nudes, here, are not intended to be actual nudes. All feminine forms are in reality robed—symbolically at least—with a suggestion, border or fringe, of clothing. And this is what makes the difference. The Māmallipuram artists had bound themselves by a convention to which they faithfully adhered. If this left their skill and artistical sense unimpaired, the charming and beautiful feminine forms they created are above and beyond sex. Religion inspired the Māmallipuram sculptors, and this made them dwell in an other-worldly atmosphere in which sex with its allurements could have, and had, no part whatever. Though they outwardly appear as if they

were nude, their feminine carvings look as decent as fully dressed forms, more decent, indeed, than the later finely robed feminine sculptures of the Madura school in the Naick period. And this may be the reason why Māmallipuram has remained so appealing to both the lovers of art and the students of religion, because of its unrivalled Grand Peaceful Atmosphere, one of devotional and prayerful bliss, that inspired 'scenes of such mighty religious grandeur' ¹⁰.

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10. Grousset, René, *Les Civilisations de l'Orient: L'Inde*, Paris, 1949, p. 90. Visitors to Mamallipuram will find a useful guide in :
 C. Sivaramamurthi, *Mahabalipuram*, Department of Archaeology, India • 40 (pp.)
 Interested readers may consult the following books :
 Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, Bombay, 2nd Edition, pp. 93-101.
 Rev. H. Heras, S. J., *Studies in Pallava History*, Madras, 1933, pp. 67-99.
 R. Gopalan, *History of the Pallavas of Kanchi*, Madras, 1928.
 G. Jouveau-Dubreuil, *Pallava Antiquities*, 2 vols., Pondicherry, 1916-1918.
 " *Dravidian Architecture*, Madras, 1917.
 " *Archéologie du Sud de l'Inde*, Paris, 1914.
 " *The Pallavas*, Pondicherry, 1907.
 A. Rhea, *Pallava Architecture*, Madras, 1909.

Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar,
Editor and Writer

FRANCIS MORAES, M. Litt.

DR. SWAMINATHA AIYAR died on April 28, 1942, at Thirukkalukundram near Madras, at the ripe age of eighty after spending some six decades entirely in the service of Tamil. In the last years of his life he came to occupy in Tamil circles a position somewhat similar to that of Johnson in the England of the eighteenth century. His word carried great authority with Tamil writers. An outsider will find it difficult to explain the Doctor's great influence merely on the ground of his literary labours. The editing of the old classics along with a few prose works marked, by not much originality of thought, is, it would seem, an insufficient explanation of the almost unchallenged power he exercised towards the end of his life. The following pages will make an attempt to answer this question.

Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar's main work for Tamil is his restoration of its ancient classics. On this rests his chief claim to the remembrance and gratitude of posterity. These inestimable works, chiefly *The Sangam Literature* and *The Five Great Epics*¹ were indeed known to exist. But about the middle of the last century

1. Under the name 'The Sangam Literature' are grouped the *Eight Anthologies*, *The Ten Songs* and the *Eighteen Short Poems*. Together with the *Five Great Epics* they form an imposing volume.

they had long ceased to be read, and their memory was fast fading away. Pundits were expounding to their students the verbal jugglery of the *Sthala-puranams* and *Prabandams* of yesterday, but these gems of Tamil poetry, hailing from the first centuries of the Christian era, were little more than names to them. Often the very names were not known. These classics were to be found in palm-leaf manuscripts among the ancestral possessions of a few pundits. Little known and cared for, ill-protected against the ravages of time and climate, they were slowly mouldering away in the lofts of some village homesteads. About the early eighties not a single one of them had been published. Even scholars like Caldwell and Pope were acquainted with few of them besides *Chinthamani*².

About the year 1884, while working as a Tamil pundit in the Government College, Kumbakonam, Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar began on the suggestion of a friend the study of *Chinthamani*. It was a new experience for him. He threw himself whole-heartedly into the study of the ancient classics. Thus began what proved to be his life-work. He described in vivid language his wanderings up and down the Tamil country in search of old manuscripts :

"Many were the hardships I suffered in my quest of manuscripts. Some people remaining within doors would send me away saying they were not at home. Others would make me wander much before giving them. Others still would lend them after long and repeated requests backed by sureties. Some treated me with scant courtesy. The mother forgets the pangs of childbirth as soon as she sees the child. In like manner I would forget as soon as I got a manuscript all the sufferings I

2. *Chinthamani*, one of the Five Great Epics, is a brilliant romantic poem written in the grand style.

had undergone in securing it; my mind would experience an intense joy"³.

It was a work of great hardship and infinite patience, and meant, besides, a heavy drain upon his slender resources. Himself not a person of easy circumstances, he had often to look up to friends and patrons to defray the expenses involved. He scoured the land during his vacations, reaching the remotest villages in bullock-cart or on foot, searching from house to house and esteeming himself well-rewarded if he could secure a single worn-out manuscript or but a portion of one. The apathy of the Tamil public was no encouragement in the work. A few enlightened friends helped him. Yet it was a Herculean task, and without his persevering courage and unshakable devotion he would not have succeeded. The finding of these manuscripts was arduous enough. To prepare them for publication was still more so. The difficulties usual in getting into print a palm-leaf manuscript were increased a hundredfold in the case of these Tamil scripts. Written often in an illegible hand, bristling with copyists' errors, without any mark of punctuation, the quantity of the vowels left to be inferred from the sense, the verses running into one another, these manuscripts offered insuperable difficulties to the reader. Not infrequently large portions of the text were missing. The copyist did not always keep the distinction between the poem, the annotations and the examples cited. At least in the case of one work, the Pathupattu, the poems were missing and had to be gathered piecemeal from the commentary. There were perplexing variations in the readings, and written in the Tamil of 1800 years ago, the meaning was not always clear even with the help of elaborate notes.

3. *Nallurakovai III*: "I know not still"

But Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar went through the toil with an avidity prompted by love. He had often to enlist the services of scholars to determine the meaning of a word, to correct a reading or to ascertain the truth of a particular statement. He describes in his autobiography how he worked on these manuscripts often far into the night, and how early dawn would still find him sitting cross-legged on the verandah of his small house and poring over these precious documents.

In the course of these preparations he became so thoroughly acquainted with the Sangam Literature that he came to be acknowledged as an authority on the Sangam age. His editions of *Purananuru*⁴ and the other classics reveal his immense scholarship. Considering our ignorance of this early literature about the third quarter of the last century, we wonder how he was able to amass single-handed so vast a knowledge. As we read through his autobiographical writings we are struck at every turn by his avidity for any information about this past. No detail was too insignificant for him. To this insatiable thirst, and to his restless energy and devotedness we have to attribute his astonishing erudition. His prefaces to the editions show his immense knowledge of the gods and goddesses, the tribes and chieftains, the trees, birds and beasts, the weapons, ornaments and utensils, the customs and manners, the religious practices, social life and cultural achievements of the Tamils of the day.

During his stay in Thiruvavaduthurai⁵, before he ever dreamt of editing the Sangam works, he came

4. An anthology of 400 poems dealing chiefly with war themes. It contains some of the earliest poetry written in Tamil.

5. Thiruvavaduthurai near Tanjore is the seat of a Saivite monastery, well known for its patronage of Tamil art and literature.

across a copy of *Valaiyapathi*, a Sangam classic. He did not set great store by it then, and let it by. When in later days he tried to procure a copy of the work with a view to editing it, he could not get any. This and *Kundalakesi*, another of the five great epics, have yet to see the light of the day. We wonder if Tamil will ever recover them. We may regret the loss, but will remember with gratitude how many precious works the untiring energy of this single man has brought to light, which otherwise might have been lost for ever: *Chinthamani*, *Pathupattu*, *Silappathikaram*, *Manimekalai*, *Purananuru*, *Aingurunuru*, *Pathitru Pathu*, *Pari-padal*, *Perunkathai*. The publication of any single one of these classics would have done credit to a life-time of research.

Tamil prose is of recent growth. In the last decade of the 19th century there were but a handful of prose writers. Dr. S. Aiyar began to write in prose as it were accidentally by way of prefaces to his editions and summaries of their contents. During the last ten years of his life he was contributing articles, mainly reminiscences of his past, to *Kalaimagal* and other periodicals. These have been gathered under the titles: *What I Heard and Saw*, *New and Old*, and *Nalluraikkovai*. His other chief prose works are the biography of his guru, Minakshisundaram Pillai, in two volumes, the unfinished autobiography, and a few biographical sketches of some Tamil musicians.

Those who form their idea of Tamil prose from the modern short stories and magazine articles will not guess the tremendous change it has undergone during the last thirty years. Taking its cue from the commentaries of Nachinarkiniar and others, Tamil prose retained its long involved constructions and

obscure phraseology throughout last century and the dawn of this century. Traces of it can be found in the Doctor's own editions. If to-day we have a modern, crisp, elastic prose, we owe it to writers like Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar.

The outstanding quality of his prose is its lucidity, in which it rivals the best prose in western languages. It is a little surprising that, a conservative in thought and sentiments, he should have led the way to a most modern prose. This sparkling of his prose results from a directness of expression and simplicity of language—traits which have their roots in his character. His intimate knowledge of the ancient classics and their commentaries might have induced him to use obsolete and obscure words—as is the case with some of the purists. In fact, his early works show a tendency towards the pundit's style. But his solid good sense enabled him to overcome the temptation.

Speaking of prose-style he says:

"We must acquire the habit of writing without errors and of using as far as possible words intelligible to all. It is good to avoid in prose obsolete and variable terms...In speaking and writing we must aim at conveying our thoughts to others, and not at employing a learned style...In the choice of words we must consider more their actual currency and intelligibility than their purity."

These principles appear elementary. Yet they required—and still to-day require—restating in Tamil where the cult of purism and high-brow elegance wages war against the most common-sense principles.

It is difficult to give examples of his prose in an English article. Perhaps the following passage, taken from a well-known article of his, will give a fair idea of the strong and weak points of his style—its singular

clarity which makes it impossible to miss the least shade of meaning, and its lack of artistic finish.

"It was eight at night. I hired a single-bullock cart to go to the railway station, and climbed in. My father took leave of me half-heartedly. Only a trunk accompanied me. When the cart was going to the south of Vannathurai it knocked against something and over-turned. I fell down and the box fell on me. Even in this state I did not lose courage. My mind was away in Tinnevely. If a *rishi* had given me a pill to travel through the air with the injunction to use it in time of greatest necessity I would have used it then. Not only was the speed of the cart diametrically opposed to that of my mind, but the cart threw me down" 6.

His short biographical sketches of the Tamil musicians give us much valuable and interesting information. His biography of Minakshisundaram Pillai has a special place. Like Sundaram Pillai's *Manonmaniyam* this work is the first of its kind in Tamil. It is a prose work of considerable merit and the story of an accomplished writer of verse of recent years.

Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar's biographical writings disclose a passion for details and a sense of atmosphere. They reveal the characters of persons by telling anecdotes and charming descriptions interspersed with the author's reflections, all marked by the directness so characteristic of Dr. Aiyar—and so different from the psychological vivisections of modern biographers. His tenacious memory unfolds before us scene after scene from the later half of the nineteenth century, in the first feeble struggles of Tamil to revive itself. We get interesting glimpses of the village 'verandah-school' and its methods, the itinerant poets and their literary discussions, Hindu monasteries and their patronage of learning, and similar sections of the Tamil intellectual life of the day. We are introduced to those early scholars like C. V. Damodharam Pillai, monastic

6. *Nallurathurai U: The Mullai that Blossomed in Moonlight*

patrons like Subramanya Desikar, and traditional pundits like Minakshisundaram Pillai and Thiyagaraja Chettiar—a generation with which he was so intimate and which today is passing away. The portraits are drawn with rare insight and deep sympathy.

In the preface to his biography of Minakshisundaram Pillai, Dr. S. Aiyar wrote that he intended to publish in a series the lives of the Tamil poets from the Sangam age to modern times. He was gathering material for this work both from a study of their works and from oral tradition. There is no doubt however, that the notes he has left behind will be of valuable help to future historians of Tamil literature.

III

Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar began his labours in the field of Tamil literature about the early eighties. His edition of *Chinthamani* appeared in 1886. Mr. Sundaram Pillai's *Manonmaniyam* was published in 1891, and Suryanarayana Sastry's *Sonnets* came out about the turn of the century. These two works, considered as the first land marks of the Tamil Revival, followed the Doctor's edition of *Chinthamani*. And he lived to see the popularity of Bharati's patriotic songs, and later, about the middle of the last decade, the rise to fame of Desikavinayagam Pillai and other verse-writers. He witnessed during the last years of his life a host of young writers successfully attempting short stories, skits, biographies and reflective essays. Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar's years of literary activity cover thus the whole Tamil Revival.

The impact of Western literatures and ideas produced a turmoil of thought in the Tamil land as in

the other parts of India, though perhaps to a lesser degree. The most radical doctrines found their advocates in prose and poetry, especially among the younger writers like Pudumaipithan⁷ and Bharathithasan⁸. But Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar was little affected by these modern ideas. He pursued his course peacefully, strongly entrenched behind his conservatism. In an article entitled *My Aim*, he wrote:

"To follow in the main what our fore-fathers practised is the chief means to obtain peace of soul. If we accept, without examining, new doctrines, new religions, new ways of worship and the like, it will take long before we get accustomed to them. Unity and certainty of belief will be lost among the people."

This conservatism was not a decision arrived at after much thought, the final outcome of a mental conflict. Nor was it the refuge of a weak mind that fears to venture on high seas. Dr. Aiyar was incapable of such a fear. He revered the past and lived in it; nothing in the present, we may say, interested him except in its relation with the past.

Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar was essentially an editor of classics. One is struck by his patient, painstaking work. He could work for months and years on the different copies, collate various readings, prepare glossaries, and edit with copious notes the most difficult manuscripts. With his knowledge of idiom and etymology, he would have made an excellent lexicographer. But he never attempted any dictionary worth the name.

Though Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar professedly abstained from critical judgments on poets, he could not help

7. A well-known short-story writer, with a great mastery of the technique.

8. One of the leading present day poets.

expressing himself in various places. These critical appreciations do not add much to his stature. His critical powers do not equal his scholarship. Perhaps the fault is due to his unquestioning veneration for the past, and a certain self-diffidence that left little room for independent judgment. Perhaps, too, it is because we are examining his literary criticism in the light of canons different from his own. He was not very happy in the evaluation of the different poets he dealt with. He bestowed high praise on verses composed by his master, some of which show little beyond technical skill. From his biography it would seem that he admired in his *guru* more the mastery of poetic technique and the fluency of versification than more intrinsic qualities. He concluded this biography with an appreciation of his master's poetry in these words:

"Others can feel beautiful sentiments and can express them too in beautiful language. But to turn out verses as it were off-hand without the least effort is a gift which very few possess. He belonged to this privileged group of poets.....Circumstances of place and time did not affect the flow of his verses. Even while holding conversation with others he could go on dictating stanzas to a student by his side."

Intricate schemes of metre, difficult rhyme patterns, and an extravagant fancy did service for real poetic vision. Like Johnson he over-stressed the importance of perfect external form.

Literary criticism has hardly developed in Tamil. Critics are shy of expressing independent judgments, of challenging traditional views, of seeming to depreciate acknowledged poets. They would strain every nerve to find something to praise even in interpolated stanzas. The name of a poet rather than the quality of the verse attributed to him carries weight with them. They move in a sort of collective security, like

the members of a choir where none is sure of his note. If Dr. Aiyar had paid more attention to the critical study of his poets and employed a different standard, he might have founded a school—the first school of Tamil literary criticism. At present he has only gathered material for future critics.

Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar was even less of an artist. We remarked the chief quality of his prose was lucidity. But the other qualities which go to make great prose are in some degree wanting in him. In point of trenchant expression he will bear little comparison with some other prose-writers as, for instance, the late Mr. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar. There are but a few outstanding passages of power and beauty in his prose writings. A literary artist would have avoided numerous unnecessary details. A more selective presentation would have removed the sense of monotony we sometimes feel in reading them.

In the main any criticism of Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar revolves round this one point: the absence of creativeness and originality as a writer. That magic gift which changes by a mere touch dross into gold—was not very manifest in him. His prose reminiscences—the nearest approach in him to creative works—show, by an unnecessary detail here and a flatness of remark there, the absence of the artist in him.

To return to the question we began with. If then his contribution to Tamil literature was the mere edition of the old classics and a few biographical writings, how are we to account for the great esteem in which he was held and the influence he exercised? I have answered this question to some extent in the early part of this article. Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar

recovered for the Tamils the treasures that were fast slipping from their fingers. He made them justly proud of a glorious past. Thanks to his labours the Tamil people can point to an ancient literature, the equal of which few other Indian vernaculars can show. This fact, combined with the adverse circumstances under which he accomplished his task, and the immense scholarship he brought to bear on it, enhances the value of his work.

These remarks may appear somewhat severe. To us they do not detract from the deservedly unique fame of the late Doctor. They merely represent our honest attempt at an impartial esteem of a great figure in the modern Tamil Revival.

His achievement, though not of a creative order, was of such importance in the circumstances that it placed him high in the esteem of the people. His rare character endeared him to them. In these days when caste prejudices have their repercussions even on literature, it is a tribute to the charm of his personality that he was held in high esteem and affection by all. He had the disarming simplicity of a child that hid or simulated nothing. He had a tender affection for his friends, and cherished in his heart their many acts of kindness. His remarkable humility won him the goodwill of adversaries. His great veneration for his *guru* was in the best traditions of the country. Their mutual love gives us some of the most touching chapters in the biography. Above all we are struck by the indomitable will and untiring energy sustained by the great passion of his life, his love of the Tamil language.

He writes:

“My aim in life concerns mainly Tamil, I must make a deep study of the Tamil classics. Even if a work appears difficult at first,

it will become clear when studied many times over. I must learn to enjoy the excellences of style and matter in every work. Besides I must be able to express them in simple language, in speech and writing, so that others may understand them."

Dr. Swaminatha Aiyar's scholarship and achievement is not that of a single man, but of a whole generation. Small wonder that his name stands revered among the different, and even conflicting, schools of the Tamil literary world, and has become almost legendary. He was the Grand Old Man of Tamil—*Tamil Thatha*.

The Present State of Dravidian Philology

DR. KAMIL ZVELEBIL, Ph. D., PRAGUE

“WHAT we want is a series of rigorously scientific grammars of all important Dravidian languages, complete in their phonetic analysis of the speech and in their inclusion of the Phonology, Morphology and Syntax of the colloquial dialects, with all interesting details. A series of historical and comparative grammars of Tamil, Telugu and Kannada... juxtaposing the oldest and the subsequent forms as found in the actual old records of the language...with analogous forms from the other Dravidian languages would be ideal.” —*Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, 1929.*

1. It is hardly possible to stress enough the importance of this request expressed by the eminent Indian savant many years ago. Dravidian studies in future—both linguistic and historical and literary—can be only based on the solid ground of a profound, exhaustive and exact philological research, and this research must be established upon the safe basis of combining both methods of historical/dynamic/and comparative philology and of synchronistic/static/linguistic analysis.

It is necessary, first of all, to consider in a systematic synopsis all the general pioneer works on

Dravidian languages beginning with the classical work of Caldwell and closing with the recent translation of Bloch's "Structure grammaticale" into English¹.

It seems that it would be necessary to bring out an index, a complete bibliography of the works dealing with our subject to enable scholars to have a perfect knowledge of all that has been done. At the same time, it is urgent to do the same in the sphere of different languages. This task has, however, the character of a more or less self-evident and preparatory work².

2. It seems that the first practical step in the further progress of Dravidian philology consists in bringing out new grammars of different languages on the phonetical and phonological, morphological and syntactical plans, based upon deep and exhaustive investigation of the material and upon various monographic studies of different problems and spheres of grammar. In those fields and spheres where we are happy enough to have texts preserved showing continual historical development of a language, it is, according to my view, absolutely necessary to proceed in the historical way in that investigation, too. To set a

1. R. Caldwell, *A comparative grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian family of languages*. London, 1856; 2nd ed., 1875; 3rd ed., 1913.

G. A. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*. vol. IV *Sen Koneu* Calcutta, 1906.

K. V. Subbaya, *A primer of Dravidian phonology*, Indian Antiquary, 1909.

K. V. Subbaya, *A comparative grammar of Dravidian languages*, ib. 1910-1911.

J. Bloch, *Langues Dravidiennes*, in *Les Langues du monde*, Paris, 1924.

L. V. Ramaswami Aiyar, *Articles in the Educational Review*, Madras, 1928, 1929, 1936, 1938, 1939.

E. H. Tuttle, *Dravidian Developments*.

J. Bloch, *Structure Grammaticale des Langues Dravidiennes*, Paris, 1946.

J. Bloch, *Langues Dravidiennes*, in *Les Langues du monde* 2nd ed., Paris 1953.

Further different articles of M. B. Emeneau, T. Burrow, P. B. J. Kemp, S. Sastri, T. Pinson, Figulla and others.

2. It would be, after all, a state ideal and much desired if all workers in Dravidian philology would join in mutual correspondence and wait in an international union—there are not so many of them—are there?

concrete example: it is necessary, for instance, to bring out a study dealing, let us say, with the morphology of old Tamil verb in the period of early epics—*Cilappatikāram*, *Manimekalai*—: or, for example the syntax of Kamban's *Rāmāyaṇam*. Thus it will be possible to reach larger units, rules and laws of different spheres of grammar in different phases of its development will appear, and, at the end, it will be possible to bring out such more general works as, let us say, historical morphology of the Telugu language³.

3. After this investigation is accomplished of the whole evolution of different languages in all historical phases and in all spheres of grammar, it will be possible to set to work on the problems of comparative character. It is necessary, of course, to start with the questions of phonetics and phonemics; it is possible to say that the first important and solid steps have been taken in this field by M. B. Emeneau and T. Burrow. These authors have promised us, also, a work of primary importance, a much desired work since long, a dictionary of etymologies⁴.

There are yet some problems important from the point of general Indian linguistics; it is necessary to mention at least two kinds of such problems; the extremely difficult question of substratum⁵, and the

3. In this connection I want to mention the claim of L. V. Ramaswami Aiyar in *Anthropos* XXXIII: a systematic analysis of linguistic features of different classical Tamil texts is much wanted. Two pioneer works can be mentioned also in this connection. They are L. V. R. Aiyar's *Evolution of Malayalam Morphology*, Ernakulam 1936 and G. S. Gai's *Historical Grammar of Old Kannada*, Poona 1946.

4. "Professor T. Burrow of Oxford University and I have initiated a collaboration looking towards it, and hope that ten years may see us at the end of our labours" says M. B. Emeneau in *BSOAS*, 1959, XV, 1, p. 99.

5. cf. especially *Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian in India* by S. Levi, J. Przyluski & J. Bloch, Calcutta 1929.

extremely important questions concerning the relation of Aryan and Dravidian—some pioneer work has been done in this field too⁶. It is, however, necessary to point out that not only the relation between, let us say, Vedic and Dravidian must be dealt with, but, at the same time, it is important, and perhaps even more important, to search into the relation between Middle-Indian/Prakritic and modern Indo-Aryan and Dravidian/cf. for instance such very grave problems as the influence of Dravidian upon Bengali or Marathi. Studies of this nature will enable us to bring out more extensive and compendious works of historical and comparative nature—say, a comparative and historical morphology of the Dravidian verb, or comparative syntax of Dravidian “cases”; later, a general comparative and historical Dravidian phonetics, morphology and syntax. And, at the end, a new, copious, monumental and complete comparative grammar of Dravidian languages.

4. Nevertheless, it must be confessed, that, what has been said here, describes, in a way, only one aspect, only one of the two sides of the whole problem of Dravidian philology, viz. the historical and comparative aspect. We must not forget, however, that there are some difficult and important questions which can be solved only by the synchronistic analysis of linguistic structure and by its comparison with different structures, not related genetically. Nothing has been done in Dravidian philology from this point of view⁷. There are, however, some extremely important

6. cf. A. Master, *Indo Aryan and Dravidian*, BSOAS XI, 297 and XII, 340. M. Mayrhofer, *Etymologische Miscellen*, ArOr, 1950, XVIII, 66. W. Kirtel, *Die Lehnworte des Sanskrit aus den Substratsprachen...* *Lavis* III, 2, K. De Vreese, *A Dravidian turn in Apabhramsa*, JRAS, 1954, 1—2, 35 and others.

7. Save, perhaps, the author's attempt to describe and explain the Tamil enclitic vowels—*o*,—*e*,—*o* and their functions in ArOr, 1954, 2—3, p. 375—405.

problems of this kind, impatiently awaiting their solution; thus, for instance, a system of phonemes of modern Tamil—or, better, the exact description of such a system—is a much needed desideratum. The author of this article occupies himself, presently, with the investigation of foreign/English, French, Portuguese, Persian, Arabic and Hindi/words in Tamil from this synchronistic point of view. There are also some interesting questions concerning that sphere which has been called *die innere Sprachform*⁸ to be dealt with.

5. It is the opinion of the author that only after all these conditions are accomplished, it will be possible to describe and explain safely and exactly the structure and the type of Dravidian languages as a whole and to discover and design the course of their historical evolution with the most [possible] degree of certainty; thus only we shall be able, eventually, to give exact and solid theories on the affinities and relations between Dravidian and some other family of languages⁹.

8. Cf., e. g., Tamil *√vīṣu*—in its meaning “to let” with the German *lassen* and Old Tamil *√i*—in a similar function with the Czech “*dati*” to give; or the Old Tamil *kurumpūl*, used (in classical texts) in the same double sense as its English equivalent, the “quail” (1. a bird 2. harlot).

9. Most of the theories proved to be dead-born children, cf. the “Austrian” theory of F. Müller *Grundriss der Sprachwissenschaft* II, 1, 95, or another, “Korean” theory of H. B. Hulbert (*Comparative Grammar of the Korean and the Dravidian family of languages*, Seoul, 1906. etc.).

Only the “Uralian” hypothesis seems to be more probable and, after T. Burrow's article of 1934, it has been placed upon a solid basis, cf. already Caldwell, 3rd ed., London 1913, p. 67, O. Schrader, *Dravidian Studies*, BSOS 1934, XI, 2, 328—356, F. O. Schrader, *On the Uralian Element in the Dravidian and Munda Languages* BSOS VIII, 75—176. S. P. Tolstov, *Problemy proischozheniya indoevropejskoj i sarmatno-uzbekskoj etnografickaja lingvističeskaja*, KSIE, S. P. Tolstov, *Drevnij Chuvstven*, 1942, p. 65 and 350.

Transliteration of Tamil in Roman Characters & Vice Versa

A SENTHAMILAN

THE system of transliteration, which was originally devised by the Royal Asiatic Society for Sanskrit and Sanskritic languages and which has been adapted with various arbitrary modifications for transliterating Tamil, is too complicated to be of real assistance to foreigners interested in Tamil studies, particularly beginners. A less complicated system has to be evolved for Tamil, which—possessing a scientifically devised phonemic structure—lends itself easily to an adequate system of transliteration, which would be ‘an accurate representation of pronunciation but at the same time simple and practical’ and which also ‘takes account of the special needs incidental to convenient and rapid reading and writing’¹.

2. The following principles were laid down by the International Phonetic Association in 1888 in regard to an International Phonetic Alphabet :—

- (i) There should be a separate letter for each distinctive sound; that is, for each sound which, being used instead of another, in the same language, can change the meaning of a word. (*This is what is now called the ‘phonemic’ principle of writing.*)
- (ii) When any sound is found in several languages, the same sign should be used in all.

1. Daniel Jones—‘*The problem of a National Script for India*,’ Lucknow 1942, p. 5.

- (iii) The alphabet should consist as much as possible of the ordinary letters of the Roman alphabet, as few new letters as possible being used.
- (iv) In assigning values to Roman letters, international usage should decide.
- (v) The new letters should be suggestive of the sounds they represent by their resemblance to the old ones. (In regard to this, it is now considered that letters should have unmistakable forms, and be as unlike each other, as possible.)
- (vi) Diacritic marks should be avoided, being trying to the eyes and troublesome to write².

In regard to diacritic marks, Dr. Daniel Jones, Professor of Phonetics, University of London said :

‘The plan of using diacritics has been shown to be defective from both the typographical and the psychological points of view. Diacritics are psychologically unsound for the following reasons: for writing to be clearly legible, every written word should have a definite and distinct form; it should have a sort of outline. Such a form is obtained if the written or printed word is composed of well designed letters. But when detached accents or other marks are used, the forms of words are less legible; their outlines are to some extent blurred.....
‘Another objection to diacritical marks is that they interfere with ease of writing.....A further objection to diacritical marks is that in practice they often get omitted in writing, and confusion consequently arises. This has been proved by the experience of those who have worked with the system of using such marks. Yet another objection to them is that superscript marks cannot be conveniently printed over capital letter’³.

As it was not found possible to dispense with diacritics entirely however, the International Phonetic Association has recommended that their use should be limited as far as possible to the following cases :

- (a) for denoting length, strength and intonation,
- (b) in representing members of phonemes,

2. ‘*The principles of the International Phonetic Association*’, London, 1949, p. 3 of cover.

3. Dr. Daniel Jones, ‘*The Problem of a National Script for India*’, op. cit.—pp. 10-11.

- (c) when the introduction of a single diacritic obviates the necessity for designing a number of new letters,
- (d) for representing minute shades of sounds in scientific investigations⁴.

3. In devising therefore a system of transcription for Tamil sounds, it would be just as well to keep the above principles in mind, if the system is to be of real assistance to foreign scholars who are interested in learning Tamil. Further, if the use of new letters outside the Roman alphabet could be avoided and if the diacritic marks used are such as to be found in an ordinary English typewriter, the work of scholars preparing manuscript copy will be greatly simplified. Fortunately, it is not necessary to go beyond the types found in an English typewriter to find equivalents for Tamil sounds. The Tamil alphabet is given in Table A with their phonemic equivalents in Roman characters; the principal member of each phoneme only is given in this Table. Two diacritic signs are used, viz:

- (i) a colon: in the case of vowels, to denote length and in the case of consonants, to distinguish those articulated with the blade of the tongue from those articulated with the tip of the tongue but otherwise similar.
- (ii) a minus sign — to indicate a retracted variety (This sign is used in only one case)

The diacritic marks should be used *after and not below* the letter in order to minimise the strain in reading and to facilitate typing or printing. These marks are not normally used in Tamil writing and hence their use for the purpose in view will not lead to confusion.

4. 'The Principles of the International Phonetic Association'—op. cit.—p. 2.

4. A narrow transcription of the members or allophones of Tamil phonemes, which have more than one member, is given in Table B. This will be useful for scientific studies and be also of assistance to foreigners learning to speak Tamil. It was Dr. Daniel Jones, who first drew attention to Tamil as a good illustration of the theory of phonemes. He wrote:

'Tamil is a language which illustrates particularly well the grouping of several quite distinct sounds into single phonemes..... It is noteworthy that Tamil orthography does not show any difference between all these sounds. Those who originally invented this orthography must have had a clear conception of the phoneme idea, though the theory had never been formulated. This is evidence in favour of a mentalistic view of the phoneme'⁵.

In fact, the theory had been by implication formulated at the time of *Tholka:ppiyam*, the oldest extant Tamil Grammar written more than two thousand years ago, although later grammarians and commentators, who apparently were but imperfectly acquainted with phonetic principles, were unable to interpret aright the relative passage⁶. With a knowledge of modern Phonemics, however, the passage in question becomes clear and meaningful and illustrates the euphonic basis on which the phonemic structure of Tamil has been raised. In the words of Prof. Sankaran of the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute:

'We meet with the accurate description of phonemes of the old Tamil language, built apparently on the results of phonetic study, in *Tholka:ppiyam*, which is the oldest descriptive Tamil Grammar. Such an emphasis on the pattern inherent in the sounds of the language of study, and the attempt to establish, on the basis of their occurrence and distribution, the types of sounds which must have been significant in distinguishing the meaning of words is not met with even in the *Aṣṭa:dhya:yi* of *Pa:n:ini*'⁷.

5. Dr. Daniel Jones—'The Phoneme—its Nature and Use', Cambridge 1950, pp. 22-23.

6. *Tholka:ppiyam*, El-uththathika:ram, verse No. 22.

