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Tamil culture

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Ancient Tamil Literature and the Study of Ancient Indian Education

XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM

The contribution that Comparative Education bids fair to make towards the promotion of international understanding and fellowship in this latter half of the twentieth century is similar to the contribution made by Comparative Philology, Comparative Law, Comparative Religion and Comparative Literature in the last two centuries. There is already the promise of educational Bryces and Montesquieus classifying and analysing educational institutions of the Western World, but Comparative Education opens up yet wider horizons, and these include the evaluation of the ideals, aims and values of educational systems and thought in the ancient world as a whole, and not merely in the sector represented by Graeco-Roman culture. It is but natural that the educationists of Europe and America should be concerned with the well-springs of their educational thought, but Comparative Education in an era of internationalism has the opportunity to extend its scope and purposes both in time and in space. Just as research workers in Comparative Education today and Modern Year Books of Education would consider it necessary to include India, Africa, China, Japan and Indonesia within the range of their studies and their surveys, a cultural history of Comparative Education would always remain incomplete without the inclusion of thought in India and China when, for instance, Plato was outlining his *Republic* and formulating his Laws, and Quintilian was instructing students for the Roman bar¹

¹ KANDEL, I. L., *Comparative Education*, pp. xvi-xxv, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 1933, pp. xvi-xvii, "The Study of Foreign

European scholarship, particularly that branch of it engaged in historical, cultural and philosophic studies, has been mostly Hellenocentric and Europacentric and has neglected to a large extent synoptic and synthesising studies of the World that belongs to Mankind as a whole. For this restricted world-view the specialist should shoulder much of the blame. Excessive specialisation has resulted in the most restricted meanings applied to "humanism" and the "humanities". The classification of specialists into Egyptologists, Indologists, Sinologists under a general trade-mark "Orientalists" has not contributed to their acquiring respectability on an equal plane with those engaged in classical scholarship. The narrow outlook engendered by a certain type of Hellenocentric scholarship sometimes leads to the most startling and unscientific conclusions, as in the following passage in which the author dismisses the consideration of non-Grecian cultures with much the same sweep as Macaulay dismissed the study of Indian literatures.

"We are accustomed" says the author of *Paideia, the Ideals of Greek Culture*,

"to use the word 'culture' not to describe an ideal which only a Hellenocentric world possesses, but in a much more trivial and general sense to denote something inherent in every nation of the world, even the most primitive. We use it for the entire complex of all the ways and expressions of life which characterise any one nation. Thus the word has sunk to mean a simple anthropological concept, not a concept of value, a consciously pursued ideal. In this vague, analogical sense it is permissible to talk of Chinese, Indian, Babylonian, Jewish or Egyptian culture, although none of these nations has a word or an ideal which corresponds to real culture."²

systems of education is not new; since the days when Athens was the school of Greece and 'captive Greece took captive her rude conqueror', history is rich in examples of international exchange of ideas, principles, and practices in education"; SCHNEIDER FRIEDRICH, *Triebkräfte der pädagogik der völker*, pp. 324-407, *Das ausland als gestaltender faktor*, Otto Muller Verlag in Salzburg, 1947.

² JAEGER WERNER, *Paideia, the Ideals of Greek Culture*, translated from the second German edition by GILBERT HIGHET, Vol. I, p. xvii, Oxford, 1946; Cf. BARKER EARNEST, *Traditions of Civility*, pp. 1-12, University Press, Cambridge, 1948.

Humanism could hardly be less humanistic, at least not in a world that reads Max Muller and Berridale Keith and Lafcadio Hearne, Ezra Pound and Radhakrishnan. Plato himself would repudiate this branch of humanism, for his liberal education consisted partly in his travels and in his study of institutions of those countries and peoples associated with Hellas. Like the histories of literature and the histories of the world that by-pass the East, even histories of Education forget one-half the world in spite of their comprehensive titles; and even if they do provide a section or two to India and China, they seem to do so to satisfy some qualm of historical conscience or much in the fashion of a sop thrown to an intellectual and cultural Cerberus.³

The student of Comparative Education, therefore, has a vast and unexplored field before him, and it is yet possible for him to work as a pioneer in synthesising the world's experience and cultures at given epochs and at given periods of her history. The world is not understood and the achievements of mankind are not understood except "by an appreciation of the intangible, impalpable, spiritual and cultural forces" operating in various parts of the world at given epochs. It comes naturally to persons familiar with Eastern and Western thought to desire that standard works on the History of Secondary Education and the History of Universities and reference books on educational wisdom should include the wisdom of the other half of the world which they tend to neglect.⁴ The interplay of

³ E. g., MONROE PAUL, *A Text-book of the History of Education*, London, 1925; COLE, PERCIVAL, R., *A History of Educational Thought*, Oxford University Press, London, 1931; BRUBACHER, JOHN, S., *A History of the Problems of Education*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1947, contains inaccurate statements. E.g., *ibid*, p. 2, "India, an oriental country, had no regard for such occidental social aims as patriotism, economic prosperity, and social progress or for the individual aims of ambition, personal responsibility and self-reliance"; EBY and ARROWOOD, *History and Philosophy of Education, Ancient and Medieval*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1951.

⁴ ULICH ROBERT is one who has expressed the need of a place to Ancient Indian and Chinese Education. See his *Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1947; ULICH ROBERT, *History of Educational Thought*, American Book Company, New York, 1945, p. vii, "It is regrettable that this book had to be

international forces and the communication and communion of ideas between peoples of the world may be traced even further than the age of the dolmens, and the deeper we go into history, the more surprising are the common characteristics of a uniform development to be traced among groups divided both in space and in time. The vision of reality, for instance, which dawned upon the thinkers of Greece and Asia Minor about the sixth century was not confined to Europe. It was broadly the age of Zarathustra in Persia, of Confucius in China, of the Buddha in India, and of the Hebrew prophets in Palestine. If we go still further, it does not become impossible to trace relationships between the Indus Valley Civilization on the one hand and Sumer, Akad, Egypt and the Aegean Civilization on the other.⁵

Our failure in synthesis arises from the fact that we wish to educate for international understanding, on a curriculum and a literature meant for instruction in nationalism⁶. We have also failed to note that the school is so much dependent on the scholarship of the University, that so long as scholarship takes a restricted view, education in internationalism and a synthesis of world-knowledge,

restricted to one western civilization, for the time is ripe for a history of educational thought which conceives of our western world as only a part of the total civilization of mankind. Particularly in the thought of Asia could we find sources of profound wisdom. We sometimes forget in our western conceit that, in spite of all their philosophical richness, Europe and the countries with typical European civilization have failed to produce anything which deserves to be called a world religion. Confucius, Lao-tse, Buddha, Isaiah, Christ—all have sprung from Asiatic soil. And, whether or not we like to admit it, they have done more for the education of mankind than all other great men together." ; RADHA-KRISHNAN, S. (Editor), *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*, Two Vols., George Allen and Unwin, London, 1953, is almost a first attempt to bring together the philosophical thought of different countries.

⁵ HROZNY FRIEDRICH, *Histoire de l'Asie anterieure, de l'Inde, et de la Crite depuis les origines jusqu'au debut du second millinaire*, Trad. franc. par Madeleine David, Paris, 1947; HERAS, H., *Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture*, Indian Historical Research Institute, Bombay, 1953.

⁶ KANDEL, I. L., *Nationalism and Education*, in *The Year Book of Education*, pp. 28-46, Evans Brothers, London, 1949; JACKS, M. L., *Total Education, a Plea for Synthesis*, pp. 113-126, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1950.

what should be the twentieth century realisation of the pan-sophic ideal of an Alexander and a Comenius must remain distant and remote. If the ideal of one world is not to become an empty word, children of different continents should hear not only of Alexander but also of Asoka, not only of the Parthenon and the Ara Pacis but also of Anuradhapura and Anghor Wat, Prambanan and Panataran, not only of the *Iliad* but also of the *Ramayana*, and the *Silappadikaram*.

It is not unlikely that at some future time it will be possible for the student of Comparative Education to have a synoptic perspective of educational thought down the ages. It is stimulating to see how certain ideas and techniques dominate parts of the world, at the same epoch or at different epochs. A comparison of the Indocentric area with the Hellenocentric points to certain dominant factors which show a parallel development across the centuries. There were eras, not necessarily synchronistic, when wandering minstrels and poets were the great educators of the two continents. There were periods when great epics like the *Iliad*, the *Ramayana*, the *Silappadikaram* constituted the content of popular education. There were long periods when exegetical works and commentaries on grammarians, philosophers and poets formed the subject of study and scholarship. University life at Taxila, at Nalanda, post-Christian Athens and at the Mediaeval Universities of Europe offer striking resemblances. Monks and monasteries in India and Ceylon played a similar role to that played by monasticism in the West in spreading learning and preserving the traditional lore. Chantry schools and Cathedral schools find their Eastern counterparts in the educational institutions that were attached to Buddhist and Jain monasteries and Hindu temples. Just as a great missionary movement carried the torch of learning to new peoples and remote places of Europe, a similar movement carried the Indian religions and Indian learning to the many states and peoples of South East Asia.

It is instructive to trace how literature, the theatre and the Fine Arts were the media of adult education in both regions. Whole systems of Comparative Education study await the enterprising students that will function as interpreters of one part of the world to another so that men may see human destiny and human thought steady and see them whole. Such vision is an absolute necessity for a world, that needs to understand Asia and her peoples.

Further, these studies become indispensable at this stage of Asian history when countries that have once again achieved independence are searching for the roots of their culture and their beliefs. Few Europeans and Americans are in a position to imagine the extent to which the history, philosophy and culture of these countries as extant before their contact with Europeans is being studied by these nations. There is every indication that educational thought, which in these countries has been mostly European in content during the colonial era, will be modified and altered by the study of the nation's past. It is but proper and natural that while on the one hand they are open to the influences of the outside world, they set up their educational house after their own indigenous traditions and in answer to their own social and economic needs. This will secure for them the most natural and organic development. Indian and Ceylonese education during the period of English rule has not been characterised by any great philosophy of education. It has been mainly utilitarian, arising as it did out of administrative needs. If foreign ideas were imported under foreign rule, they were mainly in the domain of methods, not of values, and hence a rethinking of education is observable in all countries which have become independent.⁷

⁷ E.g., *The Report of the University Education Commission*, Vol. I, pp. 56-57, Manager of Publications, Delhi, 1950; *The Report of the Secondary Education Commission*, Ministry of Education, Delhi, 1954; RAHMAN FALZUR, *New Education in the Making in Pakistan*, Cassell and Company, London, 1953; HUTASOIT, M., *Compulsory Education in Indonesia*, UNESCO, Paris, 1954; Pyidwatha, *the New Burma*, Govt. of the Union of Burma, 1954, p. 113, "For the first time in the history of our education we have formulated aims which envisage a complete revolution in our educational system."

Dr. Nicholas Hans in defining the international scope of Comparative Education says :

"The task is tremendous and can be successfully completed only by team-work of educationists of all countries and international educational agencies. The first step is to study each national system separately in its historical setting and its close connection with the development of national character and culture."⁸

An attempt should be made to trace in the spirit of team-work that Doctor Hans has envisaged the educational thought contained in one of the most ancient literatures of the world, written by a very ancient people in a very ancient part of peninsular India and Ceylon. It is true that ancient Indian education has been the subject of a number of studies by various scholars but like most studies on India they have been concerned almost exclusively with Northern India and the ancient Sanskrit and Pali literatures.⁹ The notion that the Sanskrit and Pali literatures are fully representative of the entire field of ancient Indian culture is widely prevalent. This view overlooks the fact that an accurate and complete understanding of Ancient India and Ancient Ceylon is well nigh impossible without a study of the history and the only remaining literature of the Dravidian language-speaking peoples. On the distinctive and independent culture of the non-Aryan peoples of India and Ceylon in ancient times and on their importance in the evolution of the composite culture of India and Ceylon, I prefer to quote from non-Tamil speaking critics. Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji in a notable contribution to a new series of volumes on the history of India says :

⁸ HANS NICHOLAS, *Comparative Education*, p. 7, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1951.

⁹ BOKIL, V. P., *The History of Education in India*, Bombay, 1925; DAS, SANTOSH KUMAR, *The Educational System of the Ancient Hindus*, Calcutta, 1930; KEAY, F. E., *Indian Education in Ancient and Later Times*, Oxford University Press, London, 1938; WOODY THOMAS, *Life and Education in Early Societies*, pp. 152-176, Macmillan, New York, 1949; ALTEKAR, A. S., *Education in Ancient India*, 4th edn., Nand Kishore & Bros., Banares, 1951; KUNHAN RAJA, C., *Some Aspects of Education in Ancient India*, University of Madras, Madras, 1950.

"When the hypothesis of an Aryan invasion and occupation of India was first proposed some four generations ago, it was believed that the white-skinned, blue-eyed and golden-haired Aryans, like their kinsmen of Northern Europe, entered India from the plateau of Central Asia, which was then a land of romantic mystery, came to this land of the black-skinned non-Aryans, made an easy and matter-of-course conquest of them, and imposed upon an inferior race or races their superior religion, culture, and language. It was believed that all the better elements in Hindu religion and culture—its deeper philosophy, its finer literature, its more reasonable organization, everything in fact which was great and good and noble in it—came from the Aryans as a superior white race; and whatever was dark and lowly and superstitious in Hindu religion and civilization represented only an expression of the suppressed non-Aryan mentality. This view is now being gradually abandoned. It has been generally admitted, particularly after a study of both the bases 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 Mohenjodaro and Harappa were certainly in possession of a higher material culture than what the semi-nomadic Aryans could show."¹⁰

And again :

"By far the most significant elements in the ancient civilization of India as it had evolved by the middle of the first millennium B.C. were contributed by the Dravidians."^{10b}

The Dravidian language groups today are represented by the Telugu (33 m.) the Tamil (28 m. in India, Ceylon and Malaya) the Kannada (14 m.) the Malayalam (13 m.)

¹⁰ CHATTERJI, S. K., *Race-movements and Pre-historic Culture*, in *The Vedic Age*, pp. 157-8, *History and Culture of the Indian People*, Vol. I, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1951; see KUNHAN RAJA, C., *Pre-Vedic Elements in Indian Thought in History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*, Vol. I, pp. 31-39, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1952.

^{10b} CHATTERJI, S. K., *The Basic Unity underlying the Diversity of Culture in Inter-relations of Cultures*, p. 169, UNESCO, Paris, 1953.

and by smaller populations in the Southern part of India and in isolated pockets in Central and North India.¹¹ These chief Dravidian language groups formed a solid bloc south of the Vindhya in Ancient India and at least the Tamil area arrested active and intense Aryanisation at the frontiers during the period under survey while permitting the inflow of trade and to some extent of religious thought. Their country, their language, their culture and what we have of their literature are different from those of the Rig-Vedic Aryans. Southern India, therefore, especially the Tamil-speaking area, at least up to the period of Pallava ascendancy was not the scene of an ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural interfusion of Dravidian and Aryan elements, the like of which was vigorous and active in the land roughly north of the Vindhya. Pāṇini whose knowledge of Indian geography is extensive mentions none of these races except the Andhras, and his silence may be taken as an indication that his literary contemporaries recognised no linguistic or literary affiliations with the Southern societies.¹²

The Dravidian speaking peoples of Ancient India are best known in history by the kingdoms which the Kalingas, the Andhras and the Tamils established in the Dekhan and by their overseas trade and colonisation.¹³ The Tamil speaking areas being at the southernmost extremity and having other Dravidian language groups as buffers between Aryavartta and themselves were not open to the non-Dravidian influences that were so active during this period

¹¹ BURROW, T., *The Sanskrit Language*, Faber and Faber, London, 1955, p. 376, "Besides the major languages there are numerous minor non-literary Dravidian languages spoken in various parts of India, namely :

(i) Southern: Tulu, Coorg, Toda, Kota.
(ii) Central: (a) Kolami-Naiki; (b) Parji, Ollari, Poya; (c) Gondi, Konda; (d) Kui-Kuvi.
(iii) Northern: (a) Kuruch, Malto; (b) Brahui."

¹² BHANDARKAR, R. G., *Early History of the Dekkan*, 3rd ed., pp. 8-14, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1928; AGRAWALA, V. S., *India as known to Pāṇini*, University of Lucknow, Lucknow, 1952.

¹³ *Cambridge History of India*, Cambridge, 1935, Ch. XXIV, BARNETT, L. D., *The Early History of Southern India*.

in the Northern and Central parts of India. Ceylon, though in the South and in the pre-Buddhist period for cultural purposes dependant on South India, may have been an exception, since Central Indian influences, before the Asokan period could have reached it by sea.¹⁴ This explains how up to the beginnings of the Pallava period (3rd Century A.D.) when strong political forces penetrated the Northern boundaries of Tamilakam (the Tamil land), the Tamil language area enjoyed an autonomy in culture, and how it becomes culturally and historically an independent source and subject of enquiry. I am aware that the term 'cultural autonomy' is misleading and might suggest a complete absence of foreign impact. No culture of civilised people, especially of a sea-faring and commercial people, is ever isolated. But if it be legitimate to speak of Rigvedic culture or Sanskrit culture or Greek culture or Aegean culture as separate autonomous independent cultures, then it is equally legitimate to speak of the autonomous and independent Tamil culture of the Academy or Cankam period.

Our field of enquiry ranges broadly from the third century B.C. to the second century A.D., a period of five centuries to which may be ascribed the corpus of ancient Tamil literature known as literature of the third Academy or Academy literature or Cankam literature.¹⁵ At the beginning of this epoch itself, during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya and of Asoka, the Tamil states appear independent, well-established governments already posses-

¹⁴ NILAKANTA SASTRI, K. A., *Age of the Nandas and Mauryas*, Motilal Banarsidas, Banaras, 1952, p. 256, "The first immigrants into the island (Ceylon) were probably people from the Malabar Coasts who called themselves Nagas and gave the name Nagadvipa to the Northern section of the island, the ancestors of the modern Nayars of Malabar — Naya being but the Prakrit form of the word Naga."

¹⁵ The unequivocal recorded account that there were literary academies to approve Tamil works of literary merit occurs about the 6th c. A.D. According to this tradition, the literary works of the first two academies are lost. What remains are the works of the third Academy or third Cankam which according to tradition ended about the second or third century A.D. The details of the Academy tradition may be disputed but the tradition itself would seem to contain a core of historical truth.

sed of a developed language and a literature and enjoying commercial relations with the Western world and possibly also with the East.¹⁶ The evidence of Megasthenes, it should be remembered, is fragmentary and second-hand, but it is remarkable that of the fragments of his four books preserved for us, those fragments pertaining to the South are valuable for their witness to Southern political stability and trade. The political stability is confirmed by the second and thirteenth rock edicts of Asoka, from which may be argued that the Tamil kingdoms were independent states with which the Mauryan emperor had established good-will relations.

While Tamil sources of probably a little later date refer to the wealth of the Nandas and the military prowess of the Mauryas, non-Tamil sources of this period, both Indian and foreign, are evidence of the commercial intercourse between Tamilakam and the outside world.¹⁷ Endowed as were the Tamil kingdoms with a coastline of more than a thousand miles and with islands in the neighbourhood, the Tamil kingdoms probably developed sea-faring from very early times, a calling in which the Austrics, their predecessors on the Indian peninsula were accomplished.¹⁸ The pearls of the coasts of Ceylon and the Pandyan kingdom, the soft muslin of Madura, the peacocks, teak, and sandalwood of the western range reached Northern India and the Mediterranean regions, and a few Tamil words for exported commodities lingered in the Hebrew and Greek and Sanskrit tongues to indicate the extent of

¹⁶ NILAKANTA SASTRI, K. A., *Foreign Notices on South India*, University of Madras, Madras, 1939.

¹⁷ On the literary evidence read SRINIVASA IYENGAR, P. T., *Pre-Aryan Tamil Culture*, University of Madras, Madras; ID., *History of the Tamils from the Earliest Times to 600 A.D.*, Coomaraswamy Naidu & Sons, Madras, 1929; SIVARAJA PILLAI, K. N., *The Chronology of the Ancient Tamils*, University of Madras, Madras, 1932. Cf. McCRINDLE, J. W., *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, London, 1877; ID., *Ancient India as described by Ktesias the Knidian*, London, 1882.

¹⁸ BAGCHI, P. C., *Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian in India*, translated from the French of SYLVAIN LEVI, JEAN PRZYLUCKI and JULES BLOCH, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1929.

southern trade earlier than Chandragupta Maurya and Megasthenes.¹⁹ The case for an independent and developed Tamil society at the opening of this epoch receives most strength from the independent cultured vocabulary and the literary conventions of the earliest Tamil poems extant which argue a very long period of literary and social culture preceding them.²⁰ The absence of direct evidence for the growth of Tamil literature from its primitive and earliest stages is no indication that these stages did not exist, and it is the function of the critic to attempt reconstructions of earlier societies from the available evidence and from the laws of human development observable in similar societies. When Tamil literature makes its appearance in history, it does so as in a flourishing age of letters. But within this literature of a flourishing age are to be found the relics and reminiscences of tribal customs and primitive conventions and old forgotten far off things and battles long ago.²¹

* * * *

In spite of the independent light thrown by Ancient Tamil literature on the non-Aryan influences prevalent on the Indian peninsula, no non-Tamil speaking scholar appears to have hitherto published any work which necessitates the study of the entire volume of this literature in its original. The reasons for this neglect are many. The notion pointed out earlier that Sanskrit literature along with Pali is representative of the totality of Indian thought is widespread both in India and outside of India. Since the Sanskrit language is an important representative of the

¹⁹ CALDWELL, ROBERT, *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages*, pp. 91-107, Trubner & Co., London, 1875; KRISHNASVAMY AIYANGAR, *Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture*, p. 4, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1942; BURROW, T., *The Sanskrit Language*, o.c., pp. 373-388, *Non-Aryan Influence on Sanskrit*.

²⁰ SRINIVASA IYENGAR, P. T., *Pre-Aryan Tamil Culture*, University of Madras, Madras.

²¹ SRINIVASA IYENGAR, P. T., *History of the Tamils*, o.c., THANI NAYAGAM XAVIER, S., *Nature in Ancient Tamil Poetry*, Colombo Book Centre, Colombo, 1952.

Indo-European family of languages, it has been a subject of most industrious and laborious scholarship in Europe and America. Its affiliations with Old Iranian, with Greek and Latin, with Baltic and Slavonic, with Hittite and Celtic make it an indispensable study in Western Linguistics. Rig-Vedic literature is the earliest of the literatures of the Indo-European languages and has an importance that can be scarcely attributed to any other literature in the world.

Further, in the field of Indian studies, there is a false assumption that the historic process in India is one of progressive Aryanisation of the Indian peninsula, a process which, according to the same assumption, was complete several centuries before Christ and which did not accept of any exceptions. This assumption is responsible for the ignoring of the Austric and Dravidian constituents of Indian culture and of the process of Dravidisation of the Aryan speaking colonisers and the extent to which Dravidian cultures and languages held the field in Central and Northern India over long periods of time. Scholars like Max Muller and Sylvain Levi did deprecate the "too exclusive examination of India from the Indo-European standpoint," but so far it is only in the field of Linguistics that the non-Aryan elements have received a certain recognition. Pali literature, of course, as the sources for the study of Theravada Buddhism has been consistently examined with Sanskrit in the examination of pre-Christian Indian thought, as also the Jaina literature written in the Prakrits.

The study of Sanskrit literature in Europe and even America has been also promoted on the basis of supposititious blood relationship between the Aryans of India and the Aryans of Europe. Max Muller did repudiate in later life the transfer of his linguistic nomenclature to ethnology by saying :

"I have declared again and again that if I say Aryas, I mean neither blood nor bones, nor hair, nor skull; I

mean simply those who speak an Aryan language.....
To me an ethnologist who speaks of Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan eyes and hair, is as great a sinner as a linguist who speaks of a dolichocephalic dictionary or a brachycephalic grammar." ²²

Nevertheless, among literary men in Germany, and to a lesser extent in other countries, appeals for greater interest in Sanskrit continued to be made on the basis of Aryan racial affinity.²³ These appeals, apart from their false and unscientific basis, ignored the contribution of the non-Aryan speakers of India to the development of Sanskrit literature and thought in centuries when the Sanskrit language occupied a position of eminence in the halls of learning all over India.

The earliest Tamil poetry unlike the earliest Sanskrit poetry is predominantly secular and personal poetry. It is not the composition of a sacerdotal caste but of poets of several castes and of different religious and philosophical beliefs. It is the poetry of a society in which the poet and the artiste played as educative a role as the priest in Rig-vedic society. It is a poetry that is not exclusively, not even predominantly, of kings and princes, but describes the sentiments, emotions and the ordinary life of ordinary people, of the hunters of the hills, the shepherds in the plains, the fisher-folk by the sea and young lovers everywhere. It speaks of valorous kings, of self-sacrificing chieftains, of patriotic mothers, of palaces and cities and of the poor and the lowly.

Even K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, not always a reliable writer on Tamil influences, has had to concede the unique

²² HUXLEY JULIAN, S., and HADDON, A. C., *We, Europeans, A survey of racial relations*, p. 151, Jonathan Cape, London, 1936.

²³ WINTERNITZ, M., *A History of Indian Literature*, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1927, Vol. I, p. 5, "People speak of an Indo-European 'race' which does not exist at all and never has existed.... Though the Indians are not flesh of our flesh, or bone of our bone, we may yet discover mind of our mind in the world of Indian thought."

picture of early society portrayed by Ancient Tamil poetry.
He says :

"If, as is commonly believed, the colophons embody a tradition, which, apart from the corruptions and losses due to neglect and time, may be accepted as correct, then we must recognise in these poems a quantity of literary evidence of unique value ; because then, no other part of India can be said to provide such sober and realistic pictures of contemporary life and politics as these early Tamil classics furnish." ²⁴

It is not only as historical sources that these classics are of value. Judgments on various aspects of Ancient India remain incomplete and one-sided because of the ignoring of this ancient literature. The studies of culture and society by Sorokin, of literature by the Chadwicks, of history by Toynbee, of Education by Brubacher and Woody contain inaccurate inferences because they have been unaware of this literature which represents literary *genres* not to be found elsewhere. As a source for the study of Ancient Indian Education, it offers unplumbed depths and uncharted seas.

²⁴ NILAKANTA SASTRI, K. A., *Studies in Cola history and administration*, p. 1., University of Madras, Madras, 1932.

The Place of English in Indian Education*

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR

Recent events in the Madras University bring to prominence two important questions: Is the English Language the proper medium for education in our country? Again, what share of importance should be attached to the study of the English Language and Literature in our system of education? On these two questions the view submitted in this article is, first, that the proper media of instruction in our system of education are our own great national languages, and that steps should at once be taken to bring about the substitution, and secondly, whether the medium of instruction be English or not, much less of the time and energy available for the education of our youth should be devoted to the pure study of the English Language than is at present insisted on by our Universities, especially that of Madras.

The Turks once made an expedition into Persia, and because of the steep lines of mountains in Armenia, the Padshaw consulted which way they should get in. One of the council said: "Here's much ado how you shall get in; but I hear nobody take care how you should get out." We have found our way into Western science and culture in spite of the steep barrier of language and have conquered

* This is a paper read by Rajaji to the Salem Teachers' Association forty years ago and published on September 1, 1916 in the political fortnightly, *Commonweal*, edited by Mrs. Annie Besant. The article will be read with great interest for its lucid exposition of the unique function of language in the culture-development process, and for the cogency and vigour with which the thesis was presented so long ago by Rajaji to a body of teachers. The article came to light in the course of a search—now in progress—for materials covering the early years of the distinguished leader's public life, by Mr. S. Krishnan of the USIS and is republished with Rajaji's approval.—Editor.

the country; but we have no means of extricating our expeditionary force from the enclosing language, so that the wealth of the conquered country may pass to the Nation. In fixing English as the sole medium of instruction in all the departments of study here, as in English-speaking England or America, a grave miscalculation was made as to the future of Indian national life. Educative effort produced a class isolated in cultural form from the people. The languages of the people were not fed with the new aliment. Hence the full result of the impact of Western civilisation on Eastern culture could not be attained. When making a European language the medium of instruction for spreading European knowledge in India, due allowance was not made for the persistent life of Eastern culture and Eastern languages; and an over-calculation was made as to the number of people who would come in time under the direct influence of the new culture. This is the reason why the new knowledge has not reached the people and produced those beneficial results which otherwise were long overdue, and by vicious interaction, why it has failed to produce full results even in those few who have come under its direct influence. While the people's life remains much where it was ages ago, the University scholars are living in an unreal world of their own, fed on the culture and activities of a fanciful world that has nothing to do with the life of the community to which they belong. The culture of our Universities has no real living connection with the life around us. The best products of our Universities actually live in a fanciful world brought over from Europe. They deal with what may be realities elsewhere, but only with shadows and unrealities as far as India goes.

Had a gradual substitution of the national languages been provided for, after a half-century of work modern civilisation and knowledge would have found a real resting place in the languages of the people, and there would have been a living connection between the life of the nation and

the culture of its Universities. At present the two are apart. A cultured product of our Universities would be intellectually more at home if permitted to move in English society than among his own people ; and he has to lead a strange and pernicious double life, with a foreign culture existing only in his brain for individual intellectual enjoyment, and conforming to the actual daily life and thought of quite a different community. There is not that beneficial mutual interaction between the highest products of culture and the growing national life at its average level, which is the true national function of culture and not individual intellectual pleasure.

Indeed, the more complete the product of the University, and the more keenly he enjoys his English literature, the more inseparable to him is the English language from that culture, and the more hopelessly impossible to him is the act of transferring that culture on to the life of the non-English-knowing people around him. So vicious has been the training that it is not possible for us, except with the highest effort of intellectual detachment and imagination to conceive of University education being imparted through our own national tongues.

To develop in the body and the soul the fullest extent of beauty and perfection of which they are capable is the aim of education as put by Plato. But in successive ages, and in different communities, there has not been agreement as to what is beauty or perfection.

A proper conception of education to serve as a guide to actual practice must be relative in every way to the state of development of the society in which it is given. Perfection of life in Athens of the age of Plato is different from perfection of life in the Arabia of the age of Muhammad ; very different from what it was in the eighteenth-century Oxford ; or what it is in modern India in our own changing times ; and this again is not what it was in India at the time

of the Mahabharata, or what it was in the seventeenth century, or what it is in modern London or Paris.

In times of unrest and change in any community, in educational conceptions, as in social and intellectual life, the type of culture is not absolutely accepted and may be regarded only as a stage in development. We are in such an age of unrest in our community.

During such times of unrest and change, even where the community governs itself in matters of education, the conservative classes, and the very schools and the Universities which are the channels by which adult culture flows to the young, offer conservative and traditional obstruction to any change in themselves to correspond to the changes in moving national life. Added to this difficulty, where the education of such communities vests by the chance of politics in an external force, Monarch, or People, the mistakes which such an external agency is always liable to commit in the gradual adjustment of educational processes to national ideals are likely to be greater during such periods of unrest, whose changing pulse they naturally fail successfully and quickly to feel.

Witness the troublesome unsolved questions of literary, scientific or technical education, moral or religious or secular instruction, standards of efficiency in various departments of education, on which the battles are fought unaided by the potent answers of the voice and the life of the people. If our University culture had been imparted through our own languages, and the people had had access to the new wealth of knowledge, these questions would not have been permitted to be questions of cold logic based on the notions of individual philosophers and faddists, but would have been solved by the involuntary and irresistible force of national life and experience.

For an age of unrest and change, continual readjustment by small and imperceptible steps should be provided

for in any scheme of national education. Otherwise the cleavage between educational process and national life is bound, in order to bring about the necessary concordance, to end in sudden revolutions in the former. However necessary and ultimately desirable the final results of such revolutions may be, yet, during the actual period of violent change, the work must suffer.

In maintaining that the national languages of India should be the media of instruction in the schools and Universities no stress need be laid on what is generally put forward, especially by the teaching profession, as the chief argument in the matter, viz., the great waste of energy over a foreign and difficult language; nor need we consider the proof of this waste by seeing how far it explains the general lassitude following University studies in most cases in our country. The waste of time and energy is in the lower stages of education, wherein there is no justification whatever for maintaining English as the medium for instruction. As for University, and, generally, higher education, the standard of proficiency in English necessary for the purpose has been greatly exaggerated. To serve as a working medium for instruction in the highest courses of study, a very easily attainable degree of proficiency in English, is quite sufficient, which need not involve any deplorable loss of energy. But the one aspect here insisted upon is the national effect of starving the languages of the country, and imprisoning culture in a foreign language.

It is no answer to say that the medium of instruction in Universities does not matter, and that there is nothing in it to prevent the absorption of science and the growth of thought and literature in our own languages, if men realised the duty they owed to their nation and its languages. It is idle to refuse to recognise the very great effect the medium of thought and instruction in the Universities has upon the life of the cultured classes, and upon their capacity to add to the literature of a language in which they were

not brought up to think in the higher levels. It would be ignoring the potent direct influence which the activities of the seats of learning in any country have upon the growth of the language and literature of that country.

Not having provided for gradual change in this matter, we must accept the only other cure, a revolution with all its immediate evils. Our national life demands that the new knowledge must come on the sacred vehicles of the national tongues. English must go, and the people's languages come into the Universities, even as, in England, the tyranny of the classical languages had to yield in favour of Science and the living language.

The incidental immediate loss of power due to the crude condition in which many of the national languages were allowed by us to remain, and the absence of necessary books, may cause great confusion, pessimism, and even despair. But these are the well known and necessary evils of all revolutions. We must reap the reward of past neglect. But the sooner the change, the less violent the gathering force and the revolution.

It should be remembered that there is no gain whatever, except for individual enjoyment, in a merely higher degree of culture which cannot flow in full quantity to the people. It is far better to have even a much lower degree of culture if, by its form and nature, it be really and fully fluid and assimilable.

Let us, therefore, focus public opinion on this matter and hasten the inevitable revolution, so that the travail may be easy.

Those who are of this opinion need not be taken to be wanting in keenness of enjoyment of English literature or in a just appreciation of the cultural value of that great literature. But they hold that it should be relegated to its proper place in Indian education. The culture of that

literature and the reality of it in Indian life should be proved by divesting it of its unessential English form, and clothing it in our own tongues ; and, not mistaking words and symbols for the things themselves, by finding for it final and permanent shape in thought and action, which alone are the real life and body of all true culture.

Constructive work should be begun at once to break the force of the coming revolution as much as possible. The work of feeding the national languages with modern thought and knowledge must be taken up with patriotic zeal. What appears crude, make-shifty, hybrid, and vulgar today will become the plastic, wealthy, scientific and standard language of the next generation. What now seems pure, correct and classical, though unyielding, will be treated as stiff and antiquated then. Let us begin the patriotic work of translation, taking no thought of purity of language, but only of advancement of national education. Truth, time, and the people, will sift the product, and make the standard.

To believe that English will become the national language of the people of United India is obviously absurd. No less absurd is the more moderate hope that English will occupy such a place as a universal second language as to perform the function of *conveying thought and knowledge to the people as a whole*, however much it may serve as a *political lingua franca*. We cannot dispense with the national languages. There is no insuperable difficulty on account of the number of the prevailing languages. Each one of the greater Indian languages is sufficiently strong to serve as the language for many Universities. Tamil serves as the language for a population about half the total population of France, and Telugu for a larger number. Tamil is spoken by more than three times the population of Sweden, and Telugu by about four times that number. Hindi is spoken by about 60 millions ; the population of Germany is only 70 millions. Bengali is spoken by a

population much bigger than that of France or that of the United Kingdom—England, Scotland and Ireland together. Are these languages not to be the languages of Universities for the training and culture of the youths of these several communities ?

The study of English literature in our Universities should continue. The study of one or two foreign languages is very essential for true culture. Huxley once summarised the advantages of such study. "The knowledge of some other language than one's own is of singular intellectual value. One of the safest ways of delivering yourself from the bondage of words is to know how ideas look in words to which you are not accustomed. Many of the faults and mistakes of ancient philosophers are traceable to confusion of the symbol with the thought which it embodied, a confusion to which they were led by their not knowing any language but their own. A foreign language opens new fields in art and in science. Then there is the practical value of such knowledge," especially where it is the language of the great nation that governs us. Administration and commerce as well as national politics are rendered easy by a wide knowledge of English. Lastly : "You will know your own language better if you learn an additional language."

For all these purposes a good working acquaintance with English is quite enough. A standard no higher than that which is demanded for French and German in British Universities, or better still that which is insisted on in English in German Universities, is nearer the ideal than the present extremely high and compulsory University standard, which takes away an undue share of the time and energy of our University students to the detriment of real education. There cannot be any thing more atrocious than that our young men who have enough English to go through all advanced Sciences from English books, and with English teachers, and who satisfy severe tests con-

ducted in English in those branches of knowledge by Doctors of Science, History and Philosophy, brought from England and Scotland, should yet be debarred from all branches of University Education simply because they do not also pass a severe test in pure English conducted by English-speaking scholars of the older Universities of England with, in most cases, no sense of moderation or proportion induced by a study of modern sciences. Such a system lays a premium upon mere language attainment, and keeps off much really good material from our Universities. The enormous loss to national life and culture cannot be adequately estimated and would be tolerated nowhere else.

After all, for culture in the Matthew-Arnoldian sense—of possession of a just criticism of life, of refinement in intellectual thought and emotion—one may doubt whether Eastern culture has much to learn from the West. With our own literature, our manners and our life, I believe we take no mean place in the scale of civilisation in this sense. True, even here, we need not believe that the West has nothing to teach us; but it is maintained that in *Spread*, in extension of the higher life over all classes, we have succeeded better; that the average national level of culture in this sense is on the whole higher among us than in Western communities. In self-restraint, the breadth of philosophical and moral vision, in the realisation of the higher elements of life, a far deeper culture beautifies the life and manners of our people, the literate as well as the common and illiterate, than really can be claimed by the people of the West on behalf of their masses. There is not much need to draw on English or other Western literature for progress in this direction. Equipped with a study of our own literatures and philosophies, we can attain a very high degree of literary, moral and aesthetic culture. The real want is in the direction of political and social strength, and on the material side of civilisation. Here is exotic nourishment needed, and for this, Western science and

history are our foster-mothers. All effort, therefore, should turn in this direction, and the energy of our Universities should not be wasted on the unnecessary, but ought to be conserved for things essential. If there is anything in the West that the East should absorb, it is not its civilisation on the intellectual or emotional, moral or philosophical side, but it is the material, and what are usually considered the baser, elements of it. To us the material element is the all-important part.

Apart from the importance and value of science for our national progress, the methods of science and scientific training have the highest cultural value, and are just the elements of education most necessary to perfect our national type of intellect.

It is believed by some, taken for granted without sufficient examination of causes, that a large number, if not most, of our students are unfit for scientific culture, and are suited only for literary, historical or philosophical courses of study. This is a false belief. These defects are made, not born. They are developed by a long process of parental and pedagogic error continued also by the vicious reaction of one generation of mistrained boys upon the succeeding generation. Put our boys and girls through the proper training from their childhood onwards; they will not be inferior to any other in the world, in this or in any other respect.

Against the reduction of the high and compulsory standard of attainment now demanded by some of our Universities irrespective of the particular departments of study in which the students specialise, it is argued by some that it would be an ugly spectacle if holders of high University degrees spoke and wrote unidiomatic and incorrect English. It wants some effort to get over any convention. It seems absurd that an M.A., of the Madras University should not talk chaste idiomatic English. But it does not,

if he is unable to talk or write even indifferent Tamil, his own mother tongue. The supreme ugliness of the pretension to be a cultured Indian, though entirely ignorant of Samskrit, pronouncing even the very names of your places and your languages as ignorant foreigners pronounce them, and unable to express the commonest sentiments in your own mother tongue, this ugliness is not realised. Our futile though praiseworthy attempt to write and speak, for the commonest purposes of life, the language of another nation without error of idiom or style, instead of our own; the hybrid jargon of the conversations of our educated men when unbending in the Vernaculars, are really the ugliest things in this world which we do not realise. University men of Oxford or Cambridge do not feel it a shame if they are unable to talk or write idiomatic French or German, as spoken and written by born Frenchmen and Germans; but, indeed, they would feel it a shame if they did not learn to talk and write the very best English.

An Indian Degree, it should be remembered is not an English Degree. Nor is an Indian University a branch of the Universities on the Cam and the Isis. An Indian Degree should be recognised as an Indian Degree, and should connote high culture and learning in Arts and Sciences, which are of all languages and not of English alone. It should no doubt connote a good working acquaintance with one or even two of the modern foreign languages of importance, like English, French or German. But above all it should connote the very best knowledge of Samskrit, which contains all the living though ancient culture of India; while the principal language of the University and its Faculties, the language of its arts and its sciences, should be one or other of the great living languages of the people. Then alone will the culture of the Universities perform its national function.

Rajaji informs us that his views as expressed forty years ago in this article remain unchanged. (Editor, *Tamil Culture*)

NOTE

The above in substance was placed before the Salem Teachers' Association at a debate held on the subject. There was remarkable unanimity of opinion in support of the views expressed above, with one noteworthy exception. The President of the Association, Mr. P. Seshadri, now English Professor and Vice-Principal-Elect of the Benares Hindu College, expressed from the Chair a dissenting view, the logic of which the writer failed to follow. He said that we owe a great deal to the English language and English literature; there was not a single good movement of modern India in politics, social reform, literature or even religion, which could not be directly traced to the effect of English literature. Granting, it follows that we ought to be grateful, it does not follow that we should eternally keep a foreign language as a medium for instruction. He said that it was a retrograde step to give up the elevating study of English literature. But this step no one proposed. He further maintained that the best proof of the error of the proposal would come in the actual experiment of it, as the people of the country would certainly send their boys to the English teaching Colleges, and not to the Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Hindi, or Bengali Universities; a wrong argument, proceeding on an unfair competition between a protected institution and an unprotected one. What we ask for is a proper share of protection for Universities constituted as we suggest, which we maintain will ultimately be of the highest national value. He also added that in area and spoken strength the languages of India were not big enough to serve as University languages, a position obviously erroneous. If he referred to the smallness of the *literate* population, this applies as much to English as to the Indian languages. The large percentage of illiteracy even in mother tongues is a condition that can and ought to be remedied quite apart from the question of language in Universities. Mr. Seshadri laid no stress on the absence of suitable books in Indian languages, as evidently he felt

that it was a defect which was as much an effect of the existing state of things as an objection to a change, and we cannot wait to begin till everything is ready.

C. R.

ENGLISH AS THE MEDIUM OF EDUCATION*

My article on the above subject has been adversely criticised by your Allahabad contemporary, the *Leader*, in its Editorial of September 17, by merely repeating the more plausible arguments among those advanced by the Principal of the Benares College, which I had already noticed in my original article.

The *Leader* charges me with a confusion of thought that is said to vitiate my logic, but does not choose to point it out, nor guard itself against a very inexcusable and real confusion of ideas in which Mr. P. Seshadri's arguments were lost, viz., that of confounding education through the medium of English, with instruction in modern science and thought—two totally distinct things.

My chief point was this: Western knowledge and culture would flow more easily than at present to the masses, if we employed the medium of our own languages in the Universities and schools. I also maintain that our languages will not improve in adaptability to modern science and modern thought unless we begin to employ them for the purposes of education in the Universities and schools. The *Leader* has not met either of these points.

A supposed inconsistency is referred to, in connection with a passage quoted from my article, wholly based on

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a total misunderstanding of the meaning of the first person plural in the sentence quoted. Whereas I referred to the few English-educated men, your Allahabad contemporary reads the whole nation into it, and an inconsistency naturally follows. A perusal of the passage referred to would show the obvious error of the criticism.

The *Leader* refers with great eloquence to England "the proud possessor of an Empire," and points out that it "derived its culture and the inspiration for its institutions through the Greek and Latin languages." I fear I do not see here that close reasoning and that preference for ideas rather than for words, the absence of which the *Leader* deplores in my article. I have not been able to see the correctness of this parallel either as to the facts relied upon, or as to their having occurred after, or in spite of, England's becoming the possessor of an Empire, or of the bearing of the comparison on the question at issue. I believed English boys at no time studied their history of England in Greek or Latin; or their geography, or their mathematics, or even their science, in any language but their own. I fancy they learnt even Greek and Roman History only in English. I also never heard they conducted their scientific journals in England in Greek or Latin at any time, nor that they ever acted on the policy of improving their own language by letting it alone and carefully avoiding the use of it in teaching science and other branches of knowledge in their schools and Colleges.

In any discussion on this subject, there can be no profitable result if we confound the subject-matter of studies, viz., modern science and modern knowledge, with the medium of instruction; and this error vitiates the *Leader's* criticism, as it did Mr. Seshadri's remarks.

Salem.

C. RAJAGOPALACHARIAR.

Linguistic Prehistory of India*

—MURRAY B. EMENEAU

At some time in the second millennium B.C., probably comparatively early in the millennium, a band or bands of speakers of an Indo-European language, later to be called Sanskrit, entered India over the northwest passes. This is our linguistic doctrine which has been held now for more than a century and a half. There seems to be no reason to distrust the arguments for it, in spite of the traditional Hindu ignorance of any such invasion, their doctrine that Sanskrit is "the language of the gods," and the somewhat chauvinistic clinging to the old tradition even to-day by some Indian scholars. Sanskrit, "the language of the gods," I shall therefore assume to have been a language brought from the Near East or the Western world by the nomadic bands.

These invaders did not penetrate into a linguistic vacuum. What did they find to the east of the passes? If the archaeologists' reconstruction and chronology of the events are at all well-founded, they found over the whole of the Indus Valley a high culture (the Harappā culture of the archaeologists), which was a sibling or a remote cousin of the high cultures of the Near East—Egypt, the Fertile Crescent, Mesopotamia.¹ Here were great and small

* This paper was read by Prof. Emeneau, before the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, on April 23, 1954 and is reprinted in *Tamil Culture* with their permission.

¹ See, e.g., Mackay, Ernest, *Early Indian civilizations*, London, Luzac and Co., 1948; Wheeler, R. E. M. (now Sir Mortimer), in various places, esp. *Ancient India* 3: 74–76, Jan. 1947, and *The Cambridge history of India*, supp. vol. *The Indus Civilization*, Cambridge, Univ. Press, 1953; Piggott, Stuart, *Prehistoric India to 1000 B.C.*, Pelican Book, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1950, with good select bibliographies.

cities, whose life was based on the riverine agriculture permitted by a great river and its tributaries in a vast, irrigable, alluvial valley. The probabilities are that the culture was as rigidly regimented and as firmly based on a system of serfdom or slavery as were the Near Eastern cultures.² So far the excavations have not yielded, and it seems improbable that they will in future yield, evidence of a material brilliance such as that of Egypt and Mesopotamia. It may be that the Harappā culture was the "repellent" thing that one of its interpreters³ has called it—"drab" or "dull"⁴ might be a better, because a less subjective, word.

For our present interest, however, it is to be recalled that this culture was literate. The many short inscriptions on seals are written in a script that is non-identical in its forms with either the Egyptian hieroglyphs or the Mesopotamian cuneiform, but that is somewhat similar to the early stages of both in that it probably developed from a picture-writing, rebus-like in nature, and was apparently, like both, syllabic in its structure.⁵ The unknown script and subject-matter, combined with the shortness of the inscriptions, have so far defied convincing decipherment.

The most ambitious attempt up to date, that of Father Heras,⁶ has posited that the language is an old member of the Dravidian family which is now located chiefly in South and Central India, but which still has an outlying member, Brahui, in the highlands of Baluchistan to the west of the Indus Valley. There is nothing *a priori* against this assumption. Speakers of Dravidian languages now

² Wheeler, *Ancient India*, loc. cit.

³ Piggott, op. cit. 201.

⁴ "Dull" is Wheeler's word in *Tamil Culture* 2: 20, 1953; he declares, however, in *The Indus Civilization*, 63 f. that the remains suggest "an aesthetic capacity more broadly based than the recovered examples of it alone would indicate," an aesthetic capacity perhaps expended in part on the perishable art of wood-carving.

⁵ Piggott, op. cit. 178–181. Kroeber's term "stimulus diffusion" must be called to mind.

⁶ Many articles in Indian journals have been devoted to this "decipherment." It seems unnecessary to list them.

number about 90 millions or just under one quarter of the population of the Indian subcontinent (making the family the fifth or sixth largest in the world). The geographical distribution, and the nature of the boundary in Central India between Dravidian speakers and the speakers of the Indo-Aryan languages that descend from the invader language Sanskrit, are good evidence that Dravidian has been steadily retreating before Indo-Aryan. The Dravidian-speakers of the farthest South, the Tamil-speakers, early acquired a high culture with all the features of the North Indian culture that was framed in Sanskrit. Even the grammar and the literary criticism of the Sanskrit culture were among the early borrowings and are the subjects of the earliest extant Tamil text. As is usual in India, no exact dating of this early literature is possible, but it is clearly no later than the earliest centuries of the Christian era and may well be pre-Christian. Tamil script is known from the Arikamedu finds of the first century A.D. And the presence of Aśokan inscriptions in Middle Indo-Aryan dialects as far south as Mysore State in the third century B.C. is witness to the spread of Sanskrit culture southwards prior to this period—for who could have been addressed by Aśoka in Indo-Aryan dialects if not literate brahmins who had settled in the South in some numbers on their missionary occasions?

Be that as it may, it has been claimed that the far southern, Tamil form of the brahmanical Sanskrit culture of India shows in its earliest remains so many specific high features that are not North Indian, that we must posit a high culture in South India prior to the spread of the brahmanical culture there. Archaeological evidence to substantiate these claims, however, is still lacking.⁷ Yet, taking all together, the assumption that the language of the Indus Valley documents was Dravidian is clearly not fantastic.

⁷ Wheeler, *Ancient India* 4: 89, July 1947—Jan. 1948, with some bibliography.

In spite of this, the attempts at interpretation have not been convincing. Since the subject-matter of the documents is unknown, any subject-matter, i.e. meaning, that is assigned to any element of the script, is arbitrary. A succession of arbitrary meanings thus assigned to the symbols (with, to be sure, a little aid from Sumerian texts) may, in fact, be made to coincide with a Dravidian-like succession of phonemes, but only for short stretches of the material. The Indus Valley material is made up of a fairly large number of short inscriptions, but it is only by positing numerous arbitrary variations of sound and of meaning for the same symbols that anything like a coherent system can be made to run through the total corpus. It is this necessity to vary, or, in other words, this self-given permission to vary in the sound and meaning that are attached to the smallish number of different symbols, plus the impossibility of checking the arbitrary meanings, that has convinced the interested scholars that the method used has been an unconvincing one—that, to put it more crudely, by this method one can give the inscriptions any interpretation one wishes.

In fact, promising as it has seemed to assume Dravidian membership for the Harappā language, it is not the only possibility. Professor W. Norman Brown has pointed out (*The United States and India and Pakistan*, 131-132, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1953) that Northwest India, i.e. the Indus Valley and adjoining parts of India, has during most of its history had Near Eastern elements in its political and cultural make-up at least as prominently as it had true India elements of the Gangetic and Southern types. The passage is so important that it is quoted in full:

More ominous yet was another consideration. Partition now would reproduce an ancient, recurring, and sinister incompatibility between the Northwest and the rest of the subcontinent, which, but for a few brief periods of uneasy cohabitation, had kept them politically apart or hostile and had rendered the subcontinent defensively weak. When an intrusive people came through the passes

and established itself there, it was at first spiritually closer to the relatives it had left behind than to any group already in India. Not until it had been separated from those relatives for a fairly long period and had succeeded in pushing eastward would it loosen the external ties. In period after period this seems to have been true. In the third millennium B.C. the Harappā culture in the Indus Valley was partly similar to contemporary western Asian civilizations and partly to later historic Indian culture of the Ganges valley. In the latter part of the next millennium the earliest Aryans, living in the Punjab and composing the hymns of the Rig Veda, were apparently more like their linguistic and religious kinsmen, the Iranians, than like their eastern Indian contemporaries. In the middle of the next millennium the Persian Achæmenians for two centuries held the Northwest as satrapies. After Alexander had invaded India (327/6-325 B.C.) and Hellenism had arisen, the Northwest too was Hellenized, and once more was partly Indian and partly western. And after Islam entered India, the Northwest again was associated with Persia, Bokhara, Central Asia, rather than with India, and considered itself Islamic first and Indian second.