7. Prof. C. R. Sankaran, 'Phonemics of Old Tamil', Poona 1952, p. 9.

We are lost in wonder that in this Old Tamil Grammar, we rediscover, as it were, many of our own modern ideas. The conviction is gained more and more that it is worth the while to subject Tholka:ppiyam to a detailed scrutiny exploiting this beautiful work from the rigorous view-point of modern Phonemics' 8. (italics ours)

5. The inevitability of dialectal differences amongst language communities living over wide areas is well known to linguistic scholars. In Tamil speaking areas, this has been aggravated by social cleavages arising out of the caste system and the influence of two dominant languages, Sanskrit and English, the former as the language of liturgy and religious literature and the latter as the administrative language of the government of the country. It is a remarkable tribute to the firm foundations on which the phonemic structure of Tamil had been raised that, in spite of these adverse factors, the phonemic structure as described in Tholka:ppiyam has undergone little change during more than two thousand years. We can hence go back to this old Grammar to discover the norm or standard sounds of Tamil, eliminating the mere dialectal or non-significant deviations therefrom:

6. In this connection, it is well to recall the warning sounded by Edward Sapir:

'The conception of the ideal phonetic system, the phonetic pattern, of a language is not as well understood by linguistic students as it should be. In this respect the unschooled recorder of language, provided he has a good ear and genuine instinct for language, is often at a great advantage as compared with the minute phonetician, who is apt to be swamped by his mass of observations' 9.

Dr. Daniel Jones says:

'A phonetic transcription for teaching pronunciation records the pronunciation of a single person (a typical one if possible) and the learners of the language learn to pronounce like that person' 10.

8. Ibid, p. 58

9. Edward Sapir, 'Language' New York. 1921, p. 58.

10. Dr. Daniel Jones—'The Problem of a National Script for India' op. cit. pp. 6-7.

As a foreigner is usually not competent to decide whether a particular person is a 'typical' person, such phonetic transcriptions merely add to the confusion. Take for instance the Tamil phoneme φ which in the attached Table A is represented by l-. The following are some of the descriptions given of this phoneme by empirical phoneticians:—

Prof. C. J. Firth 'a frictionless continuant having an obscure unrounded back vowel quality. l- is made by drawing back the whole tongue, and spreading the blade laterally, making it thick, short and blunt, so to speak, so that it approaches the middle of the hard palate. The result is a very retracted liquid sort of r sound' 11.

Prof. C. R. Sankaran voiceless retroflex lateral 12.

Jules Bloch a cerebral palatalized sonant spirant the pronunciation of which moreover varies from l to y 13.

Don. M. de Silva Wickramasinghe A cerebral having the combined sound of r and soft l, and pronounced by turning up the tip of the tongue as far back as possible. In Ceylon however it is pronounced like an ordinary English l. In the Tamil country it has often the sound of s in pleasure (the French j) 14.

Dr. G. U. Pope Something like the Welsh l 15

Cerebral: apply the tip of the tongue, as far back as you can, to the palate, and pronounce a rough rrr, in which a z sound will mingle.....In the South, unable to articulate this letter, they use a strong l: (or) instead. In the north in the same way they use w for φ 16

Of these, Prof. Firth's description is nearest to the standard sound as described by Tholka:ppiyam.

11. C. J. Firth—'A Short Outline of Tamil Pronunciation,' Appendix to Arden's Tamil Grammar. p. xvi.

12. C. R. Sankaran—'Phonemics of Old Tamil,' Poona, 1951. p. 8.

13. Jules Bloch—'The Grammatical Structure of Dravidian Languages,' Poona 1954, p. xxxiii.

14. Don. M. de Silva Wickramasinghe—'Marlborough's Tamil Grammar Self-taught'—London, 1906 Eighth impression. p. 10.

15. Dr. G. U. Pope—'A Handbook of the Tamil Language'—London, 1926. p. 7.

16. Ibid, p. 9.

7. *Transliteration into Tamil.* As will be seen from Table A, read in conjunction with Table B, the impression voiced in some circles that Tamil lacks certain sounds found in most other languages is wrong and based on a failure to appreciate the phonemic variants of Tamil phonemes. While most of these sounds are in wide use in Tamil speech, they are not represented by separate characters in Tamil orthography. The reason is scientific; the Tamil genius and feeling for sound appear to have been so highly developed two thousand years ago that they banned from speech all un-euphonious sound combinations in words; hence certain allied sounds such as *ch* (as in church), *j* (as in conjoint) and *c* (as in civil) are treated as a single phoneme, the value of whose allophone depends on the preceding phoneme in the same word. Taking into account this scientific and logical application of the phonemic theory by the ancient Tamil grammarians, it is easy to transliterate practically all sounds in English, for instance, into Tamil (Vide Table C). It is against the genius of the Tamil phonetic structure to adapt without modification foreign sounds which are not represented in Tamil; recognised rules and usage exist for the adaption of such sounds. These rules must continue to be observed if the phonetic pattern of Tamil is not to be mutilated out of shape but it is recognised that for use in scientific and technical fields, literal transliteration of English sounds may be necessary at present for certain restricted purposes. For such purposes only the system of transliteration indicated in Table C may be adopted.

TABLE B

Tamil Phonemes consisting of more than one member or allophone
(Narrow transcription)

	Principal number	Subsidiary members		
		When preceded by a hard consonant becomes	When preceded by a soft consonant becomes	When preceded by a medium consonant or the auxiliary consonant becomes
	unaspirated & voiceless	aspirated	voiced	fricative
க	K make கப்பல்	KH napkin பக்கம்	G angle பங்கம்	X soho வாழ்க எஃகு
ச	C church சிறகு	CH churchill பச்சிலை	J angel பஞ்சம்	Ç civil எய்சிலை கஃசு
ட	T card? பட்டம்	TH carting? பட்டம்	ḍ ? பண்டம்	ʃ fashion கஃடு
த	T+ Thames திங்கள்	T+H ? தேர்ந்து	ṭ this தேர்ந்து	θ thin ஆய்தல் அஃது
ப	P wipe புல்	PH harping அப்பம்	B amber அம்பம்	Φ ? வாய்பாடு கஃபு
ற	T Enter அறம்	TH artistic அற்றம்	D mundane அன்று	ʒ arrear அஃறியை
∴	This auxiliary consonant acquires the same fricative value as the following consonant acquires.			

VOWELS			CONSONANTS				
Articulating position	Short	Long	Articulating position	Hard	Soft	Medium	
PRIMARY							
Glottal	a (among)	a: (Calm)	PRIMARY Glotto-velar	k (king)	ŋ (sing)	y yard	
Velar	i (sit)	i: (machine)		c (church)	ɲ (angel)		
Labial	u (full)	u: (rule)			ɳ (urn)		
SECONDARY							
Velar	e (fed)	e: (able)	Dental	θ (Thames)	nh (anthem)	r (red)	
Labial	o (Opinion)	o: (opium)		Labio-dental	p (pipe)	m (mate)	l (leave)
		au (now)					v (very)
SECONDARY							
			Retroflex	t (atlas)	n (enter)	ɻ or l- ɻ (hur)	
Alveolar							
AUXILIARY							
The same articulating position as the succeeding consonant.							
x (the sound value is the same as that of the succeeding consonant)							

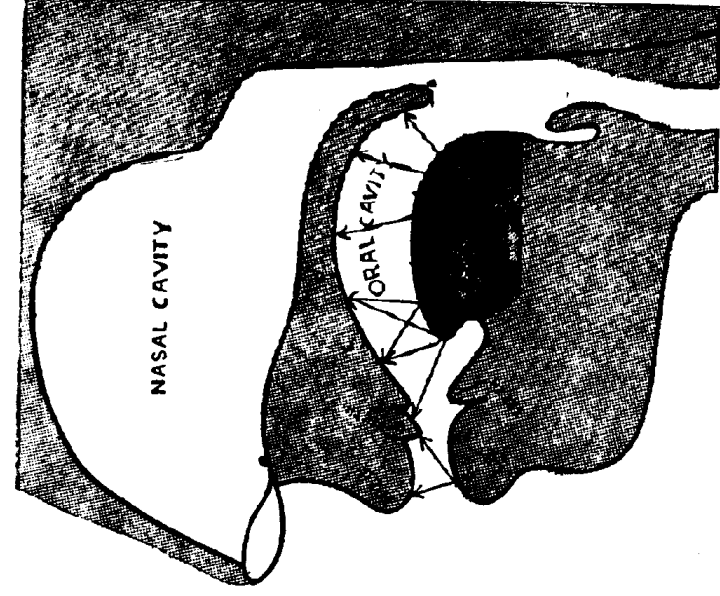
TABLE A

Tamil Phonemes

DESCRIPTION OF POSITIONS

1. A B-Glотно-velar
2. B C-Velar (back palate)
3. C D-Palatal (middle palate)
4. D E-Alveolo-palatal (front palate or Retroflex)
5. E F-Alveolar (teeth ridge)
6. F G-Dental
7. G e-Labio-dental
8. H e-Bilabial

a b-back of tongue
b c-middle of tongue
c d-front of tongue (blade)
d...tip of tongue



Tholka:ppiyam—el-uththathika:ram	Verse No.	
17. do	99	
18. do	89	
19. do	90	
20. do	91, 94, 95	
21. do	96	
22. do	93	
23. do	98	
24. do	97	

- (6) *Retroflex t* : is articulated with the *blade* of the tongue assuming a fully retroflex position.
- (7) *Retroflex t* is articulated with the *tip* of the tongue, like the English 't' but in a retroflex instead of an alveolar or dental position. It differs from retroflex t:, in that the tip, and not the blade, of the tongue touches the palate. There is a general misapprehension in regard to the value of the principal member of this phoneme, owing to the fact that it never occurs at the beginning of a word. The value of one of its subsidiary members—viz., the fricative—has been confused with the principal member and hence is often considered, as a form of trilled r.²⁶ As already indicated, retroflex 't' is a plosive like all other 'hard' consonants as can be verified when it occurs doubled, e. g., கட்டவன்—kattavan—(KATTHAVAN)²⁷

In its fricative form, occurring after the auxiliary consonant however, its pronunciation is similar to r e. g., அக்தன்—aktin:ai—(AYYIN:AI)²⁷ as shown in Table B attached.

- (8) *Retroflex l* is a retracted variety of l:, having the same articulating position as r. This is a sound peculiar to Tamil and is not always correctly articulated even by Tamilians.

26. Ceylonese Tamils generally pronounce the principal member of this phoneme more correctly than Indian Tamils.

27. International Phonetic Alphabet.

Notes.

- (1) The Phonetic values of vowels are approximately those adopted by the International Phonetic Association in broad transcription. The vowels are simple, short vowels being pronounced distinctly short and the long distinctly long, the distinction being sharp enough to cause no confusion or ambiguity to the hearer.
- (2) In the case of consonants, phonetic values are generally the same as those of the International Phonetic Association, except in the following cases :—
 - (i) y is chosen instead of j for ω , as ω is used only as a consonant and not as a vowel in Tamil and the English letter y is identified by Indians generally with this sound, rather than with the International Phonetic Association's letter j which is usually equated with voiced c (represented in the I. P. A. alphabet by inverted f.)
 - (ii) No distinguishing mark has been laid down by the I. P. A. to differentiate between sounds which are articulated with the *blade* of the tongue and those which are articulated with the *tip* but are otherwise similar. In order to avoid a multiplication of diacritic marks, the colon : is used for the former ; t:, n: and l: are the three sounds falling under this category.
 - (iii) *Auxiliary consonant x* This is an ingenious and novel feature introduced by the ancient Tamil Grammarians for use principally in poetry. Its value is variable, being the same as that of the fricative member of the following phoneme as indicated in Table B. Because of its indefinite value, the symbol x has been chosen to represent it in transliteration.
- (3) The 'hard' consonants are phonemes, whose principal member is plosive, the secondary members being aspirated, voiced and fricative respectively as shown in Table B. Their value can best be ascertained when they occur as doubled consonants in a word, the first mute one representing the value of the principal member of the phoneme and the second the value of the aspirated subsidiary member e. g., கட்டவன்—kattavan—(KATTHAVAN)²⁵, learned man.
- (4) The 'soft' consonants are nasal continuants, whose articulating position is the same as the corresponding 'hard' consonants shown opposite to them. The correct value of the soft consonants can be verified in words where they are followed immediately by a 'hard' consonant the latter assuming the value of its voiced subsidiary member e. g., பஞ்சு—panjcu PANJU—Cotton.
- (5) The medium consonants form a class of non-nasal continuants, corresponding to the semi-vowels of the Indo-European group but in Tamil they have no vowel value at any time. When a medium consonant is followed by a plosive, the latter assumes the value of its fricative subsidiary. e. g., வால்கா—va:l-ka (VA:L XA)²⁵.

25. International Phonetic Alphabet.

Notes: (i) In *Tholka:ppiyam*, *El-uthathika:ram*, verse no. 22 it has been laid down that, when consonants occur together, their sound value is modified.²⁸ As the first member of a consonant pair is articulated before the second, the latter is modified by the former.

(ii) For reasons of euphony, permissible consonant groups or clusters are severely restricted and words in which 'Soft' or 'medium' consonants are preceded by other consonants are so rare, except by way of doubling, that for practical purposes we may treat the 'soft' and 'medium' consonants as phonemes having only one allophone.

(iii) In the days of *Tholka:ppiyam*, the phonemes shown in this Table appear to have had the value of their principal member at the beginning of a word and after a vowel. In many dialects now, they assume after a vowel the value of the fricative allophone and, in the case of people speaking in a highly Sanskritised way, the voiced allophone. Thus, for example:

us—Pakal is articulated as (PAXAL)—fricative
or (PAGAL)—voiced

Some persons use this pronunciation even where the consonant occurs initially. This is principally due to the influence of Sanskrit and English on Tamil Speech. In any case it is only a preference for one allophone as against another of the same phoneme.²⁹

(iv) Although the auxiliary consonant should, according to the rules laid down by *Tholka:ppiyam*, assume one of six different sounds as indicated here, during the past several centuries owing to later grammarians' inability to grasp the phonetic novelty involved in this highly ingenious invention of the ancient Tamil grammarians, its value has been narrowed down to (X) i.e., fricative K, something approximating to the English h. Instead of importing non-Tamil script such as *pa*, *va*, *sa* etc., Tamil scholars would do well to popularise in their place the use of the auxiliary consonant *ā* as in the days of *Tholka:ppiyam*.

28. Unfortunately, owing to a far-fetched interpretation given to this verse by commentators, its phonetic significance has never been understood.

29. *Tholka:ppiyam*, *El-uthathika:ram*, verse No. 38 and 101.

TABLE C

Transliteration of English Sounds into Tamil

English sounds not represented
by separate phoneme in Tamil

Symbol to be used for
transliteration

SOUNDS EXISTING IN TAMIL SPEECH.

b (as in <u>bad</u>)	(<i>ḁ</i>) <i>ḁ</i>
c (, , <u>civil</u>)	(<i>ḥ</i>) <i>ḥ</i>
d (, , <u>and</u>)	(<i>ḍ</i>) <i>ḍ</i>
g (, , <u>angle</u>)	(<i>ḡ</i>) <i>ḡ</i>
(, , <u>angel</u>)	(<i>ḡ</i>) <i>ḡ</i>
s (, , <u>shock</u>)	(<i>ḥ</i>) <i>ḥ</i>

SOUNDS NOT USED IN TAMIL SPEECH.

f (as in <u>sofa</u>)	(<i>ḥ</i>) <i>ḥ</i>
a (as in <u>bad</u>)	<i>ḥ</i>
z (as in <u>Zebra</u>)	<i>ḥ</i>

Notes

- (i) The letter within brackets indicates that the following phoneme has the value of the allophone which it acquires when preceded by the former which should however be treated as silent, as for instance k in know.
- (ii) The minus sign—indicates that this phoneme has a special sound not found in Tamil.

Example of transliteration of Tamil into English:

பொங்கல் விழா நடைபெறும் காலமும் இனிய காலம்; கார் உலாவும் வானமும், நீர் உலாவும் ஏரியும் கருணை காட்டும் காலம்; இயற்கை அன்னை பசுமையான புடவை உடுத்து, பன்னிறப் பூக்களைச் சூடி, இனிய காயும் கணியும் கரும்பும் அணிந்து இன்பம் காட்சி தருங் காலம்³⁰.

Pongal vil-a: nhat:aipetum ka:lamum iniya ka:lam; kar ula:vum vana:mum, nhir ula:vum e:riyum karun:ai ka:t:tum ka:lam; iyatkai annai pacumaiya:na put:avai ut:utha, pannitap pukkal:aic eu:di, iniya ka:yum kaniyum karumpum an:inhthu inpam ka:t:citharung ka:lam.

Example of transliteration of English into Tamil

It will I think be generally conceded that the first requisite for bringing education within the reach of the millions of illiterates in India is the provision of a suitable alphabet for them³¹.

இற் வில் ஐ திங்க் (ம்)பி (ஞ்)செனரலி கன்(ஃ)செட்ட (க்)தா-ற் (ந்)தெ (ஃ)வ(ஃ)சற் ரெக்வி(ஃ)சிற் (ஃ)வார் (ம்)ப்ரிங்கிங் எடியுக்கே(ஃ)டன் வய்தின் (ந்)தெ ரீச் ஆ(ஃ)வ் (ந்)தெ மில்லியன்(ஃ)ச் ஆ(ஃ)வ் இலிற்றேற்(ஃ)ச் இன் இன்டியா இ(ஃ)ச் (ந்)தெ ப்ரோவ்(ஃ)டன் ஆ(ஃ)வ் எ (ஃ)குட்டெ(ம்)பிள் ஆல்(ஃ)வ(ம்)பெற் (ஃ)வார் (ந்)தெம்

30. ஈ. இ. செதுப்பினை—'தமிழ்நாடு' திருச்சிராப்பள்ளி, 1952, பக்கம் 31.

31. Dr. Daniel Jones—'The problem of a natural script for India' Lucknow 1942, p. 1.

Muslim Literature in Tamil

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

THE Muslim contribution to Tamil literature is considerable and varied. In the field of epic poetry, in the field of minor literary works or 'prabandhas', and in the field of prose, their contribution stands favourable in comparison to any of the contemporary Hindu or Christian works. With little encouragement from the Muslim rulers who invariably showed interest in Arabic or Urdu literature, and with little sympathy from the people among whom they lived, the Muslim poets were able to make an indelible mark on Tamil literature. Even in recent times, Tamil scholars of repute have not been rare in that community.

Unlike in North India, the political domination of the Muslims in the South was only for a short period. But the Tamils had contact with the Muslims long before the Muslim invasion. Tamilnad had extensive trade relationship with Arab countries. Trade agencies were established in *Kayal* (Tirunelveli district) by Arab chieftains for horse trade and *Wassaffs* says that as many as ten thousand horses were imported from Arabia every year. After the birth of Islam, Arab Settlements were made in several places in the West Coast of Tamilnad. Their main object was trade and it is not clear how far they influenced the local population. Ancient Tamil literature merely mentions their existence. Perhaps they led a secluded life caring mainly for trade and mixing very little with the local population.

There is a common belief among the Muslims, that the Amir of the Sumpla City in Turkey, after abdicating his power, became an *Aoulia*, and sailed to India

to propagate Islam. He settled at Trichinopoly and is believed to have died there in 900 A. D. A mausoleum was erected there in honour of him.

But it was the invasion of Malik Kafur in 1310, that brought the Muslims closer to Tamilnad. His invasion of the South, though an accident, yet was well-timed. The Imperial Cholas were tottering almost in exhaustion. A fratricidal war between the two sons of Pandya Kulasekhara provided a welcome opportunity to the Muslim invader. Lured by the splendour and wealth of Deccan, Malik Kafur found an easy entrance into Tamilnad. In 1324, there was a second invasion of the Pandya country and it became a province of the Delhi Sultanate. By about 1335, Jalal-ud-Din Assan Shah severed his connections with Delhi and set up an independent Sultanate at Madurai. This lasted until 1378 when the Vijayanagar prince, Kampana II, overthrew this Sultanate. Still there continued two Muslim cantonments, one at Madurai and another at Kannanur, controlling the adjoining places. Again in 1646, when the Vijayanagar Empire crumbled, the Muslims re-established themselves. Tanjore and Gingee were under their supremacy and the Madura ruler was but a vassal to them. Revolts from subject chiefs were common in this period. There was very little peace and no stable administration. In the fag end of the Nayak rule at Madurai, Queen Meenakshi invited Daud Khan to assist her against her enemies. But that proved to be an invitation to occupy the throne of Madurai. Thereafter, directly or indirectly, Madurai remained under Muslim sway till the British consolidated the South by defeating the French and their ally Tipu Sultan in 1800 A. D.

The object of the Muslim invasion was not to retain and consolidate the conquered territory under a stable

government, but to collect a rich booty. Even the few attempts to keep the subjugated kingdoms for a long period under their rule were ill-conceived and resulted in general chaos. But one permanent result of the Muslim invasion was the large number of Muslim converts throughout Tamilnad whose contribution to Tamil literature and towards the growth of Tamil language is remarkable. There were many patrons in that community, who encouraged Tamil poets. Well known among them was Sithakkāthi, whose munificence was eulogised both by Muslim and Hindu poets of the 17th century. It is said that in his time Muslims used to listen to the exposition of Mahabharatha and Ramayana with great interest, because of the absence of a similar Muslim epic. So Sithakkāthi felt sorry for it and was in earnest search of a Muslim Tamil poet, who could compose an epic on the life of Mohammad. At last he found Umaru Pulavar.

Poet Umaru was born in Ettayapuram in the late 17th century. He had his education under two Hindu teachers, Sēthu Muthaliar, and Kadigai Mutthu Pulavar, the court poet of Ettayapuram. It is said of Umaru that though a Muslim by birth, he mastered Tamil literature and grammar at an early age and was even in a position to take up the challenge of a North Indian Vidwan, Vālai Vārithi. This episode brought for him fame and he was made the court poet of Ettayapuram. It was then that Sithakkāthi invited Umaru to his place and expressed his life-long desire. Umaru agreed, but he needed a teacher who could explain to him the Arabic granthas and stories about Nabi in the Arab language. At Sithakkāthi's instance Umaru was taken to one Labbai Ali Hajiyyar, who refused to reveal the sacred story to Umaru for he was dressed like a Hindu. But Mohammad appeared in his dream and asked him

to explain to Umaru the granthas. The Labbai regretted his early refusal and directed him to his brother at Parangipēttai who was a scholar both in Arabic and Tamil. So the poet moved to Parangippēttai where, he assiduously carried on his work.

Meanwhile, Sithakkāthi passed away, before the completion of the *Puranam*. Its 'Arangetram' was celebrated at Parangipēttai itself under the patronage of Abdul Kāzi Marakkāyar. There is a story that when the stanza on the birth of Mohammad was expounded the patron's wife was so much absorbed that she forgot to regulate the flow of milk into the mouth of her suckling child. As a result, the child died on the lap of its mother. Fearing that if she broke the news of the death of the baby at once the 'Arangetram' would be ended abruptly, she suppressed it until it was over.

The title *Chirā Puranam* is the Tamil form of the Arabic 'Sirat' which means life and 'puranam', which means an old story. The *Puranam* deals with the life of the Prophet and the miracles attributed to him. It follows closely the Hindu puranic form. It is divided into three parts called Kāndams...*Kilathuk Kandam*, *Nupuvathuk Kandam* and *Hijrathuk Kandam*. The *Kilathuk Kandam*, which begins with a chapter of invocation to God, describes in the next chapter, the country side and townships of Arabia. But in that description, the reader can see not the sands and dry desert regions of Arabia, but the green velvet fields and the fertile rivers of Tamilnad. One finds not the date palms of Arab countries, but the plantain, the coconut and mango groves in Umaru's descriptions of Arabia. Here and there, a favourite line of Kambar or a well-known imagery of *Chivaka Chinthamani* or of some other Tamil classic is to be found in the *Puranam*. In one place, he sings of the women of Arabia as having

tilaks on their forehead (*Kathija Kanavil Kanda Padalam*).

The second, by name *Nupuvathuk Kandam*, deals with the revelation of Muhammad. The last one, i.e., the *Hijrathuk Kandam*, sings about the migration of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina. The whole *Puranam* is well designed and ably executed in five thousand and twenty six stanzas. It is the foremost of the Muslim contributions to Tamil. The Arab names of places and of men are as far as possible tamilised in that *Puranam* to make them familiar to the Tamils. But the unfamiliarity of the Muslim religious stories to the non-Muslim Tamils, and the general neglect of the Tamil Muslims themselves in bringing out a popular edition of this *Puranam* with detailed notes and descriptions, have prevented the *Puranam* from securing its legitimate and much deserved place in Tamil literature. It is more known than read. In style, in imagery and in the capacity for narration it equals its contemporary the *Thiruvilayadal Puranam* of Paranjōthi Munivar.

Critics say that Umaru has exceeded the limits of Islam in including a few practices of Hindus. Hardly any poet can escape the influence of time and his surroundings. Umaru was educated under Hindu teachers and the people around him were predominantly Hindus. To gain recognition, he had to cater to their taste also. There is very little evidence in the 17th or 18th centuries of any religious dissensions between Muslims and Hindus in Tamilnad. They lived in peace and lived amicably and as a result, consciously or unconsciously, Hindu influence has found a place in this *Puranam*. It lends a local colour to an unfamiliar theme.

In short, *Chirāpuranam* is a monumental contribution of the Muslims, of which that community and the Tamil language can be proud.

Another major work is the *Muhaiithin Puranam* of Badruddin Pulavar of the 19th century. It is said that he was also a scholar learned in Sanskrit and Malayalam. This work containing two thousand stanzas is divided into forty chapters. The reader cannot but admire the vast erudition of the poet. His narrative capacity particularly needs special mention here. It is regrettable that few Tamilians are aware of the very existence of this Puranam.

The other poetic works of the Muslims are not so large but by no means less interesting. The minor literary contributions include, *Ammanai*, *Anthathi*, *Pillai Thamil* and *Ātruppada*. The *Kōvai* form, popular in the later centuries, was also adopted by Muslims. (*Kōvai* is a composition in which the hero falls in love with the heroine, undergoes the hardships of love-making and in the end weds her. It runs into four hundred stanzas. The famous *Kōvai* is Manicka Vachakars's *Thirukkōvaiyar*, where divine love forms the theme.)

Umaru himself was the author of a *Kōvai* on *Sithakkathi*. The son of Umaru, Kavikkalanchiya Pulavar, wrote an *Ammānai* on the Prophet in 1713 A. D. (*Ammānai* is a musical composition sung by girls, when they are engaged in a game of throwing a number of small balls with one hand and catching them with the other. The *Ammanai* metre is the couplet form). Another poet by name, Sayed Merāp Pulavar, wrote *Papparatthiy Ammanai*, on Caliph Ali in the beginning of the 18th century. The theme was taken from *Chira Puranam*. The style is simple and musical. The *Thirumathenatthu Ammanai* of Chitthirakavi Syed Imam Pavalar, needs particular mention. He is also the author of nearly two hundred and twenty poetic works.

Another favourite literary form with the Muslims is the *Anthathi*. In this form, the last syllable or word of a line is repeated at the beginning of the next line. As a result, the whole composition is interlocked and continuous as a chain. Noteworthy among the *Anthathi* is the *Thirumathenatthu Anthathi* of Syed Imam Pavalar mentioned above. It is about the city of Medina. He was a grammarian, and the style of this *Anthathi* is embellished and intricate. But the Arabic words, unlike in other Muslim works, are fewer in number. Some of his descriptions of the city of Medina recall the scenes of Tamilnad. In certain places in the *Anthathi*, the poet simply parades his poetic ability and scholarship. A number of stanzas therefore test the ability of the reader. Equally pedantic is the *Nakai Anthathi* of Sheik Abdul Kadar Nayinar Alim. Nakoor is famous for the tomb of the Muslim Saint, Nakur. A commentary on this *Anthathi* was written by the author himself. He lived in an age when poetry was mainly considered to be an instrument for parading the author's literary skill. His *Anthathi* is strewn with *Matakkū*, i.e., the same word repeated throughout or in any part of the stanza but with different meanings. It is nothing but a form of poetic jugglery which possessed the minds of the Tamilians of these later centuries. In this group may be included the *Thirumakka Thiripanthathi* of Gulam Kathiru Nāvalar on the city of Mecca.

Muslim *Pillai Thamil* literature is also very well known in Tamilnad. In *Pillai Thamil*, the hero or heroine who is either a deity or an important person, is conceived by the poet as a young child and vividly described stage after stage, from the third month of its birth to the 21st month. Two prominent works in this branch are *Nabinayakam Pillai Thamil* and

Muhayithin Pillai Thamil of Sayed Meera Lebbai Mukayithin Kavirāyar respectively. The former describes in detail the childhood of the Prophet, the latter that of Saint Muhayitin. Hindu ideas have freely found expression in this literature. The mothers, the poet says in *Nabinayakam Pillai Thamil*, are like Lakshmi who came out of the milky ocean when it was churned by the Devas and Asuras. Just as the Hindu poets describe Sorkka Loka (Heaven) or Amravathi Patnam, these Muslim poets imagined freely and described liberally the Arab cities. Sometimes, the descriptions seem to be odd and irrelevant. But the frolics of the baby-hero and the innocent mischiefs, the cradle talks, the mother's lullaby, their tender eagerness, appreciation and adoration of the baby, have been successfully brought out in these two compositions. The style of *Nabinayakam Pillai Thamil* is [redundant and has a large number of Sanskrit and Arabic words. The *Āndavar Pillai Thamil* of Savvāthuppulavar is colloquial and inferior in poetic imagery to *Nabinayakam Pillai Thamil*. This by no means detracts from the fame of Savvāthuppulavar who, with his brother-in-law, Sakkarai pulavar, have composed many stray stanzas, noted for their humorous taunts. Sakkaraiappulavar is also the author of an *Anthathi* on Medina.

Yet another literary form called Ātruppadaḥ is also adopted by Muslim poets. But only one Ātruppadaḥ is now available. The old Tamil Sangam was revived in the beginning of the twentieth century at Madura and Gulam Kathiru Nāvalar has celebrated it in his *Pulavar Ātruppadaḥ*. In this work, the author directs a wandering poet to the newly formed Tamil Academy at Madura where he can win due recognition. The poet shows the way to Madurai and also the means by which he may reach that city. It was just then that the train was

introduced in Tamilnad and the poet humorously compares it to a millipede. He describes the train in detail. He says when the engine rolls on with its four wheels, it is like a thunderous cloud rolling on. Its mouth is full of fire, it breathes like a demon. The author of this work was also a grammarian and the very first publication of the present Tamil Sangam is his *Poruttha Vilakkam*, a book on Tamil Grammar.

The epic and the Prabhandha or minor literary forms had an appeal mostly for the cultured people. For the masses the Muslim poets sang in light musical literary forms. Foremost among them is the *Mālai*. It is a garland of poetry. Like a garland, the stanzas in this literary mode are inter-connected. Not less than thirty such *Malai*, have been composed by Muslims. Umaru was also an author of *Mutumoli Malai*. It eulogises the greatness of the Prophet. Another work which has earned the esteem of the Muslims is the *Rasul Mālai* which is to be recited during the religious feasts of the Muslims. The sense of justice of Caliph Omar, is praised in *Abu Sakuma Malai* (of 1735 A. D.) by Ceytakkāthipulavar. It narrates how the son of the Caliph, Abu Sakuma, who was addicted to drinking and committed an unpardonable offence, was punished by his own father who was equally just to his friends and foes. Consequent on the punishment ordered by his father, Abu Sakuma dies in the end. Another work, dealing with the later part of the life of the Prophet and his death, is the *Ponnariya Malai*. This is also popular with the Muslims.

The second type of light musical literary forms is the Chintu. Well-known among this form of literature is the *Puvaticcintu* of Kalai Acan Alip Pulavar. Some of the Muslim mystic poets too have preferred this form. They are sung in the same Chantham or musical

note as their Hindu counterpart, the *Kāvadiccintu*. Just as the Chinthu is popular with men, the Kummi is popular with womenfolk. In the Kummi, women clap their hands and dance in a circle reciting these songs. Notable among the Kummi compositions of Muslims which number about five, is the *Thirukkarana Cinkara Kummi* in praise of Saint Shahul Hamid Oliyullah of Nagur. The author of it is Mathurakavi Matārppulavar. *Oliyullah Alankara Kummi* of Muhammatu Kāsim Pulavar of Ceylon is also very well-known.

Another popular literary form which we have to mention here is the *Kirthanai*. In it, the story is sung in different musical notes. An early and famous work in this branch of literature is *Ramanataka kirthanai* of Aruncāhalakkavirāyar. *Cirakkirthanai* is in praise of the Prophet. The author Syed Abubecker Pulavar (cir. 1811 A. D.) belongs to Kōttāru, near Cape Comorin.

Two other branches of musical composition like *Tiruppugal* meaning the poems in praise of God, and *Ānantakkalippu*, a poem of ecstatic joy, are also adopted by Muslims. The *Thiruppugal* of Kāsim Pulavar of Kāyarppattinam, is quite popular. The folk-lore type of composition like the Themmānku, Tholippenpāttu, and Ēcal, have also been followed by Muslim poets. In the Ēcal composition, two ladies take part; while one praises the hero, the other speaks ill of him. In a humorous vein, the conversation continues to the end. It is popular with the Hindus also. But love forms the main theme of the Ēcal of Hindus. The Ēcal of Muslim poets have religious themes only. *Nabinayakam peril Ēcar Kannigal* by Shāhul Hamid Pulavar relates the noble qualities of Mohammad in a clear conversational style. Another Ēcal of one Ahamad Lebbai relates a conversation between a mother and a daughter. The subject of the conversation is how far

it is a sin for a woman to bedeck herself and tempt men in public places.

It would have been noticed that light and minor forms of literature are more popular with the Muslims than the long serious forms. It is not only true of the Muslims of this period but also of the Hindus. When the rulers were engrossed in frequent wars with their neighbours, when there was marked absence of patronage, poets were forced to resort to the popular forms of literature for recognition by the rank and file and for their sustenance. It shows how far the political conditions of a country affect literary development.

Apart from the popular forms mentioned above, Muslim poets introduced five new modes of composition in Tamil. 'Padaippōr' is one of the five new types. It is a kind of war-ballad. Sometimes it is in Ammānai metre. The theme of *Aintu Padaippōr*, meaning five war-ballads, of Asanalippulār, is the wars between the Muslims and their enemies in the early days of Islam. In all these five ballads, Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, is the hero on the side of the Muslims. The scenes of war are described at length. In A. D. 1797, Kunchu Mūsappulavar of Travancore, wrote *Ceytattup Padaippōr*. It relates the adventures of the Princess Ceytattu in a war on the side of Abdul Rahmān.

Another special Muslim composition is the Munajat. It is a supplication addressed to Allah and his blessed devotees. The number of stanzas in this composition is limitless. The Munajat of Abubeker Lebbai by name "*Surathin Munajat*" belongs to this class.

Narration of a story in the Arab language is known as *Khissz*. Matharu Saheb Pulavar's *Yusupu Nabi Khissz* deals with the life of the Prophet Yusuf

There is another *Khissa* on Princess Zeittun, which is well-known. The author is Abdul Kader Saheb. In it the Princess Zeittun, vows to marry the person who defeats her in combat. In a battle between herself and Muhammed-Hanifa, she is defeated and subsequently she marries him. In the end she embraces Islam. This composition is intermixed with prose passages. The style generally is simple. Masala or the question and answer mode of literary composition is also one of those new forms introduced by Muslims. The *Nuru Macala* by an unknown author, contains hundred questions and answers. The *Āyira Masala* of Vannap parimalappulavar of Madura is a catechism on Islam. In this work, the prophet is asked very intricate questions about the truth of Islam.

The chronicle type of composition called *Nāma* is also introduced by Muslims. An 18th century poet, Matharu Saheb Pulavar, describes in *Miharaju Nama*, the Prophet's ascent to Heaven. The *Nuru Nāma of Kayarppattinam* (Tinnevelly District) by Sayed Ahmed *Marakkayar* is a well-known work in this field. In it, the author describes *Kāyarppattinam* as the Cairo of India. The poet says in a stanza that the prayers uttered by the Muslims in the mosques are listened to by parrots, which also repeat them with reverence.

It is unfortunate that none of these literary forms are adopted either by Muslims or by non-Muslim poets in modern times.

The more popular among the Muslim poets are the Mystics. They are widely read and just like their Hindu contemporary mystic, Thayumanavar, they have a wider appeal. Foremost among them is Kunangudi Mastān Saheb of the 19th century. He was a vendor of attar at Trichy. To a very great extent, he has been influenced by Hindu thoughts and ideals.

In the last couplet of his *Mononmanikkanni*, he prays to Uma, Lord Siva, Ganapathi, Nanthi, and Valai Manōnmani—all Hindu deities. (Stanza 101). Indeed a religious mystic cannot be a religious fanatic also. His *Muhaidēen Sathakam*, i.e., hundred verses on Muhaidēen, *Akattican Sathakam*, and his *Anantha Kalippu* describe the greatness of the Almighty, the destruction of the soul and the consequent sufferings, and lastly the supreme pleasure in the realisation of the self. Moved by the lyrics of Mastan Saheb, another Poet, Aiyaswamy Mudaliar has sung a "*Pathitruppattu Anthathi*", i.e., an Anthāthi containing hundred verses in praise of him.

Another prominent mystic poet is Kalamkuti Maccarēkai Cittan, a physician, by profession, but a well-versed scholar in the *Quran* and the *Upanishads*. He deprecates the religious and communal differences. Good and great people, he says, will not have these petty-mindedness. His works abound with high philosophical thoughts, both of Hindus and Muslims. His style is difficult. Many Arabic words and sometimes Arabic phrases also are to be found in his works.

The third mystic poet who deserves mention here is Pir Mukammatu of Thakkalai in South Travancore. His *Gnanamalai* and *Navarattinakkuravanchi*, advocate religious tolerance and expound high theological ideas. Besides these important mystics, there are a large number of minor works by various authors, having a mystical note. These works have contributed much towards religious unity and harmony among the Hindus and Muslims of Tamilnad.

Muslim theological works are also not rare in Tamil. The *Vetapurānam* of St. Periya Nih deals with Kalimah, prayer, fasting and other Muslim ceremonies. *Cu apil*

Imam is another theological work, dealing with the various branches of the Imam faith. It is also published in Arabic script. Abdul Majid's *Acarakkovai* has gained popularity among the Muslim and non-Muslim Tamils. It contains ethical maxims. This work contains remedies for physical maladies also, as in the Hindu ethical works like *Chirupanchamulam* or *Thirukadugam*. Another voluminous work, perhaps the earliest of Muslim works in Tamil, for, it is said to have been written in 1594 A.D., deals with Muslim morality, Islamic customs, and Islamic laws. The author of it is Pir Muhammad Sahed. It contains the answers of the Prophet at the coronation day, when Jews questioned him on religious matters. It also contains accounts of Muslim marriage ceremonies and divorce.

The Muslim contribution to Tamil prose is not as noteworthy as in the field of poetry. Religious controversy forms the subject matter of many of the prose books. There are very few on literary subjects. Some are verbatim translations of Arabic works and a few from Persian and Urdu. *Muslim Atvaita Mulamoli* is an important work in prose. It deals with the aspect of monism in Islam. The author of it is Abdul Rahman of Nellikkupam. A section of Muslims condemned this and another work by name *Ulumuttin* written by Syed Muhammatu Alim. A few secular prose works by Muslim authors are also popular. In the book, '*Kalyarkkum Kallanarkkum Nadantha Khissa* i.e., the story of a judge and a thief the author humorously sets the dialogue between a thief, who has no education but is full of common sense, and a learned judge. In the end, the thief wins over the judge. The stories of the famous Muslim court jester Abu Navas are collected in a work which is also called *Abu Navas* by Miran Sahab. Biographies of great Muslim religious leaders are

mostly Urdu translations. *Maulana Rumi Jwya Caritram* of Shahul Hameed Lebbai and *Rahasul Goul* are important works among them. A few works on adventures have been written by Muslims. One is *Putukucam*, which narrates the invasion and conquest of Syria. The conquest of Egypt by Caliph Omar is the subject of *Puttukul Micir* by MukutOm Mokammattup Pulavar. There are also a few works on general topics.

A handful of Tamil prose works on Muslim jurisprudence are written in Arabic script. It is interesting to note that nearly thirty Tamil Muslim works, comprising poetry, prose, religion and didactic literature are in Arabic script. Works, whose language is Tamil, but written in other scripts, are not uncommon in the border areas of Tamilnad. A considerable number of Tamil books written in Telugu and Malayalam scripts are to be found in the Manuscript Libraries of Madras and Trivandrum.

These and the poetic works of the Muslims have enriched the vocabulary of Tamil by adding Urdu and Arabic words. The Arabic words in Tamil are few and these few words have been borrowed only through Urdu. As a whole, these Urdu and Arabic words number about a thousand and five hundred and no one, not even the exacting purist, dare expunge them. They have been mixed inextricably with the Tamil language. Even in the far off corners of Tamilnad, one can hear a villager using very commonly words of Urdu origin in his daily conversation. The words "Bathil" (answer) "Mathiri (type), 'Mahasul' (harvest) "Palam" (bridge), "Grakki" (costly) etc., are as often used as any of the vital Tamil words. Many of the Tamilians will be surprised even to know that these words are of Urdu origin. The loan words from Urdu can be classified into the following heads: (1) Legal terminology,

like Arji, Rāji, Vakkil, Vajā, Japthi; (2) musical terms like Kanchirā, Tandōra; (3) terms connected with the division of lands like jillā, Tāluk, Mākānam, and, land revenue terms like kist, rayath, Jamāpanthi; (4) terms about food and drinks like Arak, mittāy, Būnthi, Sarbath; (5) terms for fragrance like Athar, Vaththi; (6) quite a number of the Urdu words are used in Tamil for household utensils. They are Anda, Kūja; (7) exclamatory type of terms like Ushār, Jalthi, Balē, Bēsh, Sabash; (8) miscellaneous terms like Kapsa, utan (for a lie) alka, choudal. Borrowed words are cultural indices and a close study of these words would reveal the cultural indebtedness of Tamil to Urdu.

It will be evident from this brief survey that the Muslims have contributed not a little to the various branches of Tamil literature. This contribution includes an epic, *Chira Puranam*, and a number of minor poetic and prose works. As already said, some of their compositions can be compared with the finest of Tamil works. While assessing the merit of these works, we have to bear in mind the period between the 17th and the middle 19th century, to which almost all the Tamil Muslim works belong. It is a period of political turmoil and insecurity. Tamil Nad was harassed by successive invasions. Famine and pestilence took a heavy toll. For want of responsible government, lawlessness was rife everywhere. In that political background nowhere could art and literature flourish. It is no wonder that the literary output of this time was not of a high order. There were no patrons, neither among kings nor among the wealthy. Poets had to look to the people for their very living. The increase of light literature is mainly due to these changed circumstances. Yet the interest or importance of these minor works cannot be minimised.

In Madras State, nearly eight per cent of the total population consists of Muslims. Except in Madras City and in the Telugu-bordering areas, all other Muslims speak Tamil in their homes. But nearly five lakhs of Muslims, according to the census report of the Madras State in 1951, claim Urdu as their mother tongue. The census Report for 1951, says: "It is true that these Muslims study the Quoran in Arabic, but their mother tongue is undoubtedly Tamil; but they claim Urdu or Hindustani as their mother tongue. Under our instructions, the enumerators had no option but to accept the answer given by the person" (1951 Census of India, Madras and Coorg, vol: 2 pt: 1). This deplorable attitude of Muslims and their general ignorance of the rich heritage of their Tamil poetry have led to the present day indifference to Muslim literature in Tamil. But we cannot forget here that there were and there are Muslim scholars who stand second to none in their devotion to Tamil language and literature. One among them is the late Seykuththambi Pavalar of Kōttaru, the author of many prose and poetic works. Today signs are not wanting of a literary revival among the younger generation of the Muslim community in South India and they assure us of a bright future*.

*Important books consulted:

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5. *Ilakya Tenral* by Viththyananthan, Kalhinnai, Kandy, 1953.
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The Earliest Tamil Poems Extant

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IN his "*Chronology of the Early Tamils*", K. N. Sivaraja Pillai concludes that the P. N.¹ poems and most of the *Ten Idylls* (பத்துப் பாட்டு) fall within these two dates: 50 B. C. and 200 A. D. As regards the P. N. (புறநானூறு) poems which deal with the three great dynasties, Cēra, Cōla and Pāṇṭiya, this view is correct: but there are other poems in the P. N. which are much earlier. Take for instance, P. N. 396. It has an abundance of ancient and now obsolete words and verbal constructions, especially with the particle "*untu*". Readers of Telugu will be quite familiar with the manifold use of the particles "*un-*, *unna*, *unn-*" in this sister language of Tamil. In the earliest Tamil texts extant, the particle "*untu*", which is the வினை பெச்சம் of the old Dravidian verb "*un*" - to be, played as equally an important part as in modern Telugu. Now note the frequency of occurrence on the part of this particle in P. N. 396: வழங்குந்து, பூக்குந்து, ஒப்புந்து, இரியுந்து, தாங்குந்து, five times in contrast with the solitary instance of the more modern particle, "*ntu*" மகிழ்ந்து, in this poem. A moment's reflection on the part of those who have undergone a training in philology will suffice for them to connect the ancient suffix or ending "*untu*" with the more modern or later suffix "*ntu*".

1. In this article, P. N. = *Puranāna*; A. N. = *Aha Nāna*; Kē-
Kuruntogai; Nān-Nārinai.

Again, this feature is not confined to one poem of the P. N. For, P. N. 400 has, in line 14, தாங்குந்து. Further, it must be noted that such archaic features are most evident in those poems of the P. N., which were so old that words and lines have been lost, e. g. 400, 399, 398, 396 (nearly two lines), 395, 393, 391, 390, 388, 387, 384. P. N. 384 has the suffix "*untu*" at least twice, உறைக்குந்து in line 7 and வைக்குந்து in line 9. The same poem has also line 5 completely missing, while a few words are missing in lines 10, 13, 18 and 19. Moreover, it is precisely these poems that have no running commentary attached to them. In fact, few of the P. N. poems, from No. 269 to No. 400, have such a commentary, while most of the previous numbers have this. All these features combined make one suspect that these later numbers in the P. N. are actually the earlier poems. K. N. Sivaraja Pillai contends that this arrangement of the poems in the reverse order was done about the 6th century A. D. on a set purpose. Whether this is true or not, we must look for the earlier P. N. poems among the later numbers.

There is another criterion for us to judge these poems by: their historical background, namely, the names and times of the kings, chiefs, dynasties, towns etc. mentioned in both the "*Akam*" and the "*Puram*", i.e. "*Love*" and "*War*" pieces. Perhaps in this connection it is significant that Asoka's rock edicts, II and XIII (the Shāhbāzgarhi version) speak of five dynasties ruling South India at the same time, namely, the Satiyaputra, the Keralaputra, the Hida king, the Chodas and Paindiyas, in the words of these edicts. It was only much later that "THE THREE KINGDOMS" were established. The idea of ௩ பேரரசு is comparatively late. In the same work as I have cited

above, K. N. Sivaraja Pillai speaks of the fusion of several principalities or city-states into the Cōla or Pāṇṭiya kingdoms about 50 B. C. to 1 A. D. It is to this and later periods that the whole of *Patirruppattu* belongs. But the larger numbers of the P. N. and a sizeable number of the three *Nanuru* collections dealing with "Love" are much earlier. In their time there were not merely three kingdoms, but several principalities. Thus *Kuruntokai* refers to the following kings or princes :

Āy, probably the Hida king, at Krt. 84 : 3
cf. P. N. 128 : 5 āy malai taval potiyil.

Alici	at Krt. 258 : 2-7
Atikan, probably Satiyaputra	„ „ 393 : 4
Evvi I	„ „ 19 : 1
Elini	„ „ 80 : 5
Centan	„ „ 258 : 4
Kaṭṭi	„ f. 11 : 6
Nalli	„ „ 210 : 1

Nannan I of Pūli, on the west coast, at Krt. 73 : 2

Malaiyan, in the central hills of S. India, at Krt. 312 : 2.

Thus there are ten references to kings other than the ancestors of the "three kings". Of the three kings themselves as a group there is no mention whatever. Moreover, the Cera king is completely ignored, and there is merely a solitary reference in each case to the Cōla chiefs, Krt. 116 : 2, or to the Pāṇṭiya king, Krt. 393 : 4. From other criteria as well, namely the obsolete diction, the old grammatical pattern of the nominal system, the peculiar adverbs, the archaic verbal system,

the ancient syntactical and other features, it is quite clear that in the Krt. we possess the earliest poems extant in Tamil, with the exception of those P. N. poems just alluded to and those A. N. poems to be mentioned presently. This statement does not include grammars.

The *Narriṇai* occupies an intermediate position, between the Krt. and the A. N., both as regards the size of the poems and the time of their composition. Thus in Narr. the Pāṇṭiya king is mentioned more frequently than in the Krt., e.g. at Narr. 23 : 5-6, 150 : 4-5 etc. Likewise the Cōla kings, e.g. at Narr. 10 : 5-6, 87 : 3, 265 : 6. In the last instance, the Cōla ruler is called *ciru kōl cenni* i. e. "Cenni of the small sceptre". It is hereby clear that the Cenni of Narr. 265 is still a chief or prince and not yet a powerful king or emperor, as he is portrayed in the smaller numbers of the P. N. poems.

In the A. N. (*அகநானூறு*), however, both the Pāṇṭiyas and the Cōlas are mentioned much more frequently and as ruling over large kingdoms, almost as in the smaller numbers of the P. N. Thus the Pāṇṭiya king figures at A. N. 27 : 8-9, 36 : 14-20, 116 : 12-19, 162 : 21, 201 : 3-5, 253 : 4-5, 296 : 10-13, 338 : 5 and the Cōla at A. N. 93 : 4-5, 96 : 13-14, 44 : 14, 125 : 16-21, 137 : 5-6, 246 : 8-14, 336 : 19-23, 338 : 18-20, 356 : 11-15, 369 : 13-14, 375 : 10-15, 385 : 3-4. When one recollects that each of these collections, Krt., Narr. and A. N., has 400 or 401 poems, this difference is highly significant.

But not all of the A. N. poems are comparatively late. A. N. 265 : 4-6 mentions the Nantar of the city of Pāṭali as almost contemporary with the poet composing

the piece: pal pukal nirainta velpōr Nantar cir miku
Pāṭali kkulṇ kkaṅkai nīr mutarkaranta nitiyam kollō?

பால் புகழ் நிறைந்த வெல்போர் நந்தர்
சீர் மிகு பாடலிக் குழிஇக் கங்கை
நீர் முதற் கரந்த நிதியங் கொல்லோ?

A. N. 251:5 alludes to the exceedingly great wealth of the Nantan or Nantar, as well-known at that time:—

நந்தன் (alt. lectio நந்தர்) வெறுக்கை எய்தினும். Nantan (alt. lectio Nantar) verukkai eytinum.

The abundance of the Nanda's wealth is here pictured as so great that nothing larger can be imagined. Further, the city of Pāṭali is mentioned as a well-known town, almost contemporary with the poet, at A. N. 265:5 and at Krt. 75:4. Here there is no doubt that he refers to Pāṭali-putra, the capital of the Nanda kings and Maurya Emperors. For, Krt. 75:3-4 is emphatic as to its locality. It states: VEN Kōṭṭ-IYANAI cōṇai paṭiyum pon mali Pāṭali periyar.

வெண்கோட்டியானை சோணை படியும்
பொன் மலி பாடலி பெற்றியர்.

In the second line there is a distinct allusion to the abundant gold to be found in the Pāṭali-putra of that time. This fact is admitted by modern historians.

These allusions and references in the "Love" poems are the more important as they have 'no axe to grind': they are incidental to the main theme. As such, they are much more valuable to the student of ancient Tamil history than poems on set historical

themes" or poems written for or against certain kings or dynasties. The latter are bound to sacrifice truth to political expediency or propaganda.

Who were the Nandas to whom A. N. 251 and 265 allude? They were kings of Magadha before 321 B. C. In that year Chandragupta Maurya deposed and slew the last of them. Vincent A. Smith, in "*The Early History of India*", 1908, p. 38, considers that the Nandas reigned from about 370 B. C., i. e. about a century before the great Magadhan Emperor, Asoka, 273-231 B. C. There is nothing to surprise us in the fact that the Asokan edicts speak of five Tamil civilized kingdoms in South India, since already a century earlier there were in these lands Tamil poets, who were not only contemporary with, but also thoroughly conversant with the circumstances of the 'northern' kings of Magadha. The authors of A. N. 265 and Krt. 75 were well-informed of the exact situation and abundant wealth of Pāṭali, the Magadha capital. "Founded in the fifth century B. C., it stood in the tongue of land formed by the confluence of the Sōn with the Ganges, on the northern bank of the former and a few miles distant from the latter"—V. A. Smith, op. cit., p. 119. We may well admire the choice phraseology that so aptly sums up and gives us such a delightful pen-picture of the ancient city, as is displayed by the Tamil poets who composed Krt. 75 and A. N. 265, about 324 B. C.

Some may object to the above statement of mine, asking me: "Is the mere fact that a certain king, chief or ruler is mentioned a sufficient guarantee that he was a contemporary of the poet concerned? Could not the poet allude to a far distant historical event, preceding the composition of his verses by centuries?"

In itself this is possible; but under the actual circumstances in which these allusions occur, this is unlikely. For:—

(A) Most of the allusions I am dealing with are found in the “Love” poems of a certain type, called “*Marutham*”. In these the wife or heroine complains bitterly of the unfaithful conduct of the husband or hero. He has sought new pastures in the form of dancing girls and joined them so unashamedly, in parks and groves, in lakes and bathing-places, on river-banks and sea-shores, that the whole town or city is gossiping loudly about it. The gossip is like a tumult or uproar that strikes the ears of the heroine louder than the shout of the victorious armies of such a king when he celebrated his victory over such another king. It is here that the allusions occur. In the A. N. poems this allusion starts generally half-way down the piece and goes on down to its end. Thus A. N. 36, a “marutam” piece, contains 23 lines. The first 12 lines speak of the gossip afore-mentioned, after a long address to the hero. We shall cite a few lines:—

வரு புனல் வையை வார் மணல் அகன் துறைத்	9
திரு மருதோங்கிய விரிமலர்க் காவின்	10
நறும் பல் கூந்தற் குறுந்தொடி மடந்தையொடு	11
வதுவை அயர்ந்தனை யென்ப, அலரே	12
கொய் சுவற் புரவிக் கொடித் தேர்ச் செழியன்	13
ஆலங் கானத்தகன் தலை சிவப்ப	14
சேரல் செம்பியன் சினங்கெழு திதியன்	15
எழுவர் நல் வலம் அடங்க ஒரு பகல்	20
முரசொடு வெண்குடை அகப்படுத்துரைசெலக்	21
கொன்று களம் வேட்ட ஞானறை	22
வென்றி கொள் வீரர் ஆர்ப்பினும் பெரிதே.	23

If we should now compare the instances of where the word ‘*alar*’ occurs in these texts with the size of

the poems concerned and the allusions made therein, we shall see that this contention is correct. To cite just a few instances, “*alar*” occurs at Krt. 97:4, 258:2, 262:1, 393:2, A. N. 36:12, 116:12, 201:10, 211:17, 216:6, 253:3, 296:14, 323:1; *Ainkurunūru* 71:3, 75:2, 77:2, 164:4, 236:1, 279:5.

The point of the poet’s comparison is to put before the readers or hearers of the poem *two quite familiar facts*, the gossip afore-mentioned and a contemporary or slightly anterior event. This point would be blunted beyond all recognition, if a fact, say, of a thousand years earlier were to be compared with the gossip in question.

(B) In actual fact, this *a priori* assumption is borne out by the incipient comparisons that K. N. Sivaraja Pillai has made between the times of the authors of these poems and the times of the historical personages mentioned in these allusions—in his “*Chronology of the Early Tamils*”. Dr. Vithianandan, of the Ceylon University, has *en passant* elaborated these synchronisations in his Ph. D. thesis on the *Pattupattu*. By a diligent comparison on these lines, one comes to the conclusion that the allusions are to either contemporary or recent events. There is no reason to make the allusions to the Nandas or to Pāṭali an exception to this feature.

(C) On the contrary, there is an additional argument in this instance for our contention. Readers of Indian history know very well that the Maurya Emperors, especially Chandragupta and Asoka, eclipsed the Nanda kings of Magadha in wealth, power and dominion. If the Tamil poet who composed these poems had lived at the time of the Mauryas or later, he

would most certainly have mentioned them and not the feebler Nandas as the 'upamā' for abundant wealth and regal splendour. There is no doubt then that these poems are anterior to the accession of Chandragupta Maurya in 321 B. C. Such an event would not have taken long to be noised abroad and to reach the ears of the Tamil poets in the South. We shall then date these poems as approximately belonging to 324 B. C., i. e. to the decade preceding the fall of the Nandas.²

2. A Corollary: Concerning my identification of the Hida King of Asoka's Shābbāgarhi inscription with *īy* of *krt* 84:3; PN. 128:5; 129:5; 131:2; 241:2; 375:11. cf. K. N. Sivaraja Pillai, *passim* and R. Caldwell: *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages*, 1913, p. 96: "Ptolemy's country of the 'Aioi (Aioi)... South Travancore and South Tinnevely (sic). It commenced at the Red Cliffs, south of Quilon, and included not only Cape Comorin, but also Kolchoi, where the pearl-fishing was carried on." Hida seems to be the *āryan* form of some such old Dravidian word as "Yida," meaning sheep or shepherd. cf. Telugu *ēḍa*, Tam *īḍai-ccēri*, *īḍai-yan*, *īḍaiy-ar*, *īḍaimakan*, and whith nasalization *ipḍar* Sinhalese *epḍ-āru*. The "Aioi" seem to be identical with Tam. *āyar*=shepherds.

Tamiliana

NEWS & NOTES

THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

THE Academy was formed at a meeting of scholars and lovers of Tamil held at Madras on Sept. 18, 1954. A report of the meeting published in the Indian Express is reproduced below:

Madras, Sept. 19.

An ambitious new venture with the avowed object of bringing together persons and institutions interested in Tamil for the development and advancement of the Tamil language, literature, arts and sciences, was launched here yesterday, when the Academy of Tamil Culture was formed at a meeting of scholars and lovers of Tamil held at the residence of Mr. A. Subbiah, Director, Indian Overseas Bank.

Mr. Justice N. Somasundaram was elected President of the Academy.

Among those present were Messrs. S. G. Manavala Ramanujam, former Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University; V. Subramaniam, Member, Railway Rates Tribunal; K. Kothandapani Pillai, Member, Railway Service Commission; V. Sundaramurthy Mudaliar, Deputy Director of Income-Tax Investigation; Father Ceyrac of Loyola College; T. P. Meenakshisundaram, Professor of Tamil, Presidency College; K. K. Pillai,

Professor of History, University of Madras; S. Arumuga Mudaliar, Professor of Tamil, Teachers' College, Saidapet and V. C. Gopalarathnam, Advocate.

In furtherance of its objects, the Academy proposes to take measures to preserve from corruption or deterioration those features of Tamil which have contributed to its greatness as a language, foster scientific research in all aspects of Tamil language, literature, arts and sciences, make more widely known to the Tamil speaking peoples as well as to the outside world the beauty and the antiquity of the Tamil language, publish and encourage the publication of books, bulletins and periodicals as well as translations thereof, and establish and maintain effective contact and collaboration with universities or other academic organisations at home and abroad, professional groups, individuals, Governments and Government agencies interested in such matters.

Mr. A. Subbiah, the prime sponsor of the Academy, extended a welcome to the gathering. A number of messages wishing the function success were read.

Explaining the aims and objectives of the Academy, Rev. Fr. Thaninayagam, co-sponsor of the Academy, said the characteristics and values of the accumulated Tamil heritage of the centuries were such that the world should not be deprived of the knowledge of such a wealthy heritage. They had gathered, he said, because they realised that there were certain objects which it was the duty of cultured people to foster without relinquishing to Governments and universities the task of their fulfilment.

STUDY OF CULTURE

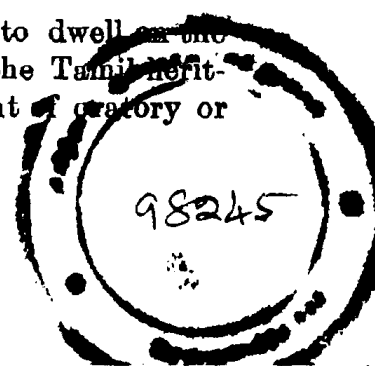
There were no doubt a number of associations in the country which sought the promotion of Tamil culture and interest in Tamil, the speaker said. But there was need at present for an association which would include in its aims the study of Tamil culture and the spread of knowledge regarding that culture.

A very wide programme of work remained to be done, Fr. Thaninayagam said. During his recent visits to libraries and cultural institutes in Europe, he had met several persons of distinction interested in Indian subjects. They complained that professors and lecturers from the South of India failed to attend regional and international Congresses on linguistics, oriental studies, history and archæology. It should be their endeavour to make proper representations so that Tamil scholarship was kept open to modern influences and benefits by living contact with the outside world.

Students of Tamil did not receive the same facilities that students of western languages received in the West. The speaker suggested that a number of Government of India scholarships, available for post-graduate work abroad, should be made available for Tamil students also for specialisation in the languages, literature, history and archæology of the South.

It was gratifying to note that the British Council had thought it fit to award a scholarship to a Tamil student to enable him to qualify in phonetics in the School of Oriental Studies, London. But what was disconcerting was that no organisation in the South had thought it fit to award a scholarship for similar studies, he said.

It was the tendency among many to dwell on the past glories of the Tamil people and the Tamil heritage, the speaker said. But no amount of oratory or



Mr. K. K. Pillai and Dr. M. Varadarajan, Hony. Secretaries; Messrs. V. S. Tyagaraja Mudaliar and C. Amirtaganesa Mudaliar, Hony. Treasurers. The meeting also elected an influential Governing Council.

The Academy will have Boards of Studies in Lexicon, Grammar, Ancient Literature, Modern Writing, Dance and Drama, Music and Science with eminent persons in the respective spheres as Directors. It will also have Departments in Historical Research, Linguistic Research, Tamil Publications, English Publications and Foreign Language Publications.

—*Indian Express* 19-9-1954

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TAMIL FESTIVAL IN SINGAPORE

Singapore, Jan. 14

About 10,000 Indians gathered at the Happy World Stadium here this evening to celebrate the annual Tamil festival which falls on Pongal Day.

The festival is devoted to the spread of Tamil language, literature, culture and arts.

Rev. S. Thaninayagam, Tamil Professor of Ceylon University, told the gathering that 75 per cent of the Indian culture and civilisation was based on Tamil.

He said Tamil was the oldest language in India and the world, older than Greek, but while the latter was already dead, Tamil was living and growing and its influence was found all over Asia and even the Americas.

Mr. G. Saranagapany, Editor of '*Tamil Murasu*', also addressed the meeting.

—*Indian Express* 17-1-55

RESEARCH IN LANGUAGES SCHOOL IN POONA FROM NOVEMBER

Poona, Aug. 21.

A linguistic school, to encourage fundamental research in Indian languages, will be established here by the Deccan College Post-graduate and Research Institute. The school will start functioning from Nov. 15 this year.

Establishment of such schools was one of the three major projects recommended by the Standing Committee appointed by a conference of linguists and educationists held last year, under the auspices of the Deccan College. Two more similar schools will be established during 1955.

The projects recommended were: (1) A new linguistic survey of India on an all-India basis; (2) summer and winter schools for post-graduate training in the principles and methodology of modern linguistics as applied to Indian languages; and (3) common, graded vocabularies of the principal Indian languages.

It is understood that in so far as the new linguistic survey of India is concerned, certain pilot surveys are likely to be initiated in the near future, with assistance from the Union and State Governments and universities.

WESTERN TECHNIQUES

A spokesman of the Deccan College told P. T. I. that with the possibility of the rapid replacement of English by national and regional languages, the sole means of understanding the different regions of India

by the outside world would be by the proper acquisition of a knowledge of these languages. But this acquisition, he said, could and ought to be directed through tested scientific linguistic techniques which have recently been perfected in the West. For this, a useful collaboration between Indian scholarship and western techniques was the only possible approach. The linguistic schools, he felt would go a long way in solving the problem.