The periods during which the Punjab has been culturally assimilated to the rest of northern India are few if any at all. Periods of political assimilation are almost as few; perhaps a part of the fourth and third centuries B.C. under the Mauryas; possibly a brief period under the Indo-Greek king Menander in the second century B.C.; another brief period under the Kushanas in the first and second century A.D.; an even briefer period under the Muslim kingdom of Delhi in the last quarter of the twelfth century A.D.; a long one under the great Mughals in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries A.D.; a century under the British, 1849-1947.

Though this refers to cultural and political factors, it is a warning that we must not leap to linguistic conclusions too hastily. The early, but probably centuries-long condition in which Sanskrit, a close ally of languages of Iran, was restricted to the northwest (though it was not the only language there) and the rest of India was not Sanskritic in speech, may well have been mirrored earlier by a period when some other language invader from the Near East—a relative of Sumerian or of Elamitic or what

not—was spoken and written in the Indus Valley. It is not ruled out, of course, that this anonymous Near Easterner might have been only one of the languages spoken in the Indus Valley—perhaps that of invaders and conquerors—while the indigenous population spoke another language—perhaps one of the Dravidian stock, or perhaps one of the Munda stock, which is now represented only by a handful of languages in the backwoods of Central India.

On leaving this highly speculative question, we can move on to an examination of the Sanskrit records, and we find in them linguistic evidence of contacts between the Sanskrit-speaking invaders and the other linguistic groups within India.

Whenever two language communities come in contact and remain in contact for any appreciably long period, the languages have some effect upon each other's structure. Borrowing of words in one or the other direction or in both is the most obvious effect. But there may also be a shift of sound systems, borrowing of derivational or inflectional morphemes, or borrowing of syntactical traits.

Sanskrit scholarship in the West soon saw that some of the non-Indo-European features of Sanskrit were Dravidian (or possibly Munda) in type. The retroflex (domal or cerebral) consonants in Sanskrit may be explained for some of their occurrences as being the reflexes of Indo-European consonant clusters of certain types. The fact, however, that the later in Indo-Aryan linguistic history we go, the greater is the incidence of retroflex consonants, and the further fact that most of the Dravidian languages and Proto-Dravidian itself have this type of consonant in abundance (the case is not so clear for Munda, but is in all probability similar), can only lead to the conclusion that the later Indo-Aryan developments are due to a borrowing of indigenous speech habits through bilingualism, and to the well-grounded suspicion that even the early development of retroflexes from certain Indo-European consonant

clusters results from the same historic cause.⁸ The same argument applies also to the development of absolutes (otherwise called gerunds) in Sanskrit; this non-finite verb form and its syntactic use are so closely parallel to a feature of Dravidian and so unlike what is found in the other old Indo-European languages that we must certainly posit Dravidian influence here.⁹

Prima facie, it should have been easy to examine the Sanskrit dictionary for possible borrowings from Dravidian. There were, however, several blocking factors. First and perhaps most important was the assumption, usually but not always only implicitly made and seldom argued or supported by evidence, that the Sanskrit-speaking invaders of Northwest India were people of a high, or better, a virile, culture, who found in India only culturally feeble barbarians, and that consequently the borrowings that patently took place from Sanskrit and later Indo-Aryan languages into Dravidian were necessarily the only borrowings that could have occurred. Indian civilization itself, with its enthronement of Sanskrit at the expense of other languages, taught Western scholars to think this way about Sanskrit. Moreover, the early days of Indo-European scholarship were without benefit of the spectacular archaeological discoveries that were later to be made in the Mediterranean area, Mesopotamia, and the Indus Valley. It was but natural to operate with the hidden, but anachronistic, assumption that the earliest speakers of Indo-European languages were like the classical Greeks or Romans—prosperous, urbanized bearers of a high civiliza-

⁸ This doctrine is held by, e.g., Bloch, Jules, *Sanskrit et dravidien*, *Bull. Soc. Ling. Paris* 25: 1–21, esp. 4–6, 1925; Some problems of Indo-Aryan philology, *Bull. School Orient. Stud.* 5: 731–733, 1930; *L'Indo-aryen du Veda aux temps modernes*, 53 ff., 325, Paris, 1934; Katre, S. M., *Some problems of historical linguistics in Indo-Aryan*, 135 ff., Bombay, 1944; Prokosch, E., *A comparative Germanic grammar*, 39, Philadelphia, 1939; Wackernagel, Jakob, *Altindische Grammatik* 1: 165, § 144 (a) Anm., Göttingen, 1896, with earlier bibliography, Gundert in 1889, *Ztschr. deutsch. morgenländischen Ges.* 23: 517 ff., having apparently the earliest suggestion.

⁹ Cf. Bloch, *Bull. School Orient. Stud.* 5: 733–735, 1930.

tion destined in its later phases to conquer all Europe and then a great part of the earth—rather than to recognize them for what they doubtless were—nomadic, barbarous looters and cattle-reivers whose fate it was through the centuries to disrupt older civilizations but to be civilized by them. This was in all probability the event in India as it was in Greece or in the late Roman Empire.¹⁰

This assumption led in the long run to another block—the methodological tendency of the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century to attempt to find Indo-European etymologies for the greatest possible portion of the vocabularies of the Indo-European languages (see also note 10), even though the object could only be achieved by flights of phonological and semantic fancy. Latin perhaps was the greatest sufferer from this urge,¹¹ but none of the languages was exempt, and Sanskrit was no exception. It was the less pardonable in dealing with a language spoken and written in India, where even casual inspection of the Dravidian languages would have suggested some borrowings, at least, from Dravidian into Sanskrit.¹²

¹⁰ Mingled with this essentially Europe-centered attitude was that other strand in late eighteenth century thinking, the “romantic” one stressed by Mayrhofer, Manfred, *Saeculum* 2: 54 ff., 1951. It led to Sanskrit being regarded (to use Mayrhofer's phrase) as “die ur-ste aller Ursprachen,” as an exemplar of purity and freedom from all non-Indo-European influence. The Indo-European savages, in short, were the noblest of all noble savages. But this, of course, is ethnocentrism all over again.

¹¹ Cf. Lane, George S., *Lang.* 25: 335–337, 1949.

¹² The borrowings from the vernacular Middle Indo-Aryan into Sanskrit, when the latter became, as it early did, a hieratic and then a dead language in which speakers of Middle Indo-Aryan languages composed freely, form another portion of the Sanskrit lexicon which must be identified and not subjected to fantastic Indo-European etymologizing. Paul Tedesco has made many notable contributions here, but he also is willing to operate with a methodology in which the Dravidian languages do not exist except as borrowers from Indo-Aryan. One example of this is his treatment of words for “belly, stomach” in Sanskrit *piṭaka-* “basket,” *Archaeologica orientalia in memoriam Ernst Herzfeld*, 218, Locust Valley, N. Y., 1952. Whatever may be the etymology of Br. *piḍ* “belly, stomach” (so with Bray, rather than *p[hi]ḍ* with *Linguistic Survey of India*), the Go. *pir id.* is rather to be interpreted as going with Te. *pēgu*, *prēgu* “entrail, gut, bowel” than as borrowed from an Indo-Aryan **peṭṭa-*. More striking is the Sanskrit word *mālā-* “garland,

The third blocking factor has been for long the general ignorance of and indifference to the Dravidian languages, even among professed Indological linguistic scholars. They must not, of course, be judged too harshly. The Dravidian languages are not easy, most of them are languages spoken by backwoods "primitives" and are badly reported, the four literary languages have enormous literatures; *ars (et scientia) longa, vita brevis*.

Finally, a fourth blocking factor has been the general caution of Indo-European scholars when confronted with a substratum situation. In this they were justified, for apart from Basque, the substrata that have been operated with in the study of the history of European languages have been languages that are fragmentarily recorded and badly known (e.g. Gaulish Celtic), not really on record (e.g. Illyrian), or not understood (e.g. Etruscan). In the case of Sanskrit, however, the Dravidian substratum is easily accessible in its dozen or more living languages and in that a Proto-Dravidian can be worked out, given enough scholars interested in the matter.

The end result of the block, however, was that very few scholars attempted to identify borrowings from Dravidian into Sanskrit; those who were interested worked unmethodically and without establishing criteria for recognition of probable, possible, and unlikely examples, and their results were universally ignored. The Sanskrit etymological dictionary of Uhlenbeck (1898-1899)¹³ and the Indo-European etymological dictionary of Walde and Pokorny

wreath," which can be provided with an Indo-Aryan etymology only with the utmost ingenuity (*Jour. Amer. Orient. Soc.* 67: 85 ff., 1947). The "rope" meanings in modern Indic vernaculars may belong to homonyms, to be etymologized as Tedesco does. But the Sanskrit "garland" word may well be borrowed from the Dravidian group of words given in Appendix 1, etym. 13, which see for details.

¹³ Uhlenbeck, C. C. *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch der altindischen Sprache*, Amsterdam, 1898-1899. He mentions non-Sanskritic languages, though without any detail, s.v. *drāvidi*, *palli*. Mayrhofer has apparently found several more such instances; *Saeculum* 2: 55, 1951: "verzeichnet kaum fünf Wörter einheimischer Abkunft."

(1930-1932)¹⁴ completely ignore the work of Gundert (1869),¹⁵ Kittel (1872, 1894),¹⁶ and Caldwell (1856, 1875).¹⁷

More recent work by Jules Bloch (1925, 1930, 1934)¹⁸ attempted to salvage some items from the early attempts, and in the 40's T. Burrow in an important series of articles (1945, 1946, 1948)¹⁹ attempted to set up methodological principles (see Appendix 1) and suggested Dravidian sources for some five hundred Sanskrit words. Collaborative work by Burrow and myself on a Dravidian etymological dictionary will add more items. The Sanskrit etymological dictionary that Manfred Mayrhofer has just begun to publish in Germany (1953)²⁰ takes account of this recent work.

It is clear that not all of Burrow's suggested borrowings will stand the test even of his own principles.²¹ Much labor will have to be expended by qualified scholars on methods and on the individual items, but it can be safely predicted that the work of these modern scholars will yield

¹⁴ Walde, Alois, and Julius Pokorny, *Vergleichendes Wörterbuch der indogermanischen Sprachen*, 3 v., Berlin, 1930-1932.

¹⁵ Gundert, H. *Ztschr. deutsch. morgenländischen Ges.* 23: 517-530, 1869.

¹⁶ Kittel, F., *Indian Antiquary* 1: 235-239, 1872; A Kannada-English dictionary, xiv-xlv, Mangalore, 1894.

¹⁷ Caldwell, Robert, *Comparative grammar of the Dravidian languages*, 565-579, 2d ed., 1875. I have no access to the 1st ed. of 1856.

¹⁸ Bloch, Jules, *Sanskrit et dravidien*, *Bull. Soc. Ling. Paris* 25: 1-21, 1925; *Some problems of Indo-Aryan philology: II. Indo-Aryan and Dravidian*, *Bull. School Orient. Stud.* 5: 730-744, 1930; *L'Indo-aryen du Veda aux temps modernes*, 322-328, Paris, 1934.

¹⁹ Burrow, T., *Some Dravidian words in Sanskrit*, *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1945: 79-120; *Loanwords in Sanskrit*, *ibid.* 1946: 1-30; *Dravidian studies VII: Further Dravidian words in Sanskrit*, *Bull. School Orient. and African Stud.* 12: 365-396, 1948.

²⁰ Mayrhofer, Manfred, *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen*, 1 und 2. Lieferung, Heidelberg, Carl Winter, 1953, 1954.

²¹ One should certainly rule out the Dravidian etymologies given for *kūpāru-* and *vris-*, which occur in one passage each in the *Rig-Veda* and nowhere else in the whole of Sanskrit literature and are of highly uncertain meaning (*Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 22-23). To provide these with Dravidian etymologies is as futile as to provide them with Indo-European etymologies, which Uhlenbeck did for the former (following Roth, presumably).

an acceptable residue that will at long last be available for studies of Indic linguistic prehistory.

It is possible already to take some tentative steps.

As was to be expected, many of the borrowed items are names of flora and fauna indigenous in India and not elsewhere in the old Indo-European territory, e.g. the fragrant screw-pine, *Pandanus odoratissimus* (App. 1, etym. 1), the cardamom (etym. 2), the house lizard, *Lacerta gecko* (etym. 3), perhaps the peacock (etym. 4), certainly the white ant or termite (etym. 5). Some of these words occur in Sanskrit literature from the epic on; others are hardly more than items in the lexica (perhaps intended as etyma from which the Dravidian words were to be derived). But words of much more general semantic range also occur, some (e.g. *nīra*- "water," etym. 6) as early as the epic. We can be sure of Dravidian origin for a few proper names; e.g. the late Vedic and epic hero Nala seems to have a Dravidian name "the good (or handsome) man," and the southern Malaya mountains have a name derived from the Dravidian *malay "mountain" (etymologies 7 and 8). Even the interjection aye of the dramas probably has a Dravidian origin (etym. 9). It is unexpected to find that *kalā*- "an art" (epic and later), which has not been provided with an Indo-European etymology, is probably derived from the Dravidian verb *kal*- "learn," but the suggestion cannot be rejected out of hand and in fact is not unattractive when we remember that India had a high culture before the Sanskrit speakers arrived.

The greatest interest attaches to the items that occur in the earliest Sanskrit recorded, the Rig-Veda. Burrow finds some twenty words, a very mixed lot including the "peacock" word mentioned before and one or two other labels for specifically Indian phenomena. Most of them, however, are much more general; e.g. *khāla*- "threshing floor" (etym. 10) and *phāla*- "fruit" (etym. 11). *kāṇa*- "one-eyed" is very obviously derived from the negative

adjective ("who does not see") of the Dravidian verb **kān*- "see."²² Most strikingly, *bāla*- "strength," which has been one of the more certain examples given in the handbooks for the rare Indo-European phoneme **b* (though the meanings of the cognates are not really identical), may be derived from the very wide-spreading and ramifying Dravidian family of *val*- "be strong, strong, strength" (etym. 12); one of the languages in which Proto-Dravidian **v* becomes *b* will have to be involved here. Indo-Europeanists may be inclined not to accept this, unless they are already desirous of getting rid of all examples of the rare Indo-European **b*.

If the Rig-Vedic examples, or any of them, are accepted, this is evidence for the presence of Dravidian speakers as far towards the northwest as the Panjab, i.e. the upper Indus Valley, in the first centuries (it is uncertain how many) of the presence of Sanskrit-speakers on Indian soil.²³ It is

²² The word occurs in Rig-Veda 10.155.1, an Atharvanic charm. It is common in later Sanskrit and has an abundant progeny ("blind" and "blind of one eye") in the Indo-Aryan vernaculars; see Turner, Ralph Lilley, *A comparative and etymological dictionary of the Nepali language*, London, 1931, s.v. *kānu*. Connection with an Indo-European root (s) *qer*- "to cut" or with *qel*- "to stick" is not obviously convincing. The Dravidian etymology is in Burrow, *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 22; earlier Gundert, *Ztschr. deutsch. morgenländischen Ges.* 23: 521. Not to be derived with Kuiper, F. B. J., *Proto-Munda words in Sanskrit*, 52, from a Proto-Munda **ga-ḍa* "defective."

²³ This thesis automatically rules out a recent hypothesis formulated by C. von Fürer-Haimendorf in *Proceedings of the 37th Indian Science Congress, Poona, 1950*, Part II: Presidential Addresses, 175-189, esp. 176-180, and *New aspects of the Dravidian problem, Tamil culture* 2: 127-135, 1953. He bases his arguments on the results of excavation at Brahmagiri, in the Chitaldrug District of Mysore State, by Wheeler in 1947 (*Ancient India* 4: 180-310, July 1947-January 1948; for the chronology of the site, esp. 200-202). The prior establishment of a precise chronology at Arikamedu (near Pondicherry) by Wheeler (*Ancient India* 2: 17-124, July 1946) allowed a cross-dating for the Brahmagiri site and the establishment of this tentative chronology: Brahmagiri Stone Age culture down to the beginning of the second century B.C., "continuing as a dwindling sub-culture through most of the succeeding Megalith phase"; megalithic culture "after c. 200 B.C. to the middle of the first century A.D., overlapping the Āndhra culture"; Āndhra culture from about middle of the first century A.D. to third century. The date for the beginning of the megalithic culture is an extremely tentative one. Wheeler pointed out, moreover, that a specific feature of the megalithic culture at Brahmagiri was the use of cists with "port-holes," that this site is near the northern limit of reported sites with this feature (Hyderabad is so far the farthest north) but that they are found in considerable numbers

not entirely clear evidence for the Dravidian nature of the Harappā language or of one of the Harappā languages ; it does, however, lead towards that hypothesis.

south to the tip of the peninsula, and that if it were not for the "wide and formidable disparity in date between the Indian cists and their Western analogues [Western Europe, 2500-1500 B.C.], a significant inter-relationship could scarcely be questioned" (183). He added a reference to an early, unverified report of similar cists in the neighbourhood of Karachi (301), desiderated a further search for megaliths in North India, and proceeded to speculate (303-304) on a possible Western origin for the Indian phenomena, with (so far as I can see) a plain warning that Iron Age megaliths of the Indian type are not forthcoming in the Western world at the right period and in the right place, but with the assumption of "the possibility of an integral connection between the port-holed cists of India and those of western Asia and Europe, in spite of the wide disparities of time and place" and an unwillingness to envisage independent origin of the port-holed cists "in regions which, however far apart, have long been interconnected by sea."

Fürer-Haimendorf in the two publications cited at the beginning of this note, and with more certainty and detail in the second than in the first, accepted with hardly a reservation the hypothesis that the megalithic culture was brought to South India from outside India towards the middle of the first millennium B.C. He finds it impossible to conceive that the megalithic, iron-using culture might have been a local development in some area of South India still unexplored archaeologically (as most of South India still is), with some stimulus perhaps from outside; I, not being an archaeologist or an anthropologist, am unable to combat his point of view with any authority. However, I am unable to accept his further hypothesis that the Dravidian languages, or their ancestor, were introduced into India by the bearers of the megalithic culture. He finds it impossible that the people with an iron-using, megalithic culture and the neolithic peoples overrun, could have spoken languages of the same family. But this *a priori* position, that peoples of different cultures cannot be linguistically related, is contradicted again and again in the Indo-European and in other fields—e.g. the relations of Latin, Celtic, and Germanic speakers within the Indo-European family in the time of Caesar and Tacitus are notorious. The general linguistic position taken by Fürer-Haimendorf is untenable, and with it falls his contention that North India could never have been Dravidian-speaking. To rule out the negative does not, to be sure, provide evidence that North India was ever Dravidian-speaking. But if Dravidian loanwords are found in the R̥g-Veda, this is positive evidence which fills this particular vacuum most satisfactorily.

It is regrettable that Manfred Mayrhofer was persuaded (Die Substrattheorien und das Indische, *Germanischromanische Monatsschrift* 34: 233-234 and fn. 9, 1953) by this tenuous archaeological hypothesis to abandon the position that he had taken earlier (Arische Landnahme und indische Altbevölkerung im Spiegel der altindischen Sprache, *Saeculum* 2: 54-64, 1951) on solid linguistic evidence. This is not to say that one can agree with all details of Mayrhofer's earlier construction (e.g. too much weight was put on less than satisfactory Munda evidence), but at least in his theory Dravidian speakers were among the early peoples met by the invading Indo-European speakers. It is not quite clear what position he takes in the introduction to his *Kurzgefasstes etymologisches Wörterbuch des Altindischen* (1953), but certainly he holds that there are Dravidian loanwords to be found in the Vedas (10).

If the Munda languages have been mentioned only in passing, it is not because there were no contacts between Munda speakers and those of the other two language families. The reason is that we know so little that is certain about the Munda family, either descriptively or comparatively. Even the most ambitious attempts at demonstrating borrowings from Munda into Sanskrit have been based on fantastically unsound methods. Although certain Sanskrit words with no Indo-European or Dravidian etymologies might be borrowings from Munda, it seems sounder to ignore the suggestions that have been made, until clear criteria for judging them are at hand (see further Appendix 2).

APPENDIX 1

SANSKRIT BORROWINGS FROM DRAVIDIAN

T. Burrow in *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 13-18 set forth criteria for identifying Dravidian words borrowed into Sanskrit. I summarize them, with some comment, as follows: (1) the Sanskrit word should have no Indo-European etymology—it should rather be: no certain or obvious Indo-European etymology; (2) there should be a wide currency of the etymon in the Dravidian languages and it should be a basic element in the vocabulary; (3) "a word is shown to be Dravidian in origin if it is clearly to be derived from some Dravidian root" (e.g. candana—"sandalwood tree, ointment" is Dravidian in origin since the corresponding Dravidian nouns cāntu, etc., are specialized derivatives of a verb meaning "to rub into a paste"); (4) the word should be of some antiquity in Dravidian (e.g. occurring in the earliest Tamil texts); (5) comparative lateness of appearance of the word in Sanskrit (or one may add, appearance only or first in Sanskrit lexica) increases the probability of its being a borrowing; (6) in each case possible phonetic criteria should be looked for; (7) likewise, semantic developments can sometimes be taken as criteria. There should be added, possibly as a

corollary to (2), that if the word denotes something peculiar to the Indian geographical or social scene, a Dravidian origin is more probable than an Indo-European one.

Not all these criteria can be brought to bear in all cases. Comparative simplicity and avoidance of the assumption of tortuous phonological and semantic developments should also be aimed at, following the general practice of all disciplines ("Occam's razor"), and may well at times tip the scales for borrowing from Dravidian rather than for an Indo-European etymology that has been suggested.

The etymologies that follow have been referred to in the body of this paper. The sigilla for the various languages and the bibliography are those given in *Lang.* 21: 184, fn. 1, 1945, and *Bull. School Orient. and African Stud.* 15: 98, fn. 1, 1953. The following short list gives the Dravidian languages in the order (essentially geographic) in which they are quoted, plus two other sigilla used in the etymologies: Ta. = Tamil, Ma. = Malayalam, Ko. = Kota, To. = Toda, Ka. = Kannaḍa (Cannarese), Koḍ. = Koḍagu (Coorg), Tu. = Tulu, Te. = Telugu, Kol. = Kolami, Nk. = Naiki, Pa. = Parji, Oll. = Ollari, Go. = Gondi, Kui, Kuwi, Kur. = Kurukh, Malt. = Malto, Br. = Brahui; Skt. = Sanskrit, Mar. = Marathi.

1. Ta. kaital, kaitai; Ma. kaita; Ka. kēdage, kēdige; Tu. kēdai, kēdāyi, kēdāyi; Te. gēdāgi "the fragrant screw-pine *Pandanus odoratissimus*"; Skt. ketakā-, ketakī- id. Burrow, T., *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 16: "the diphthong *ai* in the Tamil and Malayalam words is an indication that the word is originally Dravidian"; so also the suffix *-ai* in Ta.-Ma. and Tu.

2. Ta. ēlam "cardamom plant, *Elettaria cardamomum*"; ēla-v-arici "cardamom seed"; Ma. ēlam "cardamoms"; ēlatt-ari "cardamom seed"; Ka. ēl-akki, yāl-akki, yālaki "large cardamoms"; Koḍ. e-l-akki "cardamom

seeds"; e-la male, e-latī male "cardamom plantation"; Tu. ēl-akki "cardamoms"; Te. ēla, ēlaki "cardamom plant"; ēlakulu "cardamom seeds"; Skt. elā "cardamom." Kittel, no. 85.

3. Ta. palli; Ma. palli; Ko. epaj; To. pasy; Ka. palli; Koḍ. palli; Tu. palli; Te. palli, balli "house lizard, *Lacerta gecko*"; Skt. pallī, pallikā id. (lexical); Mar. palli, popular pāl. Kittel, no. 59; Emeneau, M. B., *Univ. of Calif. Publ. Class. Philol.* 12: 261, fn. 31, 1943; Burrow, T., *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 10.

4. Ta. mayil, maññai; Ma. mayil; Ko. mil; To. mi-s; Ka. mayla, maylu; Koḍ. mayli; Tu. mairu; Pa. manjil, mañil; Oll. mañgil; Go. mal; Kui meḍu, melu; Kuwi mellu "peacock"; Skt. mayūra- id. (in two compounds in *Rigveda* 3.45.1, 8.1.25), mayūrī- "peahen" (*Rigveda* 1.191.14, an Atharvanic charm). Burrow, T., *Bull. School Orient. and African Stud.* 11: 608-610, 1945. He discusses Przyluski's Austro-Asiatic suggestion (*Bull. Soc. Ling. Paris* 26: 99 f., 1925) and shows that Skt. mayūra- is closer in form to the Dravidian series than to the posited Austro-Asiatic *marak or the like. He notes also that *r* in mayūra- instead of *l* is not entirely unexpected in *Rigvedic Sanskrit*. Further discussion by Jules Bloch, *Bull. Soc. Ling. Paris* 25: 16, 1925. The suggestion (Walde-Pokorny 2: 243) of an Indo-European etymology on the basis of connexion with Skt. mīmāti "bellow, bleat," māyū- n. "bellowing," Gk. μῦμιζω "neigh," etc. is not convincing.

5. Ta. purru, purram "white anthill"; Ma. purru "ground thrown up by moles, rats, esp. a white anthill"; Ka. puttu, putta "white anthill"; Koḍ. putti id.; Tu. puñca id, "snake's hole"; Te. puṭṭa "anthill, snake's hole, heap, lot, crowd"; Kol. (Kin.) puṭṭa "white anthill"; Nk. puṭṭa id.; Pa. putkal, (NE) puṭkal id., (S) putta "nest inside anthill"; Oll. puṭkal "white anthill"; Go. putti id.; Kui pusi id.; Kuwi [F] pūci "anthill," pūnja "ants' nest"

(earthen)"; Kur. puttā "anthill"; putbelō "white ants' queen" (belō id.); Malt. pute "anthill": Skt. puttikā- "the white ant or termite"; pipilika-puta- "anthill" (pipilika- "ant"). Burrow, T., *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1945: 111. Skt. puttikā- has been taken to be a meaning development from puttikā- "doll, puppet" by Boehtlingk-Roth and Uhlenbeck ("das puppenähnliche tier") and Monier-Williams ("so called from its doll-like form"); this is clearly *ad hoc*. Proto-Dravidian *rr survives in Ta.-Ma. but develops in two different ways (tt, ṭṭ in different languages. Sanskrit has borrowed from two different Dravidian languages, giving puṭa- and *putta-, both meaning "anthill" or more specifically "white anthill," from the latter of which puttikā- is derived by a Sanskrit formative suffix.