U. S. GRANT-IN-AID

The Deccan College is sponsoring these schools under a grant-in-aid received from the Rockefeller Foundation of New York. The grant is being given for for (A) sponsoring three linguistic schools, each lasting six weeks; (B) offering nine fellowships of Rs. 250/- p. m. each for specialising in four Dravidian and five Indo-Aryan languages; (C) providing for five junior research associates from the U. S. who will acquire competence in selected modern Indian languages; and (D) for creating two visiting professorships at the college for linguistics during 1955, one for an Indian and the other for American senior linguists.

Provision has also been made for the participation of one senior linguist each from the U. K. and the U. S. and for visiting linguists from Pakistan, Burma Ceylon. The present grant covers a period of 18 months beginning from July 1954.

At present, with the exception of the Calcutta University, no university in India gives facilities for specialising in linguistics.—PTI.

Our Contributors

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EXTRACTS FROM THE
MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION
AND RULES & REGULATIONS OF

The Academy of Tamil Culture

OBJECTS

THE objects of the Society are to bring together persons and institutions interested in Tamil and pool their knowledge and resources for the purpose of promoting the study, development and advancement of the Tamil language, literature, arts and sciences. In furtherance of these objects, the Academy shall :

- (i) take measures to preserve from corruption or deterioration those features of Tamil which have contributed to its greatness as a language;
- (ii) foster scientific research on all aspects of Tamil language, literature, arts and sciences;
- (iii) make more widely known, to the Tamil speaking peoples as well as to the outside world, the structural characteristics and antiquity of the Tamil language.
- (iv) publish and encourage the publication of books, bulletins and periodicals calculated to further the objects of the Academy as well as translations thereof;
- (v) endeavour to create an informed public opinion on matters relating to the objects of the Academy;
- (vi) establish and maintain effective contact and collaboration with University or other academic organisations at home and abroad, professional groups, individuals, Governments, and Government agencies interested in such matters;
- (vii) to acquire, hold and deal with every kind of immovable property for the use and benefit of the Academy and to deal with them in such manner as may be beneficial to the Academy and to its objects.
- (viii) undertake such other duties and functions as shall directly or indirectly further the objects of the Academy;

Note: The Academy will endeavour to maintain high standards in all its activities, as befits an academic body of this nature, uninfluenced by political, religious or other extraneous considerations.

MEMBERSHIP

3. The signatories to the Memorandum of Association shall be the first members. Membership will be open to those who in the opinion of the Governing Council of the Academy are in a position to contribute materially to the furtherance of the objects of the Academy. Admission to membership shall be by election by the members of the Governing Council in accordance with the bye-laws framed by them for the purpose.

4. The persons listed in Appendix 'A' hereto shall be Founder members of the Academy.

5. Every member of the Academy shall conform to and be bound by the rules, regulations and bye-laws of the Academy.

AFFILIATED MEMBERS

6. Institutions other than Students' Unions may be affiliated to the Academy on approval by the Governing Council.

PATRONS AND DONORS

7. Persons who donate to the Academy Rs. 10,000 or more will be designated as Patrons and those who donate under Rs. 10,000 but not less than Rs. 5,000 as Donors.

FELLOWS

8. Persons who have achieved outstanding distinction in any field of Tamil culture or have rendered

distinguished service to the Academy may be appointed as Fellows by the Governing Council in accordance with the bye-laws prescribed by the Council for the purpose.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

9. Students, Student Unions and persons other than those elected under any of the preceding categories may be enrolled as Associate members in accordance with the bye-laws prescribed by the Governing Council for the purpose but such members will not be entitled to vote at any meeting.

SUBSCRIPTION

10. The following rates of subscription and entrance fee shall be payable by members :—

	ENTRANCE FEE		SUBSCRIPTION.	
	to be remitted within 15 days of receipt of notice of election.	Annual subscription, if paid in one lump sum.	Monthly subscription, if paid in 12 instalments.	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	
Ordinary Members ...	25	50	5	
do (Scholastic profession) ...	12½	25	2½	
Affiliated Institutions ...	50	100	10	
Patrons, Donors and Fellows ...	nil	nil	nil	
Associate Members—				
Individual Students ...	1	3	Not payable in instalments	
Students' Unions ...	2	5		
Members of the teaching profession ...	2	5	"	
Others ...	10	10		

NOTE :—

- (i) Annual subscriptions must be paid not later than 30th April each year but in the case of the first year, if the member is elected in July or later, he shall pay only at the rate fixed for monthly subscription for each month or part of the month of the remainder of the official year,

either in one lump sum or in monthly instalments. Associate members elected in July or later shall pay during the year of election one quarter of the annual subscription on each unexpired quarter or part thereof in that official year.

- (ii) Monthly subscriptions must be paid not later than the last day of each month.

- (iii) Members other than students and institutions may compound their subscription for life by payment of an amount equal to ten years subscription.

THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

11. The affairs and properties of the Academy shall be managed by the Governing Council of the Academy consisting of a President, Vice Presidents not exceeding five in number, Honorary Secretaries not exceeding three in number, Honorary Treasurers not exceeding three in number and not more than fifty other members.

12. The first members of the Governing Council shall be the Founder members as listed in Appendix 'A' hereto and the first President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Secretaries and Honorary Treasurers will be as shown in that Appendix. They shall hold office until the following Annual general meeting.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

13. The members of the Governing Council shall be elected at each General meeting of the Academy and shall hold office until their successors are duly elected. Vacancies in the Council may be filled by co-option from among the members of the Academy, while vacancies in the post of President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Secretaries and Honorary Treasurers shall be filled by Co-option from among the members of the Council. Persons co-opted as aforesaid shall hold office only for the residue of the term still remaining until the next elections to the Governing Council.

14. The Governing Council shall have power to appoint one or more Committees, Boards of Studies or Departments and delegate to them or to individual members of the Council such powers as they deem fit for carrying on the day to day administration.

15. Should the Governing council deem it necessary to increase its strength, it shall have power to do so by co-opting the required number of members and if at the next Annual General meeting such increase in strength is approved by the General Body, a correspondingly increased number of members may be elected to constitute the Governing Council.

16. The official year of the Society shall be from 1st April to 31st March of the succeeding year. The Annual General meeting of the Academy shall be held not later than 31st August of every year.

- (1) to consider the Annual Report and the Audited accounts of the Academy as up to 31st of March preceding.
- (2) to elect the members of the Governing Council for the coming year,
- (3) to consider and transact such other business of which due notice has been given as provided in these Rules and (4) to appoint an Auditor or Auditors for the Academy.

17. No resolution shall be moved at any General meeting unless notice of such resolution in writing has been given to the Honorary Secretaries on or before the 15th of July.

SPECIAL MEETINGS OF THE GENERAL BODY

18. Special Meetings of the General Body of the Academy may be convened by the Governing Council whenever necessary and shall be convened on receipt of a written requisition signed by atleast 15 members stating the nature of the business to be transacted thereat on a date within two months after receipt of such a requisition. No other business shall be

transacted at such special meetings of the General Body except what is stated in the requisition.

MEETINGS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

19. The Governing Council shall meet once a month or as often as may be necessary to transact all such businesses as may be placed before it by the Honorary Secretaries. The quorum for such a meeting shall be 7 members. The Honorary Secretaries shall also be entitled to have any urgent matter decided by circulation among the members of the Governing Council and to give effect to such decision provided that the same shall be formally confirmed at the next meeting of the Governing Council.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF OFFICE-BEARERS

20. The President and in his absence any of the Vice-Presidents shall preside at all meetings of the General Body and of the Governing Council and if none of them should be available or be not willing to act, a Chairman shall be elected from among those present. The Honorary Secretaries shall be in charge of all the administration and business of the Academy and shall be officers to sue or be sued in the name of the Academy in respect of any legal proceedings to be filed by or against the Academy. The Honorary Secretaries shall also be in charge of all the properties, movable and immovable belonging to the Academy and of the accounts and all other books and records of the Academy. They shall keep and maintain proper minutes of proceedings in respect of meetings and shall generally manage the affairs of the Academy in all matters.

21. The Honorary Treasurers shall be in charge of the funds of the Academy and shall attend to the

collections and realisations of all subscriptions and other amounts due and or payable to the Academy and be entitled to give receipts in discharge of such payments.

22. The funds belonging to the Academy shall be invested or kept in an approved Bank or Banks as may be decided from time to time by the Governing Council and such deposits or accounts operated on by such persons as may be duly authorised by the Governing Council from time to time.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

23. The minimum period of notice to be given to its members for meetings and quorum for such meetings shall be as under:—

		Minimum Period of Notice.	Quorum.
For Annual General Meeting	...	14	15
For Special General Meeting	...	14	15
For Meeting of Governing Council	...	5	7
Meeting of Committee, Board of Studies or Departments	...	2	2

24. All notice to members shall be deemed to have been duly served if posted to their respective registered addresses so as to reach them in due course of post before the period of notice provided by these Rules.

GUESTS

25. Members may introduce to the Academy occasional visitors or guests not exceeding two at any one time; the prior permission of one of the office bearers must be obtained if a member wishes to introduce more than two visitors at a time.

ALTERATIONS, ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS OF RULES

26. Alterations, additions or deletions in respect of the rules and regulations of the Academy may be made on the recommendation of the Governing Council at a Special General meeting of the members convened for the purpose.

27. The Governing Council shall also be entitled to make or pass bye-laws or other regulations for the day to day working of the Academy and for such other purposes as may be deemed necessary to facilitate and carry on the work of the Academy. The said bye-laws or regulations so made shall be binding on all members.

28. The Governing Council shall also have power to deal with all infringements of the rules and by-laws of the Academy by any member and in so doing to withhold from the offending member or members the privileges of membership for such period as may be deemed fit.

REMOVAL OF MEMBERS

29. The name of any member may be removed from the rolls if in the opinion of the Governing Council his continuance as member is prejudicial to the interests of the Academy and a resolution to that effect passed at a meeting of the Governing Council specially convened for that purpose by a majority of not less than three-fourths of the members present and voting after due notice to the member concerned setting out the grounds for such action and giving him an opportunity to explain.

TAMIL CULTURE

JOURNAL OF THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

CONTENTS

TAMIL AND SANSKRIT IN SOUTH INDIA	
Dr. J. Filliozat	285
V. V. S. AIYAR'S APPROACH TO KAMBAR	
C. Jesudasan, M. A.	301
TRIBES OF THE NILGIRIS — THE KOTARS	
Rev. F. Legrand	312
PLACE NAMES OF AGRICULTURAL REGIONS OR MARUTHAM	
Prof. R. P. Sethu Pillai, B.A., B.L.	323
A CZECH MISSIONARY OF THE 18th CENTURY AS AUTHOR OF A TAMIL GRAMMAR	
Dr. Kamil Zvelebil, Ph.D.	337
TAMIL CULTURE—ITS PAST, ITS PRESENT AND ITS FUTURE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CEYLON	
Rev. Dr. Xavier S. Thani Nayagam	341
REVIEWS	365
NEWS AND NOTES	368
SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION	377

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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R. P. Sethu Pillai, B.A., B.L., is the Professor and Head of the Department of Tamil, University of Madras. His superb command of words and his exquisite feeling for word rhythm have earned him the title 'சொல்லிசை செல்வன்' (the word-wealthy).

Dr. Kamil Zvelebil is the Head of the Department of Dravidology, University of Prague. He has translated many Tamil works into Czech and is an indefatigable research worker.

Rev. Dr. Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, M.A., M.Litt., S.T.D., founder and Chief Editor of this journal, is a member of the Department of Education, University of Ceylon; he has travelled extensively throughout the world and can speak and write several languages.

NOTE : Readers will be interested to learn that a thesis from the pen of Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, the distinguished Indian Scholar cum Statesman, in which a vigorous plea is made for the replacement of English by Tamil and other national languages of India as the medium of instruction in Universities, will be published in the January 1956 issue of *Tamil Culture*.

The January 1956 issue will also include Prof. Emeneau's article on 'Linguistic Pre-history of India'. Prof. Emeneau is Professor of Sanskrit and General Linguistics in the University of California and is engaged in the preparation of a Dravidian Etymological Dictionary in collaboration with Prof. Burrow of the Oxford University.

Tamil and Sanskrit in South India

PROF. J. FILLIOZAT.

It is a very great honour for me to address you at an Anniversary meeting of the Academy of Tamil Culture. But this honour is too great for me, and, I am afraid, it will be for you a hard task to follow me, owing to my inability to speak fluently any language other than my mother tongue. Nevertheless, if you are kind enough to excuse that inability, I shall be very happy to take the opportunity to present you the best felicitations and wishes for your work from the French institutions devoted to Indian studies and interested in the Tamil language and culture. Your splendid effort to promote Tamil studies was known in France since its very beginning, thanks to the publication of your valuable journal, *Tamil Culture*. In our opinion, no effort is more opportune, as, in the field of Indology, Dravidian studies have not yet fully received the attention they deserve.

It should not be useless to determine carefully the various reasons for the relative neglect of these studies. At first sight, we can see two main reasons at least : one is mainly an accidental reason, the other springs, I am afraid, from a prejudice.

The first knowledge of Indian literatures in Europe came chiefly from South India and from Dravidian sources, particularly from Tamil and Malayalam speaking peoples. European Christian missionaries were chiefly working in Tamilnad and they were learning even Sanskrit works through Tamil, Malayalam and also Telugu commentaries. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Tamil

philology was much more advanced than Sanskrit philology. The grammatical work of Beschi is an ever useful achievement. The lexicographical task of Beschi and of de Bourzes is still in use, through the French-Tamil dictionary of the Mission of Pondicherry, in which it was incorporated. On the contrary, Sanskrit grammars and dictionaries compiled before the nineteenth century have at present only a historical value.

It was at the end of the eighteenth century that the situation changed. At that time, *for political reasons, the main centre of activity of the Europeans in India passed from South India to Calcutta*. Here, Sanskrit was dominant and as it was, even in the South, the general literary language of all India, European scholars turned all their efforts towards that fundamental medium for the understanding of Indian civilisation. And, of course, it was not possible in Bengal to have any contact with Dravidian matters.

The other main reason for a relative neglect of the Dravidian languages was not thus accidental. It was *the consequence of a gradual rise of racial theories*. Preparing these, first arose ideas of a primitive purity of humanity and a very ancient and poetical language like Sanskrit was thought to be a worthy representative of such primitive purity. Above all, it seemed to be the purest existing form of the genuine language of a people, who were the common ancestors of the Europeans and of a part of the Indians. It was the Aryan tongue, this of the Aryas, the "Nobles". Other languages of India were corrupt forms of Sanskrit or foreign languages belonging to non-Aryan peoples, to slaves, owing all their culture to Sanskrit or Aryan influence.

Because of the transfer of the research activities to the North and in consequence of this racial prejudice, the South was depreciated. This prejudice was very strong and misleading in the examination of the relations between

Sanskrit and Tamil Cultures. In spite of the discredit into which have fallen the racial ideas, their effect on the formation of conceptions has not yet vanished in all circles of Indologists.

That is why I propose to make some remarks on the respective real positions of Sanskrit and Tamil in the Tamil country.

In the opinion of some early Indologists, Tamil was merely one of the vernacular languages of all India. The languages of India were classified in three strata : ancient Indian or Sanskrit, middle-Indian or *prakrits* and vernaculars or modern tongues. That is roughly exact for the Indo-Aryan family, but not for the Dravidian one, especially for Tamil. Tamil is an ancient language preserved till to-day with evolution and was parallel to Sanskrit, *prakrits* and Indo-Aryan vernaculars along the periods of history, not only because it was foreign to Indo-Aryan in its nature but also as its literature was autonomous side by side with those of Indo-Aryan languages. Nearly all other Indian literatures were also cultivated side by side with Sanskrit literature in every linguistic region of India, but generally without being autonomous and being, on the contrary, dependent on Sanskrit literature. Furthermore, these literatures are not means of expression of a *complete* culture. They possess original poems but not books on *all* matters of knowledge ; books in some fields are only in Sanskrit, or in translations from Sanskrit or do not exist at all in such literatures. Tamil literature, on the contrary, is complete in itself as means of cultural expression. Even translators from Sanskrit into Tamil were, in ancient times at least, very free with the original and re-arranged and recast the contents to suit the genius of their own language and culture.

Accordingly, it is not correct to place Tamil, and also some other ancient languages of India possessing a fully developed literature, on the same footing as modern lan-

guages strictly dependant on Sanskrit with only partially developed cultural literatures. Compared with Sanskrit, Tamil is surely autonomous. But that does not mean, as some are inclined to think, absence of fruitful and permanent relations.

If we listen to the claims of some Tamil traditions, we have to admit not only the independant origin of Tamil literature, but even its priority to Sanskrit literature. According to these traditions, revered authors, like Agastiyar, wrote several thousand years ago, and even some Vaishnava saints are referred to as having appeared in remote ages of past Yugas. On the other hand, the Indus Valley civilisation of Harappa and Mohan-jo-Daro possibly was Dravidian and very probably was destroyed by Indo-Aryan Sanskrit speaking peoples. It is surely easy to build on these data an hypothesis showing ancient Tamil literature born in the Indus Valley long before the Aryan invasions; then repelled to the South, and partially preserved as well as continued there. The recent attempts at deciphering the Indus Valley writing through classical Tamil favour such a view.

Unfortunately for that hypothesis, traditions like these ascribing a very remote origin to Agastiyar and to parts of the *Divyapirabandam* of the Alvars are not ancient, and it happens they are in absolute contradiction with references in the texts to things or persons of historical times. A comparative study of the language of such antedated writings with books of known date is, indeed, enough to fix their chronology. Furthermore, the evidence of the evolutionary processes of language is against the possibility of finding classical Tamil in the writings of the Indus Valley, even if the civilisation of the country was Dravidian.

In any case, even if we study extant literature only and leave aside lost books and unknown ages, we have enough to do and we can at least get some positive indi-

cations about the antiquity of ancient Tamil literature and about its relations with Aryan culture.

From a historical point of view, our records do not go earlier than the time of the first contacts between Dravidian and Aryan Cultures. Even the stories concerning Agastiyar, in Sanskrit 'Agastya', refer to an influence from the North on Tamil Culture, to a kind of cultural conquest of the South by the Northern Brahmanism as indicated in Valmiki's *Ramayana*. But, as we have already said, stories on Agastya are not very ancient and we may add they perhaps come from a rather late period of Sanskritisation and Brahmanisation about which we shall have to refer again.

In fact, as soon as history begins for Tamilnad we see it already divided into three kingdoms free from dependence on the North. These kingdoms are indeed enumerated by Asoka in the middle of the third century B.C. in his II rock edict among the countries outside (*amta*), like Ceylon and that of Antiochos, and two, Coda and Pandiya (Colar and Pandiyar) are again mentioned in the XIII rock edict, in the group of *amta* countries by opposition with royal lands (*lajavisaya*). We are sure at that time relations between the North and South were close as Asoka was sending embassies to all these countries in order to promote the *dhammavijaya*, the authority of the good order. Cerar kingdom was already mentioned by Asoka under its Indo-Aryan name *Kerala*, as *Kelalaputa* in the prakrit of the king.

The *Dhamma* propagated to all border countries was certainly Buddhist *Dhamma*, like what we see in the example of Ceylon, but in the Asoka edicts the word *Dhamma* covers a more comprehensive notion. It was the general and universal good order typified in Buddhist form but inheriting the Brahmanic idea of the cosmic, social and ethical Norm, *Rta* and *Dharma* in Sanskrit. We have evidences of the respect paid by Asoka to the Brahmanic calendar of sacred times and to the astronomy of the Jyo-

tisavedanga, as he gave prescriptions for *caturmasa* and *tisya* and *punarvasu* days (Pillar V, Kalinga I and II) and let his pilgrimage's journey of 256 nights to be fixed according to data which we can prove were those of the *Jyotisavedanga*. Accordingly, it is quite sure both Brahmanical and Buddhistic ideas were preached in Tamilnad in the third century B.C. They were preached through middle-Indo-Aryan dialects as these were in common use in the states of Asoka, "Magadhan king" according to his official title, and throughout all countries of India under his sway. We have no evidence for the propagation in Tamilnad of doctrines in Sanskrit at that time, though a knowledge of Sanskrit also in this country at that time can by no means be excluded.

We have, indeed, some indications of contact between the South and the Brahmanical circles of the North at an earlier date at the time of Candragupta Maurya, i.e., at the end of the fourth or the very beginning of the third century B.C.

This presumption arises from an identification, we may propose, of a story told by Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to the court of Candragupta, with a story current in the Pandyan kingdom. Megasthenes speaks of the legend of a so-called Indian Herakles, worshipped according to him, by the Surasenoī of Methora, that is the Surasena of Mathura. This Indian Herakles is generally identified with Krsna, as, in fact, Krsna was truly worshipped in Mathura. But it is impossible to find any corresponding legend in Sanskrit literature concerning Krsna. Deformations by the Greek author were surmised, but, if we examine the legend in detail, we observe it relates explicitly to South India and evidently refers to the Pandyan kingdom, as the daughter of the Indian Herakles was called Pandaia. Therefore we have to search for the origin of the story in Tamil literature not in Sanskrit. Actually, its basis appears in the *Thiruvilayadal Puranam*, which though a later work contains many ancient traditional

data. In this *Puranam* we find a story of the queen Pandi. A king is issueless and invokes the grace of Civan. By favour of the God appears a little girl miraculously in his hands when he was offering a libation in the fire. He adopts her as his daughter and when at the age of marriage she becomes queen, she wants, for husband, only a prince able to defeat her in combat. Many tried but without success. At last Civan himself, in the incarnation of a young hero, defeated and married her. In the Greek version Herakles has only one daughter and as nobody is worthy to marry her, he becomes himself her husband. Evidently in that Greek adaptation Herakles is not Krsna of Mathura but Sivan under a Greek name, and the story comes from the Tamil tradition of Pandya's Madurai, a Tamil counterpart of Northern Mathura. That is important because Megasthenes never travelled in the South, and surely the story was told him at Pataliputra or in some other part of Northern India circa 300 B.C., we can even add, in Brahmanical circles of Northern India. We have seen that Prakrit, not Sanskrit, was in general use throughout the empire of Asoka, grandson of Candragupta, and so widely spread that it is hardly possible to think it was not the current language in the time of Candragupta itself. The words quoted by Megasthenes are however chiefly reproduced from Sanskrit not from Prakrit forms, and that is easy to explain, if Megasthenes, as ambassador, received his information from Brahmanical circles in the court of Candragupta, not from ordinary people.

Therefore, we must conclude that Tamil and Sanskrit traditions were early in contact but, thanks to Asoka's initiatives, ideas from Northern India came to Tamilnad mostly under Prakrit garment. That is corroborated by other facts.

Even much later, in the first half of the first century of the Christian era, when appeared the first dated Tamil inscriptions, those of Virapatnam-Arikamedu near Pondicherry, Sanskrit was not yet current in Tamilnad, as the

inscriptions in an Indo-Aryan language found along with the Tamil inscriptions are in Prakrit. These inscriptions are no doubt very short and very few, but we can at least be sure they are exactly comparable with those of Ceylon at the same epoch ; here also middle-Indian was employed, not Sanskrit. The characters of all these inscriptions around the beginning of the Christian era are the same and very similar in their shapes to the ancient Brahmi of Asoka, giving supplementary evidence of the importance of the contribution of Asoka's empire to the culture in the South.

If we now consider the ancient Tamil works, we find in almost all some allusions to Vedic or Brahmanic rites and the use of some Sanskrit words, though very few. When Indo-Aryan words are adopted in Tamil in Sangam literature, they are more frequently borrowed from Prakrit forms or with Prakritic features. Surely, Sanskrit and Prakrit cultures were known to some extent in Tamilnad but rather through Prakrit than through Sanskrit. Massive influence of Sanskrit in Tamil literature took place much more later.

If we consider it from a historical angle, we can well understand this fact. During the period when middle-Indian dialects were in common use, Sanskrit was special to Brahmanical circles. In these circles it was the subject of regular teaching and therefore was well preserved in a fixed classical state. At the same time, middle-Indian dialects, owing to their wide and popular use, were always under transformation and became more and more differentiated and distinct, from one part of India to another. Sanskrit alone remained everywhere the same and accordingly became soon ready to become a *lingua franca*. In the centuries around the Christian era, Buddhist pilgrims, coming from very distant countries to holy places of Buddha's life, chiefly in the Ganges Valley where Sanskrit was flourishing, began to bring their differentiated middle-Indian dialects closer to Sanskrit, this finally gave birth

to the Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit. But Sanskrit was also more widely employed in its regular form, precisely because it had a regular form, in the courts of rulers of foreign origin in the West. It was fit for inter-state intercourse and general administration and probably Brahmins, serving in the courts as ministers and officers, used it both as their language of culture and as the more important language of India, in opposition to the foreign tongues of rulers. In fact, Sanskrit was in vogue at the court of ~~satraps~~ like Rudradaman in the middle of the second century A.D., and since then was increasingly used in official documents as well as for secular literary purposes. From India, it was exported also to foreign countries. Towards the North, it was carried chiefly by Buddhist preachers to China and Japan. Towards the East, to Indo-China and Indonesia, it was carried by propagandists of Buddhism, Saivism and Vaisnavism. The first Sanskrit inscription in Indo-China found on the Eastern Coast dates back to about the third century and its palaeographical features are not far from those of the Rudradaman's inscription. After that epoch, during the Gupta period and later, Sanskrit inscriptions, in purely grammatical and refined Sanskrit of *mahakavyas*, appear in large numbers in the Far East and it is worthy to observe that their fashions of writing, and the ideas they express, are always in accordance with Indian fashions or Indian currents of thought. Thus, we can see all Indian influences coming from every part of India through Sanskrit and following the developments of Sanskrit literature. And it is specially important for us now to observe that close relations between Tamilnad and Cambodia existed through Sanskrit not through Tamil even at the time when the Pallava and Cola influences were at their highest. We must add it should be fruitful to compare Indian documents with their counterparts in Indo-Chinese and Indonesian Sanskrit inscriptions, as these are ordinarily clearly dated and can therefore give precious landmarks for history. Bearing this in mind, we can now re-examine the contacts of Tamil literature with Sanskrit.

The absence of strong influence of Sanskrit literature on the Sangam works of Tamil poetry appears to be quite natural. Before and around the beginning of the Christian era, when Sanskrit was just preparing for its secularisation and expansion, it was not yet able in the South to replace the Prakrits and to introduce new literary fashions. But after it was widespread as the language of official documents, diplomacy and general culture for communications between Indians and with foreigners, its influence gradually became deeper. In all likelihood, that took place in Tamilnad about the fourth century A.D., when the language of the chancellery of the Pallavas, which formerly was Prakrit, gave place to Sanskrit.

Since that time, the influence of Sanskrit was much more effective than that of Prakrit. Prakrit literature was not so impressive as the Sanskrit one. It was more special and of multifarious kinds. Its chief forms were Buddhist and Jaina. Jaina tradition, yet now living, brought many elements to Tamil Culture but not always through Prakrit, as Sanskrit became also a Jaina means of expression. Buddhist tradition was for many centuries flourishing in Tamilnad and most likely under the same Pali form as in Ceylon. We have, indeed, in Pali literature clear testimony of that fact; the Pali literature of Ceylon has preserved the works in Pali of two famous Buddhist Tamilians, Buddhadatta, born at the end of the fourth century A.D. at Urayur, the Cola chief town and Dhammapala, both commentators of Pali Scriptures. But, as we see from Ceylonese chronicles, Tamilians were not as a general rule converted to the Buddhist creed. And, if we find testimony of the existence of Buddhism in Tamilnad specially at Kanchipuram till the fourteenth century, we may nevertheless be sure that this religion had already been in decadence for a long time, and was partly known through Sanskrit sects and sources. Therefore, while we have clear evidence of good knowledge of Buddhism in Tamil circles by books like *Nilakesi*, Buddhism did not

exert a profound influence on Tamil literature neither through Pali works, nor through Sanskrit.

On the other hand, before Sanskrit expansion took place in Tamilnad, roughly prior to the fourth century A.D., Tamil literature was already fully developed and quite ready to meet and survive the later massive invasion of Sanskrit. Only in some fields of learning it was apparently enriched, but in an original manner, by knowledge of Sanskrit lore. Dr. P. S. Subrahmanya Sastri has shown how the author of *Tolkappiyam*, assuming* that he had knowledge of Vedic *Pratisakhya*s and of the *Nirukta*, did utilize it, not on the Sanskrit model but with the finest feeling of the genius of the Tamil language quite different from Sanskrit in linguistic respect.

Vedic lore also was surely known in ancient times to Tamil authors, but was not adopted by the Tamils and Brahmanisation or Brahmanical social organisation came only with the later influence of *dharmaśāstras* of classical Sanskrit.

It does not follow from these observations that no kind of *dharma* was known in ancient Tamilnad before the borrowing of doctrines of these Sanskrit *dharmaśāstras*. We can trace in Prakrit Pallava inscriptions a useful indication. Sivakhamdavamma, according to the inscription of Hirahadagalli, received the honorific title of *dhamma-maharajadhiraja*, "emperor following the Dhamma" and the same title reappears in later Sanskrit inscriptions of the same dynasty: Visnugopavarman was *dharmayuvamaharaja* and Simhavarman II *dharmamaharaja*. That is enough to prove the existence of the ideal of a kind of *Dhamma* amongst the Pallava kings but not to show the

* Dr. Sastri has based this assumption on inadequate data. First, he takes it for granted that *Nirukta* and *Pratisakhya*s are chronologically anterior to *Tolkappiyam*; secondly, the existence of some similarities is *ipso facto* proof that the author of *Tolkappiyam* was acquainted with these Sanskrit works. Such uncritical and facile assumptions are too readily made by Sanskritists like Dr. Sastri, who refuse even to consider the possibility of the truth being just the opposite.—(Editor)

nature of this *Dhamma*. But, as its mention first appears before the vogue of Brahmanical learning in Tamilnad, we can try to trace its model in the original literature of the country and we think immediately of works like *Tirukkural*.

In that famous and admirable book, we find at first the *Aram* section, illustrating without any sectional religious bias, an ideal of good order of universal human interest. *Aram* is usually interpreted as an equivalent of Sanskrit *dharma*, but the ideal of Tiruvalluvar does not coincide with the *dharma* of Sanskrit *Smrtis*. It is surely more akin to the *Dhamma* of Asoka long ago preached in Tamilnad. It is akin also to the Jain ideal, as Prof. Chakravarti has recently pointed out. But we see that *Arat-tupal*, just after *Kadavul Valthu*, begins with *Vancirappu*, the eulogy of rain, and that seems to me very characteristic of an idea which is fundamental in the conception of Vedic *ṛta*: the good order, which is also the Truth, possesses as cosmical sign the regularity of coming of rainy season, the first and main condition of the life of all beings. Thus in free accordance with an ancient Vedic idea, Tiruvalluvar, nevertheless, did not follow special Vedic or Brahmanic speculations. Though exalting the greatness of those who have renounced the world (*nittar perumai*), he left aside the Vedantic search of the *Atman-Brahman* and he put the stress on family life (*ilvalkkai*) and on all human virtues. Such an ideal resting on adoration of God, praise to the cosmic Norm of the world and purity of conduct, completed by rules fit for kings and states as emphasised in *Porutpal*, is probably a true image of the *dhamma* or *dharma* referred to in Pallava inscriptions. In any case, *aram* of *Tirukkural* is the standard Tamil ideal of life, not ignoring various *dhammas* or *dharma*s of Aryan India, but autonomously fixed in Tamilnad.