6. Ta. nīr "water, sea, juice, liquor, urine, dampness, moisture"; (nīrpp-, nīrtt-) "become thin or watery (as liquid food in cooking), be wet, moist"; nīrmai "property of water, as coldness"; īr "moisture, wetness"; īram "wet, moisture, freshness, coolness"; īrali (īralipp-, īralitt-), īri (īripp-, īritt-) "become moist, damp"; īrippu "dampness"; īriya "damp, wet, cold"; Ma. nīr "water, juice, moisture"; īram "moisture, dirt"; īrikka "grow damp"; īrmam, īrman, īran "damp cloth"; Ko. nīr "water"; To. nīr "water"; īrm "dampness"; Ka. nīr "water"; īra "moisture, dampness, wetness"; Koḍ. nīri "water"; Tu. nīru "water"; Te. nīru "water" (literary); nīḷu "water"; imiri "moisture"; Kol.-Nk. ir "water"; Pa.-Oll. nīr "water"; Kui. nīru "juice, sap, essence"; Br. dīr "water, flood-water, juice, sap": Skt. nīra- "water" (epic+); "juice, liquor" (lexical); nīvara- "water, mud" (lexical). Kittel, no. 157; Bloch, J., *Bull. School Orient. Stud.* 5: 739, 1930; Burrow, T., *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 9. An old Indo-European etymology, that always required faith both in its phonology and in its semantics, has recently been revived with all the apparatus of the laryngeal hypothesis by Louis H. Gray, *Lang* 25: 376-377,

1949; it is hardly convincing *vis-à-vis* the general Dravidian word for "water."

7. Ta. nal, nar-, nalla "good"; nala (nalapp-, nalant-) "result in good, take a favorable turn"; nalappu "goodness, benefit, success"; nalam "goodness, virtue, beauty, profit, fame, prosperity"; nalavu "goodness"; narku "good"; narpu, narram, nanpu, nanmai, nanri, nannar "goodness" (some of these also mean "beauty"); Ma. nal "good, fine"; nalam, nallam "goodness, beauty"; nalpu, nalma, nanni, nanma "goodness"; nalla "good, fine, handsome"; Ko. nal va-yn "one whose mouth smells good, who enjoys food and prosperity"; na pal "teeth that grow straight and regular"; To. naṣ, naṣo "beauty"; naṣo-n n. pr. of a man; Ka. nal, nalme "goodness"; nalla "a good man; goodness, excellence, beauty"; Koḍ. nallē "good"; Tu. nalu, nala "good, cheap"; nalmē "goodness, friendship"; Te. naluvu "beauty, ability; beautiful"; Go. (M) nelā "good": Skt. Nala- n. pr. of a man. Emeneau, M. B., *Univ. of Calif. Publ. Class. Philol.* 12: 255-262, 1943; this still seems to me to be a good etymology. Manfred Mayrhofer agrees, *Symbolae Hrozny* 5: 371, 1950.

8. Ta. malai "hill, mountain"; Ma. mala "mountain"; Ko. mal im "buffaloes of the Nilgiri tribes (i.e. mountain buffaloes)"; mal aṛ "high downs on western half of Nilgiri plateau"; To. maṣ oṛ id.; Ka. male "mountain, forest"; Koḍ. male "thick jungle land, cardamom plantation in jungle on mountain"; Tu. malē "forest, hill overgrown with forest"; Te. mala "mountain"; Kol. ma-le "hill"; Pa. malaṅg "forest"; Br. mash "hill, mountain"; Skt. malaya- "the mountains which border Malabar on the east (i.e. Western Ghats)" (epic+); "a celestial grove (Nandanavana)" (lexical); "a garden" (lexical); māla- "forest near a village; field" (lexical). Kittel, no. 164; also Gundert and Caldwell. The Sanskrit lexicographers derive malaya- from a hypothetical root mal "hold, possess," since the mountain range "contains sandalwood"! The commentators are wildly at variance

about the meaning of *māla-* in Meghadūta 16, some taking it as a proper name of a field, others as a common noun; certainty seems impossible, but it is in all probability the word that we are dealing with, whatever its specific denotation in Kālidāsa's verse.

9. Ta. *aiya* excl. of wonder, of pity or concern; *aiyakō* excl. of pity or sorrow; *ai* "wonder, astonishment"; *aiy-enal* "uttering *ai* expressive of wonder, of distress or mental suffering, of assent"; *aiyaiyō* excl. of pity or grief; *aiyō* excl. of wonder, of pity or concern, of poignant grief; Ma. *ayyā* interj. of derision; *ayyō*, *ayyayyō* interj. of grief or pain; Ko. *aya* excl. of surprise or grief; *aya* excl. of grief; To. *eya* excl. of surprise; Ka. *ayyō*, *ayyayyō* interj. of grief or astonishment or compassion; Tu. *ayyō*, *ayyayyō* interj. of grief, annoyance, or pain; Te. *ayyō*, *ayyayyō*, *ayyayyō*, *ayayō* interj. of sorrow, lamentation, pity, pain, etc.; Kui *āige*, *āigo*, *āigōna*, *āike*, *āiko*, *āikōna* interj. of annoyance, impatience, or disgust; Kuwi (S) *ijaliyō*, *ijalesa* (*j = y*) "alas"; Kur. *ayō*, *ayō ge* excl. of pain or surprise; Malt. *aya*, *ayyi*, *ayyu* excl. of wonder, woe, or joy; *ay(y)oke*, *ay(y)okabo* "alas": Skt. *aye* excl. of surprise, recollection, or fear (esp. in dramas). In the Dravidian languages these are either vocatives of words for "father" (all the southern languages) or "mother" (Kui- Kuwi, Kur., Malt.), or have in a secondary way been equated with or assimilated to such vocatives; note Ko. *aya* *ava* "father! mother!" In Sanskrit there is no such connection. An Indo-European etymology might be suggested with such interjections as Gk. *ai*, *ai*, *āiai*, Lith. *ai*, *ai*, German *ei*, and Skt. *e*, *ai* (both lexical) (cf. Walde-Pokorny 1: 1), but the Dravidian forms are so much more current than the suggested Indo-European etyma that a borrowing from Dravidian seems more plausible.

10. Ta. *kaḷam*, *kaḷan* "place, open space, threshing floor, battlefield": Ma. *kaḷam* "threshing floor, level space

for spreading grains for drying, battlefield"; Ko. *kaḷm* "place for threshing or dancing"; To. *koḷn* "threshing floor"; Ka. *kaḷa*, *kaṇa* "threshing floor, battlefield"; Koḍ. *kaḷa* "threshing floor"; Tu. *kala* "a square, bed of flowers, etc., place where pariahs assemble"; Te. *kaḷlamu* "threshing floor"; *kalanu* "war, battle, combat, (B) threshing floor"; Kol. *kalave* "workshed in field, (Kin.) threshing floor"; Nk. *kaḷave* "threshing floor"; Pa. *kali* id.; Oll. *kalin* id.; Go. *kārā* "sacred enclosure, threshing floor"; Kui *klai* "threshing floor"; Kuwi (F) *kranū*, *kalōmi* id.; Kur. *khall* "field, piece of land suitable for tillage"; Malt. *qalu* "field on the hills": Skt. *khāla-* "threshing floor, granary" (Rigveda +); "place, site" (lexical). Burrow, T., *Bull. Soc. Orient. and African Stud.* 11: 133, 1943; *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 9. No Indo-European etymology has been plausibly suggested.

11. Ta. *paṇu* (*paṇupp-*, *paṇutt-*) "ripen (as fruits, grain), grow mature, arrive at perfection, become old, come to a head (boil), change color by age, become pale or yellowish (as the body by disease), become flexible, pliant"; *paṇu*, *paṇuppu* "ripeness, yellowness (of fruits), leaf turned yellow with age"; *paṇunu* (*paṇuni-*), *paṇunu* (*paṇuni-*) "grow ripe, become mellow, mature, be full or perfect"; *paṇam* "ripe fruit"; Ma. *paṇukka* "grow ripe, become well-tempered, suppurate, decay"; "a fruit put to ripen"; *paṇuppu* "ripening of fruit"; *paṇupikka* "ripen artificially"; *paṇam* "ripe fruit, ripe plantains"; Ko. *paṇv-* (*paṇd-*) "(fruits) become ripe, (boil, sore) opens"; *paṇ* "fruit"; To. *poṣf-* (*pošt-*) "ripen"; *pum* "fruit"; Ka. *paṇ* "be produced (ripe fruit)"; *paṇ*, *paṇṇu* "ripe fruit, ripeness"; Koḍ. *paṇṇi* "fruit"; Tu. *palkuni*, *palkuni* "be very soft (as an overripe fruit), be pliant, flexible"; *parnduni* "be ripe, mature, (hair) turns gray"; *parndu* "ripeness, ripe fruit, ripe plantains, ripe, gray"; *palu* "ripening (as of fruit), half-ripe"; Te. *paṇḍu* "ripen, mature"; "fruit, berry"; "ripe, mature"; *paṇṭa* "produce, crop, fruit, ripening"; Kol. *paṇḍ-* (*paṇḍt-*) "become

ripe"; paṇḍu "ripe fruit"; (Kin.) pan "fruit"; Nk. paṇḍ- "become ripe"; paṇḍe "ripe fruit"; Pa. paṇḍ- "(plant) matures"; paṇ- "ripen"; pal "ripe fruit, pus"; Oll. parṇ(g)- "become ripe"; Kuwi (S) paṇḍu "ripe fruit"; Kur. pānnā (pañjā) "ripen, (boil) festers, have a yellowish appearance (as after a prolonged illness)"; pañjkā "fruits"; Malt. pāne "ripen"; panjek, panjeke "ripe"; Skt. phāla- "fruit" (Rigveda+); phalati "bear or produce fruit, ripen" (epic+). Gundert, H., *Ztschr. deutsch. morgenländischen Ges.* 23: 519, 1869; also Caldwell and Kittel; Burrow, T., *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 10; Ammer, Karl, *Ztschr. deutsch. morgenländischen Ges.* 51: 128, 1948; Mayrhofer, Manfred, *Anthropos* 47: 664, 1952; with some uncertainty Bloch, Jules, *Bull. Soc. Ling. Paris* 25: 17, 1925; *Bull. School Orient. Stud.* 5: 740, 1930; Kuiper, F. B. J., *Acta Orientalia* 16: 305, 1938; the possibility is not even mentioned by Lüders, Heinrich, *Kuhn's Zeitschrift* 42: 198 ff., 1909. This hypothesis of borrowing is much more obvious than the suggested derivations from Indo-European roots meaning "swell" or "burst" or than Sturtevant's connection with words for "leaf" (*Lang.* 17: 6, 1941).

12. Ta. val "strong, forceful, skilful"; valam, vallam "strength, power, right side, victory, authority"; vallavan, valavan, vallān, vallālan "strong man, capable man"; valli (valli) "be able"; vali "strength, power"; (valiv-, valint-; valipp-, valitt-) "be strong, compel"; valimai "strength, skill, hardness"; valiya "strong, big"; valivu "strength"; valu "strength, skill, ability"; (valupp-, valutt-) "be strong or hard"; valuppu, vanpu, vanmai, "strength, firmness"; valumai "strength, force, violence"; vala kkai, valaṇ kai "right hand"; Ma. val, valu, valiya "strong, powerful, great"; valli "be able, strong"; valippam, valima "greatness, bigness"; valiyē "forcibly, suddenly"; valam "the right side"; valaṇ kai "right hand"; Ko. val "powerful, very, right"; val kay "right hand"; val(n) "man who is clever at cheating";

valc- "(man) becomes stout, (heart) becomes bold, (grain) becomes solid lump when boiled"; To. paṣ "right"; paṣ koy "right hand"; paly- (pals-) "(child) becomes strong"; Ka. bal, bali "grow strong or firm, increase"; bal, balu, bolu "strength, firmness, bigness, abundance"; bala "right"; bala key/gey "right hand"; balume, balme, baluhu, balpu "strength"; Koḍ. bala "power, strength"; balate "right (hand)"; ballyē "great"; Tu. bala "strength"; balatu "the right side"; balata kai "right hand"; balāpini "gain strength, recover health"; balike "prowess, strength, hardness"; balimē, balumē, balme "strength, might"; balu "very large, great, severe, violent"; Te. valāti "clever person, expert"; vala "right"; vala cēyi "right hand"; valadu "much"; valanu "skill, excellence, possibility"; "right, possible, convenient"; valan instrumental postposition; valamu "largeness, stoutness"; valūda "stout, large"; valla "possible"; vallaḍi "violence, oppression"; Pa. vela key "right hand"; Go. wāllē "much, very"; Kuwi (F) braiyū, (S) blāju-gatti (j = y) "strong"; Kur. balē, balēti "with the help of"; Skt. bāla- "power, strength, might" (Rigveda+); balena, balatas "by means of". The *v*-languages are primary; *v* > *b* in Ka. beginning in the 9th cent. A.D. Sanskrit may then have borrowed from a Dravidian language with secondary *b*. Kittel, no. 398; also Caldwell; Burrow, T., *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 19. Should we perhaps add also the name of the Rigvedic demon valā-, i.e. "the strong one"? It is just as good a suggestion as the derivations given from IE *wel- "drehen, winden, wälzen" or *wer- "verschliessen, bedecken."

13. Ta. mālai "garland, wreath, necklace, anything strung together"; malai (malaiv-, malaint-) "wear, put on" (Burrow, "put on as a garland," based on the old text *Puranānūru* 12, etc.); Ma. māla "garland, wreath, necklace, dewlap"; Ka. māle "wreath, garland, necklace"; Koḍ. ma-le "necklace, dewlap, jungle cock's ruff or neck feathers"; Tu. mālē "garland, wreath, necklace"; Te.

māla id. Burrow, *Bull. Soc. Orient. and African Stud.* 12: 390, 1948. He notes that Ta. has mālai in the oldest literature (*Purāṇānūru* 60, 76) and that the verb malai with a short vowel is just as old and related as a derivative from the noun. The Ka. word is classed by the Ka. grammarians as a *tatsama*, i.e., "a term not borrowed from Sanskrit, but existing in Kannada as well as in Sanskrit" (Kittel's definition); this native analysis always may be taken as speaking in favor of Dravidian origin. The Ma.-Koḍ. meaning "dewlap" may possibly also be taken as evidence for mālai as a native Dravidian word. For non-Dravidianists it should be noted that the Dravidian forms are those that a borrowing from Sanskrit would have but are also those proper to a native Dravidian group of etyma.

APPENDIX 2

THE MUNDA LANGUAGES

Identification of borrowings from Munda into Indo-Aryan and into Dravidian engaged several scholars in the 20's and the 30's, notably J. Przyluski and Suniti Kumar Chatterji. This was continued by the publication in 1948 of F. B. J. Kuiper's *Proto-Munda words in Sanskrit* (*Verh. d. K. Nederlandsche Ak. v. Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, N. R.* 51.3), a very ambitious work. In spite of a few tempting borrowings among those suggested by these various scholars (*cf.* Burrow, *Trans. Philol. Soc.* 1946: 3-6), there are several factors involved that give a conservative scholar pause.

First, the Munda languages are very poorly known to scholarship. Ambitious grammars and dictionaries have been published of Santali, Mundari, and Sora (Sabara or Savara), but, with all deference to the extended efforts and the devotion of the missionaries and the educationists who have worked here, we must judge, I think, that the

intrinsic complexities of the languages of this family are not a suitable field for amateur effort. Extensive prefixing, infixing, and suffixing, make both description and comparison of the languages very difficult, and until we have competent descriptions of several of them, comparisons concerned with borrowing or with genetic relationships within the family and outside it will be hazardous.

The second dubious factor concerning Indo-Aryan borrowing from Munda is that so far those who have tried to demonstrate such borrowings have been dealing not primarily with Munda but with Father W. Schmidt's Austro-Asiatic or with his Austric. Acceptance of the hypothesis that Munda, Khasi, Mon-Khmer, and various other languages of Southeast Asia form a language family to be called Austro-Asiatic can so far only be on a different plane from the scholar's attitude with respect to Indo-European, Finno-Ugric, Turkic, Bantu, Malayo-Polynesian, Algonquian, or Athabaskan. In contrast with these, the material with which Schmidt worked is badly recorded and analyzed, and in spite of some tempting similarities, it is clear that little progress has been made beyond them in the search for phonetic correspondences. The field is one in which accidental similarities are still being found rather than etymologies. This scepticism becomes more pronounced when Austronesian (= Malayo-Polynesian) is brought in to form an Austric family. Archaeologists, historians and prehistorians, and ethnologists concerned with South Asia have erected lofty hypotheses on Schmidt's hypothesis, but the linguistic specialist should know full well what a weak foundation Schmidt has provided and should refrain from erecting his buildings on it.

In identifying Indo-Aryan borrowings from Munda, Austric material has been used to the fullest extent—groups of Austric etyma, including Munda words if they can be found in the badly recorded material, are provided as the bases for the borrowing. How hazardously specula-

tive this procedure can be is clear from a glance at Kuiper's introduction in which are found these statements of his method: (6) "the Austro-Asiatic consonantal system had a relatively small number of phonemes with a wide range of possible realizations, the following sounds, for instance,

$$\begin{array}{l} d/t \sim dh/th \sim r \sim j/c, s \\ d/t \sim dh/th \sim r \sim *z/*s \sim y \sim l \end{array}$$

originally having constituted one phoneme"; (7) "another Proto-Munda phenomenon inherited from prim. Austric is the nasalization and pre-nasalization of the consonants of a root"; (7) "the vowels are largely interchangeable . . . the derivatives from one and the same root have often widely divergent forms; e.g. Skr. *tunḍa-* and *cañcu-* [both 'beak'] from *da-da*, *veñi-*, *kabari-* and *āpiḍa-* [the first two 'a braid of hair,' the third 'a chaplet tied on the crown of the head'] from *wa-da*, . . . From the point of view of methodology this is, I think, the chief difficulty of these investigations, as by a purely mechanical application of the 'sound-laws' nearly everything can be demonstrated." If these are sound-laws (with or without quotation marks), we have got back to the days of Voltaire. No wonder Kuiper astonishes himself by the fact that "nearly everything can be demonstrated." Unfortunately, altogether too many of the Indo-Aryan borrowings from Munda astonish in this way. In addition, much derivation in the Austric languages depends on prefixation and infixation—though it is to be noted that little of this apparatus is so far known by satisfactory comparative methods. If words may be split up and prefixes and infixes discarded somewhat arbitrarily in the attempt to establish groups of etyma, this derivational method and the phonological method sketched above are together unlikely to establish much credence. But even so there are without doubt a few sane etymologies to be salvaged from the work already done, though I do not know how to identify them.

This slight critique of Munda and Austric studies makes clear, I hope, that the prime desideratum in this field is accurate and intensive recording and analysis of the languages concerned. It is only after this is accomplished that the way will be open for valid comparative work and for the establishment of a linguistic prehistory of the kind that is already possible for Indo-Aryan and Dravidian.

Some Further Contacts and Affinities between the Egypto-Minoan and the Indo-(Dravido) Sumerian Culture*

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We are now living at an epoch when the Aryans are erroneously looked upon as the Makers of Civilization. In fact, apart from the fanciful Nazi theories of the Aryan super-man, L. A. Waddell has written a large volume to show that this is so: but I think that his arguments are far from convincing. They are almost "Hess" guesses, having no intrinsic cogency to recommend them. But about the early contacts of the ancient cultures there cannot be any doubt: nor about the simultaneity of their efflorescence. Sir John Marshall rightly contends that the Indo-Sumerian and Egypto-Minoan civilizations constitute a sub-species of culture, having a special relation with one another, a common parent, a common social environment, in the 'Chalcolithic' phase of material technique. This was already diffused, at the simultaneous dawn of these four civilizations, over the whole region, extending from the Atlas to the Himalayas into the Afrasian steppe. He regards this common Afrasian culture of the Bronze-Stone Age as a unity of which each of the four is a mere articulation. Undoubtedly these four cultures had responded in the self-same manner to the identical challenge of desiccation by changing their habitat and way of life alike, from that of food-gatherers into that of cultivators.

When the grasslands overlooking the lower valley of the Nile turned into the Libyan desert, when the grasslands overlooking the lower valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris turned into the Rub'al-Khālī and the Dasht-i-Lut,

* See *Tamil Culture*, Vol. IV, No. 2, April 1955, for his earlier article on the subject.

when the grasslands overlooking the lower valleys of the Indus and the Mihran turned into the deserts of Thar and Cutch, these heroic pioneers plunged into the jungle-swamps of the valley-bottoms, reclaimed the marshes into fields and created the Egyptian, Sumerian and Indian cultures. An analysis of the oldest relics of human physique in Crete shows that it was first occupied wholly or mainly by 'Long-heads', while the 'broad-heads' were hardly then represented. They were accordingly immigrants from the Afrasian grasslands on the far side of the Eastern Mediterranean. The inexorable challenge of desiccation impelled these communities to brave the terrors of the salt estranging sea and make themselves at home in the Aegean Archipelago. The genesis of the Minoan Civilization can thus be traced back to the same first cause as the geneses of the Egyptian and Sumerian Cultures. The Indus Civilization is part and parcel of that greater civilization which during the Chalcolithic (or Bronze-Stone) Age extended across the broad Afrasian belt. It is intimately related to other branches of that civilization in Western Persia and Mesopotamia, on the rivers Kārun and Karkheh no less than on the Euphrates and Tigris, even the Helmand. Between them all was a fundamental unity of ideas which could hardly have been the result of mere commercial intercourse.

A. CONTACTS AND AFFINITIES BETWEEN THE INDUS AND MINOAN CULTURES.

The religion of the Indus Culture with its dominant mother goddess, with its male god who performs the same function as the Minoan 'Master of the Animals', besides being Siva's prototype, with its tree-worship and personification of tree-spirits, and with its cult of phallic and baetylic stones, seems to have more points of contact with the Minoan than the Sumerian religion. Nevertheless, the Sumerian and the Indus religions have special resemblances: the conception of the Tree of Life, the fantasy

of mixed and semi-human monsters, and the portrayal of monsters and animals in the role of officient genii, i.e., officiating ones.

In another passage, Sir John Marshall draws a comparison between the effacement of the memory of the Indus Culture from the tradition of the subsequent Indic society and the effacement of the memory of the Minoan Culture from the tradition of Hellas.

The foot of a little bronze statue found at Mohenjo-Daro has an anklet of much the same pattern as on a figure in a fresco at Knossos. A clay amulet at Mohenjo-Daro shows a large tree of uncertain species associated with a cult object at the top of which is an animal's head, with a sprig of flowers or leaves rising from between its horns. The tree has a high platform round its base—a favourite Minoan architectonic device. The sacred tree or cult figure on this amulet reminds one of many such figures found on Minoan intaglio: it appears to be tossing a man over his head, or the man may be vaulting over the animal, as in the sacred bull sports of ancient Crete.

Pottery models of the sacred dove are frequently found in the Indus Valley, set on little pedestals so that they stand upright. Some of these figures exactly resemble examples found at very early sites in Sumer. The dove was held sacred to the Mother-Goddess both in Sumer and in Crete. The same belief doubtless prevailed in the Indus valley, for the method of portraying the bird, with outstretched wings and tail, is identical in all three places. A female figure of clay from Mohenjo-Daro actually has two birds perched on the top of her head, which, as in Crete, doubtless symbolized spiritual possession.

The curious pottery jar, ornamented on the outside with knobs or small female breasts in rows set closely together, resembles early Minoan work. Dr. Frankfort has found similar ware at Tell Asmar in Babylonia. Beads of

unusual shape and other objects found at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro can be linked with those of Crete, Egypt and Greece. The Greek cross with a linear cross in its centre is very common in the Indus Valley. Here, in Sumer and in Crete, a peculiar form of the same cross was used as inlay for pieces of wooden furniture. Intertwined talismanic designs were also popular in the Indus Valley, in Sumer, in Crete and in Egypt. The meander patterns of E.M. III seem to be lateral evolutions of the svastika symbol and have points of affinity with such-like Proto-Indian patterns. Another coincidence or connexion is the Minoan and Mohenjo-Daro delight in hydraulic devices.

B. CONTACTS AND AFFINITIES BETWEEN THE INDUS AND SUMER CULTURES.

One eminent authority holds that the Sumerians, a sea-faring people, navigated the waters of the Persian Gulf, discovered the Delta of the Indus, ascended this river and its companion water-way, the Great Mihran, so like the Euphrates and Tigris, and thus colonized a country so like their own. Thus they created there a new land of Sumer overseas, just as the Minoans created the Mycenaean culture of Continental Greece. Whatever truth there may be in this hypothesis, there is no doubt regarding the affinity of the two cultures. Thus Professor Langdon, after a study of the tablets at Jamdet Nasr in Iraq, emphasises the definite connexion between the most archaic Sumerian script and the Indus Valley script. Etched carnelian beads of the same shape and with the same painted pattern have been found at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa, as well as in the Royal Tombs at Ur by Dr. Woolley. Some variegated stones, especially those with natural veinings, have been capped at each end with gold, both in Sumer and in proto-India. Several Statues unearthed at Mohenjo-Daro show that, as in proto-Sumer, *fillets* or head-bands were worn round the forehead. These fillets have sometimes holes bored along one edge to enable ornaments to be sus-

pended from them. Fillets ornamented in a similar way, either with a row of dots or with figures of animals, are well-known in early times in Sumer. A bronze pin with a coiled head recalls similar pins found in Sumer, Egypt, the Caucasus and Central Europe. An interesting find of rouge contained in cockle-shells provides a link with contemporary Sumer; for the same type of shell, used to hold face-paints, has been taken from graves at Kish and Ur.

Certain skulls unearthed at Mohenjo-Daro are of the same type as others of very early date discovered in Mesopotamia. The white steatite head and bust of a god at Mohenjo-Daro has a short beard and shaven upper-lip, in the latter fashion resembling other figures, both of gods and men, found in ancient Sumer. Likewise the peculiar half-shut eyes of the Mohenjo-Daro god has been noticed in some very early clay figures from Kish and Ur. The likeness of a horned human figure with the feet and tail of a bull found on one seal-amulet from Mohenjo-Daro, to a certain Sumerian demi-god is very striking, and appears to indicate that a relationship once existed between certain of the beliefs of the two civilizations. Another type of hero struggling with two tigers found depicted on three seal-amulets at Mohenjo-Daro is singularly like the early representations of the Sumerian Gilgamesh, the friend of Enkidu, who assisted that hero in his struggles with wild beasts, chiefly lions, however.