After the increasing use of Sanskrit in the country, borrowings of Sanskrit words became gradually more numerous, but the Tamil genius continued to follow its

own ways in accordance with its own well fixed rules. Technical Sanskrit texts chiefly of *ayurveda* and *jyotisa* were frequently, but not always or not exclusively, inspiring Tamil compositions. Apart from these, the most known Sanskrit texts were, it seems, works not belonging to exclusively peculiar schools but works of wide popularity like *Bhagavadgita*, as we can trace some echoes of Gita in songs of Tamil saints. The works of these Saints, Alvars and Nayanmars were composed, it would seem, chiefly during the period of Pallava and Cola splendour. In their hymns or poems we frequently find Sanskrit words or allusions to ideas contained in Sanskrit literature but they use chiefly ordinary Tamil words without special technical meaning. Their songs are devotional songs, not philosophical compositions. But in their very time, philosophical speculations on Vedantic subjects began to be greatly active among Dravidian authors studying Sanskrit books like *Upanishads* and *Brahmasutras* and commenting upon these in Sanskrit. The illustrious Sankaracarya, circa 800 A.D., was thus a Sanskritizing Dravidian and one of the most eminent contributors to Sanskrit philosophical literature and following his example we see Sanskrit literature in Tamilnad, not entirely imported from the North to the South but partly created in the South itself.

The new Sanskrit literature of the South grew quickly and spread to the North, having, of course, at the same time a large influence in the South itself. Thus, when Tamil continued to be cultivated in accordance with its own traditions, it received a double dose of Sanskrit influence from both outside and inside. That led to an increasing popularity of Sanskrit studies in Tamilnad and to the introduction of an immense number of Sanskrit words into the Tamil language, even doubling some Indo-Aryan words already adopted on a middle-Indian form.

The development of philosophical speculations led also to a great effort at reinterpretations of Tamil works of religious interest according to the various views of Vedan-

tic circles. Thus began, for example, an exegesis on the hymns of the Alvars, chiefly Nammalvar. Almost every word of *Tiruvaymoli* was examined and interpreted in Sanskrit by many successive commentators, with the strongest tendency to find in it at any cost a meaning in accordance with the technical Sanskrit Vedantic vocabulary. All the literature in *manipravalam* thus substitutes such a vocabulary to simple Tamil words, just partly preserving the Tamil morphological structure of phrases. Moreover, the *Tiruvaymoli* was looked at as an *Upanisad*, the *Dramidopanisad* and, notwithstanding that, the entire work of Nammalvar was placed parallel to the Vedas: *Tiruviruttam* to *Rgveda*, *Tiruvaymoli* to *Sama*, *Tiruvaciriyam* to *Yajur*, and *Periaturuvandadi* to *Atharva*. That was quite arbitrary and manifestly a pure result of the prestige gained by Sanskrit in Vedantic circles of Tamilnad. That prestige, the widespread use of Sanskrit philosophy and the necessity of controversy with the Sanskrit school led also Ramanuja in the line of *Acaryas*, to become a Sanskrit author like Sankara, though he was a Tamilian of Sriperambudur and full of admiration for the Alvars, more particularly Andal. Founded on Tamil sources before the tenth century, the Srivaishnava movement flourished in Sanskrit alone during the following centuries.

Moreover, in almost every part of Tamil literature Sanskritization was in great honour during that period. Even in Tamil grammar so aptly established long ago in accordance with the very genius of the language, new grammars like *Viracoliyam*, tried to describe Tamil on the model of Sanskrit, as if it was a language with the same structural character.

Lastly, during the period of Vijayanagar rule in Tamilnad, the prestige of Sanskrit was actively maintained, as a great revival of Sanskrit and even Vedic studies took place in the court of Vijayanagar. Even in writing, new fashions were introduced from the North under the shape of *Nandinagari*, and the great work of Vedic com-

mentory by Sayana was undertaken under the patronage of the kings of Vijayanagar.

On another side, we have to note the interest manifested in Tamilnad for the Northern books even from Schools of far countries. We know through Father De Nobili in his *Apology*, a book entitled *Sindamani* was in honour in Madurai. According to the description of De Nobili, this book was certainly not the Tamil *Civagacintamani*. It was surely Sanskrit *Tattracintamani* by Gangesa, founder in Bengal of the *Naryanyaya* School. The sending of a copy of this book by French missionaries to Paris from South India in the first part of the eighteenth century under the abridged title *Sindamani* proves the fact.

Nevertheless, the influence of different sections of Sanskrit literature on Tamil culture was very unequal. Vedic lore, in particular, was very scarcely cultivated in Tamilnad through Tamil writings. On the other hand, in relatively late times, during the periods of great influence of Sanskrit some special fields of Tamil literature were developed in parallel with the corresponding parts of Sanskrit literature but preserving a great amount of originality. It seems the literature ascribed to Sittar falls under this class. Siddhas are, of course, well known in Sanskrit literature but we have before us two traditions, one in Sanskrit one in Tamil, till now appearing as very different.

In any case we have no need here to emphasize on the persistent activity of the Tamil literature in opposition to Sanskrit; your work is the best witness of the high place of Tamil. We may conclude by saying that Sanskrit came into great vogue in Tamilnad after the full development of Tamil literature. When it arrived, it was welcomed and it gave Tamil literature new wealth without supplanting it. Thanks to Sanskrit influence, while preserving its own genius, and enriching Sanskrit literature itself, Tamilnad was able to permit two great cultures to flourish at the same time.

Dr. J. Filliozat, who is a keen student of Indian History and of Indian Culture, has a brilliant record of academic distinctions and activities.

Born in Paris on November 4, 1906, Dr. Filliozat took his Doctorate in Medicine in 1930. Soon he directed his attention to Oriental Studies, in which he has since become solely absorbed as is evidenced by the following events in his career.

1935—Diploma of 'Ecole Nationale des Langues Orientales, Paris (with Tamil as modern Indian language).

1945—Secretary of the 'Societe Asiatique' since 1945.

1946—Doctor es Lettres (Paris).

1952—Professor, 'Le College de France', the most celebrated seat of learning in Paris.

1952-55—As President of the Administrative Board of the 'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient', went on cultural missions to Indo China.

1953—General Secretary of the International Union of Orientalists.

1954—First Director of French Institute of Indology at Pondicherry.

Dr. Filliozat is a versatile and prodigious worker and his field of research extends from linguistics, philology, paleography, numismatics etc. . . . to philosophy, literature, history of religions, sciences, etc. He is the author of several books, including :

L'Inde Classique (in collaboration with L. Renou)

La doctrine classique de la medecine indienne and has contributed numerous scholarly articles.

V. V. S. Aiyar's Approach to Kambar

C. JESUDASAN, M.A.

In the sweep of his imagination, in the unflagging sonorous qualities of his diction, in a feeling for dramatic situations, and in the individuality he bestows on the children of his creation, Kambar stands without question as the king of Tamil Literature. Students of Tamil would be justified in ranking him with the greatest of world-poets. In his greatness indeed he may not be free from lapses of taste, but then this is a quality he shares with Shakespeare. While Shakespeare's unerring sense is for the play of human feelings, Kambar's is for sheer poetry. By the rich glow of his verse, Tiruvalluvar's unequalled perfection in ethical poetry, or Kapilar's glories achieved in docile obedience to rigid literary convention, seem to grow pale and wan. Kambar's literary destiny is but one work, the *Kamba-Ramayanam*. The outlines of it indeed are borrowed from the Sanskrit. But the poet's allegiance to the original stops here. He exercises fully his right to be himself, and, "fancy-free", proceeds with the creation of that great ocean of literature to which his name is given. For, the *Kamba Ramayanam* is like an ocean. No study can exhaust it, no plumbing can fathom it thoroughly. It remains, when other inspirations run dry, the eternal life-giving source to the love of the study of Tamil.

If there is a duty of the literatures of the world to contact one another for mutual benefit, the Tamil Scholar has a duty to take the *Kamba Ramayanam* to the arena of the men of letters of other languages, nationalities and cultures. There is no medium so fitted as English for international communication. Naturally a translation of

the *Kamba Ramayanam* into English would be most welcome. It is truly a pity that there is no full translation available. It could not be for want of devotion, for, the *Kamba Ramayanam* is read with religious ardour in many a Tamilian Hindu's home. But a translation and a proper introduction to a study of it in English require absolute mastery of the two languages concerned. There, really, has been the drawback.

V. V. S. Aiyar has found time, among his many activities, to put a study of the *Kamba Ramayanam* before the English reading public. The work is not comprehensive, nor indeed does it profess to be. Beside the monumental work of Rev. G. U. Pope, the translation of the *Kural*, the *Tiruvacagam* and the *Naladiyar*, the work of V. V. S. Aiyar might indeed appear inadequate. But it is really only an introduction to a study of the work proper. V. V. S. Aiyar might have rendered substantial service to Tamil poetry had he taken more pains over this work. But he chose to devote only part of his talents and time to this cause, and so the fact remains that the *Kamba Ramayanam* still awaits a competent translator and competent critics to study those many facets of it which V. V. S. Aiyar has passed by.

Incomplete as it is, V. V. S. Aiyar's study of *Kamba Ramayanam* deserves attention as a praiseworthy venture into a vast field. The world tends to eye with suspicion the boosting of a language by half-ignorant enthusiasts. Let but the proofs of greatness be brought, and thinking men all over the world are willing to welcome to their midst the hitherto unknown classics which bear witness to the omnipresence of genius.

V. V. S. Aiyar has indeed taken for his study that aspect of Kambar which is not above criticism—the dramatic side of his work. The characters are largely borrowed from Valmiki, and except for a few individual touches here and there, as in the love of the maiden Sita

and the idealisation of the major characters in general, we could recognise the old Sanskrit friends with new faces here. There is much that is sentimental, unrealistic, and grotesque. The Tamil epic poet has not recognised the Latin convention that the epic should revolve round a few momentous days and not be a narration of the story from A to Z. There is also a sensuousness in him which does not fail to discolour even the best of his human portraits. And yet, perhaps, V. V. S. Aiyar is justified in opening the great theme of the study of Kambar by introducing the characters to his audience. For, after all, lovers of Tamil poetry are fewer than lovers of *Kamba Ramayanam*. The characters are familiar to many while the poetry belongs to the literate few. These characters have captivated and held in bondage the minds of the Tamils through many generations, and it is fitting that the western world should have an idea of the fascination—for the most part religious—exercised by them.

The characters of the *Ramayanam* are many and great, but the two names which spring instantly to our lips, the names which form part of many a religious incantation in Hindu households are the names of Rama and Sita. These two characters are drawn with unwavering idealism by Kambar. No study of his *Ramayanam* would be complete without one or the other of these. Unfortunately, V. V. S. Aiyar, who had reserved Sita's character to the last as the plum of his pudding, did not live to treat his audience to it. The unnamed substitute for V. V. S. Aiyar who has heroically striven to complete the study, has not, despite the tribute of the *Sunday Bharat*, done full justice to Sita. Kambar's Sita is married to Rama with the customary marriage rites, but she is no soulless doll who simply submits to her guardian's will. The husband to whom she gives her hand is the lover to whom she has already given her heart, and this coincidence seems to be the ratification of a pure passion by the powers divine. She had solemnly sworn to end herself should Rama prove to be other than

he who had touched her heart. So with her marriage really is her first moral victory, the legitimate fore-runner of the second moral victory over the foul advances of Ravana. So Sita as a bride in the *Kamba Ramayanam* is decidedly more interesting than she is in Valmiki. Again the indelicacy of her language used to Lakshmana in Valmiki is considerably mitigated in Kambar, where though she is desperate at his coolness on hearing Marichan's dying cry in Rama's voice, she does not at least fling the charge of illicit passion in the face of her husband's worthy brother. It has been pointed out that even in the description of Sita's person Kambar is not particularly delicate, but one believes the Sanskrit model is even less so, and Kambar has definitely not coarsened the picture, though he might have shown still better taste. Anyway a study of Kambar's Sita would be a separate volume by itself, and we are unfortunate in V. V. S. Aiyar's having left his work without its heroine.

There are other though less important omissions in V. V. S. Aiyar's work. Kaikeyi and Mandodari might have been more intensely studied. Kaikeyi's character is far more complex than that of Rama or Sita, steel-true and blade-straight, and we are not sure that she is thereby more interesting. Shurpanaka herself has not been more harshly condemned than this woman for claiming what was after all her due. But a sympathetic study of her character will show that she was not by nature so cunning or cruel as generally thought. Only two characters in the story strongly condemn her—her own son and her husband—and theirs is the blind passion of infatuation for Rama. Rama himself recognises that she has been another mother to him, and the man, who sternly reproves his devoted wife for her unwifely act of suffering life in another man's home, never sees anything unmotherly or worthy of reproof in Kaikeyi. It had been a former understanding between Dasaratha and Kaikeyi's father that her son should be heir. The king had also promised his young and favourite queen

the two dearest wishes of her heart. He had then, strange to say, arranged for the coronation of his eldest son, old arrangements overlooked, at the time when the prince's devoted brother Bharata was not there to share in the rejoicing. Putting all these things together, what was more natural for an impressionable young woman, especially when misguided by a counsellor totally wanting in generosity, than to demand her due, and further safeguard the interest of her son by exiling the prospective rival? Against this, however, we must array the facts that, first of all, in Dasaratha's household the system of polygamy was unusually successful, the co-wives being perfectly contented, that the brothers were dearly devoted to one another and Rama was idolised by all the other three, that Rama himself had been the perfect son of Kaikeyi, and had touched her heart almost as much as Bharata, her own child, that long years of disinterested attachment among the members of the family had virtually annulled all earlier selfish interests, and Kaikeyi, knowing her husband's life itself was bound up in that of Rama, could not but have foreseen the fatal results of Rama's banishment. Justice indeed was on her side, and she thought that she had reason for claiming it; but the bonds of human love in her case pulled the other way. Her failure to respond fully to this urge at a decisive moment is indeed the only failing which she is guilty of. But then this failing is the axis on which all subsequent action is pivoted, and everywhere else Kaikeyi is far from being a monster, though Kambar himself would take sides with her son against her.

Just a passing mention is made of Mandodari who surely deserves more. Sita herself, held up to the world as the brightest luminary of the story, is guilty of pettishness and short-sightedness at least in the forest scene where she urges Rama first and Lakshmana next after Marichan. One might throw the blame on Providence which had so arranged for the destruction of the *Rakshasas*; but even if Providence put the weakness there, there

is no point in denying the weakness. Sita is also capable of wishing to see her tormentors widowed. Mandodari is nobility itself, and when we think of her love for her husband we should remember that she had far less reason to worship and love her husband than Sita had to worship hers.

V. V. S. Aiyar mentions one slight failing in Rama's love, but he has not been given time to explain it. Obviously it is the chilling reception Rama gives his wife when she is redeemed and brought to him after untold privations. He tells her that all that bloodshed was not for the sake of the shameless woman who endured existence in a stranger's home, but for the renown of his father's house. It is only after Sita has proved her loyalty by the fire-ordeal that he accepts her. Rama's part in the Vali-Sugriva business is equally distasteful to our mind. Rama considers himself bound in honour to avenge the wronged brother, but he puts himself in a very delicate position, and his shooting at the unprepared enemy is surely not an additional laurel to his martial reputation.

Aiyar has taken great pains to prove that Vibhishana is not a time-serving traitor but purely a bhakta of Rama, whose every act may be justified from that point of view. But unless Rama is to be completely divested of his human attributes we would think twice before accepting this. We can understand that Vibhishana strongly disapproved of his brother's misdeeds and that he recognized the greatness and virtue of the enemy. We can also understand his fleeing from his brother's camp upon Ravana's suspicion and anger being roused. But Ravana spared the brother whom he strongly suspected of treachery simply because of the call of blood. What we cannot bring ourselves to like in Vibhishana is his denying this call of the blood in him, and making himself instrumental to the punishment of his brother. Rama himself, for all the God that Kambar or Vibhishana would make him out to be,

frankly owns to Lakshmana that his victory over the Rakshasas was due to Vibhishana,

With his counsel sage,
That guided us to victory!

Let us call a spade a spade and be done with it. If this was not fratricide on the part of Vibhishana there is no other word for it. One finds no meaning in defending Rama's godhead against human reproach when he is to be judged as a man. Lakshmana is much nearer divinity when he expresses his disapproval of the affair of brother fighting against brother.

Every competent student of a literary work can have his own comments to make upon it. V. V. S. Aiyar's right to have his opinion cannot be questioned. Still there are statements of his, which, with due respect to his learning, I must own to be hyperbolic. For example, his purpose in studying *KambaRamayanam*, he says, is to prove that it is an epic challenging comparison, "not merely with the *Iliad* and the *Aenid*, the *Paradise Lost* and the *Mahabharata*, but with its original itself, namely, the *Ramayana* of Valmiki". Here is an undisguised suggestion that Valmiki's *Ramayana* is decidedly superior to the *Paradise Lost*, the *Iliad* and the *Aenid*. One is not aware of the extent of V. V. S. Aiyar's intimacy with the *Iliad* and the *Aenid*, but in view of his recognized scholarship in English one must concede his authority to judge the *Paradise Lost*. The present writer confesses ignorance of Valmiki's *Ramayana*, except in so far as it is accessible in translations. But even bringing the *Paradise Lost* and the *KambaRamayanam* into the arena, one wishes that V. V. S. Aiyar had thought twice before committing himself to such a sweeping statement. The *KambaRamayanam* is nothing so sustained as the *Paradise Lost* for all its magnificence, and though for sheer fluency of language one does indeed wonder whether Kambar or Milton deserves the palm, there are again and again instances when we feel of Kambar that he might

have blotted a thousand lines of his composition after the whiteheat of their creation had cooled down. This is not what one associates with the *Paradise Lost*. Kambar's defect is not merely that he is voluble; the torrent of rich music which his poetry affords trespasses into many a field which a finer taste would leave untouched. V. V. S. Aiyar's enthusiasm for the *Ramayana* has swept him here off the stand of sensible criticism. Indeed the two works, *Paradise Lost* and the *KambaRamayanam* should not be compared as epics. The ideas that we have imbibed from the west, of epic grandeur and epic restraint, will not stand when we read the *KambaRamayanam*. Spenser's *Fairie Queene*, in general structure, is much nearer to the *KambaRamayanam* than the *Paradise Lost*. True, that is no reason why the *KambaRamayanam* should not be an epic, and a great epic, according to oriental standards. The test of time has proved its worth. It is not merely the religious colouring of the story which has captivated Tamilnad. The testimony of all subsequent Tamil poets is there to support its literary claims.*

Granting this, we have still to face the fact that V. V. S. Aiyar has not fully succeeded in substantiating his statement. Tamilians need nothing more than the *KambaRamayanam* as evidence of its own greatness. But in introducing the *KambaRamayanam* to the non-Tamil world as a mighty work much more is needed than retelling the story or considering the characters which after all are borrowed from the Sanskrit to convince the audience of its merits. V. V. S. Aiyar's book, which is mainly a study of the characters of the *KambaRamayanam*, is but the beginning of what might have been a monumental work.

* Almost every cultivated language has its own distinctive features which defy comparison with other languages and it is not therefore possible to arrive at absolute standards which can guide literary criticism in comparing the literature of one language with that of another. Both V. V. S. Aiyar and his critic appear to err in making such comparisons, one in favour of and the other against *KambaRamayanam*. Vague generalisations such as western and oriental standards carry us nowhere. (Editor)

The magic of *KambaRamayanam* is not merely the magic of the story or the characters involved though surely Kambar knew his advantage when he fixed upon his subject. One needs but to listen to the drugging music of a few of his best stanzas at a stretch to know of the power in the hands of a master of the art. To bring this out in another language is no easy work, though one feels that V. V. S. Aiyar is one of the competent few who could have made a brave attempt. But he has let the opportunity go by, and contents himself with translating only such of Kambar's stanzas as bear directly on the characters he discusses.

His achievement by itself is indeed not inconsiderable. In twenty pages he presents a crisp narrative of the story without knowing which, one could not be introduced to the characters. His study of Lakshmana is excellent. So is his view of Indrajit. Even the other characters he presents would be interesting to those who are absolutely unacquainted with them. For a first introduction to them we could look for no better. Supplemented as it is with translations from the original it does give an idea of the substance of *KambaRamayanam*.

But substance is not everything. Manner in poetry cannot be ignored. V. V. S. Aiyar has translated into blank verse the resonant stanzas of the great Tamil poet. Milton has made the blank verse the language of the epic in English. But I do not think that it is Kambar's singing style which can be successfully represented in blank verse. And any style has to be handled by a born poet to make blank verse worth the reading. V. V. S. Aiyar's prose is clear and lucid and answers his purpose well. But I doubt if the same thing could be said of his verse. I am sure that a verse like

Fly

Before death overtakes you Indrajit,
And saying,—died

Or

Hissing clove the air with force abnorm

Or

All highly virtues come

By instinct to the children of thy race.

even sacrifices sense and grammar to the demands of metre. Of all verse forms, blank verse would be the last to demand such sacrifice, and one can safely say that he who puts blank verse on stilts thus would not be capable of shaping it in any style, much less Kambar's style. Occasionally the verse does go smooth-flowing as in Hanuman's speech to Kumbakarna :

This rock I hurl at thee ; if from its shock
Thou canst escape alive, the world will count
Thy might invincible and I shall deem
Myself defeated at thy hands, and face
Thee not again in battle ; and great will be
Thy fame on earth.

Sufficiently competent as verse of this type is, its distance from the magic of the original is immeasurable. And yet we have not had better translators than V. V. S. Aiyar.

Translation indeed, is a thankless job, and if it is to be worth while it should generally be allowed some freedom. But translation which avails itself of freedom defeats its own purpose ; and translation which maintains absolute loyalty to the original is usually defeated by the genius of another language.

Rev. Pope's herculean labours have brought out in English faithful English editions of some of the great Tamil works. But though their value is undeniable they still do not equal their originals. Probably V. V. S. Aiyar was wise, in so far as his own reputation was concerned, in refraining from a complete translation or a translation of the most glorious passages of *KambaRamayanam*. But still the need for translation is there, a vast field unexplored.

When a lover of poetry thinks of Kambar it is not first of the *Ramayanam*, but of those haunting melodies of his that will not desert the ear even in dreams. It is stanzas like those ushering in the maiden Sita into the hall for her engagement, like the wonderful description of *Marudam*, like Sita's grief over the supposed death of her husband and a thousand soul-stirring episodes sung in undying verse. It is such glories that the Tamil literature thirsts to present to the world, and we wait for another V. V. S. to proceed with that work which his fore-runner had begun and left half-way.

Tribes of the Nilgiris

—The Kotars

REV. F. LEGRAND

The Kotars are, after the Todas, one of the most remarkable among the Tribes inhabiting the Nilgiris. They are easily distinguishable among the other people of the Hills, when they come to the market of near-by towns such as Ootacamund, Kotagiri and Gudalur, close to which they have some of their settlements. They are well-built and good-featured, their skin having usually a copper colour; many of them are light-skinned. In fact, though much has been said and written about the Roman deportment of the Todas, many of them are rather dark-skinned, in spite of their having inhabited the Hills for many centuries; and the Badagas, who are comparatively recent comers to the Hills, are certainly of a fairer complexion. However some of the Kotars are the fairest skinned amongst the Hill tribes.

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE.

The head of the Kotars is well-formed, with a slightly elongated face, the forehead narrow but prominent. They keep their hair long and loose, or tie it carelessly at the back of the head; their eyebrows, dark and bushy, have a tendency to be united to each other; their nose, smaller and more sharply defined than it is with the Todas. On the whole, they are fairly good-looking, and their countenance indicates energy and decision.

The Kota women are rather shy, in contrast to the Toda women who are rather too bold sometimes. Even now, when Kota women see some stranger approaching,

they run away and hide within their houses. They are clad in filthy dirty clothes, tattered and torn, and frequently their clothes do not reach even to the knees. The men wear more or less the same clothes as the Todas. The *putkuli*, or toga-like cloak of the Todas, is called by the Kotars *vevad*; the *tharp* (waist cloth) is called *mund*, and the *Konu* or *langooty*, is known in Kota language as *kosal* or *jalladam*.

Both men and women are wearing ornaments, which are usually made by the Kotars themselves. They wear silver rings (*madaram*) on the third or fourth finger of the right hand. Men are also wearing ear-rings, which are sometimes of gold and set with pearls. On the second or first toe of each foot, Kota women usually wear some rings made of bell metal, which they call *kakoji*. They wear also copper wristlets, *tebugan*, on the right wrist, and bell metal wristlets, *vodshalle*, on the left wrist; and also adorn themselves with red and black beaded necklaces, *koivarila* and *karg*, which they purchase from the plains.

HABITS AND MODE OF LIFE.

When a Badaga meets a Toda, he places his hand on the head of the latter to salute him. This familiarity is not permitted to the Kotar, who must raise his hands to his face and salute him from a distance. The Badagas, who use the Kotars for their festivals, do not allow them to approach their temples. For the Kotars are considered to be unclean.

They are unclean in fact in their food. They are great flesh eaters, and do not bother about the quality of the flesh; even now they are eating carrion, and we can see them sometimes carrying dead buffaloes which have died of disease and eating their flesh with delight. It is curious enough that this kind of food seems to agree with them. They are a sturdy set of people, very active, and show more energy and muscle than the other tribes.

The Kotars are the artisans among the Hill tribes of the Nilgiris. Until the coming to the Hills of the Europeans and the Tamilians of the plains, they were the only ones to practise any industry at all. They work in gold and silver, are blacksmiths and carpenters, rope-makers and tanners, potters and musicians. In this last capacity, they are playing at Toda and Badaga funerals. On the whole, they make a good livelihood, as their music and dancing are indispensable at feasts and are ordinarily well rewarded. The Kotars play a kind of clarionet, which they call *kola*; they have a drum, *pare*, which they beat with the hands, and a sort of tambourine, *tapate*, beaten by two sticks. They play also the *buguri*, or flute of the Todas, and a kind of bugle or horn, which they get from the plains.

The women make baskets, and also rude clay pots; they use a kind of black clay found in swamps for making the pots on a wheel. The potter's wheel is a disc of wood or of dry mud, with a blunt iron point on which it revolves in a socket, which is merely a hole in a stone fixed permanently in the ground, in front of the houses. The Todas are using these earthen pots for cooking purposes and in their dairy work; but not for their sacred dairy.

The Kotars are also agriculturists, and raise the same crops as the Badagas, on the best lands close to their villages. They raise crops of bearded wheat, barley, potatoes, samal, onions, etc. They keep also herds of cattle, but usually do not drink the milk, except when it is presented to them by a *pujari*, or in a village different from their own.

They are moreover paid in kind by the Badagas, Irulars and Kurumbars, for the services they render them. The Todas pay them with the hides of dead buffaloes and with ghee.

They used to drink a lot and were very gay on market days; but nowadays, they do not appear to be addicted to drink when they come to the town. They just

come to the market to purchase iron (*hibbi* in Kota), with which they make their implements, good sickles (*kanaket*), hooks (*mava*), hammers (*matige* or *tabita*), mamooties (*kudai*) and hoes (*kala kudai*), and even good axes (*madat*) for chopping wood, which they sell mostly to the Badagas.

To make all these instruments, they use rather primitive implements which they prepare themselves. They use bellows (*tithi*) in their forges, bellows mouthpieces (*mork*) made of clay, pokers (*shedigol*) and pincers (*kodikilla* or *kaikilla*); formerly they used a piece of iron fixed in a wooden block, as a kind of anvil, but now they know the use of the modern anvil and many of them have it in their forges.

THEIR VILLAGES.

The Kotars have seven villages in the Nilgiris District, six on the plateau proper and one down on the slopes, close to Gudalur. All these villages are named *Kotagiri*, which is the Badaga name for the Kotar villages, meaning literally: Kota hill. The name in Kota language for their villages is: *Kakal*. Each village has however its proper names, which differ in Badaga and Toda languages.

Melkotagiri (or Perangada), called Melkokal by the Todas, is the well-known Kotagiri, the hill station situated on the north-eastern crest of the plateau, and overlooking the plains of Coimbatore. The name Perangada comes from Peranganad, one of the four old divisions of the Nilgiris, which derives its name from the god Rangaswamy, worshipped by the Badagas and Irulars on the peak of that name. When the European settlement was established at Kotagiri, the land of the Kotars was purchased by the Government, and a new village was built for the Kotars about two miles from the place. The former village of the Kotars was on the maidan, in the centre of the town, and their temple has been kept as it was at the time.

Kil Kotagiri is another village of theirs, called also Kinnada, and in Toda, Kilkokal. It is situated on the lower eastern slope of the Hills, about seven miles north-east of Kotagiri.

Kolimalai¹ Kotagiri is in Mekanad, about three miles west of Ketti.

In the Kundas, Kunda Kotagiri is about two miles from Kilkunda, as the crow flies, on the west of it, and close to Manjur. It was formerly called also Menada, and Merkokal by the Todas.

Next, there are two villages of Kotars in Todanad, north-west of the plateau, near Sholur, beyond Dunsandle Estate. These villages are Trichigidi or Tirichigad, and Padugula, also called Kuruvoje, and by the Todas Kuruguli.

Finally, the settlement near Gudalur is called Kalagasa, or Kallgodi.

Some of their villages, as the one at Kolimalai, are kept rather neat; but on the whole, their dwellings seem rather dirty and very poor. Dr. Shortt thus described their villages:

They form large communities, each village containing from thirty to sixty or more huts, of tolerable size, built of mud walls, and covered with the usual thatch grass, somewhat after the style of native huts in the plains; but the arrangement of the dwellings is far from being neat or prepossessing in some villages. The floors are well raised from two to three feet above the soil, with eaves or a short verandah in front, and a pial or seat on either side of the door, under the eaves, on which the people squat themselves when idle. The size of the doors giving entrance to their huts measures 46 x 26 inches.

Nowadays, they are modernizing themselves to some extent, and several of their houses are big halls, covered with Calicut tiles, where several families live together. The pillars of some of their verandahs are of stone, and some are even sculptured, as well as the door posts, with

¹ Hill Ranges of Southern India. I. p. 55.

carving executed by woodcutters from the plains. One of the forges at Kotagiri has pillars of stone sculptured with fishes, lotuses and flowers. The outside walls are sometimes white-washed and painted with several designs in ochre and red colour.

The villages consist of detached huts, and also of huts distributed in streets. Each settlement should consist of three streets or *Keris*. At Kotagiri, these three streets are named: Kilkeri (lower street), Nadukeri (central street), and Melkeri (upper street). At Sholur however, there are four *Keris*, called: Kilkeri, Korakeri (other street), Amreri (near street), and Akkeri (that street). This division into *Keris* is important among them as instituting a kind of relationship. People of the same *Keri* cannot inter-marry. At Sholur, Amreri and Kilkeri people have to seek partners in Korakeri and Akkeri, and vice-versa, and thus divide themselves into two exogamous groups. Usually the three *Keris* exist in the village. A Kilkeri man may marry a Nadukeri or Melkeri wife, but not a Kilkeri woman, who is considered to be too closely related to him.

THEIR TEMPLES.

In every village there are two temples, dedicated to Kamataraya and Kalikai, which are their names for Siva and Parvati.

"Some rude image of wood or stone," writes Dr. Shortt¹, "a rock or tree in a secluded locality, frequently forms the Kota's object of worship, to which sacrificial offerings are made; but the recognised place of worship in each village consists of a large square of ground, walled round with loose stones, three feet high, and containing in its centre two pent-shaped sheds of thatch, open before and behind, and on the posts (of stone) that support them some rude circles and other figures are drawn. No image of any sort is visible here."

¹ Tribes of the Neilgherries, 1868.

At the annual ceremony, the two gods are represented by two thin plates of silver, attached to the upright posts of the temples. The Kotars go to these temples at the full moon to worship the gods. They worship also Magali and Mariamma against cholera and small-pox. At Gudalur, they keep also the Malabar Onam festival.

At Kolimalai, there are three temples, two dedicated to Kamataraya, and one to Kalikai, or Kahasamma, his wife.

One of the two temples at Padugula or Kuruguli (Sholurkokal) is in the form of a Toda *Palthchi* or ordinary temple of the Todas, built in the same oval pent-shaped kind of construction as their ordinary dwellings, but a little bigger. This *Palthchi* is dedicated to Urupal, who is the same as Kamataraya, according to the Kotars. The other temple is dedicated to Kamataraya, and there is none to Kalikai in the village.

The Kotars have two kinds of priests, belonging to their own tribe. One is called *Devadi* or *Terkaran*, the other is the *Munthakannan* or *Pujari*. Both of them are family men and work at their forges or in the fields when they are not occupied with temple duties; but they are not allowed to work for others. They do not live in the temple. At the time of the feasts, they cook food before the temple and distribute it to the people. In the *Palthchi* temple at Sholur, however, the *Pujari* boils rice in the temple at the sowing and reaping seasons, and distributes it to all the heads of families in the village. Both the priests are forbidden to attend Toda or Badaga funerals, under pain of pollution, and at the time of the annual feast, they are not allowed to live with their wives. The *Devadi* seems sometimes to be possessed by the god, especially when consulted at the time of appointment of a new *Pujari*. Both of them participate in the seed sowing and reaping ceremonies; they make the first salute to the corpse at a Kota funeral.

RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS.

The principal feast of the Kotars is the annual feast of Kamataraya, which is celebrated in January, beginning on the first Monday after the January new moon and lasting about twelve days, during which the Kotars clean and decorate the temples with flowers, light a fire in the temple and bring it to the principal street of the village, where it is kept during the whole of the feast. They eat, feast and dance to the accompaniment of the Kota instruments described above. It is said that much indecent dancing takes place during this feast between men and women. In his book *Reise nach Sud-Indien*, published in 1894, Dr. Emil Schmidt thus describes the dancing at which he was present :

When I was at Kotagiri the Kotas celebrated the big festival in honour of their principal god. The feast lasted twelve days; every evening homage was paid to the god, and dancing went on round a fire which was kept burning near the temple during the feast. On the last evening, women, as well as men, took their part in the dance. The weird music, penetrating to my house, attracted me to the village. At the end of the street abutting the back of the temple, a big fire was kept up by putting on continually large bundles of brushwood. The musicians stood close to the flames, on one side of the fire, with their musical instruments, two drums, a tambourine, beaten by blows on the back, a cymbal made of brass, beaten with a stick, and two pipes resembling oboes. The same monotonous tune was repeated again and again by the two last ones in rapid four-eight time and accompanied by the other instruments. When I arrived, about forty Kotars, young and old, were dancing near the fire in a semi-circle, going first to one side then to the other, raising their hands, bending their knees, and making fantastic steps with their feet. The whole circle moved slowly forwards, and now and then one or the other of the dancers shouted something that sounded like *Hau!* and, at the end of the dance, there was a general shout. Several Kotars of both sexes were seated around the circle, some on the heaps of stone close to the temple. Many Badagas of good standing who had been specially invited to the feast, sat down on a raised floor near the back wall of the temple round a small fire. After the

dance, the dancers dispersed. The drummers kept their instruments, which had become damp and lax on account of the moist evening breeze, so close to the flames that I thought they would get burnt. The music soon began a new tune; first the oboes, and then, the other instruments, as soon as they had understood the proper movement. The tune was not the same as before, but its two movements were repeated without stop or change. Women as well as men, took part in this dance; they were grouped in a semi-circle, and the men completed the circle. The men danced wildly and irregularly. Coming slowly forward with the whole circle, each dancer turned from right to left and from left to right; after every turn, they were facing the fire. The women were dancing with more accuracy and more skill than the men. On beginning the dance, they first bent themselves towards the fire, and then made half turns, left and right, with regular and artistic steps. In their appearance there was a mixture of pleasure and shyness. The dancers were not wearing any special costume; the women, however, nearly all old and ugly, wore ornaments in the ears and nose, and on the neck, arms and legs. Only women took part in the third dance, which was played again in four-eight time. This was the most artistic of all; its slow movements had been well rehearsed previously. They stepped radially to and fro, turned forwards and backwards, etc., with seriousness and solemn dignity.

The Kotars, having much to do with the Todas, have borrowed from them many of their funeral rites. They burn the body with some articles belonging to the dead person, and collect the bones in a pot which is buried near the burning place. The skull is preserved for the dry funeral, as with the Todas. But there is a special custom among the Kotars. A *Teru*, or scaffolding hung with clothes is erected before the dead man's house. The corpse is laid on a cot and placed under the *Teru*. All the relations assemble and salute the body, the elder putting their foreheads to the dead man's forehead, the younger to his feet. After dancing round the corpse for some hours they remove the *Teru* and carry the corpse to the burning place (in *Kota, Due*).

This custom of the *Teru* or Procession Car, has been adopted also by the Badagas.

TRADITIONS.

The Kotars have no traditions of their own. Koten, their eponym, is said by the Todas to be one of their ancestors, who brought up the Kotars from the plains. J. W. Breeks, in his book *An Account of the Primitive Tribes and Monuments of the Nilagiris*, published in London in 1873, narrates a story he heard from the Todas. He says that there were three Toda brothers, Koten, Tekudi and Elna. Koten's wife blamed her husband for not possessing any Kotagiri or Tiriari (sacred village of the Todas). He went to his brothers to complain. Tekudi gave him a Tiriari bell and some buffaloes from the Muttanad Tiriari (on the road to Kalhatti, the so-called Toda cathedral); Elna gave him a Kota man and woman. With these, Koten went to the Kundas, where he established a Tiriari and Palals (priests), and he placed the Kotars at the Kunda Kotagiri, called by the Todas, Merkokal. (Mer is the name for Kundas in Toda language.)

Koten and his wife Terkosh were transformed later on into two hills, which are known by the names of Koten and Terkosh, on the Sisapara side of the Hills. Todas and Kurumbars pay occasional visits to these hills, and the Todas are said to sing the song about Koten when they see these two hills.

From this story, it seems that the Kotars were already on the Hills before the establishment of the Kunda Kotagiri. Elna, who gave the Kotars to Koten, was living at Muttanad. There are no Kotars in the immediate vicinity. But there is a settlement at Sholur which, in straight line, is not very far. At Padugula, as we have seen, there is a temple in the shape of the Toda temple; and it seems likely that, owing to their association with the Todas, this is the first Kotar settlement on the Hills. The Todas, being in need of their services, called them to the Hills as soon as they came, and bargained with them, as it is said of Koten: "You shall be my people, and make pots for us." The

Kotars' claim to dead buffaloes formed part of their agreement with the Todas.

The Kotars came to the Hills after the Todas. But the Todas themselves are not, strictly speaking, the first inhabitants of the Hills. They claim as their own several of the cairns, such as Seven Cairn Hill, but say that the others were built by different races, before their coming.

I suspect the Kotars to have come to the Nilgiris about the same time as the Todas. Perhaps they were associated with them already in the plains. As the original place of the Todas is still a mystery, it is also difficult to decide about the origin of the Kotars. In the north of Mysore, near Harihar, there are workers in metals called also Kotars. They worship also Kama and Kalima. Is there any connection between them and our Kotars of the Nilgiris? As the language of the Kotars is a mixture of Tamil and Kanarese, it may be that they came originally from the Kannada country. I am not in a position to decide the question actually.

In conclusion, I give here a list of several proper names in use among the Kotars, some of which seem to be peculiar to them.

Male names: *Kambata* (the god), *Kose*, *Mosale* (crocodile), *Kounda*, *Jogi*, *Mala*.

Female names: *Niji*, *Puyi*, *Teinti*, *Kempi*, *Tegi*, *Madi*, *Verkarji*.

Place Names of Agricultural Regions or Marutham

R. P. SETHUPILLAI, B.A., B.L.

The people of *Tamil-Akam*, a region of great fertility and natural facilities for irrigation, have devoted themselves to the pursuit of agriculture from time immemorial. They reclaimed the lands on river-banks and developed them into fertile fields. They realised the truth that the river nourishes the field with its silt-laden water, just as a mother nurses her darling infant with her breast-milk, and thus came to develop an attachment to the rivers which they held in great veneration. The river *Ka:virī* was glorified as the *Ponni*, the golden damoiselle, or the Goddess of all prosperity. The river *Vaikai* was described as the tendril-waisted damsel that never fails. In short, according to the Tamils, rivers are the throbbing life-arteries of a country.

Villages sprang up on river-banks and grew apace; and the people prospered. This gave rise to the time-honoured saying in Tamil that a "Village without a river is devoid of beauty". The ancient cities and seaports of great renown were built on river-banks and estuaries. The present Woriyur (Utaiyūr of Sangam literature) Tiruchirappalli enjoyed at one time the pride of place as the capital city of the Chola kings. It lies on the southern bank of the *Ka:virī*. The famous city of *Pat:t:inam*—the city *par excellence*—which served as the gate-way of Chola Nad stood at the mouth of the *Ka:virī*. This city was honoured with the significant names of *Puka:r* or river-mouth city and *Ka:virippu:mpatt:t:inam*—the city beautiful on the *Ka:virī*. In the same way the city of Madurai, the capital of the Pandya kings was situated on the banks

of the Vaikai. And Kotkai the maritime capital of the Pandyas, flourished, at the mouth of the other great river of the Pandya country, the *Porunai* (the present *Tamiraparani*). It will thus be seen that rivers contributed mainly to the agricultural and commercial prosperity of the ancient Tamil country.

It is true that Tamil Nad cannot boast of large rivers like the Ganga (Ganges) and the Godavari. And yet the Tamils felt legitimate pride on their achievements in utilizing the waters of their small rivers to maximum capacity. Their appreciation of the great utility of river-water is evidenced by the suggestive names they gave to rivers. *Pa:l-a:tu* (milk-river), is the name of the river flowing through the Thondai Nad, the modern Chingleput District. This river depends for its water mainly on subterraneous springs; and it is seldom in spate. Another river in the droughty Ramanathapuram District—*Se:thu Na:t:u*—bears the sweet name of *The:n-a:tu*, the honey-river. The Lord of Kunta-k-kudi, situated near the *The:n-a:tu* is called *The:n-a:ttu-nha:yakar* or the Lord of the honey-river. The waters of this river are utilized to the last drop for irrigation. Even as the Thondai Nad can boast of its river of milk and Pandya Nad of its river of honey, the Chera Nad can boast of its *Nhey-ya:tu*, the river of clarified butter. A village situated on its bank has been named *Nhey-ya:ttang-karai*.

A rivulet in Tirunelveli District has been named *Karun:ai-a:tu*, the river of compassion, in appreciation of its beneficence to the people living in the locality. And another river flowing by the side of Virudachalam in South Arcot is called *Man:i-muth-tha:tu*, the river of rubies and pearls.

It is significant that the names of some of these rivers are borne by certain villages and towns flourishing on their banks. *Thiru-v-ai-a:tu*, the sacred five rivers, is the name of a village in Chola Nad, regarded as a sacred spot from

ancient times. The place bears this name presumably because it lies in the midst of the fertile tracts fed by five branches of the *Ka:viru*. The Sanskrit name of this place is *Panchanatham*.

There is a river *Ce:y-a:tu* by name which flows through the Thondai Nad. A village on its bank also bears the same name. *At:ai-y-a:tu* is a river flowing through the city of Chennai (Madras). It takes its rise in the Cemparam-pa:kkam tank in Chingleput District and flows through Madras into the Bay of Bengal. The name of this river has been given to a settlement on its margin.

The ancient names of certain rivers, which have become obsolete in modern times, can be inferred from the name of places situated on their banks. The *Cittatu* or *Ciththira:-nhathi* which rises on the Kutta:lam Hills, is joined in its course by a small tributary. This tributary bears in Puranic legends the name of *Ko:than:t:ara:ma nhathi*. According to legend, Rama who was spending part of his exile in this region would appear to have bored the ground with his *Ko:than:t:am* (bow) to obtain drinking water to quench the thirst of Sita. The water which gushed forth is said to have formed a river which was hence named after the bow. The original name of this rivulet was *Kayath-th-a:tu*. It has its source in an artesian spring, yielding a copious supply which overflows and runs as a rivulet. It was natural therefore to call the river *Kayath-thatu* (*Kayam-deep* spring). Rivers in the South have their source generally on mountain tops. *Kayath-th-a:tu* however, is an exception. Although the river has lost its original name, it is recalled by the township on its bank which bears the name of *Kayath-th-a:tu*.

A settlement springing up on the margin of a river is generally called *A:ttu:r*, a river-side place. Many villages bear this name in Tamil Nad. In Salem District, *A:ttu:r* is the name not only of a village but also of a taluk of which

it is the head-quarters. Again A:ttang-karai, river-bank, is the name of a place in Ramnad District. Besides, there is A:ttu-p-pa:kkam in Tanjore District, A:ttu-k-kuticci in Trichinopoly District, and A:ttu-k-kuppam in North Arcot District.

The place where people get access to river-water is known as *thutai*. A village lying close to such ghats takes the suffix *thutai* in its name. The natural charm of these bathing ghats is indicated by the names given to them. In the luxuriant groves on either side of the Ka:virī, peacocks spread out their plumes and monkeys gather, jump and prance. A bathing ghat noted for the dance of peacocks came to be known as Mayil-a:t:u-thutai, the dancing-ghat of peacocks. And the ghat where monkeys frisk about came to be called Kurangk-a:t:u-thutai, playing-ghat of monkeys. The former place-name has now been changed into Mayavaram*. There are two places known as Kurangk-a:t:u-thutai, one on either bank of the Ka:virī. One of these places is now known simply as A:t:u-thutai, but the other retains its full name.

Besides these places, there are on the Ka:virī several sacred spots like Kat:ampa-nh-thutai, ma:-nh-thutai (ma:-mango tree), both of which have been honoured by *The:va:ra* hymns. And on the Porunai river, we have Pu:nh-thutai (now called Cinthpu-pu:nh-thutai) the flower-ghat, and Kutukku-th-thutai (*Kutukku-narrow*).

An islet in a river is known as *Rangam* in Sanskrit and as *Thuruththi* in classical Tamil. There is a picturesque islet in the Ka:virī close to Tiruchirappalli. The Vaishnava Saints have composed hymns in praise of the presiding deity of this place. In their sacred poems, this islet is called *Thiruvaramam*. The original name of Kuttalam in Tanjore district, was Tiru-th-thuruththi. The Saiva hymnist, Thiru-na:vuk-k-arasar has sung about this Thuruththi in exquisite language ;

* Since altered to Mayuram.

I, a servant of God, behold the Lord of Thuruththi, who reposes on the bosom of the Ponni, which carries in its flood a cargo of flowers.

Inscriptions refer to this place as "the islet in the clasp of heaving waters". Another islet in the Tamil country is Tiru-pu:nh-thuruththi, the sacred islet of lovely flowers.

The ancient Tamils held in high veneration the confluence of rivers, treating it as a sacred spot. It was generally called a Ku:t:al or union. The place in Thondai Nad where the Pa:l-a:tu, the Ce:ya:tu and the Kampai-a:tu mingle their waters, is known as Tiru-muk-ku:t:al, the holy junction of three rivers. Similarly, the meeting place of the Porunai, the Citta:tu and the Ko:than:t:ara:ma-nhathi was known as Muk-ku:t:al. This is the spot celebrated in the pastoral play called Muk-ku:t:al Pal:l:u depicting the life of the peasantry. The place in Chola Nad where the Ket:ilam and the Uppan-a:tu unite has been called Ku:t:al-U:r, the place of union. And Ku:t:alai-a:ttu:r in South Arcot is situated at the junction of the Vel:l-a:tu, the white river and the Muth-th-a:tu, the pearl river. This sacred place has been honoured by the hymns of *The:va:ram*.

The ancient Tamils built dams across rivers, diverted the water through channels and stored it in lakes and tanks. Naturally villages came into existence near these dams. The Tamil word for dam is An:ai or An:ai-k-kat:t:u (anicut). In South Arcot District, there is a place called Karat:i-an:ai, the bear dam. Kan:-an:ai, the eye-dam in Ramnad District and Vel:l:i-an:ai, the silver dam in Trichinopoly District are other place names having this termination.

Villages also spring up near irrigation channels which are called Ka:l, a contraction of the word Ka:lva:y. Vel:l:a-k-ka:l, the flood-channel and Pal:l:a-k-ka:l, the low channel are place-names in Tirunelveli District. Thalai-k-ka:l, the head-channel is a village in Ramanatha-

puram District *Man:lal-ka:l*, the sandy channel in Tiruchinnappalli District, *Kuval:ai-k-ka:l*, the lily channel in Tanjore District, and *Ma:ng-ka:l*, the mango-channel in North Arcot District. The word *Ka:l-vay* of which *Ka:l* is a contraction, is itself the name of a place in Tirunelveli District.

A natural brook is called *O:t:ai* in Tamil. A village springing up near such a brook often takes *O:t:ai* as a suffix in its name. We have thus *Mayil-O:t:ai*, the peacock brook in Tirunelveli District, *Pa:l-O:t:ai*, the milk brook in Ramanathapuram District and *Cemp-O:t:ai* the copper stream in Tanjore District.

A sluice constructed on a channel-bank or tank-bund is called *Mat:ai*. Water is let into the field through the sluice. In the vicinity of such sluices, villages have grown up. *Paththal-mat:ai*, commonly known as *Paththa-mat:ai* and *Pa:la-mat:ai* in Tirunelveli District, and *Me:la-mat:ai* in Madurai District are such places.

Storage of water impounded for irrigation fields is called *E:ri*, lake. Numerous villages have sprung up in the neighbourhood of lakes in the Tamil country. Some of the place-names associated with lakes perpetuate the beneficence of the ancient kings of Tamil Nad. *Pallavan-e:ri*, now corrupted into *Palamane:r* in Chittoor District was constructed by a Pallava King. *Then-ne:ri* in Thondai Nadu is yet another village which came into existence by the side of a lake. The lake was dug by a prince named Thirayan, the prince of the waves. *Thirayan-e:ri* has been corrupted into *Then-ne:ri*. There are many villages bearing the name of *Ma:tan-e:ri* the lake of *Ma:tan*, in Tirunelveli District. The word *Ma:tan* denotes the Pandya King. A lake was constructed in Kongu Nad by a king named *Vi:ra-Pa:n:t:ian*. The village which sprang up by the side of this lake came to be called *Vi:ra-pa:n:t:iya-p-pe:r-e:ri*, the great lake of *Vi:ra-Pa:n:t:ian*. The present name of this place is simply *E:ri*.

Names of deities are sometimes associated with lakes. *A:tumukan-e:ri* near Tiruchendur in Tirunelveli District is named after Lord *A:tumukan*, the six-faced God of the Tamils. Yet another lake, which owes its origin to a king of Malayalam (Travancore) has been called *Pathmana:pan-e:ri*, the lake of Lord *Pathmana:pan*. The village which came into existence near this lake now bears the corrupted name of *Pathuman-e:ri*.

There are a few place-names having the suffix *pe:ri*. This suffix is seen in *Ci:vala-P-pe:ri*, *Kan:t:iya-p-pe:ri*, *Alangka:ra-p-pe:ri*, *Vicuvanha:tha-p-pe:ri* in Tirunelveli District. *Pe:ri* is a corruption of *Pe:r-e:ri* meaning a large lake. Evidence in support of this usage is available in inscriptions. A big lake built by the King *Mathura:nhthakan* was known as *Mathura:nhthaka-pe:r-e:ri* and another by the King *Sunhthara-Co:l-an* in Arcot as *Sunhthara-Co:l-a-p-pe:re:ri*. The original name of *Ci:valap-pe:ri* in Tirunelveli District, was *Muk-ku:t:al*. This name signifying the confluence of three rivers, was appropriate for the village situated near it. In later times, the Pandya king *Sri Vallapa* constructed a big lake in the village and called it *Sri Vallapa-pe:r-e:ri*. This name has now been corrupted into *Ci:calap-pe:ri*. There is an old tradition that a Kannada chief constructed a dam across the river *Tha:miraparan:i*, diverted its water through irrigation channels and reclaimed an extensive tract in Tirunelveli District. This dam which is the third on the river is known to this day as the Kannadian dam. The same chieftain constructed also a large lake near the town of Tirunelveli and gave it the name of *Kannat:iya-p-pe:re:ri*. In course of time, this lake-name became the name of the village around it, and was corrupted as *Kan:t:iya-p-pe:r-e:ri*. *Alangka:ra-p-pere:ri* meaning the lovely lake is the name of yet another village. The natural scenery of the surroundings and the large sheet of water with ripples waving on its bosom are probably suggested by the name.

Ko:t:t:akam is another name for a large lake; and there is many a Ko:t:t:akam in the Ka:virī basin. Places like Puthu-k-ko:t:t:akam, the new lake and Ma:nang-ka:ththa:n-ko:t:t:akam are instances of lake-names becoming place-names.

Next to the lake, *Kul:am*, the tank, serves the needs of agriculture. Place-names ending with *Kul:am* are numerous. Some of the names given to tanks indicate the colour of their water or the extent of the water-spread. *Karung-kul:am*, the black tank in Tirunelveli District and *Seng-kul:am*, the red tank in Tiruchirappally District indicate the colour of the tank-water. *Periya-kul:am*, the big tank in the Madura District is a township that has come into existence in the vicinity of a big tank. *Pu:ng-kul:am*, the flower tank in Tanjore District and *Pudu-k-kul:am*, the new tank in South Arcot District are indicative of the nature of the respective tanks.

Some of the great tanks constructed by the Tamil kings and chieftains came to be glorified as *Camuththiram* (Ocean), and *Va:rithi* (immense sheet of water). A tank constructed by the Chola king Raja Raja, is mentioned in an inscription as *Ch:ol-a-Camuththiram*, the ocean of the Chola King. *Ampa-camuththiram* is the name of a place in Tirunelveli District. The original name of it was *Il:ang-ko-kut:i*. The lake which came into existence in the village was named *Ampal:-camuththiram*, the ocean of the lady. This name has been corrupted into *Ampa:camuththiram*. There is evidence in inscriptions to show that tanks originally called *E:ri* (lake), were in later times dignified as *camuththiram* (ocean). The embankment of an old tank in the village of *Then-ne'ri*, was breached at one time by heavy rains, and an inscription says that one *Tha:tha:ca:ri* who repaired the bund, renamed this lake after himself as *Tha:tha:-camuththiram*.

Further, the words *E:nhthal* and *Tha:ngkal* indicating ponds or pools occur in place-names. Places like *Il:a-v-*

aracan-e:nhthal, the prince's pool and *Cempian-e:nhthal*, Chola's pool are names associated with the rulers of the land. Similarly *A:lanh-tha:ngkal*, the banyan pool in North Arcot District and *Val:avan-tha:ngkal* the Chola pool in Chinglepet District may be cited as examples of *Tha:ngkal*.

The words *A:vi* and *Va:vi* also signify a pool. They occur occasionally in a few place-names. *Nhi:r-a:vi* in Ramanathapuram District and *Kal-la:vi* in Salem District are place-names having the termination *A:vi*, and places like *Ko:t:al-va:vi* in Madurai District have the suffix *Va:vi* in their names.

A deep pool is known as *Mat:u*. There are place-names having this termination. *Muthalai-mat:u*, the crocodile pool in Tanjore District, *A:nai-mat:u*, the elephant pool in South Arcot District, *Kal-mat:u*, the rock pool in Tirunelveli District and *Cem-mat:u*, the red pool in Salem District belong to this category. The word *Ilanjci* also denotes a pool. There is a place known as *Ilanjci* near Tenkasi in Tirunelveli District. This village is glorified as *Pon-n-ilanjci*, the golden pool in the celebrated Tamil drama known as *Kutta:la-k-kutavanjci*.

A natural pool is called *Poykai*. *Poykaiya:r* is the name of an eminent poet, and he is said to have been born in a place known as *Poykai*. Again *Poykai A:l-va:r* is the name of one of the three great saints of the Vaishnava cult, who are known as the first *A:l-va:rs*. According to tradition, he was born in a lotus-pool near a temple of *Thiruma:l* (Vishnu) in *Ka:njciapuram*. There is, besides, another place known as *Poykai* in North Arcot District. It will thus be seen that the word *Poykai* has become a place-name.

A pool containing drinking water for the village is known as *U:run:i*, (*Ur:* village *Un:* consume). There are several places going by the name of *U:run:i*. For instance,

Pe:r-u:run:i the great pool, in Tirunelveli District. Mayil-U:run:i, the peacock pool in Ramanathapuram District. and Purac-U:run:i, the Portia pool in Tanjore District.

Cetu is a literary word for tank. The hamlet of Ra:yalu-ceruvu, the King's tank, lies in Chittoor District. It is said that this lake was constructed by Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagar with the object of developing agriculture in that area, and was therefore called after him as Ra:yar-cetu. In ancient times, this place lay on the highway from Kanchipuram to Tirupathi and was therefore a centre of great attraction. The large lake constructed by Krishnadeva Raya can still be seen in the village. It has been formed by a broad embankment half a mile in length connecting two high hills.

Some of the ponds and pools of the Tamil country are supplied with water from subterranean springs. The common name for a spring is U:ttu. There are a few place-names having this word as the suffix. Ta:l-ai-y-u:ttu the cactus spring in Tirunelveli District, Aththi-y-u:ttu, the fig spring in Ramanathapuram District, Kan:n-u:ttu, the eye spring in Tiruchirapalli District and Ma:-v-u:ttu, the mango spring in Salem District are instances of villages named after the neighbouring springs.

In the same way wells also have given rise to place-names. Thiru-v-alli-k-ke:n:i, the sacred lotus well (modern Triplicane in the city of Madras), Na:rai-k-kin:atu, the crane well in Tirunelveli District, can be cited as instances of such place-names.

There are numerous villages, the names of which emphasise the characteristic features of their soil. Na(l)-n-nilam is the name of a village in Tanjore District. The prefix *Nal* (which means good) is probably indicative of the fertility of the soil.

The word *Pulam* also denotes land. Ta:marai-p-pulam, the lotus-field, Karuva-p-pulam the cassia-field and Cet:t-i-

p-pulam, the Chetty field are place-names in Tanjore District.

Pattu in Tamil means land under cultivation. It has been corrupted into *paththu* in the South and into *Pat:t'u* in the North. A village comprising lands endowed to a temple is generally called *Koyil-pattu*, temple-lands. A village near Ramanathapuram is known as *Perung-karun:ai-pattu* the field of great mercy. The name Chingleput is a corruption of the beautiful name *Ceng-kal-unhi:r-p-pattu*, the field of red lily. A village in Chittoor District which originally bore the name of *Pu:ththalai-p-pattu* the field of flowers, now passes as *Pu:thala-p-pat:t'u*. A place in North Arcot District was originally called *Thel:l:a:ttu-p-pattu*. In modern times, however, this name has been corrupted into *Thel:l:a:ra:p-pat:t'u*.

The word *Pan:n:ai* also denotes a field. *Cenhthila:n-pan:n:ai*, the field of the Lord Muruga of Tiruchendur, is the name of a village in Tirunelveli District. There is also a village bearing the name *E:l-a:yiram-pan:n:ai*, seven thousand fields at a distance of eight miles south-west of Sattur in Ramanathapuram District.

A classical word for the field is *Pal-anam*. *Tiru-p-pal-anam* is the name of a place in the Tanjore District, sanctified by *Theva:ra* hymns. It is now known as *Thiru-p-payan:am* (*payan:am* means journey.) *Kal-ani* is yet another word for the field. It occurs in place-names like *Then-kal-ani*, the Southern field and *Puthu-k-kal-ani*, the new field in Arcot District and *Ka:-k-kal-ani*, the field of groves in Tanjore District.

The word *Vayal*, also meaning a field can be seen in place-names like *Puthu-vayal*, the new field, *Nhet:u vayal*, the long field and the like. It is usual in the South to call any productive land, a *Vil:ai*. *Va:kai-vil:ai*, the land of rain-trees and *Thicaiyanvil:ai* are names of villages in Tirunelveli District.

Ve:li and *Ka:n:i* are words denoting the extent of land. They also occur in place-names. It is evident that names of villages like *Ai-veli* the five *Ve:lis* and *Onpathu-ve:li*, the nine *ve:lis* in Chingleput District rose from the extent of arable land. In the same way, the word *Ka:n:i* finds a place in the names of villages like *Muk-ka:n:i*, the three *Ka:n:is* and *Cang-ka:n:i*. The words *Kutun:i* and *Na:l-i* denoting smaller measures, are also found, though rarely, in certain place-names. There are villages like *Co:l-ang-kutun:i* and *Et:t-u-nha:l-i* in Madurai District.

Wet lands of high productive capacity are known as *Nhancey*, and dry lands of scanty yield are known as *Pun-cey*. A place in Tanjore District formerly known as *Nhani-pal:l-i* is now called *Punjcai* (corrupt form of *punjcey*.)

The practice of raising garden crops by baling water from wells is also found in Tamil Nad. Hence we find words denoting garden occurring in some place-names. *Pu:nh-tho:t:t:am*, the lovely garden, is the name of a village in Tanjore District. *Injai-k-kollai*, the ginger-garden and *Karuppu-k-kil:a:r*, the sugarcane-garden are villages in South Arcot District. The words *Tho:t:t:am*, *Kollai* and *Kil:a:r* are synonyms denoting the garden.

Although the Tamils lived in all the four traditional types of land, they considered *Marutham* as best suited for human habitation. The word *U:r* therefore significantly stands for a settlement in the midst of fertile fields. It is used extensively in combination with the names of trees and animals. *Maruthu:r* is a village taking the name after the *Maruthu* tree (Red cedar) and *Na:val-U:r*, after the *Naval* tree (*Jambulensis*.) Further more, *Thengkur*, *Panai-y-u:r*, *Patcu:r* and *Kat:ampur*—all glorified by *The:va:ra* hymns—are denominated in terms of the trees characteristic of the terrain.

The ancient Tamils greatly admired the bravery of the *Puli* (tiger) among the beasts and cherished it in place-

names. Many are the villages which bear the name of this animal. Places like *Puli-y-u:r*, *Pa:thiri-p-puliy-u:r* and *Eru-k-kaththam-puli-y-u:r* are sacred spots mentioned in *Thevaram*. *Perum-puli-y-u:r*, the place of the big tiger and *Kutum-puli-y-u:r*, the place of the small tiger, are names of villages in Tiruchirappalli District. The former is now known as *Perampalu:r* and the latter as *Kutumpalu:r*. *Citu-puliy-u:r*, the place of small tiger, is the name of a village in Tanjore District.

The names of birds are associated with certain place-names. The birth-place of *Nhamma:l-va:r*, the greatest of the Vaishnava Saints, was a small village called *Kuruku:r* in the Tirunelveli District. *Kuruku* means a swan. *Mayila:ppur* (Mylapore), a suburb of Madras, obviously owes its name to *Mayil*, the peacock. Equally so are *Thiruna:rai-u:r*, the sacred place of cranes and *Ko:l-iyu:r*, the village of cockerels, are instances to point. Another interesting place-name is *Van:t:a:nam*, which means the stork.

The name of places having the suffix *U:r* may be considered under two main divisions, namely *Nhallu:r*, good place and *Puththu:r*, new place. *Thiru-ven:n:ai-nallu:r* is a village on the bank of the *Pen:n:ai-a:tu*. This place is sanctified by a temple of Lord Siva, who bestowed his grace on *Sunhtharamu:rthi*, one of the *The:v:ara* hymnists. It is also the birth-place of *Mey Kan:t:a The:var*, the author of a philosophical treatise in Tamil, expounding the cult of Saiva Siddhanta. There is another village called *Nhallu:r* close to *Kumbakonam* in Tanjore District. *Periyapura:n:am*, the lives of the Saiva Saints, mentions this *Nhallu:r* as the place where *Amarnhi:thi*, one of the sixty three Saiva Saints, attained salvation. *Ce:y-nhallu:r*, sacred to Lord *Muruka* the Son-God of the Tamils, situated on the river *Man:n:i*, is now known as *Ce:ngkanu:r*. Another *Ce:y-nhallu:r* in the North Arcot District passes now as *Ce:nu:r*.

The Tamil kings brought into existence a number of villages with the object of perpetuating their memory, and some of them bear the suffix *Nhallu:r*. *Vi:ra-Pa:n:-t:riya Nhallu:r*, *Ma:na:para:n:a Nhallu:r* and *Cey Thungka Nhallu:r* bear the names of Pandya Kings. Some of the villages formed by the great Chola Kings are noticed in inscriptions. *Mut:i Kon:t:a Nhallu:r*, *Anhapa:ya Nhallu:r*, *Thirunhi:ttu-c-co:l-a Nhallu:r* *Thiru-th-thon:t:aththokai-Nhallu:r*, *Civapa:thace:kara Nhallu:r*, *Kali Kat:inhtha co:l-a Nhallu:r* and many other prosperous villages bear the titular names of the Chola Kings.