Both in the lowest levels of Mohenjo-Daro and in ancient Sumer, tin was very much used as an alloy to toughen copper, about 2800 B.C. The copper and bronze of the Indus Valley, like that of the Sumerians, contains an appreciable amount of nickel, and probably came from the Oman district of Arabia. The socketed adze-axe found at Mohenjo-Daro is similar to the socketed implements found in Sumer. The method of casting bronze in the Indus Valley was the wax process, a technique well-known in Sumer and ancient Egypt. The barrel-shaped weight

found at Mohenjo-Daro is like those that have been found in Egypt, Sumer and Elam. The decimal system of notation found on a slip of shell at Mohenjo-Daro occurs on the Proto-Elamite tablets and on others from Jamdet Nasr in Mesopotamia. Ladles made from sea-shells were much used in the Indus Valley and in contemporary Sumer. In the Indus valley were unearthed pottery net-weights which are ring-shaped, very much like a small bracelet. Similar rings of the same date have been found by Dr. Franfort at Tell Asmar with the remains of a fishing net still adhering to them.

The Indus valley grey-coloured pottery, with horizontal marks left by the polisher, is similar to that of Sumer. The tall offering-stand which has a base of trumpet-form and a shallow dish at the top resembles some found at Kish, Ur and Fara in Babylonia. In both cases the stands are made in two pieces carefully luted together. Several feeding-cups with spouts obviously meant for small children, of the same date and shape, have come to light in both Sumer and the Indus Valley. Small flat sherds cut with triangular incisions seem to be fragments of pottery boxes or stands. This type of ornamentation occurs in some of the earliest ware of Egypt, Sumer and Elam. The eyes of all the stone statues made by the Indus Valley people were inlaid with stone or shell, a technique which also prevailed in both Egypt and Sumer. In one figure the arm has been partially freed from the body, a feature which is also observable in some of the Sumerian statues. In both cases the waves of the hair are indicated by chevron lines. In both cases the men wore their hair in the same way, i.e., gathered up in a bun at the back of the head and secured by a silver or gold or woven fillet worn round the fore-head.

Disc-beads of glazed crystal or quartz, similar to some found in the early graves of Elam and Sumer, have also come to light in the Indus Valley. A kind of gaming piece,

made of faience, tetrahedral in shape, is especially interesting in view of the fact that identical objects have been found at Ur. A brick found at Mohenjo-Daro, incised with rectangles in three rows of four, was evidently part of a game-board: but it is uncertain whether the game resembled ancient Egyptian "Sent" or the Sumerian, as found by Dr. Woolley at Ur. He has also succeeded in restoring the remains of several specimens of harps and lyres, which are found as signs in the Mohenjo-Daro script.

Peculiar heart-shaped pieces of bone inlay which have been found at Tell Asmar correspond with the Indus valley shell inlay of the same date. A fragment of a vessel of light-green steatite found in a low-stratum at Mohenjo-Daro has carved on it an unusual mat-pattern, which also occurs on Sumerian vessels unearthed at Tell Asmar, Kish and Susa. A motif of concentric (magical) squares, found at Tell Asmar by Dr. Frankfort, is duplicated in the Indus Valley seals.

The Proto-Australoid and Mediterranean types of skull, which predominate among the Mohenjo-Daro population, must have belonged to a big-brained, dolichocephalic people. They agree in many ways with skulls found by Dr. Woolley at Al 'Ubaid and by E. Mackay at Kish. The height of the Mediterranean type of male, when alive, was about five feet four and a half inches.

C. CONTACTS BETWEEN THE SUMERIAN AND MINOAN CULTURES.

The Minoan form of lyre, as first seen on seals of the hieroglyphic class, was essentially a derivation from the old Chaldean as found at Tello. The gazelles' heads with which the later Minoan lyres were decorated, find still more remote predecessors in the horned heads of bulls and stags such as adorned the harps of the royal musicians. The sacrificed remains of these animals were found with them in the royal tombs of Ur. The golden sprays of leaves

and flowers that bedecked the head-dresses of departed queens and court ladies at Ur curiously recall the similar adornments found in early Minoan graves at Mochlos and elsewhere. The fantastic semi-human types from which the Minotaur sprang, themselves suggest the monstrous creations that attach themselves to the legends of Gilgamesh and Ea-bāni. So too the two-headed Minoan composite animals are derived from the crossed bulls and lions seen up-reared on the chaldean cylinders. The Bull 'Rhyton' found in Crete from M.M.I. is clearly of Sumerian origin. Directly and indirectly, often indeed through circuitous Nilotic channels, the debt of Minoan Crete to the Sumerian civilization becomes more and more apparent.

The steatite sphinx of Hagia Triada in Crete, with the cup-shaped hollow in its back, is an off-shoot of a distinct class of Chaldean stone-vessels in black steatite. One of these, an ink-pot in the form of a crouched dog, has its surface engraved with cuneiform characters giving the name of King Sumu-ilum, 2204-2176 B.C. The Hagia Triada parallel is likewise an inkstand, the inkpot being lost.

At the beginning of the Middle Minoan Age, a minute form of granulation is shown on such figures as gold lions and dagger blades. This was undoubtedly due to an early wave of direct influence from the East. Granulated decoration also appears on Egyptian jewellery of the 12th Dynasty, e.g., in the Treasure of Dashur: but the Minoan method is not of Egyptian but of Sumerian origin. Large granulation occurs on a dagger-blade at Ur.

According to the Cretan tradition, preserved by Diodorus and attested to by Suidas and Pliny [who in H.N. XIII.77 speaks of "in palmarum foliis primo scriptitatum" (Sic)], Minoan Crete was well acquainted with the use of palm leaves and papyrus for writing purposes, as was ancient Chaldean. Cf. A. H. Sayce, *The use of Papyrus as a Writing Material among the Accadians*.

Even the Minoan bull sports starting about 2100 B.C. seen now to be derived from Cappadocian ones, of about 2400 B.C. These again are derived from Sumerian prototypes of about 3100 B.C. The recent discoveries at Ur by Mr. C. L. Woolley have brought to light wells, lined with superposed clay cylinders of about 5000 B.C. This was the origin probably of the Melian (Mycenean) well, lined with clay cylinders, of which the tradition survived in Crete itself. Lastly, the burial vault at Ur affords by far the earliest dated example of the 'tholos' type of sepulchral chamber, domed above by overlapping courses. It was hence probably that the 'tholos' type of tomb came into Crete and other Aegean lands. There is also a remarkable similarity between the Minoan Tower-houses and the Sumerian as well as Indus Valley Tower-houses.

D. AFFINITIES BETWEEN THE EGYPTIAN AND INDUS VALLEY CULTURES.

Besides those casually mentioned in the above sections (A, B and C), we may note the following: The finding of lumps of green substance, identified as terre verte, at Mohenjo-Daro perhaps means that this material was, like kohl, used for the eyes, as was malachite in ancient Egypt. Certain markings on the hull of a mast-less vessel at Mohenjo-Daro suggest that it was made of reeds bound together, a method of building which was used for quite large boats in ancient Egypt. The hemispherical copper or gold terminals of some of the strings of beads found in the Indus Valley have resemblances to those of the Egypt of the Old Empire. A pottery candle-stand is also paralleled in Egypt by several of the same shape and date. In Egypt mussel-shells were 'imitated' from slate and aragonite, in India from copper and pottery.

The affinities between the Egyptian culture on the one hand and the Minoan and Sumerian cultures on the other are shown at great length throughout the great work of

Sir Arthur Evans,* "The Palace of Minos at Knossos". In all these cases the multitude of resemblances in the most unexpected places lends cogency to the argument of a common, though perhaps remote, origin.

* I acknowledge indebtedness to the above author as well as to—Ernest Mackay: *The Indus Civilization*; Toynbee: *A Study of History*, Volumes I and VI; *The Cambridge History of India*, Volume I; and Plates: Volume I; *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Volume I and Plates: Volume I; and Sir John Marshall: *Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus Civilization*, in three Volumes.

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Translations of Some Well Known Tamil Poems

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING

This Agaval is by a minstrel, known to us as Kanyan or 'Singer' of the flowery hill, who was a court poet and friend of Ko Perum Cholan of Uraiyur—a little, it may be, before the date of the Kural.

See Pura Nanuru 192.

கு ா லி க ள்

யா தும் ஊரே ;—யாவரும் கேளிர் ;—

திது நன்றும் பிறர்தர வாரா ;—

நோதலும் தணிதலும் அவற்றோர் அன்ன ;—

சாதலும் புதுவ தன்றே ;—வாழ்தல்

இனிதென மகிழ்ந்தன்றும் இலமே ;—முனிவின்

இன்னு தென்றலும் இலமே ;—மின்னொடு

வானந் தண்டுளி தலைஇ யானாது

கல்பொரு திரங்கு மல்லல் பேர்யாற்று

நீர்வழிப் படுஉம் புண்போல் ஆர்உயிர்

முறைவழிப் படுஉம் என்பது திறலோர்

காட்சியிற் றெளிந்தனம் ;—ஆகலின் மாட்சியிற்

பெரியோரை வியத்தலும் இலமே ;—

சிறியோரை இகழ்தல் அதனிலும் இலமே !

THE SAGES

To us all towns are one, all men our kin.

Life's good comes not from others' gift, nor ill
Man's pains and pains' relief are from within.

Death's no new thing ; nor do our bosoms thrill
When joyous' life seems like a luscious draught,

When grieved, we patient suffer ; for, we deem
This much-praised life of ours a fragile raft

Borne down the waters of some mountain stream
That o'er huge boulders roaring seeks the plain

Tho' storms with lightnings' flash from darken'd
skies

Descend, the raft goes on as fates ordain.

Thus have we seen in visions of the wise !—

We marvel not at greatness of the great ;

Still less despise we men of low estate.¹

(Comp. Kural, 397 Pazhamozhi, 116.)

* * * *

THE 400 LYRICS—PURANANURU

THE COLAN KING, KILLI-VALAVAN, WHO FELL AT
KULA-MUTTAM

This king, who (we may infer) possessed considerable ability, was both brave and generous (but somewhat head-strong). Hence a great deal of good advice is, in a very tactful way, offered to him by the minstrels and he seems to have been all the better for it. The following lines are worth noting. They are by Vellai Kudi Naganar.

¹ Translated by Dr. G. U. Pope. Published in the Siddhanta Deepika, Vol. VII, No. 1, April 1906.

35. நளியிரு முநீ ரேணி யாக
 வளியிடை வழங்கா வானஞ் குடிய
 மண்டினி கிடக்கைத் தண்டமிழ்க் கிழவர்
 மூரசமுழங்கு தானே மூவ ருள்ளும்
 அரசெனப் படுவது நினதே பெரும
 அலங்குகதிர்க் கனலி நால்வயிற் றேன்றினும்
 இலங்குகதிர் வெள்ளி தென்புலம் படரினும்
 அந்தண் காவிரி வந்துகவர் பூட்டத்
 தோடுகொள் வேலின் றேற்றம் போல
 ஆடுகட் கரும்பின் வெண்பூ நுடங்கும்
 நாடெனப் படுவது நினதே யத்தை, ஆங்க
 நாடுகெழு செல்வத்துப் பீடுகெழு வேந்தே
 நினவ கூறுவ லெனவ கேண்மதி
 அறம்புரிந் தன்ன செங்கோ னுட்டத்து
 முறைவேண்டு பொழுதிற் பதனெளி யோர்ண்
 டுறைவேண்டு பொழுதிற் பெயல்பெற் றேரே
 ஞாயிறு சமந்த கோடுதிரள் கொண்மூ
 மாக விசம்பி னடுவுநின் றுங்குக்
 கண்பொர விளங்குநின் விண்பொரு வியன்குடை
 வெயின்மறைக் கொண்டன்றே வன்றே வருந்திய
 குடிமறைப் பதுவே கூர்வேல் வளவ
 வெளிற்றுப்பனந் துணியின் வீற்றுவீற்றுக் கிடப்பக்
 களிற்றுக்கணம் பொருத கண்ணகன் பறந்தலை
 வருபடை தாங்கிப் பெயர்புறத் தார்த்துப்
 பொருபடை தருஉங் கொற்றமு முழுபடை
 ஊன்றுசான் மருங்கி னீன்றதன் பயனே
 மாரி பொய்ப்பினும் வாரி குன்றினும்
 இயற்கை யல்லன செயற்கையிற் றேன்றினும்
 காவலர்ப் பழிக்குமிக் கண்ணகன் ஞாலம்
 அதுநற் கறிந்தனை யாயி னீயும்
 நொதும லாளர் பொதுமொழி கொள்ளாது
 பகடுபுறந் தருநர் பார மோட்பிக்
 குடிபுறந் தருகுவை யாயினின்
 அடிபுறந் தருகுவ ரடங்கா தோரே.

GOOD COUNSEL FOR THE YOUNG KING (35)

THE TAMIL LANDS

The pleasant Tamil lands possess
 For boundary the ocean wide.
 The heaven, where tempests loud sway not,
 Upon their brow rests as a crown.
 Fertile the soil they till, and wide.
 Three kings with mighty hosts this land
 Divide ; but of the three, whose drums
 Sound for the battle's angry strife,
 Thou art the chief; O mighty one !
 Though the resplendent sun in diverse quarters rise ;
 And though the silvery planet to the south decline ;
 Thy land shall flourish, where through channels deep,
 Kaveri flows with bright refreshing stream,
 Along whose banks the sweet cane's white flowers wave
 Like pernon'd spears uprising from the plain.
 Let me speak out to this rich country's king !
 Be easy of access at fitting time, as though
 The Lord of justice sat to hear, and right decree.
 Such kings have rain on their dominions at their will !
 The clouds thick gather round the sun, and rest
 In vault of heaven :—So let the canopy
 Of state challenge the sky, and spread around
 Not gloom, but peaceful shade ! Let all the victories
 Be the toiling ploughman's gain !
 Kings get the blame, whether rains fail, or copious flow,
 And lack the praise : such is the usage of the world.
 If thou has marked and known this well,
 Reject the wily counsels of malicious men.
 Lighten the load of those who till the soil.
 The dwellers in the land protect. If thou do this
 Thy stubborn foes shall lowly bend beneath thy feet.²

² Translated by Dr. G. U. Pope, Balliol College and Indian Institute, Oxford published in Siddhanta Deepika Vol. VII, No. 1, April 1906.

CAMEOS FROM TAMIL LITERATURE

HEROISM OF AN ANCIENT DAME

PURANANURU, 278, by Kakkai Padiniyar Nacchelliar
and 279, by Okkur Masathiar.

(The Heroism displayed by this ancient Tamil Dame is simply grand, and would beat that of the Spartan mother. The Purananuru and Agananuru are full of incidents of sublime heroism. The men delighted in the number of wounds they received in the front part of their body, as do the German students now. The conquests made by the Tamil kings were far and wide. We have forgotten all this past now. We take delight in recounting the deeds of other nations. The ancient Tamil martial races are now employed in carrying on the most menial offices. Our ancient swords have been literally beaten into spindles and ploughshares. Our friend wondered how this poor piece of humanity, who could not stand the cross examination of the Government pleader, could have possessed any martial blood in his veins. We hope to set forth now and then in these pages the deeds of valour displayed by our Tamil people, just to remind our readers that we too had a glorious past.)

I

278

நரம்பெழுந் துலறிய நிரம்பா மென்றோள்
முளரி மருங்கின் முதியோள் சிறுவன்
படையழிந்து மாறின னென்றுபலர் கூற
மண்டமர்க் குடைந்தன னாயி னுண்டவென்
முலையறுத் திடுவென் யானெனச் சினை இக்
கொண்ட வானொடு படுபணம் பெயராச்
செங்களந்துழுவோள் சிதைத்துவே ருகிய
படுமகன் கிடக்கை காணாஉ
சுன்ற ஞான்றினும் பெரிதுவர் தனளே.

She was very old, her veins stood out and the bones protruded. She heard many people give out that her son had turned from the battlefield and fled. She vowed that if it be true that her son was afraid of battle, she would cut off the breast that suckled him. With fury in her face and sword in hand, she turned over the dead bodies in the red field and searched and she came across the dead body of her son cut in two. At sight of her dead son, she rejoiced more than on the day she gave him birth to.³

II

279

கெடுக சிந்தை கடிதிவள் துணர்வே
முதின் மகளி ராதல்தகுமே
மேனா னுற்ற செருவிற்கிவடனனை
யானை யெறிந்து களத்தொழிந்தனனே
நெருந லுற்ற செருவிற்கிவள் கொழுநன்
பெருநிரை விலங்கி யாண்டுப்பட் டனனே
இன்றும் செருப்பறை கேட்டு விருப்புற்று மயங்கி
வேல் கைக்கொடுத்து வெளிதுவிரித் துடிஇப்
பாறு மயிர்க்குடுமி யெண்ணெய் நீவி
ஒருமகன் ல்லதில்லோள்
செருமுக நோக்கிச் செல்கென விடுமே.

Our heart ceases at this dame's great courage.
Well may she merit her ancient age.
In a former war, her father it was
Who, killed by an elephant, died in the field.
It was in the other day's battle, her husband
Fell overpowered by numerous hosts :
And now to-day at the beat of drum,
Delighted and yet how sad was she this woman with
an only son.

She lovingly oiled and combed his hair,
Gave him his spear and bade him seek the battle field !⁴

J. M. N.

³ Translated by J. M. Nallasami Pillai and published in Siddhanta Deepika Vol. VII, No. 7, October 1906.

⁴ Translated by J. M. Nallasami Pillai and published in Siddhanta Deepika Vol. VII, No. 7, October 1906.

A Note on Tamil Syntax

NHATTIN:AI 55

--KAMIL ZVELEBIL, Prague.

In two different articles, published in Archiv Orientalni, XXIII, 1955, pp. 435-464 and pp. 479-481 (cf. especially p. 448 ff.) the author has tried to show the great importance and the general validity of a grammatical principle of Tamil, which can be expressed schematically by

d D,

i.e., *determinans precedens determinatum*; that, which determines (i.e., d), precedes that, which is determined (i.e., D).^a The author has tried to show that this principle rules the sphere of morphological structure of the Tamil finite verb forms^b as well as the sphere of sentential structure.^c

When reading and analysing an early old Tamil stanza, Nhattin:ai 55, we have come across the verses:

ஓங்கு¹ மலை² நாட்³... (நீ)⁴... வந்து⁵ இவள்⁶... ஆகம்⁷... புல்ல⁸...
பறவை⁹... மொய்த்தவின்¹⁰ கண்¹¹... நோக்கு¹²... என¹³
வினவினள்¹⁴ யாழை¹⁵...

^a Cf. H. Beythian, Gramatik der. Tamilsprache, Leipzig 1943, p. 178, § 175, an enumeration fairly complete, and J. Bloch, Structure grammaticale des langues dravidiennes, Paris, 1946, p. 77.

^b The Tamil finite verbal forms have been explained by the author as, e.g., ceyve:n=ceyvu ("the future doing") +yain ("I"), i.e., "I determined by the future doing", cf. also F. B. J. Kuiper in Acta Orientalia XX, 1948, "Note on Dravidian Morphology".

^c That, which is most important in Dravidian sentence, the finite verbal form, is placed, as a sort of determinatum, at the end of the whole sentence (this finite verbal form, this determinatum, being determined by a whole series of determinants in the form of adverbial and infinitive participles, functioning as Indo-European verbal forms in secondary clauses). Cf., also P. Poucha, The Syntactical Relationship of Some Asiatic Languages, Archiv Orientalni, XVII, 1949, p. 288.

which precisely though not literally translated means: "O chief³ of high¹ mountain².... (thou) hast come,⁴ (and) when thou embraced⁷ her⁵ breast,⁶ the bees⁸ have been swarming⁹ (and this) having seen¹¹ mother¹⁴ (with her own) eyes¹⁰, asked¹³ thus¹²...."

Analysed, however, in detail, and translated literally, it runs thus: "... (thou) having come,⁴ when embracing⁷ her⁵ breast,⁶ the mother¹⁴ asked¹³ thus¹² having looked¹¹ (with) eye¹⁰ determined by (-in, an original determinative suffix) the swarming⁹ bees⁸." The form *moyththalin* though traditionally explained as some form having temporal ("when the bees swarmed....") or causal ("since the bees swarmed, comm. *moyththalina:le* : , "by, through the swarming of bees") meaning, is nothing else than *moyththal*, a verbal noun, "swarming", + -in, the determinative suffix, identical ultimately with the attributive suffix -in, well-known from all stages of Tamil linguistic developments. Thus, the old syntactic construction as found in Nhattin:ai 55, helps us to understand the original meaning of such forms as *moyththalin*, and it proves again, the "nominal" and "attributive" character of old Tamil syntax.

patavai....*moyththalin kan*: means, ultimately, "bees-swarming attrib. eye," "eye of the swarming of bees," "eye (taking the sight of) the bee-swarming," where d, determinans (*patavai moyththalin*) precedes the D, determinatum (*kan*:). Whole sentential structures appear, in the light of this analysis, as determinative compounds, as clusters of determinants, combined by the d D principle.

Kamban's Modernism¹

A. C. PAUL NADAR

We have gathered together to study and understand Kamban's great poem and to popularise it. But, we know very little about his life. All that we know is that he was born in a village called Therezhundur in the District of Tanjore and was a Ovachar by a community, a community of temple poojaris and pipers. He was patronised by a philanthropic gentleman, Sadayan by name. Tradition has gathered round the names of the poet and his patron a number of legends of little historical value. About his age, there is disagreement among scholars. My research has led me to the conclusion that he must have lived at the time of the fall of the Pallavas and the rise of the Cholas under the line of Vijayalaya. That was a period of great activity in religion, literature and art, untouched by the philosophy of the later Vaishnava Acharyas or the hard theology of the commentators on the Alvars written in Manipravalam² style. Kamban, then, belonged to the end of the 9th century or the beginning of the 10th century.

For the last 1,000 years, Kamban by his sonorous and rhythmic verse has captured the ear of the Tamil people. Wherever he is sung, either under the banian tree or in the

village chavadi, you can be sure of a large concourse of people listening in profound silence and deep enjoyment. Such is the magic of his words. He has given delight and instruction to thousands of people including illiterates. People who cannot read a line often repeat his verse with gusto.

The vastness of Kamban's learning and the beauty of his diction, the simplicity of his style and the profundity of his thought, his wonderful portraits of men and women at all stages of culture, his powers of dramatization and his sense of humour, his deep knowledge of the past and his prophetic vision of the future and his keen understanding of the fundamental problems of life, all these make his Ramayana a unique piece in Tamil Literature. Every Tamil ought to be proud of this treasure. Yes, if Kamban's real merit is known, the whole of India would claim him as one of its mighty sons.

Some people are not attracted to Kamban's poem ; they complain that his theme is puranic old-world story, ill-suited to present day conditions. But all students of Kamban know how the poet combines the idealism of puranic stories with the realism of the present day. He is indeed a guide to the understanding and the solution of many modern problems. He lived at a time when society was feudal in structure and kingship was the order of the day. Kings were then deified by poets and saints ; and the divine right of kings was universally accepted. It was generally agreed then that kings were everything and the people were nothing. But Kamban sings in a revolutionary strain and says that the ruler of the country is a mere 'body' and the people of the country are its 'life'. This shows what a prevision he had of our modern democracies, where the ideal is the withering of the rulers and the flowering of the rule of the people. We have now accepted the socialistic pattern of society as our ideal. Kamban had a similar vision. He says that in the idealised society of

¹ Presidential address delivered by Mr. Paul Nadar at the Kamban Conference held in the Rajaji Hall, Madras, on November 14, 1955, in the presence of Mr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Republic of India, who inaugurated the Conference. Mr. Paul Nadar has kindly forwarded it to us for publication in *Tamil Culture*.—Editor.

² An artificial and generally unintelligible style, predominating in Sanskrit words but in the superficial form of Tamil prose, adopted by commentators of the Jaina and Vaishnava religions. A commentary of this type on Saint Nammalwar's *Thiruvaymoli* in Tamil, written by Vadakku Thiruveethi Pillai consisting of thirtysix thousand granthas and known as *#Q* (I:T:U), is being rendered back into intelligible Tamil by Mr. B. R. Purushotama Naidu under the auspices of the University of Madras.—Editor.

Ayodhya, wealth was available to all, and there was nobody who could be considered either wealthy or poor :

“ எல்லார்க்கும் எல்லாப் பெருஞ் செல்வமும் எய்தலாலே
இல்லாரு மில்லை உடையார்களு மில்லை மாதோ ”

He has a ready-made solution for the eradication of casteism, condescension and communalism from our midst. The way Rama fraternizes with the untouchable Guha is the best solution that we can think of. Rama offers kinship of his family not only to Guha but to his entire tribe and proposes to share in their work. Kamban teaches us how to harmonise differences and resolve conflicts and strifes. He reconciles the Sanskrit Culture of the North with the Tamil culture of the South. He harmonises Vedic with secular culture and the aristocratic with that of the common man. In his illuminated outlook on life, differences disappear. His broad tolerance has charity for all and malice for none. His penetrating and far-seeing eye sees unity in variety. That is a lesson which we with the 14 national languages and a composite culture have to take to heart.

Kamban reached the height of his art in the creation of his hero. The poet took the whole universe for his vision and looked beyond the visible and concrete and apprehended the Absolute. But his apprehension was not that of a metaphysical philosopher but of a seer and an artist. He concretises the intangible in the image of his hero Rama. His hero is none other than the ultimate reality itself ; that great immanent and transcendent power, incomprehensible to our mind and beyond the sweep of our imagination, that pervades all things but not confined to any one thing. He is the thought of ages and the goal of humanity, taking the form of man. As Alvars before him tried to localise the Absolute in shrines and temples, Kamban finds the Absolute in his ideal hero. But this god-man is not free from the human limitations and sorrows which he has to face in common with ordinary mortals. The poet describes how, even with such limitations, he radiates love all round.

Kamban seizes on a supreme saying of Thiruvalluvar who preceded him by some centuries :

அன்பின் வழிய துயிர் நிலை

and expounds how it works in the world of Rama. Life without love is dead ; the way of love is life. Kamban describes how Rama loves not only his brothers as his own life, but also an untouchable, a monkey and a Rakshasa as his brothers. Such universal and catholic love brings into one fold all kinds of people who in turn not only love each other but their enemies also.

Mere profession of love and affection, however, will not save society ; it must show itself in action ; that is, in 'tyaga' or self-sacrifice. Bharatha is the model of such sacrifice. It is the sacrifice of every one of us that keeps alive the world. Without self-sacrifice, nothing worth having will live. Such is the lofty teaching of this great poet whom we honour today. May his glory live for ever.

A Short Lay of Minstrels*

Translation by

SRI V. KANDASWAMI MUDALIAR, B.A., L.T.

*Cirupanattuppadaï, a Sangam poem written by
Idakkali Nattu Nallur Nathathanar.*

Towering in shades of purple and blue, hill on hill rose ;
The mountain-stream, in sparkling cascades falling, swirled
fast
Between two shoulders of the hills ; and in ripples silvern
Flowing, looked like a garland of colourful pearls
Lying limp between smooth, rounded shoulders, and full
firm breasts 5
Of the fair Damsel-earth¹ lying in an abandon seductive ;
And swelling into a river full and flooded,
The rushing waters rammed against the falling banks
Fringed with groves flaming with flowers
Perfume-filled. And Koels² in their leafy shelter tore 10
With beaks the fresh flowers from their branches, and
scattered
The colourful petals on the black rippled sands.
And the sable bank thick with them, a little frayed
In the ascending sun, looked like the outspread tresses 15
Raven-black of Damsel-earth decked with flowers.
Like a moving bed of flowers the travelling minstrels,
Man and woman, strong and fair, colourfully arrayed,
Took the path of the river on their eager march
To the far-famed court of peerless Nalliakkodan³.

* The translator does not give a too literal version, and in many places he differs from the commentator. May we suggest to the traditionist that this even then has its value as an adaptation reminding us both of ancient Tamil ideas and modern English poetry.—Editor.

¹Mother-earth.

²Indian cuckoo.

³The king of Oïmanadu, in Thondaimandalam ; this was bounded by Kalashti in the north, by Pennar in the south, east by Bay of Bengal and west by Tiruvannamalai.

The Belle of the minstrel party, tender of foot 20
And gait graceful, treaded wearily her way
On the soft sandy bank littered with lance-sharp shingle.
Hill and dale, groves fair and fields green they left far
behind,

And reached the wilderness of burning sand and rays fiery.
The minstrel Belle, her tender feet torn and bleeding 25
Through the gravels of the burning road, sought shelter
Of the lineal shade of tall Kadamba¹ trees
On the endless road of the sandy, dry woodlands,
Whose fields were parched up and whose tanks had grown
dry.

She of rare grace of womanly perfections was dowered 30
Richly with feminine charms of rhythmic curves
And soft supple undulations ; her perfumed tresses
Of sapphire-blue sheen, rippling down her towering neck
And fragile waist, looked like a dusky screen-cloud against
A gold-canopied evening hill. And smitten 35
With shame at her willowy gait, peacocks hide
To hide in one another's train aglow with ocelli
Blue and green ; her bare ankles slender, knit strong
Ended in well-chiselled feet whose pink soles
Looked like drooping tongues of tired dogs ; and her shapely
legs 40

Full and firm, at every step, looked like the trunk
Lusty and trailing of a cow-elephant ; while her thighs
Lusty, olive-fair, one against another, full, firm and smooth
Challenged the trunks of plantain trees of the cool hillside.
Her firm breasts, chloasma-mantled, were as fair and full
As vengai²-flowers, round which banded-bees hummed
sweet

Their minstrelsies ; nay, they in their rounded perfection
Challenged the blooming buds of Kongam³ of dawn ;
Her row of pearl-white teeth surged with the dew sweet
As juice of breast-shaped tender kernels of palm. 50

¹ Wendlandia Notoniama (bot).

² Pterocarpus indicus.

³ Chlospermum gossijpium.

She was chaste as mullai¹-buds by the forest-path,
 Which is abloom with Kanjankullai²-flowers, as fair
 As pearly teeth of a damsel; and when the Belle
 Of soft swaying gait, of fawn-look and of forehead
 Bright and chaste like flashing stainless steel rested, 55
 Her pages guileless caressed her feet fair and soft.
 "Hail, brother-harpist! urged by smiting poverty,
 Which has embittered life, you master-lutanist
 Seek the bounty of the king from whom we, laden
 With gifts, are returning. You will in his great court 60
 Waken to matchless melody the golden chords
 Of the small-harp pillowed against your left shoulder.
 Your path lies across domains great and prosperous
 Of kings and chieftains famous for their gracious bounty;
 You will pass through the kingdoms of the three kings
 great 65
 Of Chera, Chola and Pandian lands and of chieftains
 Seven and princely—Pegan³, Pari⁴; Kari⁵, Aai⁶,
 Nalli⁷, Athigan⁸, Ori⁹—and I shall describe,
 For your guidance, those lands of kings and chiefs.
 "The flooded fields are starred with lilies of languid
 petals; 70
 Fishes gambol stirring their green glassy waters to silver
 ripples;
 The buffalo of a wide muzzle foraging for food
 Crushes the carps¹⁰ under its firm heavy tread;
 And maw-crammed with lilies, it seeks the cool shade
 Of jack-trees mantled with trailing pepper-creepers; 75
 And to the caress of its back by leaves soft of turmeric,
 It chews slow the cud to the dripping of honey
 Immature from the lilies, and lapses to sleep
 On a soft floral bed of wild-jasmines snow-white.
 Such is the fertility of the western lands 80

¹ Jasmine.

² White basil—*Ocimum album*.

³⁻⁹ Seven chieftain kings famed for their bounty. ref. lines 146, 154, 162, 169, 174, 180, 187.

¹⁰ Carp—a fresh-water fish.

Over which Cheran-Senguttuvan¹ holds his sway!
 May, with his large host valorous of lancers,
 Bowmen, chariots and tuskers, he had brought low
 The enemy kings of the distant North, and planted
 His victory-bow on the blue towering heights 85
 Of the snow-capped Himalayan-hills of the North.
 Vanchi² of river-wide yawning gateway
 Is the capital of this Kuttuwan³, heroic
 Of shoulders and the lord of speeding war chariots.
 You brother-harpist, are wending your weary steps 90
 To the court of Nalliakkodan whose capital
 Is greater, and whose lands are richer by far.
 Black baboons-laurelled with pith-garlands
 Beside their ears and with red breasts as if craftsmen
 Cunning had chiselled to shape the wood of Nuna-tree⁴, 95
 Full-grown and abloom with honey-dripping flowers—
 Travelled in the caravan carts of salt-vendors
 Of well-turned necks; and their wives of silken tresses,
 Which, without having been made into any one
 Of five-fold knots, hang down their willowy waists, 100
 And wave in the wanton wind. And these fat-baboons
 Jubilate with their children of beaming anklets
 Golden, by sounding the rattle improvised of sea-shells
 Pearl-hearted, and of serrated edges. And such 105
 Is the prosperity of Korkai⁵ on the shores
 Of the eastern blue seas of towering waves.
 And the Pandian-king, coming of the long line
 Of the guardians of the southern Tamil country,
 Marched against his foes, and captured their wide domain.
 And he holding sway under the regal shade 110
 Of his white umbrella of victory, tasselled

¹ King of the Chera country (present Malabar). Brother of Il:anko, the author of the Song of the Anklet (Silappadikaram). He marched with his forces to the Himalayas to bring a stone to carve the idol of Kannaki, the heroine of Silappadikaram.

² வஞ்சி Sea-port of the Chera-country.

³ Cf. 1.

⁴ *Morinda citrifolia*.

⁵ கொற்கை Sea-port of the Pandian kings.

With pearls gleaming ; he crowned with laurels of
victories ;
And he the lord of wind-speed war chariots, is the king
Of Madura, the eternal home of Tamil,
The peerless tongue of antiquity, and far-famed 115
For the amplitude of its street of jubilant crowds.
And this Madura is lesser than the great realm
Of Nalliakkodan, to whose city far-famed
You, brother-harpist, are marching with weary steps.
Kadamba¹ trees, umbrageous and aglow with flowers, 120
Girdle dense the banks of green tanks of placid waters ;
The laurels of these trees drop their stamens and pistils
About the watering-steps of tanks ; and they
Lying scattered look like rangoli² done in gold
And vermeil-red. To the rays of the golden sun 125
Rising in the orient, lotus buds, lusty as breasts
And favoured of gods, open their fair petals.
Dragon-flies sleep for the night in the coronae
Golden, walled round with petals pink as
Vermeil-dyed palm of a damsel ; and they, after 130
Resting in the sweet embraces of their partners
Life-guarding, waken with the dawn, and with amour
filled
Hum with surge of their wings their madrigals,
Round the honey-cups of lotus flowers surging
In the wide fields that girdle far-flung Uranthai, 135
The Capital of the Chola King Sembian. And he,
The guardian of realms lying on the western shores,
And great in the might of his arms hero wristleted,
Marched against his enemies, razed their ramparts
Of high-reaching gateways to such low heights that bulls
Bellowing, scratched their itchy necks against the low
dead walls.
And he is far-famed as the master of chariots stately
And of warriors valorous, who from the battle thick

¹ Wendlandia Notoniaina.

² This is the floor-decoration of loops and curves done in white or colour powder, by Hindu women.

Will not fluce. And this Uranthai looks small before
The far-famed capital of Nalliakkodan's realm. 145
Pegan was a chieftain of hills whose cloud-canopied peaks
Tower to shadowy heights and whose fertile sides
Overflow with cool mountain streams. Descending from
Ancient Avias¹ his brawny shoulders beam with the might
Of smiting his enemies. When a blue peacock 150
Of his fertile hillsides apprised by its sharp cry
Of rain-harbinger clouds, he was so pleased
That he gave his regal mantle to it as a scarf.
Pari, famed in classic lore for his charity
Boundless, was the lord of the purple Parambu-hills, 155
Which echo with the rushing waters of Ori,
The hill-stream, which in cascades leaps over shelvy sides.
He helped his ivory chariot, wrought luxuriously
With vermeil and gold, as a stay to the mullai²-creeper
Which swayed helpless on the road lined with naga³-trees
Round whose flowers banded-bees hummed their
madrigals.

Kari, beaming bright with circling hero-wristlet,
Was a terror unto his foes, who quailed with fear
At his death-dealing lance, and who under his rage
Towering cowered. But to the minstrels he was a prince
Of sweet winsome grace, who staggered the world by the
gift

Of all his lands with his steed, of rippling white mane,
That was decked with a bridle of sweet-chiming silvern
bells.

Aai of shoulders brawny through wield of bow, and
perfumed

With sandal paste was of such sweet enrapturing grace 170
Of words and gifts, that he offered to the deity
Templed under the banyan-tree the cast-off skin
Of a king-cobra of a beaming blue-black hue.

¹ ஆவியர்

² Jasmine.

³ Naga trees— சுரபுன்னை

Athigan is he who gave to Avvai¹ the fruit of nelli²
 Black and beautiful—the elixer vitae—of the tree 175
 That grew on the sides of his majestic blue hills,
 Colourfully carpeted with perfume-filled flowers.
 And he wields his long lance flaming with fiery wrath,
 And is the lord of a force wide as surging seas.
 Nalli, the lord of hills towering peak on peak, 180
 And where the rains drizzle in sparkling silver drops,
 Through his unebbing generosity, gladdened
 The hearts of those who sought his bountiful friendship;
 And with his lusty hands, famed with the might of war
 In the enemy's field of battle, he bestowed gifts 185
 So generously that they knew no future want.
 Ori the master of a horse of silken mane
 Snow-white battled down Kari of steel-blue steed. And
 he,
 So famed in war, gave as gift to minstrels his lands
 Fair, of low-lying hills bristling with naga-trees 190
 Of crowded branches flaming with perfumed flowers.
 Not one of these seven bounteous chiefs is as great
 As Nalliakkodan in his generosity.
 And he of war-famed strength of well-knit lusty limbs,
 To the beam of his fame in the wide world, girdled 195
 By vasty seas, bears now and lone the heavy yoke
 Of an endless giver of gifts, instead of those
 Bounteous chiefs of adamant shoulders, who smote
 Their ever-rising foemen; he is greater
 Than all the kings of Ceylon broad, ancient and of fame
 Unfading; of Ceylon of sea-rammed shores, and famed
 Even on the day of its foundations firm;
 And he is greater than those of Ceylon kings
 Who helped the damsels of rounded shoulders gambolling
 In the waters of the sea with Naga-³wood 205
 Of fragrant flowers, eagle⁴ and sandal-wood as floats.

¹ ஓளவை

² நெல்லி Emblica officinalis—goose-berry.

³ Cf. line—160.

⁴ அகில்—eagle or akila wood or aloe or agila wood=aquilaria ovata.

On the day of our grinding poverty, with eager hearts,
 We approached this Nalliakkodan, who wields in war
 His stainless sword, and who is as strong of limb
 As a sinewy tiger and who comes of Avia—line. 210
 His fame is so great that in cowardly retreat
 He had never turned his hero-ankleted feet,
 Covered with indurations of riding his war-tusker.
 We approached him of lusty hands, as famed as the rains
 Bounteous, through gifts of herds of elephants to minstrels
 Of diverse musical instruments; and we sang
 Praises of his unsurpassable lineage and also
 Of his sire's plenitude of lands of soaring hills.
 In those days our cold hearth, overgrown with mush-
 rooms
 Hollow-stalked, looked dismal with the bamboo falling 220
 From the thatch, and with aged walls gnawed by white-
 ant hosts.
 Our gloomy fire-place echoed with sharp muffled bark of
 the bitch,
 Famished and newly littered, which spurned, unable to
 bear
 The pain of blind pups of folded ears feeding at her dry
 breasts.
 And we, for fear of the curiosity of tell-tales, barred 225
 The doors of our fire-place; and our tambourine-girl
 Of slender waist, swaying with pain of gnawing hunger,
 Picked wit hunclipped nails, to the jingle of conch bangles,
 The velai-greens growing on the dust-shoot; and we,
 Cooking it even without salt to savour, shared 230
 With our dusky kindred large, and thus our hunger
 Gnawing mitigated in those indigent days.
 “And we now are returning from Nalliakkodan,
 Laden with his gifts of stately chariots, and tuskers
 Small-eyed, ichor shedding, terror-striking and decked 235
 With chiming bells to apprise people before and behind.
 And you also, brother-harpist, now distressed with the
 want
 Of your own and of your large dusky kindred, will seek

With a heart guileless the bounty of such a king.
 The towering waves of the surging blue seas ram 240
 Against white sands ; your path lies by such a shoreland,
 Where aloes abloom with swan-shaped flowers ;
 Where early spring flowers of gold-mohur trees
 Vie with gold in colour and seem to cheat the eye ;
 Where the lusty mature buds of musundagam¹ 245
 Bloom with sapphire-blue sheen ; where long-stalked
 punnai² buds
 Hang like bewitching garlands of the pearls of the sea.
 If after long march, you reach the song-famed shore-land
 town
 Of Eilpattinam³ of ice-cool tanks, and famous
 For its towering ramparts girdled by moats of blue waters,
 You will meet the good-wives of the shoreland, who will
 Raise flaming—red fire and dusky blue smoke curling,
 Of akil⁴ wood, brought by the towering sea-waves,
 And heaped up to the height of ruminating camels.
 And these damsels of lusty shoulders, of lance-mortal
 looks, 255
 And of such a spotless beauty of face that the moon
 Is smitten with sorrow for want of such a beam,
 Will serve mature toddy to men of the shore-land.
 If tuning your lyres to the dance-measure of minstrels
 Fair and of sweet-toned flutes, you go singing praises 260
 Of the lord of Kidangil⁵ beaming beautiful
 Like his flower garland, and who is the lord
 Of groves thick with trees of flower laden boughs,
 You will get at every hamlet the poached meat
 Of corned kuzhal⁶ fish of their fresh-water tanks. 265
 On your way to Veloor the red bean-nuts hang fair
 Like threaded coral wreaths ; Kayan⁷ thickets surging

¹Leather berried buid-weed. *Rivea ornota*.

²*Calophyllum Inophyllum*.

³Eilpathinan, Veloor, and Amoor were important towns.

⁴Akil = அகில் or eagle wood.

⁵கிடங்கில்

⁶குழல்

⁷*Eugenia braeteata*.

With sapphire-blue buds bloom like a flock of peacocks ;
 Musundai¹ flowers hang like spindles on their boughs
 Umbrageous ; and bunches of Kanthal² flowers open 270
 Like the pink fingers of a fair damsel ;
 And in the long devious path of the kitchen garden
 Velvet mites of red vermilion hue creep slowly.
 Its hills are girdled by fair woodlands embowered
 With white mullai flowers chaste as home-templed wives.
 Turning your steps to west, where the opulent glow of the
 sun
 Fades behind hills, whose sides sparkle with silven streams
 Leaping from cove to cove, you will reach Veloor.
 If you reach Veloor, bright with tanks filled with flowers
 Of petals sharp as smiting lance, and which is famed 280
 For its triumph through wield of triumphant lance,
 matrons,
 Of the woodlands, avoiding the blazing sun
 For their no less fiery huts, will serve you sour-rice
 Delicious, hot from fire with roasted venison
 For your refreshment, and of your women of tender 285
 Mango-leaf complexion decked with wristlets but few.
 Fragrant flowers of drawn hang in wreaths on thickset
 Kanchi-tree on whose bough perched, the blue king-fisher
 Of golden beak keeps long vigil, gazing into
 The fathomless tank, and then picks up a stenchy minnow,
 When the lotus leaf broad is torn by its long beak.
 Ruby-eyed blue bees buzz round the honey cups
 Of morning flowers of bristle-stalked lotus plant ;
 And the bees circling round the white flowers look
 Like the shadowy serpent—Ragu³—round the sun. 295
 Such are Amoor's agricultural lands of cool fields.
 Its cities wide are stoutly guarded, its priests
 Pious dwindle not, and its warehouses are cool and
 beautiful.

¹ Cf. l. 245.

² *Gloriosa Superba*.

³ Ragu—it is an Indian belief that the serpent Ragu causes the eclipse of the sun by swallowing it.

You will rest in its hospitable villages ;
 And when you seek to leave the place, you will be barred
 By children urged by their mothers of wristleted arms,
 And of braids of sapphire-blue sheen, stout as trunks
 Of cow-elephants, hanging down their necks in languid
 grace ;

And they are sisters to tillers of soil, who own
 Sturdy bulls, whose necks are grown lusty and strong 305
 Through ploughing the fields round and round all day long.
 These sisters will serve you sweet savoury dish
 Of crab of curved claws with chunks of snow-white rice
 Cooked of grains well polished by dark adamantine
 Pounders to the wearing away of their silver-blue
 ferrules. 310

The ghoul of white beaming tusks, of a tongue
 Red and drooping like flame, of black ears hanging like
 Those of a black goat and of curved beastly paws,
 After having gorged on corpses, ruffles wildly
 By her loud echoing laughter, the silence 315
 Sepulchral reigning in the battle field at its eve.
 And so looks the tusker awe-inspiring, whose nails
 Are dyed with gore through kicking about corpses
 With its legs drum-stout ; and the cloud of dust thus raised
 By its stampede is lowered by its rain of streaming
 ichor. 320

The calm of streets after the festive dust and din
 Of noisy, surging, shouldering crowd is like
 The silence of battle field after the tusker's stampede.
 And Nalliakkodan's city of such festive
 Streets loud with noise is not afar but a-near. 325
 You will reach his towering gates of lofty doors
 Ever opened, like the cloven Meru-hills
 Where god is tempted, to the minstrels, the pandits
 And to Brahmins deeply learned in rare vedic-lore.
 Those deeply learned in lores many thus him praise : 330
 'He is grateful to those who do him a good turn,
 He spurns the company of the small-minded,
 He is as affectionate as he is sweet,

And of a face ever beaming bright with smile.'
 Warriors renowned for the might of sword praise him
 thus : 335

'He is a shelter to those who seek refuge in him,
 He does not harbour deep-seated hatred against foes,
 He will fight shoulder to shoulder with his forces,
 He will inspire courage in the hearts of the flagging.'
 Damsels abright with pink-rayed eyes, large with paint,
 praise thus : 340

'He will fulfil the deep longings of their hearts,
 He will, when they with passion surge, satisfy their amour,
 He will be no one seductive courtesan's tool,
 He will, when in sorrow, hasten to relieve them.'
 Minstrels who with his bounty run their houses praise
 thus: 345

'He will before men of little learning appear as simple,
 He will with the learned discourse with equal wisdom,
 He will reward to endless measure and each to his desert.'
 Him will you approach, who shines bright in the council
 Happy of the learned, the seers and ministers 350
 Like the milk-white moon amidst its brilliant star-host.
 Yours is a harp to whose upright post, wrought in grace,
 Is firmly fixed the tapering black-wood cross-beam
 Fashioned like the snake-twined forearm of a green-eyed
 monkey

Black, grasping the snake ; and the two halves of its sound
 box 355

Blue-black as Kallam¹ fruit of the woodlands, are knit
 Close with a line of bead-headed pins ; and the box,
 Rich with far-famed carver's cunning craft is covered
 With deer-robe, which at the stitch of its halves looks
 Like downy hair-line running down a woman's belly. 360
 You will stir its nectar-sweet chords, golden like
 Dripping honey, and waken, as fixed in music-lore,
 The twisted chords one by one to the melody
 Of bewitching music templed in your cunning harp.
 To the music so raised you will sing praises thus 365

¹Carnissa— கார்னிஸ் பழம்

Of Nalliakkodan. 'Oh King, thou art he whose hand
 Is ever shaped like a hanging bud through your gifts
 Endless to aged seers ; thou art he whose broad shoulders
 Are a shelter to flagging warriors and damsels
 Languishing ; and thou art he whose sceptre is a shade 370
 Sheltering to tillers of soil ; and art the mighty
 Of shoulders, whose lance flames in fury at the sight
 Of your enemy-kings of stately war-chariots.'
 And ere you your song of praise finish, he will
 You apparel with garments as white and thin as 375
 The epidermal lining of the hollow of bamboo.
 To such a measure large he will serve you sweet mead
 That you inebriate will lilt your head as a snake
 Sways its hood in anger left to right ; he will feast you
 On viands prepared, not a jot swerving from culinary
 rules 380
 Laid down by Bhimsena of Himalayan broad shoulders ;
 And who is elder to Arjun of brocaded scarf ;
 And whose quiver is full of arrows, which to flames
 Consuming made a prey the forests of Kanda¹
 He will viands delicious serve in a circle of cups 385
 Golden, which vie in colour with fate-stars-girdled sun
 Of dawn rising in eastern sky, flaming abright
 Like the flash of steel ; he standing beside you
 Will feast you with unebbing hospitality.
 With victory-winning might he puts to rout even 390
 Foes famed for strength of victory-winning lance-host ;
 He destroys their strongholds, and with booty thus gained
 He relieves the wants of minstrels, and all of those
 Who seek his bounty ; and to you he will give gifts
 Of gold, yellow as morning sky, gained as booty 395
 Of vanquished kings by his heroic chieftains ; further
 He will give you a chariot whose spoked wheels, bound by
 Steel tyres and firmly fixed to the steel-strong axle-tree
 Chiselled with carver's cunning craft, look like full moon
 Of silvery ray, rolling in after-winter sky 400

¹ Bhimsena one of five Pandava princes of Mahabharata, a Hindu epic, burnt to flames the forest of Kanda.

Of dark, cold clouds ; the inner side of its towering canopy
 Is painted with vermilion, red as surging bunches
 Of sky-reaching palasa¹ tree, whose blooming buds
 Are circled by a swarm of bees of jubilant songs ;
 And the canopy outside gleams like molten gold. 405
 And with it he will give you a charioteer, a bull
 Grey-white, fair of head and fleet of foot than horses
 speeding,
 Yoked to the chariot of well-tested speed and wrought
 In all grace and beauty by an adept craftsman.
 These gifts you will get, if you go seeking the bounty 410
 Of Nalliakkodan decked with tender-leaved laurels.
 And in whom fleeting fame is firm based ; and he is
 The lord of those hills whose thunder-ploughed sides are
 too steep
 To be scaled, and whose towering purple peaks bristling
 With swaying bamboos are girdled by misty drizzling
 clouds, 415
 Amidst which peacocks spread their blue bejewelled fans,
 Which look like akil-fume mantled blue tresses of damsels
 Of supple shoulders, and of willowy waists from which
 Sarees
 Diaphanous and white fall in bewitching languid folds."

¹Palasa tree— கல்யாண முருங்கை

Reviews

BHARATHIAR : HIS LIFE AND POETRY

By

P. M. SUNDARAM, M.A.

(Published by Orient Longmans, Ltd., Madras.

Pages 133.—Rs. 2/-)

This is a welcome addition to the meagre literature we possess on perhaps the greatest of modern Tamil poets and founder of a new era in Tamil literature. In the Foreword, the author's aim is stated as an examination of Bharathi's poetry, and accordingly the poet's life is summarised in some thirty-six pages, and the rest of the book is devoted to a consideration of his poetry.

A poet is known by his works and Prof. Sundaram shows a full and analytical knowledge of Bharathi's works. He treats in successive chapters of the poet's conception of God, Religion, Society, Womanhood, Nationalism, Philosophy and the like—in what appears perhaps more as separate articles than chapters of the same book. Towards the end he discusses Bharathi's poetic ability and his place in Tamil literature. One emerges from a reading of the book with the impression that the author does not stress sufficiently on the revolutionizing and revitalizing nature of Bharathi's work.

STUDIES IN PATHUPPATTU

By

Thiru V. KANDASWAMI MUDALIAR, B.A., L.T.

(Publishers: Ottrumai Office, Theagarayanagar, Madras.

Price Re. 1/-)

The author is a well known writer of English prose. This brochure comes as a fitting introduction to the Tamil

classics. People have developed a ghost fright, as this author puts it, of these classics and this introduction giving his sketches of and gleanings from the Ten Idylls of the Sangam age will exorcise this evil spirit. The author lives through these sketches, here and there exclaiming with his sly humour "Visvamisras beware". The fivefold divisions of the Ancient Tamil land, her cities and rivers, nay, her furniture too find their reincarnation in his rhythmic prose. He himself weaves patterns of his own modelled on the classics—in his description of Kattabomman. We meet the poet and the painter everywhere in this book.