New settlements are known as *Puththu:r*, the new village. A sacred place in Pandya Nad, honoured by the hymnists, is known as *Thiru-p-puth:thu:r*, the sacred new village. On the banks of the river *Aricil*, a new village sprang up and it was known as *Arici-t-karai-p-puththu:r*. And the village that grew up on the banks of the river *Kat:uva:y* was called *Kat:uva:y-k-karai-p-puththu:r*. Both these villages have been sanctified by the *The:va:ra* hymnists. The *Periyapura:n:am* says that the *Puththu:r* to which *Sunhtharamurththi* proceeded for celebrating his marriage came to be known from that event, as *Man:am-vanhtha-puththu:r*. A village that was founded by *Ko:van*, a chieftain, took the name of *Ko:van-puththu:r*. It is now known as *Ko:yam-puththu:r* (Coimbatore), the great centre of cotton industry in South India. *Srivilliputtur* is a place held in great reverence by *Vaishnavas*.

A Czech Missionary of the 18th Century as Author of a Tamil Grammar

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When occupying himself with the investigation of C. Przikryl's *Principia linguae Brahmanicae*¹, the editor of the *Principia*, Dr. Pavel Poucha, one of the leading Oriental scholars of the Oriental Institute in Prague, has found a fragmentary manuscript of a Tamil grammar by the same Carolus Przikryl S. J. This work of Przikryl has been unknown since neither Prof. V. Lesny who had treated the Ms. of Przikryl's *Principia* in an article² nor his predecessors in this matter, Martin Pelzel, the author of a short biographical sketch of Przikryl, and Josef Dobrovsky, mention the existence of this (as far as we know the fifth) work of C. Przikryl at all. Dr. P. Poucha has investigated carefully the Ms., which has been, contrary to the *Principia* (which have been rewritten at the end of the 18th Cent.), preserved only in the original, written in Przikryl's own typical small characters. Only the beginning of a Tamil vocabulary can be found on the 192nd folio of the copy of Przikryl's *Principia*, comprising 48 words in all, 27 of which are translated into Latin.

In the original Ms., the fragment of the Tamil grammar can be found on pp. 29—34 and, partly, on p. 45. This fragment comprises: (a) a list of Tamil characters with their Latin equivalents (pp. 29—31), (b) pronunciation (pp. 32—34), this chapter being, however, unfinished, (c) morphology (*De declinatione nominum*). On that

¹ C. Przikryl, *Principia linguae Brahmanicae*, sign. X C. 35, in the National Museum in Prague.

² V. Lesny, *Principia linguae brahmanicae von Carolus Przikryl*, *Archiv Orientalni*, Vol. VI (1934), No. 1, pp. 50—53.

very page, unfortunately, the fragment comes to an abrupt end and there is not a word more about Tamil in Przikryl's Ms. The fragment of Przikryl's Tamil grammar comprises thus only the three mentioned paragraphs which are, however, unfinished.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to deal with those fragments and to stress their importance in the history of Indology, since they belong to the oldest works dealing with the Tamil language. Carolus Przikryl had been working up in India not only the grammar of the Konkani dialect of Marathi (*Principia linguae Brahmanicae*), but also a grammar of Tamil. According to the view of Dr. P. Poucha who has actually found and discovered this fragment in the National Museum in Prague, this fragmentary Tamil grammar was written between 1755—1762 (when its author left India for good). It must have been composed after its author had made use of some other Tamil grammars, very probably of Beschi's *Grammatica latino-tamulica*, 1738, and Walther's *Observationes grammaticae quibus linguae tamulicae idioma vulgare illustratur*, 1739. It is the opinion of Dr. P. Poucha that, since the other Tamil grammars, written until his time, viz., P. Bruno's grammar (1685), P. de la Lane's grammar (1728) and Beschi's other grammar of 1730, have been only in manuscript form, C. Przikryl very probably had been able to take as his model only the two grammars quoted above. It is difficult to guess if he had made use of Ziegenbalg's *Grammatica Damulica* which had been published in Halle (?) in 1716.

The present writer has investigated different parts of Przikryl's Ms. in some detail. It seems that the list of 48 Tamil words has been excerpted out of some text (or texts); this seems to be indicated by the following considerations: 1. only 26 words are translated into Latin; 2. some of the words form groups connected according to meaning; 3. the transcription of some words shows the

author's hesitation and is inconsequent: thus he writes *ca:agam* for காகம், cornix, but *cai* for கை, manus; *ac:ham* for அச்சம், metus, further however, *accham*, id. etc.

This list of words has been used as material for the explanation of pronunciation and orthography. It is very interesting to read the description of the cacuminal and retroflex consonants in the light of our experimental phonetic investigation, cf. ㄥ — . . . *pronunciatur inversa retrorsum lingua usage ad interiorum palati* . . . ண—*ut n, sed inflecta eodem ut pauli anti dictum modo lingua*; ண—*ut inflexa aliquantum lingua usque ad palati medietatem*, ழ—*similiter ut ண, crassiore sono reflexa omnino ad interiorum palati partem lingua*.³

Przikryl treats orthography and pronunciation together in his description, which is considerably condensed, to some extent, however, not quite orderly arranged. Some passages dealing with vowels are very careful indeed, cf. பகல்—*non pronunciatur pagal, sed paguel. dies.eodem modu*; புகழ்—*puque.laus. அவன aven.ille*. . . . And further: “ I breve ante ழ adeo leniter pronunciatur, et quodammodo absorbetur quam nod adesset. Sic interminatione verborum கிறது cradu, கிறது gradu.”

From the paragraph dealing with sandhi we may see that Przikryl has distinguished between the colloquial and literary forms of Tamil, cf. p. 33 of the Ms.: *hujus tamen regulae rarus est usus in lingua vulgari, inviolabilis autem in sublima*.

On p. 45 the Ms. has been continued with a paragraph on the declination of nouns. It is necessary to stress the fact that Przikryl does not simply enumerate the different suffixes of the traditional eight “cases”, but that he explains, in detail, the syntactic use of these suffixes. Let

³ Cf. the data obtained after the accomplishment of experimental phonetic investigation in Svarny, Zvelebil: Some Remarks Ar Or, Vol. XXIII, 1955, No. 3.

us quote only one typical example: "ut மலையைக் குறித்து intendendo montem, respectu montis; nam குறித்து gerundium est a verbo குறிக்கிறது intendere. vel 3^a similiter per accu. sativum cum gerundio கொண்டு explicate quod gerundium est verbi கொள்ளுகிறது quod etiam significat: assumere quae, phrasis 3^a e significat ablativum instrumenti seu medii, quo utimur in latino sermone pro accusativo cum praepositione per: ut தவத்தைக்கொண்டு கையேறினான் per poenitentiam, sive a frumendo poenitentiae medium, aut mediante poenitentia salvus factus est."

With this last example which, by the way, indicates also the nature of some of Przikryl's sources (*salvus factus est*!), the whole fragmentary Ms. of the Tamil grammar is brought to a definite end. Maybe, and let us hope so, that in India itself more of Przikryl's works, and, among them, possibly also some dealing with Tamil, will be found by future research.

We can conclude: the fragment of the Tamil grammar by Carolus Przikryl⁴ is based, most probably, upon the study of some older Tamil grammars (most likely on the works of C. J. Beschi and Ch. T. Walther), but it seems, that its author has compared these data with some other material obtained perhaps through the study of some texts or personal contact.

Even if this fragmentary manuscript is, perhaps, not an attempt to compose a new and original Tamil grammar, it is necessary to stress the keen interest of its author in a neo-Indian living language, in Tamil; this interest has taken a definite and remarkable shape in Przikryl's work on the Konkani dialect of Marathi.

⁴ Carolus Przikryl, born 7-12-1718 in Prague in 1734 joined the Jesuit Order, since 1784 in India (as Director of the Studies at the Archbishop's Seminary in Goa), later imprisoned in Portugal, since 1788 in Bohemia, died in 1785 as the rector of the Bishop's Seminary in Hradec Kralove.

Tamil Culture—Its Past, Its Present and Its Future with special reference to Ceylon*

XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM.

பாமரித்த மொழிகளிலே தமிழ் மொழிபோல்
இனிதாவ தெங்கும் காணும்

"Tamil" means "sweetness," and "Culture" has been defined as "sweetness and light." "Tamil" and "Culture," therefore, make a most graceful combination both in Language and in Life. It is this graceful combination that has brought us here this evening.

The Tamil Cultural Society has completed three years since its inception. If it is to be of greater service to the Tamil-speaking peoples, it should be our privilege to welcome to the Society more members from every walk of life. It is by the growth of organised action among the Tamil-speaking population that the Society may hope to realise what it has so elaborately planned. There was never a time in the history of this Island when concerted action was so vital to our existence as it is today. It is the aim of the Tamil Cultural Society to have an Island-wide membership of at least ten thousand people, all united in the furtherance of the cause of Tamil Culture, the Tamil Language, Tamil Literature and the Tamil Arts. This may seem an ambitious aim, but it is not beyond realisation, provided every Tamil-speaking citizen is conscious of his heritage, and of his duty to pass on that heritage to the generations that will succeed him in this Island.

* An address delivered under the auspices of the Tamil Cultural Society, Colombo on August 2nd, 1955.

WHAT IS CULTURE ?

Culture has been defined as a "way of life," as "sweetness and light", as "activity of thought and receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling." These brief definitions are sufficient to show the comprehensiveness and the indispensability of culture, for one must have a way of life, and that way of life should be combined with sweetness and light, with activity of thought, and with beauty and humane feeling.

Tamil Culture is nothing else but the Tamil way of life, a pattern of gracious living that has been formed during the centuries of Tamil history. It has been conditioned by the land, the climate, the language, the literature, the religions, the customs, the laws, the food, the games and toys of the Tamil people, by the palmyra palm, the gingelly oil, and the vegetables associated with them. Culture is a most elusive and at the same time an all-embracing term.

THE ANTIQUITY OF TAMIL CULTURE IN CEYLON

Tamil Culture has existed in this Island from time immemorial. All the weight of geological, anthropological, historical, literary and linguistic evidence point to the existence in Ceylon of a people with racial and cultural affinities with the inhabitants of South India.¹

The *Mahavamsa* itself recognizes the existence of a civilized people living in cities at the time of the landing of Vijaya. The *Mahavamsa* too supposes a pre-Buddhist period in Ceylon when the religion of the people was Hindu. The story of Elara's reign, the statement,

"When he had thus overpowered thirty-two Damila Kings, Dutthagamani ruled over Lanka in single sovereignty,"

the rule of Tamil kings, the accounts of the Vaitulyan doctrine, and references to "Damiladevi," "the Chola

¹ See Articles by Swami Gnana Prakasar in *Tamil Culture*, Vol. I. (1952) Nos. 1-4.

people," "the further coast" and "the other coast," point to an ancient time when Tamil Culture and Sinhalese Culture existed side by side upon this Island.²

The relations of the Sinhalese Kings with Nagadipa, with the Chera, Chola, Pandya Kings of South India their dynastic alliances, their embassies, their treaties, and even their wars and their intrigues, are evidence of a fraternal rivalry that existed between these neighbouring kingdoms. There is a tendency to exaggerate these wars and to portray these cultures as if they were perpetually in conflict. Such a portrayal is one of the dangers of history.³

The truth is, that to one well read in Ceylon and South Indian history, these conflicts seem like the internal conflicts of kindred peoples. The wars of the Tamils against the Sinhalese are not any more numerous or hostile than the wars among the Tamil kingdoms themselves.

At the time the Portuguese landed on this Island, there is ample evidence for the honoured place Tamil had at the Court of Kotte and for the Tamil schools that the Portuguese founded in the Western and North Western Provinces.⁴

When printing was introduced into this Island for the first time, the Dutch published books both in the Tamil and Sinhalese tongues. A copy of a Tamil book published in Colombo in 1754 by the Dutch Pastor Bronsveld, refers

² W. GEIGER, *The Mahavamsa*, p. 165; pp. 264f., Colombo 1950.

³ H. BUTTERFIELD, *History and Human Relations*, p. 158ff., London, 1961.

⁴ DE QUEYROZ, *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon*, p. 241, Colombo, 1930; S. G. PERERA, *The Jesuits in Ceylon*, passim, Madura, 1942;

See G. SCHURHAMMER, *Ceylon zur zeit des konigs Bhuvaneka Bahu und Franz Xavers*, 2 Vols.; Leipzig, 1928; and *Die Zeitgenossischen Quellen zur geschichte Portugiesisch-Asiens und seiner nachbarlander 1538-1552*, Leipzig, 1932; M. A. HEDWIG FITZLER, *Os tombos de Ceilao da seccao ultramarina da biblioteca nacional*, Lisbon, 1927; PIERIS-FITZLER, *Ceylon and Portugal*, Leipzig, 1927, fails to mention or translate the Tamil sentences in the letters from the Court of the King of Kotte, though reproducing in a frontispiece plate the Tamil writing which precedes the signature of the Sinhalese king.

in its dedication to the Tamil language spoken within the greater area of this Island. (*Maxima cum hujus insulae parte Tamulice loquentem*).⁵

Robert Knox and the Dutch despatches speak of the Tamil townships and the Tamil-speaking people of the Kandyan Kingdom.

TWIN CULTURES

The comparative study of the Tamil and Sinhalese languages, of the literatures and grammar in the two languages, of place-names, of the drama, the dance, the architecture, the sculpture peculiar to the two cultures of this Island reveal to what limits they influenced each other. Anthropological surveys have shown the extent to which the common racial characteristics are shared by the populations that speak the two languages, and history testifies to the shifting of populations from one kingdom to another and to the sections of people that have changed one language for the other. The laws, the caste system, the patterns of social structure, reveal very many common elements. For the existence and inter-penetration of these cultures, there is no better evidence than a religious shrine like Kathirgamam held sacred by the Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims, located in the southernmost part of Ceylon, and the religious shrines of the Buddhists located in Nainativu, a northernmost outpost of the Island, held sacred also by Hindus.

The existence of two different religions did not always prevent the patronage that kings of one persuasion extended to the religion that was not theirs; did not prevent the patronage and employment of Saivaite Brahmins at the Sinhalese Courts; did not prevent marriage alliances of Sinhalese Kings with Tamil Saivaite Queens; did not prevent the teaching of Tamil along with Sinhalese, Pali and Sanskrit at the more famous pirivenas as testified by the *Gira Sandesa* (15th century).

⁵ *Catechismus*, Colombo, 1754 (Copy seen in the Museum Library of Djakarta).

There was a time when Buddhism counted many Tamils among its followers, even in Ceylon, and Tamil Buddhist monks contributed in no small measure to the enrichment of Tamil literature and Pali literature. Viharas were established in the Tamil-speaking areas of Ceylon and South India, and Tamil monks came to teach as well as to learn in the Sinhalese kingdoms. It will always remain a source of pride to us that the greatest, if not the only classical epic of Theravada Buddhism exists in the Tamil language. The poetry of *Manimekhalai* (2nd cent. A.D.) has been forgotten by scholars because of its didactic and doctrinal appeal, but it remains one of the finest jewels of Tamil poetry with an abundance of quotable lines, like

“பாடகமடங்கலும் பசிப்பிணிபறுக”

“மாநவநீரோடும் மடவாநீர் கற்பும்
காவலன் காவல் இன்றெனில் இன்றும்”

The *Virasoliyam*, a compendious Tamil grammar, was compiled in the 11th century by a Tamil Buddhist, Buddhāmitrar. The origin of Tamil is attributed in this grammar to Avaloketiswara (Bhōdisattva). This grammar seems to have influenced the Sinhalese grammar *Sidatsangarawa*. Among the more famous Tamil Buddhists that visited Ceylon on religious and cultural missions were Sangamitta (4th c.), Buddhādatta Mahāthero (5th c.), Vajirabhodhi (7th—8th c.), Anurudha (12th c.), Dharmakīrti, author (?) of the *Culawamsa* (13th c.). Dignaga, Dharmapala of Nalanda, Bhodhidharmar of China were three other illustrious Tamil exponents of Buddhism.⁶

⁶ On place names, see B. J. PERERA, *Some observations on the study of Sinhalese place names in The Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. II (1953) pp. 241—250; page 244:

“Tamil place names are found mostly along the sea-coast and in the Anurādhapura, Chilaw and Puttalam districts. Though there are no native Tamils living along the sea-coast south of Colombo, the Tamil origin of most of the present inhabitants there is seen from the fairly large number of Tamil place names. The ‘ge’ names of these people too attest to their Tamil origin. The word *malai* meaning in Tamil ‘a mountain or hill’ is found in even the central parts of the island. They are come across

THE TAMIL LANGUAGE

The Tamil language has been spoken in this Island, it would seem, at least for the last three thousand years. The punchmarked coins of an early era point to connections that Ceylon may have had with Mohenjodaro and the Indus Valley civilisation. Tamil poetry composed in Ceylon has been included in the earliest Tamil Anthologies, and the Tamil spoken in Ceylon represents a pre-Pallava period with its ancient morphological and grammatical forms and its repertoire of words considered obsolete for centuries on the neighbouring continent.

A language is always a mirror of a people's genius.⁷ The Tamil language has been spoken basically in its present form for the last two thousand years, and it continues even now to be the living language for thirty to forty million people—about thirty million people in India, more than two million people in Ceylon, nearly one million people in Malaya, Vietnam and Indonesia, and many thousands scattered over Fiji, Mauritius, Madagascar, Africa and even Trinidad and the Martinique Islands. Tamil is as much a classical language as Greek, Latin or Sanskrit, with this difference that while her ancient contemporaries have changed beyond recognition or been long regarded as "dead", Tamil continues to be one of the most vigorous of modern languages, and perhaps offers the only example in history of an ancient classical tongue which has survived to this day and yet remains young as it was two thousand years ago.

in literature produced many centuries before the opening up of plantations and show that the Tamil element in the composition of the Sinhalese is far greater than is usually conceded. Ranmalaya, Kotmale and Gilimale are some of the examples."

I am indebted to my colleague, Mr. K. Nesiiah for the above reference. C. E. GODAKUMBURA, in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies. The Dravidian Element in Sinhalese*, pp. 837-841, Vol. XI; N. S. VENGADASAMY, *Tamil and Buddhism*. (Tamil) Madras, 1950.

⁷ A. N. WHITEHEAD, *Aims of Education*, New York, 1951: "Language is the incarnation of the mentality of the race that fashioned it."

The monumental Tamil-English Dictionary by Miron Winslow was commenced in Jaffna by Joseph Knight, assisted by Gabriel Tissera and Rev. Percival (two Ceylonese), and it is in the introduction to this Dictionary that Dr. Winslow has the oft-quoted passage:

"It is not perhaps extravagant to say that in its poetic form the Tamil is more polished and exact than the Greek, and, in both dialects with its borrowed treasures, more copious than the Latin. In its fullness and power, it more resembles English and German than any other language."

Dr. Slater said, "The Tamil language is extraordinary in its subtlety and sense of logic"; and W. Taylor observed earlier, "It is one of the most copious, refined and polished languages spoken by man."⁸

Tamil speech as obtaining in Ceylon, and Tamil phonetics as obtaining especially in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, show a fidelity to the earliest Tamil grammars which the speech of South India does not—a clear indication of the development of Tamil in Ceylon unhampered by the extraneous influences to which South India was subject.

TAMIL LITERATURE

Tamil Literature has made certain definite contributions to world thought and letters. Its love poetry and its inclusion of love poetry in its theory of poetics are indications of the humanistic approach to life that is characteristic of Tamil Culture. The love poetry of the Tamils is the product of a people among whom the finest ideals of courtship and wedlock had long been cherished. The ethical poetry of the Tamils has been the wonder of all foreigners who have studied it. The maxims of Thiruvalluvar or the *Tirukkural* is a book of which Dr. Albert Schweitzer has said:

⁸ Quoted in Preface to Winslow's *Tamil-English Dictionary*, Madras, 1902.

"There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much lofty wisdom."⁹

And Dr. Pope observed :

"I have felt sometimes as if there must be a blessing in store for a people that delight so utterly in compositions thus remarkably expressive of a hunger and thirst after righteousness."¹⁰

If English be the language of commerce, French the language of diplomacy, Italian the language of love, and German the language of philosophy, then Tamil is the language of devotion. The devotional poetry in Tamil is so great in bulk, and in depth and intensity of emotional fervour, that its continued study has given the language a certain aptitude for the expression of themes pertaining to mysticism and contemplation. The Nature Poetry of the Tamils is again the result of a people who lived intimately with Nature. No people, except perhaps the people of the Pacific Islands, have made so much use of flowers and plants in daily life for various purposes as the Tamils have done. The Tamils said it with flowers not only in love but also in warfare. The ancient Tamil warriors went to battle, their brows decked with garlands, and each strategic movement had its own symbolic flower.

The influence and vitality of Tamil Culture in Ceylon has been such that it has produced a Tamil literature of worth, of which there is indisputable evidence from the 13th century, and many a Ceylonese poet and scholar crossed the Straits and won fame and recognition in other lands where Tamil is spoken. The name of Arumuga Navalar is associated with a great revivalist movement in Tamil and Saivism; C. Y. Thamotherampillai was a pioneer editor of the classics which spear-headed the Tamil Renaissance; V. Kanagasabaipillai opened up a new

⁹ A. SCHWEITZER, *Indian Thought and its Development*, pp. 200-205, London, 1936.

¹⁰ See M. WINSLOW, Preface to *Tamil-English Dictionary*; SRI KANTHA, *Terra Tamulica*, Colombo, 1910.

horizon to many a foreigner with his "*The Tamils Eighteen Hundred years ago*;" N. Kathiravelpillai distinguished himself as a lexicographer; Cumaraswamy Pulavar was recognized as a scholar of outstanding merit; Swami Vipulananda occupied the Chair of Tamil at the Annamalai University, and Swami Gnana Prakasar established his reputation for comparative philology and for the history of the Tamil-speaking people. The records of some of the earlier Tamil writers of Ceylon have been included in the "*Tamil Plutarch*" compiled by Simon Casie-Chetty.¹¹

Sinhalese sovereigns of various periods extended their patronage to Tamil poets, and the story is told of the forlorn Tamil bard that set out from Jaffna with his poem to the Court of Rajasingha at Kandy, to be told on the way that the last Tamil-speaking King of Ceylon had been taken captive.

IDEALS OF LIFE

Tamil Literature was the result of the *Weltanschauung*, the world outlook of the Tamil-speaking peoples, and at the same time that literature kept alive the outlook and those ideals which shaped it. Imagination is a gift which has been associated with great commercial peoples, and no people in this part of the world were such skilful navigators or traders as the Tamils.

The sea ports of the then Tamil country, which included all the Malabar coast as well, were busy ports of call into which ships from the West sailed with their gold, lamps, wine and goblets, to return home laden with pepper and silks and cotton and ivory, and with the pearls of the Tamil seas. Teak from the Tamil country has been found in the ruins of Ur of the Chaldees, and peacocks and apes of the South were sold abroad as early as Solomon's time. Yavanar, or men of the Graeco-Roman world, established

¹¹ K. KANAPATHI PILLAI, *Ceylon's Contribution to Tamil Language and Literature in University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. VI, No. 4 (1948); Articles by K. P. RATNAM and K. K. NADARAJAH in the *Ceylon Tamil Festival Volume* (Tamil), Jaffna, 1951.

colonies and trading stations in the Tamil Kingdoms, and were even employed as engineers, body-guards, palace-guards and city-guards in the service of Tamil Kings.¹²

In this trade and overseas expansion the ports of North Ceylon played a great part which is forgotten in the age of the steamship and the aeroplane. Kalpitiya, Mantote, Kayts, Elephant Pass, Trincomalie have a naval history that has yet to be studied from local and foreign records, including the Arab chronicles.

The Tamil Argonauts turned their eyes even more naturally towards the East and with them they carried their art and architecture, their religion, their language and their laws. It is agreed by most writers on Indian influences on South East Asia that the Tamil Kingdoms were among the earliest and the most active.

The author of the *Periplus* and Ptolemy speak of the ships that used to sail from the Eastern coasts of South India and Ceylon to the land of gold (Malaya and Java), and Fa Hien refers to his voyage to Java, via Trincomalie. Having travelled lately through South East Asia, I have been able to follow the routes taken by the Tamil Argonauts and see the many lands where the Tamil-speaking people left behind the traces of their genius and culture. In the architecture of Champa and Cambodia, in the sculptures of the Museum of Tourane, in the Saiva Siddantha system of religion once followed in Indonesia and Indo-China, in the bronzes of Siam, may be seen the traces of Tamil influence. The Baratha Natyam has affinities with the dances of Cambodia and Bali; the Tamil sacred verses are recited by the Court Brahmins of Thailand at the Tamil feasts of Thirupavay and Thiruvempavai and during the coronation of their kings; certain tribes in Sumatra go under the Tamil names of Chera, Chola, Pandya and Pallava; and the temples of Dieng plateau, of Po-Nagar,

¹² See E. H. WARMINGTON, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*.

of Mi-son (Vietnam), of Anghor Thom, show the influence of Tamil architecture.¹³

Islam was spread in the Malay Archipelago largely by Tamil-speaking people.

Because of their international outlook, trade and navigation the Tamils eschewed insularity and developed a remarkable universality of outlook. Wendell Wilkie in *One World* begins his book with the statement, "In future our thinking must be worldwide." The Tamil poet anticipated him by a two thousand years when he said

உருது என்ரு நாடுது என்து !

"Every country is my country;
Every man is my kinsman."

This sense of universality was instrumental in fashioning Tamil society after a broad and tolerant pattern. Albert Schweitzer in his *Indian Thought and its Development* shows exhaustively the optimistic, humanistic sense of life and life affirmation, the *joie de vivre*, that is characteristic of the Tamil attitude to life. He has also shown that three of the greatest philosophers of India, namely, Sankara, Ramanuja, Ramananda came from the South and were indebted to Tamil thought.

The happy warrior delineated by the Tamil classics is one who has a sense of honour and of chivalry, and who will rather die than turn his back upon a foe or an adverse circumstance. Honour, bravery and nobility (மௌனம்) required one to bear the marks and scars of battle on the bosom. The story is told of the Tamil matron that heard of her son who had fallen in battle. She hurried to the battlefield in distress lest he should have fallen in retreat, but was relieved and happy when she saw the wounds on his chest, the infallible sign that he had fallen facing the enemy.

¹³ G. COEDÈS, *Les états Hindouïses*, Paris, 1948.

The Tamil warrior was expected to cover himself with glory in the arts of war and of peace. Men were illustrious because they left a glorious name (புகழ்) :—

"புகழொடு விளங்கிப் பூக்க
நின்று வேலை"

(Puram 21 : 23).

காளமுயல் எய்த கம்பினில் பாடு
பிழைத்த வேல் ஏந்தல் இனிது.

(Kural, 772).

The ideal of tolerance, the will to live and let live, is well illustrated by the anthologies which include poems of every shade of religious and philosophic belief. It is further clear from the scenes in *Manimekhalai* of Tamil cities where philosophers of rival schools expounded their own doctrines from their respective booths, under their own flags—a two thousand-year old anticipation of Hyde Park Corner.

The tradition of Bakthi and the ideal of tolerance explain the fact that nearly every world religion can claim in Tamil a voluminous literature. Tamil Culture has been enriched by poetical works of Saivaites, of Vaishnavites, of Jains, of Buddhists, of Muslims, of Catholics, of Protestants. No other language in the world has been the vehicle of the epic poetry of so many different religions, not Latin, not Sanskrit.

As the ideal of the Philosopher-Statesman was outlined by the Greeks, as the Orator was delineated by the Latins, the Courtier and Governor by the English, the Tamils conceived their educational ideal as the Complete Man, the Perfect Man (சான்ஞன்) endowed with honour, greatness, culture, benevolence and grace.

Further, a life of altruistic love was recommended to every Tamil. It has been found that persons dedicated to service and love live longer than others, and probably it is the altruism of Tamil Culture

"தமக்கென வாழாப் பிறர்க்குரியனாக"
"என் கடன் பணி செய்து விடப்படுத"

that explains its long survival.

PRESENT STATE

When one examines the present state of the Tamil-speaking peoples and their fidelity to the ideals that moulded their culture one wonders if they have not lost a great deal of the virility and resource that characterized them of old. It is true they continue to live, to be theistic, and to have a love of the language and literature that nurtured them, but enterprise, initiative, creative activity and philosophic thought are necessary to them, if they are not to be noted for inertia and apathy. Some of their ancient contemporaries are no more; the Chams and the Khmers with whom they traded and who under their inspiration erected colossal monuments are themselves spent forces in the world of today. Unless we are alive to the needs for the conservation and transmission of this culture, it may well be that a few centuries hence we shall have precious little of this heritage left behind in the country of our birth.

1. As the basis and source of this apathy and inertia, I would point to the ignorance of the language, of the literature, of the arts, of the history, of the culture, that exists among our people today, especially among those sections that combine wealth and influence and a lop-sided Western education. Cultures disappear by those very causes by which they flourish, and the disappearance of the ideals that nourished Tamil Culture will eventually lead to the disappearance of Tamil Culture itself.

*They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried
and drank deep.*

During the last fifty years there has been a revival of interest in Tamil, and this revival must be attributed to the printing and popularising of the Tamil classics. But that revival in Ceylon will not be complete unless it reaches every section of the Tamil-speaking public, particularly those who establish the norms of appreciation and the standards of refinement.

2. The dearth of philosophic thought is, perhaps, the greatest drawback in the popularising of true values in Ceylon. In the spate of talk and oratory about our past glories, we run very dry concerning the problems that affect us in the domain of thought, concerning our beliefs, our code of right and wrong, our political creeds, our ideals of service, our national unity. Philosophy is not the peculiar business of the angels; it is human business, everybody's business.

The want of creative activity in writing and the Fine Arts that we remark today is mainly due to the lack of an interest in philosophic studies and in pure thought. The publishing houses are bringing out translations and adaptations of foreign works and commentaries on the ancient classics, but original works, works in Tamil that deserve translation into foreign tongues, books on the problems vital to man today are noticeably scarce.

3. A lack of originality is seen in the Tamil radio, the Tamil films, and the Tamil newspapers. It is also visible (or audible) in the platform oratory that is being developed in a manner so that the sense follows the sound; it is audible in the alien Tamil accent that is heard over Radio Ceylon; in the hybrid imitations that pass for Tamil dance, and in the poor norms of appreciation of Tamil music.¹⁴

4. The emphasis hitherto in the Tamil Renaissance has been on the study of literature. An equal emphasis is necessary today on the Fine Arts of the Tamils. We have not produced recently any great sculptor or any great painter. It is by a revival of these arts that we shall teach our people the art of life and the art of gracious living. A very famous English writer on the Tamil dance wrote to me some time ago from Canada: "I would give anything to have a glimpse of a Pallava sculpture or a Chola bronze." It requires an aesthetic mind to be so moved by art.

¹⁴ BERYL DE ZOETE, *The Other Mind*, p. 14, London, 1963.

I have no intention of continuing these observations because I see at the same time a few signs of an awakening of effective interest in our cultural heritage. But the question that agitates our minds today, the mind of every Tamil-speaking citizen be he Muslim or Hindu, Catholic or Protestant, or Buddhist, concerns the future of Tamil Culture in this country.

LANGUAGES OF ADMINISTRATION

The stagnation in Tamil Culture that has been noted before is not a little due to the want of State patronage during the last three or four hundred years. With the dawn of a new era in our national life, it is but legitimate for us to expect the State to extend the same measure of support to the development of the culture of the two major nationalities that form the Ceylonese nation.

(I follow A. L. Kroeber's definition of nation and nationality :

"Here are some contemporary cases of political nations that include two or more nationalities. Belgium is almost equally divided between Walloons speaking a French dialect in their homes and Flemings speaking a variant of Dutch. Switzerland is 72 per cent German speaking, 21 per cent French, 6 per cent Italian, 1 per cent Romansch. The Union of South Africa has a white population that is part English speaking and part Afrikaans or Dutch speaking, plus the racially distinct Bantu-Negro natives. India in 1947 set up house-keeping on its own, as two independent political nations with dozens of nationalities and languages.")¹⁵

In the formation and preservation of nationalities, language is by far the most objective factor. It is the free inter-communication of common speech that provides the consciousness of kinship. Language is the rational and spiritual matrix in which a culture lives, moves and has its being. Hence the Tamil poets have consistently lost

¹⁵ A. L. KROEBER, *Anthropology*, p. 226-227, New York, 1948.

themselves in a mystical enthusiasm over the nature of the language, calling it the sweetest possible names :

செந்தமிழ், இன்றமிழ், வண்டமிழ், தண்டமிழ், அருந்தமிழ்,
பசுந்தமிழ், செழுந்தமிழ், தீந்தமிழ், உபந்தமிழ், கோந்தமிழ்,
ஒண்டமிழ்.