இறந்தவர்கள் வாழும் நிலையும் பேசும் முறையும்

By

MARAI THIRU

SOMASUNDARA PARAMACARYA SWAMIGAL,

Junior head of the Tirugnanasambanthar Mutt, Madurai.

(Publication of the Tiru Arul Tava-neri Manram.)

This book is a well documented summary of the experience of the author in communicating and receiving communications from the deceased through mediums. It also gives an explanation from the Hindu point of view of the state of the man after his death. The astral body is nothing but our own body seen in our dreams. He tries to understand the miracles of our saints from this point of view.

The author, as the spiritual head of an ancient Hindu mutt, feels that these experiences will restore man's confidence in matters spiritual.

Whether one accepts the explanation or not, these experiences received not through professional mediums but through innocent and unsophisticated people throw out

a challenge for understanding the Man the unknown. Modern science is still groping in the dark. Nor did our philosophies lay any great emphasis on this; for they thought this would lead one away from the spiritual path. The puranic lore however never ceased giving detailed version of the life beyond the grave. These experiences have therefore a scientific and perennial interest to the modern man who has yet to find a place for this in his scheme of things.

News and Notes

THE LONDON TAMIL SANGAM.

We have received the following report from the Secretary of the above sangam :—

London has had since the war more than five hundred Tamil-speaking persons from various parts of the world, including Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Fiji, India, Mauritius, South Africa, British Guiana and Trinidad. Attempts were made off and on to form a Tamil Sangam on a cultural basis and the present London Tamil Sangam is, true to the Tamil tradition, the third of its kind.

This third Tamil sangam, though known as London Tamil Sangam, looks after the Tamil cultural interests of Great Britain and Ireland. It was inaugurated on 24th March 1955, under the Presidentship of Prof. A. Chidambaranatham Chettiar of the Annamalai University, when he visited England during his tour of British Universities. About ninety Tamil-speakers representing various countries met to approve the Constitution of the Sangam and elected a working committee. Among its aims are :

“To propagate and foster interest in Tamil culture and to encourage the study of the Tamil language and literature” ;

“To promote the Tamil conception of universal brotherhood” ; and

“To serve as a meeting-place for Tamils from various countries living in Great Britain and to foster social contacts among them”.

At present the Sangam has nearly one hundred members, including a few non-Tamil Indians and Ceylonese and Englishmen.

The Tamil New Year Day, 1955, was celebrated by the Sangam with plays and dance items of cultural interest, preceded by a Tamil style dinner. The Ceylonese members were responsible for items of folklore interest.

On 27th July, 1955, Dr. RM. Alagappa Chettiar was entertained to tea by members of the Sangam. On 19th November, 1955, the Sangam arranged a variety entertainment and dinner at which Rev. Dr. Xavier S. Thani Nayagam, Chief Editor of *Tamil Culture*, was the chief guest.

The Sangam is greatly indebted to the following gentlemen who were responsible for the formation of the Sangam :

Mr. S. M. Lakshmanan Chettiar	(India)
Mr. R. Krishnamurthy	(India)
Mr. Adi Nagappan	(Malaya)
Capt. C. S. K. Pathy	(England)
Mr. R. Radhakrishnan	(India)
Mr. J. M. Rajaratnam	(Ceylon)
Mr. A. Sathasivam	(Ceylon)
Mr. K. S. Senathiraja	(Ceylon)
Mr. R. Viswanathan	(India)

The following gentlemen were elected as Patrons and Office-bearers for the year 1955-56.

Patrons :

Prof. T. Burrow (Oxford)
 Prof. A. C. Chettiar (Annamalai University, India)
 Dr. Kumaru (England)
 Mr. G. D. Naidu (India)
 Capt. C. S. K. Pathy (England)

President :

Mr. Adi Nagappan (Malaya)

Vice-President :

Mr. J. M. Rajaratnam (Ceylon)

Secretary :

Mr. R. Radhakrishnan (India)

Asst. Secretary :

Mr. R. Viswanathan (India)

Treasurer :

Mr. N. S. Sharma (India)

Working Committee members :

Mr. S. M. Lakshmanan Chettiar
 Mr. S. Ambalavanar
 Mr. V. A. Ramachandran
 Mr. T. Subbiah
 Mr. Ross Raja
 Mrs. Parvathi Krishnamurthy
 Miss. J. C. Fernondo
 Mrs. Wilson Jeyaratnam
 Miss T. R. Arumugam
 Mr. K. Ramanathan.

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA—DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN STUDIES

The University of Malaya will have from October next year a department of Indian studies.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University Sir Sydney Caine, has said that the department was intended to cover a wide range of Indian studies. But in the first instance, emphasis would be on Tamil language and literature.

Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders, on whose report the University was established in 1948, had recommended that a department of Tamil studies should be set up by the University. But Prof. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, an eminent historian of South India, who was invited to give his views on the subject, advised that an Indian department would be incomplete and valueless if there were no provision for studies in Sanskrit.

Recently, the Commissioner for India in Malaya, Mr. R. K. Tandon, presented a set of 70 Sanskrit books and Rs. 6,000 in cash as a token payment on behalf of the Government of India to the University of Malaya for the Indian Department proposed to be set up by the University.

—Singapore, September 13, 1955.
—(*Indian Express*—Sep. 15, 1955.)

SOUTHERN LANGUAGES BOOK TRUST

The Prime Minister, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, an eminent writer in his own right, yesterday (October 5, 1955) disclosed that the Union Government was thinking of having a semi-autonomous publishing house to bring out Indian and foreign classics and art books at cheap prices.

Inaugurating the Southern Languages Book Trust at the Senate House, he exhorted the people to develop the habit of reading and thinking.

The Publishing House, which the Union Government was thinking about, would cover all languages of India and English, and produce various types of books, classics, translations from the classics of other countries, books on art etc., and produce in large quantities to bring them within the reach of many.

The Prime Minister was received by Mr. S. Govindarajulu, Vice-Chancellor, Venkateswara University and Chairman of the Book Trust, and conducted to the dais. The other Vice-Chancellor-members of the Trust, Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Dr. S. Bhagavantham, Dr. V. L. D'Souza, Dr. V. S. Krishna and Mr. T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai, were presented to Mr. Nehru.

AIM OF THE TRUST

Welcoming the gathering, Mr. S. Govindarajulu explained the objects of the Trust—to sponsor the publication and distribution of high quality low-priced books in

large numbers in four South Indian languages—Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada.

The Trust will issue 80 titles a year—20 in each of the four languages. Each series of 20 books will present a balanced list, so that there will be in each new group of books released, some current and classical titles which would appeal to almost any worthwhile taste. The Trust's objective is to encourage editions of 5,000 to 10,000 and even 20,000 of the selected books to be sold at cheap cost. The Trust will provide working capital to publishers as loans.

He referred to the learning of English language and the controversy whether they should continue to teach in English and thus keep the doors open to something new in scientific and political thought.

He said many of them had learnt English "and this has helped to add significantly to our ancient heritage; what is more, it has helped us to understand better and cherish all that is valuable in our heritage; it has also given us the confidence to demand that what is not good in that heritage should be abandoned."

The Ford Foundation had approved a grant to the Trust for a three-year scheme, and the Trust expected to produce by its publications no spectacular changes, but deemed it as a long-range measure.

—(*Mail*, October 6, 1955.)

OBITUARY

REV. FATHER H. HERAS

The death of Rev. Father H. Heras, S. J., on the 14th December 1955 is a great blow to Indology in general and the study of the Indus Valley civilisation in particular. His contribution to historical research in India was thus described by Dr. Hasmukh D. Sankalia in his introduction to the Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume (November

1953) of the Indian Historical Research Institute, founded by Father Heras in 1926 :

'There was no Institute where Students could be trained to carry out research in pure history.....The foundation of the Indian Historical Research Institute as a post-graduate Department of St. Xavier's College, supplied this long felt need....There was no institute in Bombay and perhaps in all India at that time, where the needs of the students were so carefully thought of and provided for....Besides the facilities which the Institute provided, Father Heras was always there to guide the people.....

'History was conceived of in its widest sense. Its study was, therefore, not confined to political or dynastic history, as was then the prevailing custom. But besides these which should always be there to serve as a necessary frame work, for understanding the collection of ideas, institutions and persons, both the Guru and his Sishyas undertook investigation of minute and hitherto neglected aspects—the social, religious, economic, educational, archaeological—of the several periods of Indian history, called Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern.

'Since 1918, Father Heras has written 13 books and nearly 200 articles, while his work, on the Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture is about to be published. Every one of these works—whether on the Manchu Dynasty of China, or on the Guptas, Pallavas or the Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagara, or on the religion of Asoka and Akbar, or those on the spread of Buddhism in Afghanistan are marked by brilliant scholarship and extreme thoroughness. Every source of information available to the writer is systematically studied and cited. One may disagree with the author regarding certain conclusions, but his methodology cannot be challenged.

This is no less true of Father Heras' forthcoming work 'Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture'. Not only is it his *magnum opus* but it is his life work. For he has been working at it since 1934. And it may be said that there is no other Scholar—Indian or foreign—who has devoted so much time and labour to the elucidation of the Indus Script and its import. Behind this study lies not only the study of the several ancient Oriental and Occidental Scripts—Hieroglyphic, Cuneiform, Hittite and Phoenician, but their cultural

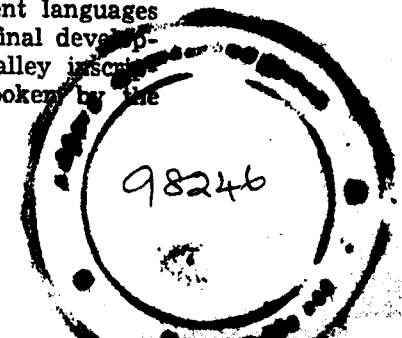
history and archaeology. Probably no other scholar except Father Heras could have attempted such a study. Brought up and educated in Spain, he knows several European languages so that he can read into original all the relevant literature on this subject, whereas India has become his second home. In him have thus commingled the modern European Scholarship and the Oriental Tradition. With these two he has approached the problem of the decipherment and interpretation of the Indus (Harappa) Script. The discovery of a bilingual inscription or some such evidence can alone prove or disprove his interpretation, but one can nevertheless appreciate the most methodical and logical approach to this problem and the conclusions which follow from it.....

'Father Heras's interest in the decipherment and interpretation of the Indus Valley seals has made its library probably the best equipped library in the whole Orient as far as these Proto-Indian (Iranian, Iraqi and Mediterranean) subjects are concerned. Probably here is the only museum in the world where one finds large sized enlargements (photographs of 10" x 8") of the Indus seals, and the actual use of the Script.'

The first volume of 'Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture' to which Dr. Sankalia refers was published early in 1954 and in it Father Heras arrived at this characteristically forthright conclusion :

'We are therefore forced to acknowledge that the Dravidians, of India, after a long period of development in this country, travelled westwards, and settling successively in the various lands, they found their way from Mesopotamia up to the British Isles, spread their race—afterwards named Mediterranean owing to the place they were known anthropologically—through the west and made their civilization flourish in two continents, being thus the originators of the modern world civilization.'

'We are still breathing the atmosphere that nurtured these ancient heroes. The Minas and Paravas and Velal:as and Kut:agas are still living round us. The Scripts that are being used by the different languages of India are acknowledged as the natural final development of the cryptic signs of the Indus Valley inscriptions. Echoes of the ancient language spoken by the



Indus Valley dwellers resound in our ears continually.
The belief in the existence of one God still leads the
destinies of the Indian nation.'

The death of Father Heras is in a literal sense an irreparable loss to Dravidology. The remaining volumes of his 'Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean Culture' are still to be published; it is understood that the Second Volume was nearly ready for publication at the time of his death. As the result of his painstaking and exhaustive researches should not be lost to India and to the world, it is earnestly hoped that the authorities of the St. Xavier's College, Bombay, will take early steps for the publication of the remaining volumes.

Father Heras will be particularly missed by the readers of *Tamil Culture*, to which he was a frequent contributor. On his way to Kodaikanal a few months ago on medical advice, he met while at Madras Mr. A. Subbiah, Vice-President of the Academy and made valuable suggestions in regard to the work of the Academy and this journal, to which he promised to send a contribution from Kodaikanal, if his health improved. Alas, Death has since snatched him away. May his Soul rest in peace!

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

HINTS RE-ARTICULATION

Hard¹ (Plosive)	க	—	k	(as in king, angle, alhambra)
	ச	—	c	(„ church, angel, calcium)
	த	—	t:	(„ card?).... Retroflex - articulate with blade of tongue.
	த	—	th	(„ threat, this, thick).... dental.
Soft (Nasal)	ப	—	p	(„ pipe, amber)
	த	—	t	(„ atlas, sunday, arrears).... Retroflex articulate with tip of tongue.
	ங	—	ng	(„ sing).... velar n
	ஞ	—	nj	(„ angel).... palatal n
	ன	—	n:	(„ urn?).... Retroflex n - articulate with blade of tongue.
	ந	—	nh	(„ anthem).... dental n
	ம	—	m	(„ mate)
	ன	—	n	(„ enter).... Retroflex n - articulate with tip of tongue.
Medium (non-nasal continuant)	ய	—	y	(„ yard)
	ர	—	r	(„ red)
	ல	—	l	(„ leave).... Alveolar l - articulate with tip of tongue.
	ல	—	v	(„ very)
	ழ	—	l:	(„ ?).... Retroflex l - articulate with blade of tongue.
	ள	—	l:	(„ hurl).... Alveolar l - articulate with blade of tongue.
	ஃ	—	x	(„ ahead)
	ஃ	—	x	(„ ahead)

* The Tamil phonemes may for practical purposes be treated as having single allophones only, except in the case of the hard consonants which have four allophones each, as shown in note 1 on the reverse.

The Educators of Early Tamil Society

XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM

The Sangam literature and the twin-epics represent Tamil society essentially between the years 200 B.C. and 300 A.D. The anthologies do perhaps contain poems of earlier and later periods, but that the great bulk of poetry belongs to this epoch is accepted by most scholars who have examined this body of literature. When it comes, however, to stratification of the poems contained in the anthologies on the basis of the contemporaneity of the poets and their respective patrons, or on the basis of language and grammar, or when it comes to assigning even approximate centuries and generations to them, the student is faced with some intransigent and, in the present state of evidence, insoluble problems. But the attempts at chronological stratification from different angles are all the time making the panorama of early Tamil life clearer and clearer, and reducing the obscurity which hangs over the centuries represented by this literature.

The educators of this early society are the parents, and pre-eminently also the bards, minstrels and poets; but towards the end of the period, particularly in the society reflected in the twin epics, religious teachers, Vedic Brahmins, and Jain and Buddhist monks become also the chief educators of the Tamil country. While the system in the earlier part of the Sangam epoch is secular and informal, towards the latter part of the epoch it becomes religious and formal. What is remarkable about the growth of the educational process as reflected in this literature is that it seems to correspond to the main lines of development in other ancient countries like Northern India and the Greek and Celtic worlds, and as in those countries illustrates a

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

NOTE.—In most present day dialects, in the plosure assumes a fricative—sometimes a voiced—value after a vowel also, except in the case of *t*: which retains its normal unaspirated, unvoiced value even after a vowel.

2. The value of this *auxiliary* phoneme, which must *always* be followed by a hard consonant, was variable during the time of Tholkappiam; it acquired a phonetic value identical with that of the following hard consonant, vide 1 (c) above,

e.g., எஃகு became ehhu

Later its value became fixed as *h*, irrespective of the following consonant.

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=Thamil), or where it is unnecessary to indicate the exact pronunciation, accurate 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., வேங்கடம் = Vengadam (Vengkat am).

- (ii) Reference may be made to *Tamil Culture*, Vol IV, No. 1 (January 1955 issue) pp. 58-73 for fuller details.

THE TAMIL SCRIPT

(This table is given for the guidance of those who wish to read Tamil texts which often appear in TAMIL CULTURE)

Vowels	Vowel symbols attached to preceding consonant.	Hard consonants						Soft consonants						Medium consonants					
		k	c	t:	th	p	t	ng	nj	n:	nh	m	n	y	r	l	v	l-	l:
அ a	nil	க	ச	ட	த	ப	த	ங	ஞ	ண	ந	ம	ன	ய	ர	ல	வ	ழ	ள
ஆ a:	ஈ to the right of the consonant	கா					ற			ணு			னு						
இ i	ி to be joined at the top—right of consonant	கி																	
ஈ i:	ி to be joined at the top—right of consonant	கி																	
உ u	a semi-circle  a vertical stroke or a loop  to be joined to the bottom	கு	சு	டு	து	பு	து	ங்	ஞ்	ண்	ந்	மு	னு	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழ்	ள்
ஊ u:	Same as for u, but with an additional stroke or loop	கூ	சூ	டூ	தூ	பூ	தூ	ங்	ஞ்	ண்	ந்	மு	னு	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழ்	ள்
ஏ e	ஐ to the left of the consonant	கே																	
ஐ e:	ஐ to the left of the consonant	கே																	
ஐ ai	ஐ to the left of the consonant	கை									ணை		னை			லை			ளை
ஓ o	ஓ to the left & ஈ to the right of the consonant	கொ					றெ			ணு			னு						
ஔ o:	ஓ to the left & ஈ to the right	கொ					றெ			ணு			னு						
ஔ au	ஓ to the left & ஈ to the right	கொ																	
஑ pure consonants	A dot on the top of the consonant	க்																	

Note.—(1) The vowels are written as shown in the first vertical column.

(2) The consonants are written as shown in the horizontal columns, with a symbol or symbols indicating the vowel immediately following. A consonant followed by the vowel அ (a) has no symbol, while the pure consonant not followed by a vowel has a dot on top.

(3) All the eighteen vowel consonants under க் (k) are shown as a guide; in other cases only the irregular forms are shown, the rest being exactly similar to those shown under க் (k), excepting for trivial differences in a few cases which might safely be ignored.

normal uniform development whereby a certain type of society evolves a pattern of education in response to the social and economic needs of that particular type of society. The more numerous the societies examined, the greater is the possibility of illustrating with more examples a certain uniformity of development in the educational process among peoples.

It would seem that education originates with religious rites and songs and dances, and with prophecy and mantic poetry as may be seen by the origin of the Vedic *mantra* and the Greek *molpe*. From these religious and magical beginnings, education seems to proceed to a period of reliance on the powers of man. It becomes progressively anthropocentric, and the chief educators are those who sing the praises and the deeds of heroic men. This second stage which may be known as the bardic age of literature as of education is succeeded by a third stage in which not bards and minstrels but poets play the important part as the educators of a country. Close upon the poets come the philosophers and religious educators of a sophisticated and civilised society which represents a fourth stage in the history of education among ancient peoples. These stages of development do admit of variations in different societies but the variations are not of such a nature as to invalidate the general principles, and the stages of development have been classified according to those who were the chief educators of each epoch, though such a classification does not exclude at any given stage of growth the presence of educators characteristic of a preceding or succeeding stage.¹

There is all over the ancient world the phenomenon of single persons being invested with multiple functions in a

¹ See MACKENZIE, A.S., *The Evolution of Literature*, John Murray, London, 1911. This is a remarkable comparative study of literature as a social phenomenon among both primitive and civilized peoples; MURRAY, GILBERT, *The Classical Tradition in Poetry*, O.U.P., London, 1927; CORNFORD, F.M., *Principium sapientiae, the origin of Greek philosophical thought*, University Press, Cambridge, 1952; BOWRA, C.M., *Heroic Poetry*, Macmillan, London, 1952.

primitive and tribal stage of society, and as social development becomes more complex, these functions come to be distributed among different individuals. Thus in primitive society, whether Tamil or Indo-Aryan or Greek or Celtic, priesthood, prophecy, poetry, philosophy and teaching are seen to reside in one and the same individuals while later there is a differentiation of functions and persons. There is already in early society a dim association of religious, prophetic and poetic inspiration with the intuitive wisdom of the philosopher. Five types, priest, prophet, poet, philosopher and pedagogue repose in a single figure. Even today among the Tatars and other Siberian peoples, the *shamans* and *bakshas* are described as "singers, poets, musicians, diviners and doctors, the guardians of popular religious traditions and the preservers of ancient legend".² This may be said also of the quasi-priests of several tribal societies not excluding the Pre-Dravidian and semi-Dravidian tribes living in India and Ceylon today.³ G. Fraser's "Golden Bough" is perhaps one of the most comprehensive works in which this multi-functional priest-educator type may be traced in the customs of the five continents.

I. THE SHAMANS

Though the Sangam anthologies reflect predominantly a panegyric and anthropocentric age and the twin epics reflect predominantly a philosophic and didactic age, all these works do contain references to religious rites, taboos and social customs which are remains or developments of an earlier mantic period when in the priest or priestess

² CORNFORD, F.M., *Principium sapientiae*, O.C., p. 94. Cf. CHADWICK, KERSHAW, N., *Poetry and Prophecy*, University Press, Cambridge, 1942.

³ THURSTON, EDGAR, *Omens and superstitions of Southern India*, Fisher Unwin, London, 1912; SELIGMAN, C.G., and SELIGMAN, B.Z., *The Veddas of Ceylon*, Cambridge, 1911; HAMBLBY, W.D., *Origins of Education among Primitive People*, Macmillan, London, 1926; HELSER ALBERT, D., *Education of Primitive people*, Fleming H. Revell Company, New York (no date); DAWSON CHRISTOPHER, *Age of the Gods*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1933; BOAS FRANZ, *The Mind of Primitive man*, Macmillan, London, 1938.

resided multiple functions like ritual dancing, prophecy and augury. The earliest phase of Tamil society as inferred from this literature was a social organisation based on physiography with a differentiation and specialisation of functions and customs proper to each of the five regions, hunting and cultivation of wild plants in the mountain districts, pastoralism in the "bush", rice and sugarcane cultivation in the riverine belts, and fishing, diving and sailing along the sea-coast, and plunder in the less inhabited districts. These societies which are adumbrated seem to have been of the early food-gathering type in which populations were sparse, social classes were unknown, mates were selected by freedom of choice within the regional clan, government was under local chiefs and social life was imbued with a keen sense of kinship and community.⁴

The first formal educators of these earliest societies were persons endowed with shamanistic power. Their office was neither full-time nor hereditary, but they seem to have been often elderly persons. The priest (*Kuruntogai* 53) or priestess (*Puram*; 253, 5) of Murugan, the hill-god, danced vigorously "like the gambols of herds" in an open space covered with white sand and performed the sacrificial ritual of the offering of the blood of rams, rice, roasted rice grains and red flowers. He entered into a trance as a result of his ritual ballet, and both dance and offerings were meant to appease the god and thus prevent him from afflicting people with illness and calamities (*Aham*; 22). There is also evidence for men and women and even children engaged in community religious dancing in order to obtain prosperity or to avert impending disaster. When the fisherfolk found that their nets failed to bring sufficient

⁴ See JACOBS MELVILLE, *Cultures in the present world Crisis in Human Relations*, Vol. I (1947). KROEBER, A.L., *Anthropology*, London, 1948; HERSKOVITS MELVILLE, J., *Man and his works*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1949; LINTON RALPH, *The Tree of Culture*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1955. Pages 486-498 in *The Tree of Culture* present for the first time in an American book an analysis of ancient Tamil society of the Sangam period. The author has drawn from secondary sources but recognizes the value of the *Tolkappiyam* for cultural anthropology.

reward for their toils, they planted the horn of a shark and danced around it a ritual dance with offerings of flowers; when there were portents of impending disaster the shepherds and shepherdesses danced in order that the god of the flocks might avert the calamity; when marauding tribes found their cattle-wealth diminishing, they danced before their mother-goddess in order to obtain greater prosperity for their villages and more abundant plunder.⁵

Worship in its earliest recorded form was ritual dance joined with offerings both animal and vegetable, especially flowers of the region. The dances were mimetic in that the priests and priestesses imitated the action of the god and wore the insignia of the god. Sometimes a person was accoutred like the god or goddess and offerings were made before him. This custom may possibly be among later developments of the original religious dance.⁶

The priests and priestesses were also the authentic interpreters of omens and were credited with prophetic vision. Their songs and sayings were probably the earliest poetry and oral literature to which society paid any heed. For the origin of Tamil poetry from a mantic stage, there is a very interesting piece of evidence in the name given to the ancient fortune-teller who divined the future from the configuration of rice-grains spread on her winnowing-fan. Her appellation was 'akaval-makal': (அகவல் மகல்) or "the woman who calls". The word "akaval" by itself means a call, an appellative utterance, and referred in this context to the custom of the priestess calling upon the gods and spirits. This usage led to the designation given to the

⁵ SRINIVAS IYENGAR, P.T., *History of the Tamils*, O.C., p. 77: "The means of cure were not solely supernatural, for, as the hilly region abounded in simples, the magic of the priests and priestesses was fortified by the use of drugs. Hence the early priest was also the medicine-man and even today, notwithstanding millenia of philosophical evolution, the devil priest-cum-medicine-man of the degraded Kuravar tribe drives a flourishing trade among the elite of society, on the sly."

⁶ SRINIVAS IYENGAR, P.T., *ibid*, pp. 74-85; see also OESTERLEY, W.O.E., *The Sacred Dance*, University Press, Cambridge, 1923; JAMES, E.O., *The beginnings of Religion*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1949; BACKMAN, LOUIS, E., *Religious Dances*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1952.

earliest Tamil poetic metre which originally must have been a recitative chant like the religious chant of early ritual.^{6b}

The role of these early priests and priestesses was also prophetic. In the course of their ritual ballet they entered into a trance and revealed what was occult and predicted what might happen to the tribe. The cantos describing the dances of the shepherds, of the marauding-tribe and of the mountain-folk in the epic *Silappadikaram* are reminiscences of earlier periods, and the dance and mantic declarations of Salini give us a short but illuminating indication of the importance of the seer in early regional and clan organization. Because the village of the tribe is destitute of cattle wealth and its rivals flourish, Salini dances into a trance and recommends a more martial and plundering attitude on the part of the tribe and offerings and worship to their traditional goddess. She makes mantic declarations in a voice of authority, and a people used to plunder and cruelty watch her dance and listen to her with awe. The entire canto is worth close study by an anthropologist as each word in the description of the dance may contain significance for anthropological knowledge of an ancient tribal class of which there is such early recorded evidence in literature.⁷

Vedic literature also contains pointers to a time when the priesthood had not as yet been organized into a rigid caste, and sacrifices were offered by the *paterfamilias*. Some writers are inclined to believe that there is sufficient evidence for ritual dance and mime in the *Rig-veda*. The *Atharva-veda* contains sufficient evidence for the existence of shamanism and for the power which the atharvans could have wielded with their spells, incantations and magic. The *Atharva-veda* is indicative of a society and a stage of thought more ancient than the one represented by the

^{6b} See Patir., 43, 28: "அதலவன்"

⁷ Silap., Cantos 12, 17 and 24; see HAMBLY, W.D., *Tribal dancing and social development*, Witherby, London, 1926.