The use of the Tamil language in the civil, educational and social life of this country is an absolute necessity if Tamil Culture is to survive. Today, Tamil is spoken in every part of Ceylon by over two million people ; it is indigenous to this Island ; its speakers constitute a major nationality ; its cultural influence in the nation is very much greater than may be gauged from the numerical strength of its speakers. Words are the living memorials in which are enshrined much of social and political history. The inner life of every people is stereotyped in their language, and retained there for the instruction of future generations. I could give you hundreds of Tamil words and terms, the disuse of which in administration would impoverish the Tamils in Ceylon in more ways than one. It is but a fundamental and human right that Tamil be one of the languages of administration all over the country so that the Tamil-speaking population may transact their business with Government in their own language, and consequently that their business is attended to by members of the Government service who have a minimum knowledge of the Tamil language.

There is a flagrant contradiction in the statements of those thinkers who would have Tamil as a medium of instruction in schools but not as a medium in administration. If there is equality of opportunity in this Island, it should be made compulsory for a Government servant to have a minimum knowledge of both languages so that he may serve in any part of the Island.

That two languages should function as languages of administration is nothing new in the history of multilingual or bilingual states. South Africa, Canada, Belgium,

Switzerland have their own solutions to the language problems. When three nationalities, four languages, and adherents of three religions have co-operated to build an exceptionally "national" nation in Switzerland, two languages in Ceylon should present no difficulties provided we are determined to preserve the unity of our nation and the territorial integrity of our country. The rule by majority as practised in homogeneous states which have only one language, one nationality, one race, one religion, may not be exercised in countries with a plurality of cultures, nationalities, languages and religions. If the Swiss confederation has made concession to a language like Romansch which is spoken by only one per cent of its population in one of its twenty-five Cantons, and to Italian spoken by six per cent of its population in two of its Cantons, there must be an affinity between democracy and language that is worth learning.¹⁶

"In all these countries, Belgium, South Africa and Switzerland, none of the linguistic groups can be properly called a 'national minority,' as each has absolute equality of status with the majority group and its language is used by the state side by side with the language of the majority."—(N. Hans, *Comparative Education*, p. 50.)

In the interests of national stability and solidarity it might be useful for cultural leaders of bilingual and multilingual states to study the questions of national languages on an international plane. Such conferences would strengthen the claims of the Tamil language in Ceylon.

TAMIL AT THE UNIVERSITY

If a language is to be the matrix of a flourishing and progressive culture, it is necessary that it be taught at a University level both as a language and as a medium. I am making no suggestion here with regard to the time when our national languages may be introduced into the University or about the preparation needed for its intro-

¹⁶ Consult A. SIEGFRIED, *Switzerland, A Democratic Way of Life*, London, 1950.

duction. Nor am I minimising the importance of a high standard of English desirable at our Universities, but if we wish to develop our languages and our literatures for modern needs and the expression of modern thought, such a development is inconceivable without the national languages becoming the medium in which our intelligentsia think and write, speak and teach. Even for the success of the national languages medium in the elementary and secondary schools, it would seem that a literature at a University level of thought is a prior requisite. So too it is a prior requisite for the progress of all technicalized means of mass communication like the press, the radio and the cinema. The history of the great Buddhist Universities and the Hindu Mutts of the neighbouring continent, as well as the history of Universities in other parts of the world, should convince us of the creative influence exercised by these institutions of higher learning in the transmission of language and culture and in the development of the mother-tongue.

The complaint of creative inactivity in Tamil letters and the barrenness of Tamil Art in Ceylon of today is primarily due to the absence of a centre of Tamil thought and Tamil basic research. Our population and our need, would justify the founding of two more Universities, which would be mainly concerned with the development of the national languages. A University in the Northern or Eastern Province with a Tamil cultural emphasis and another in the South of Ceylon, heir to Totagamuwa, would meet the needs. Of the Wijaya Bahu Pirivena, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam speaking at the Calcutta University Institute in 1916 said :

"In the fifteenth century we had in Ceylon a splendid College of the University type in the Wijaya Bahu Pirivena at Totagamuwa in Galle District, presided over by Ceylon's greatest poet, Sri Rahula Sthawira. It was catholic in its aims and provided instruction for Buddhists and Hindus, clerical and lay, in all the knowledge of the time." (*Eastern Ideals in Education, in Studies and Translations*.)

To deny Tamil, equality of status and opportunity at the University or at the Universities of Ceylon, is to deny to the Tamil-speaking people that scholarship and opportunity for national service and cultural refinement which are the ends and aims of higher learning. A University

"aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, at cultivating the public mind, at purifying the national taste, at supplying true principles to popular enthusiasm and fixed aims to popular aspiration, at giving enlargement and sobriety to the ideas of the age, at facilitating the exercise of political power and refining the intercourse of private life."—(Cardinal Newman, *Idea of a University*.)

Are we to be denied these gifts of University life merely because a bilingual University is supposed to be a novel institution in our national experience? Bilingual Universities are no uncommon feature of bilingual and multilingual countries. They tend to set the tone and the example in tolerance, good understanding and co-operation for the rest of the country. And bilingualism at the University and in administration function on the understanding that on the part of the language groups there will be no linguistic or cultural imposition which involves the sacrifice of the mother-tongue.

The existence of the age-long cultures side by side should be looked upon as a source of fruitfulness and mutual benefits. Hence our Universities, schools, and adult educational agencies should provide opportunities for the study of the two national languages. Citizens should be encouraged to learn the other national language so that they may break the linguistic barrier in the interests of social harmony. In Ceylon, we possess already a linguistic environment favourable to the study of Sinhalese, Tamil and English, and as many citizens as possible should avail themselves of this opportunity to obtain a knowledge of the three languages, naturally, in varying degrees of proficiency.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE

Thus far I have spoken of State patronage and of institutions for the promotion of Tamil Culture in Ceylon. The State may not relinquish its obligations in favour of private enterprise and initiative, nor may it attempt at consoling us with the assurance that "Tamil will be taken care of in South India." Our reply then would be: "We are Ceylonese and the Tamil language belongs here in its own right, and even if Tamil *per impossible* ceased to be the living language in other parts of the world, we shall endeavour to make it continue to flourish in this Island reserve." An assurance of Tamil prosperity in South India would be similar to assuring the French-Swiss nationality that French need not be an official language in Switzerland because it is the official language across the border in France, or that the University of Lausanne is superfluous because there is a University in Paris, or to saying that the mother-tongue may be neglected in Australia because English is taught in the United States. The growth of Tamil in Ceylon has been independent, though that growth did always admit of influences from across the seas in the same manner as the other great language of this Island.

Nor is it accurate to say that the Tamils are so endowed with intelligence that they will learn the Sinhalese language and wield it with the facility of a mother-tongue even better than the Sinhalese themselves. This is a very unscientific conjecture entirely unsupported by facts. The Tamils can never acquire the same command of Sinhalese as those to whom Sinhalese is the mother-tongue, unless they are prepared to change their mother-tongue. There are very, very few people in the world who are able to think, speak and write two languages with the same equal facility." And what guarantee is there that even

17 MARIO PEI, *The Story of Language*, New York, 1949, p. 104:

"A trace of foreign accent is present in about 99% of cases where a person on one linguistic background tries to speak another tongue."

if they sell their birthright, origins, religion, names and antecedents will not prevent discrimination should Government or society choose to discriminate against them?

SOME WAYS AND MEANS

There are ways and means by which individuals may promote Tamil Culture, either singly or in a body. It would not be wrong to say that the State and the Universities receive their tone and their standards also from the society which they represent, so that the higher the standards of society, the higher is the standard of cultural patronage by the State and of efficiency at the University. Here are some ways and means by which the objectives of a cultural revival may be achieved:

1. Active support should be given to associations dedicated to the study and promotion of *Tamiliana*.
2. Tamil society should set the highest standards in this revivalist and progressive movement. Awards (cash, medals, books) should be offered for creative work and for translations.
3. Libraries and Museums should be established as means of adult education and films should be made of the Tamil heritage. The project of the Jaffna Library merits the support of the entire country.
4. A comprehensive Tamil-Sinhalese-English Dictionary and a Tamil Encyclopaedia for Ceylon should be compiled.
5. Basic research should be undertaken by cultural associations so that the significance and import of Tamil

Page 191:

"It has been fully established that a change in language on the part of an individual is attended by corresponding changes in gestures, facial expression, carriage, even humour and taboos. This is readily observable in the case of bilingual speakers when they pass from one language to the other."

Page 234:

"Linguistic intolerance is manifested in the aversion to other languages than one's own. As a student of linguistic sociology puts it, 'To the naive monoglot, objects and ideas are identical with and inseparable from the particular words used to describe them in the one language he knows; hence he is inclined to consider speakers of other languages as something less than human, or at least foreign and hostile to the world of his own experience.'"

customs and habits and way of life may be popularised among the Tamil-speaking people.

6. Teachers of Tamil should be well-qualified and be lovers of Tamil literature that enjoy Tamil poetry in their leisure. A new orientation in the prescribing of books of study and in their teaching is necessary if Tamil children are to love their language and enjoy poetry and the Tamil Arts as the expression of life and experience, and wield their language for intelligent and effective citizenship.

The writing of poetry should receive especial attention, since poetry, more than any other Fine Art, is a powerful vehicle for the transmission of a people's ideals, history and language.

7. Tamil monuments in Ceylon should be better studied and preserved. If the State for some reason or other, has not hitherto prepared specialists in Tamil archaeology or Tamil history, it should be the duty of the Tamil Cultural Association to request the State to do so. The University, the Department of Archaeology, the Public Museums should have scholars well versed in Tamiliana.

Scholarships may be offered to deserving students by the Tamil-speaking public.

8. Tamil studies should be made to show the points of contact and elements common with Sinhalese Culture so as to promote understanding and national solidarity.

9. The Tamil classics should be translated into Sinhalese and books on Tamil Culture be written in English and Sinhalese for the promotion of inter-nationality harmony.

10. The contribution in thought, in literature, in art made by the Tamil-speaking people should be made known through translations in the principal languages of Europe and Asia, because that contribution is part of the world's heritage. In the past, for political and religious reasons, Tamil studies had enthusiastic students in Portugal, Holland, France and England. In the future, it will be the duty of Tamils themselves to give their treasures to their fellowmen, and a few Tamil scholars at least should learn Hindi, Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian for this purpose.

11. Culture is dependent for its origin and its development on geography and on the land. Tamil Culture has had always an intimate communion with the land

as is to be seen from the earliest Tamil poetry down to our own day. The tendency of people to flock to the towns should be arrested, for extreme urbanization and the consequent change means death to a culture such as ours. One cannot be opposed to change or to the absorbing of elements that are conducive to cultural progress. But the process of change should not involve the ceasing of a vital internal development. The Tamil-speaking people should co-operate in colonisation programmes and revive the agricultural bias of their social structure.

12. Every Tamil-speaking citizen should make his own contribution to this cultural movement, by study, by doing promotional work, and by material assistance. Many associations and authors fail to give of their best for want of adequate finances.

UNTO THE LAST

These, ladies and gentlemen, are some of the measures that we may adopt in order that we may reacquire our Culture for ourselves and our generation, and that we may leave it to those who follow us, richer and nobler, if possible, than we found it. There is no doubt that the task of nation-building is not a light one, and that the problems that beset us are many and varied. While other bilingual states are parts of continents and have large territories contiguous to them, Nature and history and a common patrimony intend us to be one nation in our Island home. Because Tamil is the mother-tongue also in other countries, no Tamil-speaking Ceylonese has ever ceased to think of this Island but as his home, his country and his motherland. For two thousand years and more, our two major nationalities have lived together, and there is no reason for not hoping that Sinhalese Culture will be a source of inspiration and strength to Tamil Culture and that Tamil Culture will be a source of inspiration and strength to Sinhalese Culture. The great Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam in a speech that inaugurated the national movement in this country saw the vision of a future Ceylon which because of progress and leadership would serve as a beacon light to the rest of Asia. Asia

today throbs with the consciousness of a new hope and destiny, and within the frame-work of a new world, our country situated in the centre between East and West has the new opportunity to evolve a life of its own, her own democracy, by learning from the experience of other nations on either side of her but by solving her own problems in the manner best suited to her own national genius.

If I have ventured to suggest to you a few measures for the continued preservation and development of Tamil Culture, I have done so in the spirit of a student. The history that I have outlined, the language in which our mothers sang to us when rocking our cradles, the words that have become dear to us by traditional usage and the phrases that have become consecrated in our prayers at home or at common worship, the literature that has formed, nurtured and elevated us and offered us the ideals which we cherish, these are some of the factors that contributed to the Tamil-speaking peoples existing as a nationality upon this Island. One is not less a Ceylonese for being loyal to Tamil Culture or to Sinhalese Culture.

While it is true that a culture may not be created artificially, it is equally true that it is in the power of men to contribute to the causes and work at those conditions necessary for a flowering of culture, and it is also in the power of men to combat those intellectual errors and the emotional prejudices which stand in the way of such conditions. The survival and the continued growth of Tamil Culture is, therefore, in our hands.

It is selfless and noble to dedicate one's time and energies under God to one's Culture and one's Country. The Tamil sage implied that Tamil Culture is the dearest possession of the Tamil people for the preservation of which no sacrifice would be great enough, not even life itself :

தமிழகத்தின் மட்டுமே நம்மை
அழித்தேன் தமிழ்த் தாய்நாடு

Reviews

TAMIL ENCYCLOPAEDIA-SECOND VOLUME

The publication of the second volume marks another distinct stage in the endeavours of the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam to complete the great task they have set before themselves. Compared with the progress made by lexicon-writers and editors of encyclopaedias in other countries, they have every cause for satisfaction that though lacking even in essential resources they are forging ahead at a rate that should rouse envy in the hearts of less enterprising peoples, whose dream of an encyclopaedia of their own is yet too remote for realization. We owe it to the unrelenting and determined efforts of the editors as well as the contributors, that the target dates are being kept in every possible direction.

Several criticisms have been advanced in regard to the first volume of the encyclopaedia, and the second volume too has not escaped strictures. But the consensus of opinion certainly is that in an undertaking so prodigious where the whole field of knowledge known to modern man has to be covered, omissions, perhaps some of them serious, are likely to occur, which to some extent detract from its value. So on the whole the editors of the encyclopaedia must be congratulated on the measure of success that they have achieved in regard to the erudition and skill they have brought to bear upon the presentation of matter so vast and varied and which occasionally defies both analysis and synthesis.

Sometimes descriptions of persons and things are neither full nor sufficiently illuminating. For example, the account given of the University of Ceylon is rather meagre. There is no mention made at all of Edward VIII

of England, while the other Edwards find a place in the encyclopaedia. Some of the sketches could contain illustrative details and references. In the brief account given of the Greek legendary hero, Endymion, a reference to the English poet Keats's work *Endymion* may be brought in. Descriptions of Capital Cities sometimes leave much to be desired. If the editors could indicate to the contributors the precise nature and quantum of information required, they would not give room for criticisms of the type already referred to. Besides, they should themselves ransack the literatures and other sources of knowledge available on the subjects concerned in order to supplement the meagre information that might be supplied by the contributors.

In conclusion, one cannot but extol the good work done by the publishers in both volumes. We have to offer them special praise for the ingenuity, thoroughness and efficiency with which they have used in most cases pure Tamil terms for highly recondite and technical ideas which have been so far studied and understood only in English by Indians in general. This would serve as an eye-opener to those half-hearted reformers who are unwilling to make Tamil, or the regional language for that matter, either as an instrument of modern thought or as a medium of instruction in Universities. The Tamil encyclopaedia will surely pave the way for the publication in Tamil of innumerable authoritative standard text books on modern sciences and arts which would come to be prescribed for study by students in the University. Especially when such a wealth of Tamil vocabulary has been created to meet the demands of higher knowledge the next step forward would be to bring out standard books in Tamil on all subjects according to the requirements of University authorities. This would by all means hasten the introduction of the Tamil medium in Colleges. In this regard, both the Tamil Valarchi Kazhagam and The Academy of Tamil Culture should vie with one another not only in the creation of

standard scientific and technical terminology but also in the production of books by offering the necessary incentive to Tamil scholars, who have creative ability and a talent for writing books. Above all the best service that could be rendered to the cause of the Tamil language would be to encourage the writing of Tamil that is pure, simple, chaste, racy and which carries with it the indelible stamp of the genius of the language.

TRANSLATIONS OF TAMIL POEMS INTO CZECH BY DR. KAMIL ZVELEBIL

Dr. Kamil Zvelebil, our contributor from Prague, has published recently an anthology of classical Tamil verse as an edition de luxe, richly illustrated. This anthology, which appeared under the title சஞ்ஞம் "CERNY KVET", comprises about 50 poems in Czech poetical translation, selected from the Akam, Narrinai and Kuruntokai collections. Soon another anthology of Tamil Cangkam poetry will be published in Dr. Zvelebil's Czech translation, comprising about 200 stanzas. Thus the Czechoslovak readers have been, for the first time, acquainted with the riches and splendour of old Tamil Poetry.

News and Notes

THE FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ACADEMY OF TAMIL CULTURE

The first Annual General meeting of the Academy was held on the 27th August 1955 in the Quinn Hall, Loyola College with Mr. Justice N. Somasundaram, President, in the chair and the usual business was transacted.

Following the General meeting, there was a public meeting over which Professor R. P. Sethu Pillai presided. The gathering was large and the hall was packed to capacity. The proceedings began with a prayer in Tamil sung by the well known actor Mr. T. K. Shanmugam. Professor Filliozat of the College De France, Paris, then delivered an address on "Tamil and Sanskrit". The full text of his address is printed elsewhere in this number.

Professor T. P. Meenakshisundaranar, who was the next speaker, expressed gratification at the keen enthusiasm and interest shown by the Tamil public, particularly the student population, towards Tamil language and culture but sounded a note of warning that unless this interest and enthusiasm were capitalised and translated into action it would serve no purpose.

Rev. Dr. Thani Nayagam of the University of Ceylon, the Chief Editor of Tamil Culture, mentioned that, in connection with his educational and religious work, he had of necessity to learn a number of languages including Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese and he had no hesitation in endorsing Bharathi's dictum

பாரதீய மொழிகளையெல்லாம் தமிழ் மொழி போல
இந்தரம் தெரிந்து காண்க.

He referred to his recent visits to the countries in the Far East where he was able to recognise many elements of Tamil influence in the fields of religion as well as art and architecture. Amongst other things he referred to the fact that certain sects in Indonesia were known as Cheras, Cholas and Pandiyas and to the tradition obtaining at the annual coronation celebrations at Bangkok in Thailand of singing by the High priest there of Tamil stanzas from Tiruvachagam (Tiruvembavai).

Dr. K. K. Pillai, Professor of History, Madras University emphasised the need for conducting research in a scientific spirit and mentioned instances of scholars in historical and literary fields in Tamil Nad who approached problems with preconceived prejudices, leading them to absurd and highly inconsistent findings. In particular he pointed out the fallacy of conclusions drawn by some scholars in regard to language on the basis of inscriptions raised by non Tamilians, particularly Buddhist and Jain immigrants into Tamil Nad.

Professor Sethu Pillai, in his concluding speech, felt that it was a good augury that scholars of the type of Prof. Filliozat and Dr. Thani Nayagam were able after considerable research to bring out the antiquity, independent evolution and the expansive influence of Tamil language and culture. He was confident that it would no longer be possible for prejudiced writers, masquerading as historians and literary scholars, to belittle the antiquity and the greatness that belong of right to Tamil language and Tamil culture. He stated that a wave of enthusiasm was rising among all sections of the Tamil people and hoped to see ere long the achievement of his life-long desire, viz., to see Tamil enthroned as the language of administration and of education at all levels.

The proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. Valavan Pandian, Professor of Tamil, Loyola College and with a Tamil National Anthem sung by Mr. T. K. Shanmugam.

370

TAMIL CULTURE

HINDI AND NON-HINDI REGIONS

President Rajendra Prasad has reiterated the Government's assurance to the people of the South and other Non-Hindi regions that there is no question of imposing Hindi on any one. Inaugurating the Hindi exhibition organised by the Central Educational Ministry in August last, the President said that there was no attempt on the part of the Government to put the people whose mother-tongue was not Hindi in a position of disadvantage or to put whose mother-tongue was Hindi in an advantageous position. Referring to the question of the Union Public Service Commission conducting its competitive examinations through the medium of Hindi, the President said that although steps may be taken to encourage the use of Hindi as the medium of these examinations those who might prefer to use the medium of English or their mother-tongue would be free to do so subject to their passing a test in Hindi later on. He was therefore of the view that there was no justification for thinking that there was even a remote possibility of the Non-Hindi speaking candidates being discriminated against or put to any disadvantage.

HINDI AND GOVERNMENT SERVANTS

The Home Ministry of the Government of India have issued an order that all Central Government servants should have sufficient knowledge of Hindi by January 26, 1965. In this connection, it is understood that the Home Ministry is considering a suggestion made by President Rajendra Prasad that, if necessary, Government servants should be asked to devote one hour out of their eight hour day to the learning of Hindi.

HINDI AND ENGLISH

The Official Language Commission, as it is reported, received surprising answers to their questionnaire. It is learnt that Kaka Kalelkar, who has been a Champion of Hindi as the State Language of India, has suggested to the

Commission that English should not be replaced for another 15 years.

The Syndicate of the Madras University in their answer to the questionnaire issued by the Official Language Commission has opposed the early replacement of English by Hindi. The Syndicate is of the opinion that the replacement of English by Hindi will place most persons belonging to the Non-Hindi speaking areas at a serious disadvantage, the more so in regard to such Non-Hindi speaking areas as South India, where Hindi language and script are almost wholly unknown. They further think that there cannot be any possible method of safeguarding the claims of persons belonging to the Non-Hindi speaking areas in regard to the public services unless English is also allowed as a language of examination along with Hindi till such time as one of the regional languages has developed sufficiently to replace English in the higher stages of learning. The Syndicate is also of the view that if the medium for the Public Service Examinations is to be changed from English, any of the languages mentioned in the constitution may be used and the candidates must be given the choice to use any one of these languages. On the question of propagation of Hindi in Non-Hindi speaking areas, the Syndicate has stated that it may be the duty of the Central Government and the State Government of the Hindi speaking areas to expend money on the propagation and enrichment of the Hindi language. But other States will have their corresponding obligation for the propagation and enrichment of their regional languages.

The Syndicate has also suggested that the use of English as the official language may be extended for at least a period of 30 years from the date of commencement of the constitution.

TAMIL AS STATE LANGUAGE

Sri K. Kamaraj, Chief Minister of Madras, has stated that ultimately the aim of the Government is that the administration of the State should be carried on only in

the regional language. He also thinks that the process of introducing the regional language for conducting the administration of the State will gather momentum as soon as the re-alignment of State boundaries is completed in the light of the recommendations of the State Reorganisation Commission.

During the discussion on the questionnaire issued by the Official Language Commission in the Madras Legislative Assembly, Sri C. Subramanian, Finance Minister, stated that there will be no objection to the study of a common language so long as the autonomy of the State was ensured in regard to the development of the Regional Language for administrative and educational purposes. Regarding the adoption of Hindi as the official language, the Minister said that the part of the Constitution relating to that subject required complete re-thinking. The decision contained in the chapter was arrived at as a compromise formula and it should be re-examined in the light of the existing circumstances.

The Madras Presidency Tamil Sangam at its meeting held at Tirunelveli welcomed the statement of the Finance Minister in the Madras Legislative Assembly that the regional language would be the official language of the State. It was also announced at the meeting that the Administrative Terms Committee of the Sangam had already coined about 5,000 Tamil equivalents of English administrative terms, and Government was urged to give financial aid to the Sangam to complete its work.

DEPARTMENT OF DRAVIDIAN PHILOLOGY

On the 15th of October 1955, the new Department of Dravidian Philology of the Annamalai University was inaugurated by Sri C. Subramanian, Minister for Finance and Education. The following is an account of the circumstances which led to the opening of this department, sent to us for publication by the Public Relations Officer, Annamalai University.

In recognition of the services of the Annamalai University to the cause of higher education, the Union Government sanctioned, on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations, a non-recurring grant of Rs. Three lakhs for the establishment of a Chair in Tamil.

To formulate proposals for the utilization of the grant, a Special Committee was formed, consisting of the following gentlemen: Sri A. Ramanatham Pillai, then Deputy to the Vice-Chancellor (Convener), Sri T. M. Narayanaswamy Pillai (now Vice-Chancellor), Dr. Chidambaram Chettiar, Professor L. P. KR. Ramanathan Chettiar and Professor G. Subramania Pillai. After deep thought and deliberation, the Committee reported that having regard to the genesis of the University, the intentions of the Founder, the wishes of the public, and the aspirations of the youth of Tamil Nad, the University has a distinctive role to play in the field of higher education, namely that of giving the foremost place to Tamil and providing facilities for and encouraging the study of Tamil and research in it in all its aspects—language, literature, culture, philosophy, religion, archaeology, fine arts, music, sculpture, architecture etc. In due course and as finances permit, facilities for the study of and research in Tamil in all its aspects should be provided. But provision of research in all these branches all at once may not be feasible, and so it would be necessary to undertake at present one or two schemes within the financial capacity of the University.

Several fruitful lines of work that have to be pursued, were outlined in the order of preference. To start with, Studies in Comparative Philology were considered essential as they open out a vista of useful investigations.

Preparation of a new Etymological Dictionary in Tamil and research in Comparative Dravidian Philology are very important subjects. Professor R. P. Sethu Pillai has stressed the importance of philological research in Tamil, and the need for the immediate preparation of an etymo-

logical dictionary in Tamil. He says, "Dr. Caldwell gave the lead in this direction but after him no systematic attempt has been made to study the Dravidian Language from the scientific point of view."

Research work and the preparation of the etymological dictionary will necessitate the appointment of a competent Professor of Tamil assisted by research scholars in each of the other Dravidian languages namely, Telugu, Kannada, and Malayalam.

The next proposal is a scheme for the study of, and research in, Tamil Philosophy—Saiva Siddhanta and Vaishnava Siddhanta. Due importance has not so far been given to these subjects. Again no research or study has been made of the work of Thirumular. It may be taken on hand as early as possible. There is no need to dilate on the importance of the two philosophies.

The third scheme is research in the field of History, Archaeology and Epigraphy etc. There are many unexplored regions in South Indian history. There is as yet no connected and authentic account or history of South India and its people from the earliest times, based on systematic study and research.

The fourth scheme is research in Tamil Literature. No doubt some work in this field has been done already and is being done even today. The department of Tamil Research in the University is at present engaged in the work of publishing a Variorum edition of *Kamba Ramayanam* and also in publishing the twelve *Tirumurais*. Further lines of research would have to be pursued in the following :

(a) Research in Sangam Literature. There is need for authoritative commentaries on some Sangam works and also on important later works.

(b) Critical editions, with translations in English and notes, of Tamil classics, such as *Kamba Ramayanam*, *Thirukkural*, *Silappathikaram* and *Thiruvacakam*.

(c) Further, Tamil Literature is in need of literary criticism. One of the directions in which research should be undertaken as early as possible by this University is the production of critical works on Tamil classics like *Kamba Ramayanam*, *Silappathikaram*, *Periyapuram* and some Sangam works on the lines of Bradley's "Tragedies of Shakespeare".

(d) An exhaustive history of Tamil literature on the lines of Saintsbury's "History of English Literature". A History of Tamil Literature up to the end of the 10th century has been completed by the Research department. It has to be continued and brought up to date.

(e) The History of Tamil Grammar from the age of *Tholkappiam* has to be presented to the public in a fresh light after adequate research.

(f) In the field of music and dance, Tamil Literature has something valuable to contribute. Rare passages from *Silappathikaram* have to be studied and explained. As it is, it is a sealed book. Research in these would be interesting and instructive.

and (g) Similarly, research in sculpture and temple architecture has to be undertaken under the auspices of the University.

The Syndicate accepted the above recommendations of the Special Committee and decided to create a Silver Jubilee Chair in Tamil with a complement of lecturers for work with special reference to the preparation of the new Etymological Dictionary in Tamil and research in Comparative Philology.

The Academic Council unanimously accepted the proposals of the Syndicate.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND DRAVIDIAN CULTURE

It was brought to the notice of the Academy that the Central Advisory Board of Archaeology nominated recently

by the Government of India has many representatives on it interested in Aryan or Sanskritic Culture, while not a single representative interested in Dravidian or Tamil Language or Culture has been appointed thereto. It was resolved that the Academy should make suitable representations to the Ministry of Education in this regard.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE TAMILS
CHICAGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

In its issue of October 17, 1955, *Tamil Nadu*, Madurai, published a photograph of a bronze statue of a palm tree climber exhibited in the Natural History Museum, Chicago, with the following descriptive caption:

The Tamils are a mixture of White and Negro stocks and have dark brown and wavy hair. They climb toddy palms to obtain sap for making wine.

This gross misrepresentation has drawn indignant protests from Tamilians both in India and abroad and on the matter being brought to the notice of the Governing Council, it was decided that the Academy should take suitable action to correct the misconceptions.

Transliteration of Tamil Phonemes into English

VOWELS

அ	—	a	(as in among)
ஆ	—	a:	(„ calm)
இ	—	i	(„ sit)
ஈ	—	i:	(„ machine)
உ	—	u	(„ full)
ஊ	—	u:	(„ rule)
எ	—	e	(„ fed)
ஏ	—	e:	(„ able)
ஐ	—	ai	(„ aisle)
ஓ	—	o	(„ opinion)
ஔ	—	o:	(„ opium)
ஔ	—	au	(„ now)

CONSONANTS

Hard¹ (Plosive)	க	—	k	(as in king, angle, alhambra)
	ச	—	c	(„ church, angel, calcium)
	த	—	t:	(„ card?)
	த	—	th	(„ threat, this, thick)
	ப	—	p	(„ pipe, amber)
	ஃ	—	t	(„ atlas, sunday, arrears)
Soft (Nasal)	ங	—	ng	(„ sing)
	ஞ	—	nj	(„ angel)
	ன	—	n:	(„ urn?)
	ஞ	—	nh	(„ anthem)
	ம்	—	m	(„ mate)
	ன்	—	n	(„ enter)
Medial (non-nasal continuant)	ய	—	y	(„ yard)
	ர	—	r	(„ red)
	ல	—	l	(„ leave)
	வ	—	v	(„ very)
	ள	—	l-	(„ ?)
	ழ	—	l:	(„ hurl)
Auxiliary² (Aytham)	ஶ	—	x	(„ ?)
	ஸ	—	x	(„ ?)

1. The Phonemes, classified as *hard*, have normally an *unaspirated*, *unvoiced* value but acquire the following modified values if preceded by a consonant:—

(a) a *slightly aspirated* unvoiced value, if preceded by a *plosive or hard consonant*.

e.g., பக்கம் - is pronounced pakkham, not pakkam

(b) an *unaspirated but voiced* value, if preceded by a *nasal or soft consonant*:—

e.g., பங்கம் - is pronounced pangam, not pankam
பஞ்சம் - " panjam, not pancam

(c) a *fricative* value if preceded by a *non-nasal continuant or medium consonant or by the auxiliary consonant*.

e.g., பல்லை becomes palhalai not palkalai
எஃகு " ehhu not exku

2. The value of this *auxiliary* phoneme, which must *always* be followed by a hard consonant, is variable; it acquires a phonetic value identical with that of the following hard consonant, vide I (c) above,

e.g., எஃகு becomes ehhu

Note. (i) With a view to keep down transliteration to the minimum it is suggested that, in the case of Tamil words which are already in free use in English (e.g., Tamil = Thamiz), transliteration need not be resorted to. In the case of proper names etc., which occur more than once in the same article, the transliteration need be shown only once in brackets side by side with a free English adaptation, the latter alone being used subsequently, except of course in cases where such a procedure will lead to ambiguity,

e.g., வெங்கடம் = Vengadam (Ve:ngkat:am).

(ii) Reference may be made to *Tamil Culture*, Vol. IV, No. 1 (January 1955 issue) pp. 58-73 for fuller details.

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