Rig-veda and is of greater anthropological interest than the *Rig-veda* itself. The atharvans, corresponding to the "magi" in Persia were the earliest shamans and teachers as revealed by Indo-Aryan sources.⁸

In Greek literature, however, the evidence for shamanism in the earliest hellenic society is not so patent. "The Greeks with their love of fact and reason, disowned the old magical chains, but they lay somewhere in the background and were connected by tradition with their first poetry."⁹ The origins of Greek poetry are also intimately connected with song, music and dance. To Musaeus and Orpheus, the authors of the first poetry, are attributed magical powers. While Apollo and the Muses inspire mantic declarations, Dionysius is the inspirer of the kind of prophecy which is exercised to discover the ancient wraths of offended spirits whose vengeance causes hereditary maladies and afflictions, such as regional spirits and gods like Murugan were said to cause in the Tamil world.¹⁰

In Celtic society, the institution of Druidism points to an earlier period when a priestly class developed as a result of its priestly and shamanistic power. This class developed later into the intellectual class among Celtic peoples. From the evidence of classical writers like Caesar, Diodorus Siculus and Strabo it would appear that in Gaul, in Britain, in Scotland and in Ireland, the history of education began with them and that they functioned in a plural capacity as ritual officiants, poets, law-makers, judges and teachers.¹¹

THE BARDS AND MINSTRELS

A second stage in the manifestation of educative impulses in early Tamil society is to be seen in the growth

⁸ WINTERNITZ, M., *A History of Indian Literature*, O.C., pp. 119-158; MACDONELL, ARTHUR, A., *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 191-201; Heinemann, London, 1905.

⁹ BOWRA, C.M., *Heroic poetry*, O.C., p. 20.

¹⁰ MURRAY GILBERT, *The classical tradition in poetry*, O.C., p. 28 ff; CORNFORD, F.M., *Principium sapientiae*, pp. 88-106.

¹¹ SPENCE LEWIS, *The History and origins of Druidism*, Rider and Company, London, 1949.

of a hereditary class of professional singers, dancers, musicians and panegyrists known as 'pa:n:ar'. The earliest poems concerning this class point to a stage of societal evolution in which the regional culture and regional community has broken into many villages with chiefs and super-chiefs presiding over a village or over a number of villages. The Tamil names for the chiefs of the different regions are reminiscent of this period.¹²

A good few of the Puram poems are illustrative of this society in which warfare of the feud-vendetta type took place. In these poems recognition and merit are attached to physical strength and bravery, and persons who are connected with feud-vendetta for the seizure and plunder of cattle and of land are greatly eulogized, namely, the chief who leads the foray and distributes the spoils, the blacksmith who makes weapons of warfare, the potter who makes the jars for the corpses or ashes of heroes, the drummer who infuses a martial spirit and the bard who sings to the accompaniment of his lute heroic and panegyric songs in honour of his patron both in the battle-field and at home.^{12b}

While a sense of community grows around the leader and chief who leads forays and distributes plunder, the bard becomes the voice of the community which expresses in song its past achievements, and its present ambitions and hopes and fears. He sings the heroic deeds of the tribe, chiefly of the leader, and thus keeps alive the spirit of bravado and bravery, and other qualities associated with a warrior especially hospitality and liberality. In the village community centre, the *mantam*, the bard entertains the members of the village with his song and music and dance, and with his accounts of the deeds of his tribe and of the warriors it has bred living and dead.^{12c}

¹² SRINIVAS IYENGAR, P.T., *History of the Tamils*, O.C., 253—300.

^{12b} See G. U. POPE, *Purapporul Venbamalai*, in *Tamilian Antiquary* No. 6, pp. 45—77, Madras, 1910.

^{12c} *Patir*, 43, 26—28.

The origin of bardic poetry demonstrates a bifurcation of functions which were originally resident in the priest or priestess. Since a martial society tends to centre its ideals, thoughts, ambitions and praise around the achievements of men themselves, exclusively secular persons are needed to make them articulate for the clan and tribe. The function of the bard is both to inspire to heroism as well as to entertain, and thus for entertainment purposes he has with him his troupe of men and women and children, dancers and musicians. Bardism and minstrelsy in the Tamil country become gradually the hereditary occupation of a class of people.

The Tamil name for the professional bard is itself derived from the word "pan:" which stands for any kind of instrumental music.^{12d} Instrumental accompaniment was an indispensable feature of early song and dance as in Greece. The bards were differentiated by the kind of musical instrument they played, the large lyre or the small lyre; by the posture they adopted while singing panegyrics in court, whether they were entitled to sit or stand before their patrons; and by the kinds of dances they performed. We have no means of assessing the number of bards or bardic troupes which existed in the period, but all evidence points to their having been numerous. Each village seems to have had its class of panars.

Many of these troupes led a wandering life in search of patrons in various parts of the Tamil country; and they are

^{12d} The common origin of early literature from dance and song is further illustrated by the early association and derivation of Tamil terms like ஆடல் (lit, movement, dance), and பாடல் (பா and ஆடல்) (song with dance). In prosody, besides அகவல், are the terms அசை (originally movement) and அடி. A number of primary activities of early society contain the word for movement e.g. விளையாடல் (play, creative movement); உண்டாட்டு (lit. dance with food and drink); கொண்டாடல் (feasting; lit. to dance with someone or something); போராடல் (to battle) நீராடல், கடலாடல் (to bathe in stream or lake, or to bathe in the sea).

SRINIVAS IYENGAR, P.T., *History of the Ancient Tamils*, O.C., p. 16, derives pa:t:tu (song) from pan: (instrumental music).

extremely important not only in the development of oral and written literature but also in the growth and popular appreciation of the Fine Arts like music and dance. Wherever they travelled they carried their different musical instruments with them, harps, lyres, flutes, horns, tambourines and cymbals. Several poems about the troupes of bards and dancers, men and women, refer to the soiled tattered clothing and lean worn-out hungry frames with which they enter the palace of a chief or king and the rich silks and sumptuous entertainment with which they are rewarded so much so that the abundance of food and drink makes them forget the very arts which procure for them a living. The gifts they received from chiefs and kings were the conventional ones of a bunch of lotuses of gold fastened together by a band of silver given to the head of the troupe, and jewels of gold given to the women. Bards and minstrels were also given gifts of elephants, horses, and chariots as well as gifts of land. These gifts may seem exaggerated, but gifts made to bards seem to have been equally wealthy and precious in panegyric and heroic ages in other parts of the world. The Huns, Celts, and Saxons were used to presents of jewels, bracelets, bags of gold, and extensive lands being given by their chiefs and kings to bards and minstrels. Princely patronage was the bard's reward for his service to the community.¹³

Through the Tamil bards and their troupes a tradition was maintained in society and in literature and the fine arts, though like all panegyrists they are mostly concerned with contemporaries, their patrons, whom they praise or whose passing away in the palace or in the foray, they lament. Almost their entire literature, even if it was recorded, has perished and what remains are probably a few eulogistic poems which were preserved in the courts of the patrons they celebrated.

¹³ BOWRA, C.M., *Heroic Poetry*, O.C., pp. 404-442; CHADWICK, The *Heroic Age*, University Press, Cambridge, 1926; CHADWICK, MUNRO, H. and KERSHAW, N., *The Growth of Literature*, O.C., Vol. I.

An evolution in the role of the bard is easily traceable in these poems. He began as an individual necessary, like the drummer, to stir up the martial spirit of the clan engaged in battle and to sing the praises of the chief and the warriors when after victory they danced and drank and feasted. At a later stage song and dance became choric and musical instruments developed, and thus the bardic tradition became more organized and turned into a troupe from a hereditary class. Anonymity is generally a feature of bardic life, and the names and particulars of these bards have not been preserved, not even in colophons.

When at a later stage the poet becomes the respected personality of a more developed and literate society, music and poetry which hitherto were combined separate to a certain extent. The bard and his troupe continue with music, and song and dance, but poetry, reflective, didactic, and panegyric of a higher order becomes the property of poets. The Tamil distinguished between the bard (pa:n:ar) and the poet (pulavar) as much as the Greeks did between the bard (aoidos) and the poet (poietes), and Indo-Aryan society between the bard (suta) and the poet (kavi).¹⁴

The bards were so prominent and numerous members of early society and were so identified with panegyrics, that in subsequent development when poets compose panegyrics in praise of kings and chiefs they do so in a "bardic convention", as if a bard were praising the hero of the poem. The *a:ttuppat:ai* is such a situation where the poet imagines a bard who has received bounteous gifts for himself and his troupe encountering a similar band of minstrels in search for a patron, and recounts to them the reception and wealth his troupe received from a particular king or chief and recommends his fellow-bards to betake themselves to

¹⁴ MURRAY, GILBERT, *The classical tradition*, O.C., p. 46. Cf. SINCLAIR, T.A., *A History of classical Greek Literature*, pp. 4-9; Routledge, London, 1934.

the same patron. The following is a short poem composed in a bardic convention by a poet :

Ministrel, with little lute of sweetest strain !
 Suppliant with words of wisdom full !
 Importunate thou askest me to rest and listen to the
 pleasant sounds of thy tambourine.
 But hear what I shall say !
 The modest homes of Pan:n:an, whose hands are full
 of gifts, is near the wide city
 If thither,—together with thy songstress, whose hair
 diffuses fragrance of the 'trumpet-flower', the
 brightbrowed, sweetly smiling,—you softly ad-
 vance, you shall prosper well.
 His gifts are not mere chance, like gold found by the
 woodman in the forest.
 Hesitate not.
 Long may he flourish. (Pur : 70.)¹⁵

The bards being panegyrists by profession were extremely skilled in the use of words, and when poets gained ascendancy in society their institution degenerated in certain ways. They are used in the poems of a subsequent stage of development as conventional pimps and as companions to young men in love, obviously because of their gifts of persuasive speech. A poem in the *kuruntogai* expresses the marvel of a damsel at a bardic messenger's flow of language which she argued should be far more copious in his own village if he could be so eloquent before strangers in a strange place. (*Kuruntogai* ; 33). The expression "youthful student" (இளம் மாணாக்கன்) used in this poem is significant as one of the rare examples in Sangam literature of evidence for formal studentship.¹⁶ For the same competence in language, the bards were used by chiefs and kings to carry messages from the battlefield or camp to their queens in the palace.

¹⁵ POPE, G.U., *The Four hundred Lyrics in the Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXIX, (1900), p. 281.

¹⁶ Kur., 33, 1—2 :

அன்று யிலுநு ரீளமாணாக்கன்
 தன்னார் மன்றத் தென்னன் கொல்லோ

It is significant that women constituted an integral part of the bard's troupe, and that they were the principal singers and dancers at the performances in courts and village community centres in programmes of entertainment. They do not appear to have been panegyrists directly apostrophizing the patrons of the band. Transmission of the arts within the class was easy since entire families, children included, went from chief to chief, and kingdom to kingdom, entertaining the villages on their way and receiving their hospitality. Their diverse musical instruments they carried with them protecting them in cases sewn of thick cloth.

Tamil society did not have in its early stages religious traditions of the kind Indo-Aryan society had. Along with the religious tradition in Indo-Aryan society there grew *pari passu* a secular tradition. The *Rigveda* contains a kind of panegyric poetry in the praise for gifts (*da:nastutis*). The *Brahmanas* contain songs in praise of men (*ga:tha: na:ra:samsi*) which are laudatory as their title indicate. Further at the time of the Buddha himself, there were already a large store of narratives in prose and verse. All this secular literature in pre-Buddhist India is evidence of a twin tradition, one mantra or religious and the other suta or bardic.¹⁷ It is from Sanskrit bardic literature that the two epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharatha*, took shape and form.

The sutas were the charioteers of chiefs and accompanied the chiefs to battle. They sang the praises of their chiefs both in war and peace and they formed part of the court. The role sutas played in the courts were played by

¹⁷ WINTERNITZ, M., *A History of Indian Literature*, O.C., Vol. I, pp. 311—316 ; MAJUMDAR, R.C., ed., *The Age of Imperial Unity*, pp. 243—245, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1951 ; DANDEKAR, R.N., *The Mahabharata: origin and growth in University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. XII, (1954), pp. 85—85. Page 85 : "In the history of Indological studies there has always been evident a tendency to exaggerate the importance of the Vedic Aryan element in India's culture complex". Page 75 : "I believe that, in a sense, the beginnings of the Mahabharata, viewed as a whole, have to be traced back, both from the points of view of cultural history and literary history to a period before the Vedic samhitas came into existence".

wandering minstrels and singers (*Kusilavas* and *Magadhas*) among ordinary people. The *Mahabharatha* presents Sanjaya the suta, describing the battle-scenes to Dhirta-rashtra; and Kusa and Lava, the two sons of Rama, are said to have wandered from place to place singing in assemblies the tale of Rama they had heard from Valmiki.

The sutas like the magadhas formed a separate caste in Aryan-speaking India. According to the lawbook of Manu, the sutas are represented as a mixed caste originating from the union of kshatriya warriors and brahman women, and the magadhas as the offspring of inter-marriages of vaisyas with kshatriya women. Originally, says Winternitz, the magadhas were bards from the land of Magadha and the sutas were bards from a country situated to the east of Magadha. Hence there is room to surmise that this bardic tradition in Northern India may have received its greatest strength from non-Aryan sources, especially so as the arianisation of Magadha and neighbouring provinces had not been accomplished at the time the earlier mantra literature was composed.

In Greece also education both among princes and people evolved along similar lines. The original religious lyric and dance gave birth to man-centred arts of which the bards surrounded by their choruses of women, were the chief exponents. Homer himself refers to bards older than himself, and even if Musaeus and Orpheus seem legendary, there is no doubt that Homeric poetry was preceded by the poetry of wandering and minstrels, some of whom may have been blind, who took to professional singing and recitation at courts and at festivals. After Homer, a guild of bards called Homeridae or "sons of Homer" existed at Chios who professed to popularise Homer's compositions. When Homer became the "educator of Greece", the rhapsodes mostly made dramatic recitations of Homeric epics.¹⁸ A certain decline in the nature of minstrelsy and

¹⁸ MARROU, H.I., *Histoire de l'Education dans l'Antiquite*, p. 34, Editions du seuil, Paris, 1950.

the importance of the rhapsodes synchronises also in Greece with the increase of the social prestige of poets, sophists and philosophers. Plato's *Ion* is a revealing dialogue on the nature, popularity and artificiality of the rhapsode's calling during the classical period.

The place of the minstrel and bard as popular educators, and in some societies as formal educators, is made clear again by the study of educational factors among Celtic and Teutonic peoples. In Pre-Christian Ireland, for instance, instruction was not only in the hands of druids, but also of the *filidh* or bards. They were generally peripatetic, teaching in the open air, and the profession seems to have become hereditary among certain families. Both the chiefs and the agricultural population had to support these bards and their pupils. They were so numerous that the people resented their privileges. Their influence became more systematized when bardic schools were organized in each chieftaincy.¹⁹ Wandering minstrels and the troubadours are the persons to whom the beginnings of literatures in the Romance tongues are attributed. The minstrel and bard have been studied by critics and historians of literature but their role as educators deserves greater notice in histories of the education of early societies.

(To be continued)

¹⁹ EDGAR JOHN, *History of Early Scottish Education*, Edinburgh 1893, p. 23: "The bard or minstrel shares with the priest the honour of being the first teacher of a nation;" HAARHOFF THEODORE, *School of Gaul*, O.U.P., London, 1920; AUCHMUTY, J.J., *Irish Education*, Harrow London, 1937.

All India Oriental Conference, 1955

Presidential Addresses*

DRAVIDIAN SECTION

R. P. SETHU PILLAI.

The All-India Oriental Conference is held at the Annamalai University which was established, nearly a quarter of a century ago, for promoting the cause of University Education in general and of Dravidian culture and literature in particular. The people of Tamil Nad look upon this University with legitimate pride as a centre of learning, specialising in South Indian literature and culture.

Great changes are taking place in our political and educational affairs at present. The States Re-organization Commission, set up by the Central Government, has submitted a momentous report, and there is little doubt that most of its recommendations will be implemented at an early date. In the new set-up, it may be confidently stated that the regional languages of India will receive the consideration and support that they deserve. Sooner or later the regional languages will become the language of administration in the State and the medium of instruction in the Universities situated within the State. The observations of Sri B. G. Kher, Chairman of the Official Language

* This Conference was held at Annamalainagar under the auspices of the Annamalai University and the main Session was presided over by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the Vice-President of India. The Presidential addresses of the Dravidian and Tamil Sections are reproduced here as they would be of interest to readers of *Tamil Culture*.—(Editor).

Commission, in the address delivered by him at the Autumn School of Linguistics in Poona in October 1955, clearly reflect the aspirations of millions of people in this country. He says: "The fourteen languages mentioned in the Constitution of India have an enormous wealth of literature and a literary tradition going back several centuries, and in the case of some of them more than 2,000 years. Intrinsically, I believe, each of these languages is fully capable of expressing the most complex or abstruse thought, notion or shade of meaning. Mahatma Gandhi with his astonishing insight into the fundamentals of controversial issues said as long ago as 1928 that there never was a greater superstition than that a particular language can be incapable of expansion or expressing abstruse or scientific ideas."

The dawn of Independence in India has raised great expectations in the minds of the people regarding the regeneration of the regional languages. It has been authoritatively declared that all the fourteen languages enumerated in the Constitution are national languages, and that Hindi is the official language of India. The Government of India have realized the paramount importance of promoting the interests of all these languages. They have constituted the Sahitya Akademi in Delhi to achieve this object. It was declared by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan on the occasion of its inauguration that 'it is the purpose of this Akademi to recognise men of achievement in letters, to encourage men of promise in letters, to educate public taste and to approve standards of literature and literary criticism.' In pursuance of this policy the Government of India awarded a cash prize of Rs. 5,000 each, to the most outstanding book, in twelve out of the fourteen Indian languages, published after the advent of Independence. The Government have also made, on the recommendations of the Sahitya Akademi, a grant of Rs. 15,000 to a distinguished Malayalam poet to enable him to publish his translation of the Rig Veda into Malayalam.

It is the policy of the Akademi to co-ordinate the literary activities in the various languages of India in order to promote its cultural unity. As Sardar Panikkar said, 'It will easily be granted that in a country in which fourteen languages, each with a long history and a growing literature, are recognised, it is of vital national importance that their development should be co-ordinated with a view to promoting the cultural unity of India. With this object the Sahitya Akademi has set up an Advisory Board for each of the languages and the programme of the Akademi has been so framed as to foster better mutual acquaintance and understanding between writers in the different languages of our country. The foremost item of the programme is the preparation of a Bibliography of Indian Literature. The compilation of Bibliographies in the four main Dravidian Languages is in progress and the work has been entrusted to competent scholars or institutions. These Bibliographies will be very useful sources of information regarding the books published in the first half of the present century.

The Sahitya Akademi has also decided to sponsor the publication of 'The History and Development of Modern Indian Literatures', which will be originally written either in the language concerned or in English, and would then be translated into Hindi and other Indian languages. At the request of the UNESCO, a list of classics in all the Indian languages suitable for translation in English and other European languages is being prepared by the Akademi. The Advisory Board for Tamil has recommended that selections from Kambaramayanam may be translated into English and other Indian languages.

It is a matter of gratification that historical and linguistic research in recent years has laid greater emphasis than ever before, on the Dravidian contribution to Indian culture. Prof. S. K. Chatterjee says that "in culture, speaking in the Indian way, one may say that over twelve annas in the rupee is of non-Aryan origin," meaning thereby that more

than three-fourths of Indian culture is non-Aryan and predominantly Dravidian. Western savants are beginning to realize that the Dravidian element in the Sanskrit vocabulary is certainly more than what was admitted by the scholars of an earlier generation. The question of Dravidian loan-words in Indo-Aryan has attracted the attention of linguists in recent years. Dr. Caldwell, Kittel and Gundert were the pioneers in this line of investigation. Dr. S. K. Chatterjee pursued the subject and gave a list of Dravidian words in Vedic and later Sanskrit in the introduction to his book entitled "The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language." Some years ago Mr. Burrow, Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford, has published some articles on the Dravidian words in Sanskrit and set forth the criteria for identifying such words. The need for philological research in the Dravidian languages is being increasingly recognized by the Madras and Annamalai Universities. A 'Dravidian Comparative Vocabulary' setting forth the primary words common to the five principal languages commonly known as Dravidian, namely Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kanarese and Tulu is being printed by the Madras University. The Annamalai University has decided to utilize the grant of three lakhs of rupees graciously made by the Government of India on the occasion of its Silver Jubilee to the creation of a Department in 'Dravidian Philology.' It is understood that the compilation of an 'Etymological Dictionary of Tamil' will be one of its main activities. Besides these Universities, an Academy of Tamil Culture has been recently started in Madras for fostering scientific research in the Tamil language, and a quarterly review entitled 'Tamil Culture' is published by this Academy in English. The Deccan College in Poona has given an impetus to the study of Philology by organizing Schools of Linguistics under the grant received from the Rockefeller Foundation of New York. During the last two years, three conferences have been held in which a large number of schools from different parts of India representing the regional languages, have partici-

pated. The Deccan College has rendered a great service to the Dravidian languages by bringing out an English version of the 'Grammatical Structure of Dravidian Languages' by Jules Bloch. Prof. Bloch was one of the most sagacious of linguists produced by France and his contributions have always tended to inspire our scholars to similar achievements. The inter-relationship of Dravidian and Indo-Aryan and *vice versa* was a subject of abiding interest to him. His demise on the 29th November, 1953 is a great loss to the world of Dravidian Philology. The Deccan College has also published 'A Historical Grammar of Old Kannada' by G. S. Gai and 'The Evolution of Malayalam' by A. C. Sekhar. Mr. B. Emeneau, Professor of Sanskrit, University of California, made a field study of the language of the Kotas in the Nilgiri Hills and published a grammar of the Kota language.

In the field of literature a great deal of interest is evinced in India and elsewhere, in the study of the Sacred Kural which holds a unique place in Tamil literature. The great savant Albert Schweitzer says: "There hardly exists in the literature of the world a collection of maxims in which we find so much of lofty wisdom." Several commentaries were written on this work by eminent scholars, but only a few of them exist at present. All the available commentaries have been collected and published as a variorum edition of the Kural by the Dharmapuram Adhinam in South India. An English commentary on some of the maxims of the Kural was published nearly a hundred years ago by F. W. Ellis of the Madras Civil Service. This valuable commentary which was not available for several decades, has been re-printed by the University of Madras. The latest translation of the Kural in English is by Prof. Chakravarti of Madras. He is a Jain scholar and his commentary has been written from the Jaina point of view. It is his opinion that the doctrine of Ahimsa which is fundamental in the Jaina religion, is the bed-rock on which the structure of the Kural is raised. It is interesting to note

that the Kural has been translated into several Indian languages. Nearly thirty years ago, it was translated into Sanskrit by Appa Vajapaiyan, a descendant of the well-known Appayya Dikshitar. The translation is entitled "Suniti Kusuma Mala", i.e., 'A Garland of the Flowers of Good Morals.' Translations of the Kural have been published in Hindi in recent years. Prof. B. D. Jain of the Banaras University has rendered it into Hindi in three parts at the instance of the Head of the Tiruppanandal Mutt in South India. Another translation of the Kural is entitled "Tamil Veda" and the author of it is Kshemanand Rahat, and published by the Sahitya Mandal in 1950. The translation is in simple prose and covers eighty-nine chapters of the Kural. There is also a Bengali translation of the Kural (made from the English Translation by Sri V. V. S. Ayyar) by the late Dr. Nalini Mohan Sanyal, with an introduction by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji.

This great ethical work has been rendered into the Dravidian languages as well. In Telugu, Venkata Rama Vidyananda, who lived for nearly ninety-five years in the last century, translated it under the caption 'Trivarga Deepika.' Dharma, Artha and Kama which are the Sanskrit equivalents of the Tamil Aram, Porul and Inbam are denoted by the word 'Trivarga'. The author lived only to complete the first two parts of the work. It is a metrical translation and contains an introduction on the life of the author. In Kannada the Kural has been translated by Sri R. Narasimhacharya under the title "Neeti-manjari". In Malayalam, the Kural was translated nearly three centuries ago by Ravi Varma who is said to be a Kaviraya. His translation covers the whole work. Recently Sri Parameswaran Pillai has brought out a Malayalan commentary of the Kural under the title 'Ratna-Uddharakam'. He omitted the third part dealing with Kama, as there was already abundant literature on the subject in Malayalam.

The highest place in epic literature is assigned to *Kambaramayanam* in Tamil. Although the work is very popular in the Tamil country, there is no authentic edition of it. The Annamalai University has undertaken to produce a definitive edition and the first part of *Sundarakandam* was released on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the University. A thousand poems of this epic were translated into English by Sri V. V. S. Ayyar and the Tamil Sangam at Delhi has recently published the translation. The *Kambar Kazhakam* in Madras has taken up the work of translating two thousand stanzas of *Kambaramayanam* and a few selected stanzas from the first two books have been recently published under the caption "Leaves from *Kambaramayanam*". At the instance of the Sahitya Akademi an English translation of selections from *Kambaramayanam* by Sri Rajagopalachari has been recommended to the UNESCO for publication. In Telugu this great work has been translated by two scholars. The translation of Somanathakavi of Kakinada is still in manuscript and Sri Ramulu Reddi's translation has been published. These translations are said to be elegant and accurate.

There is at present a revival of Tamil learning in the Madras State. The general public are taking a keen interest in the study of Tamil classical literature. There is a general desire that cultural words found in the ancient classics should be resuscitated for enriching the vocabulary of the modern languages. For instance the word for the 'light-house' in classical Tamil is 'Kalam Karai Vilakku'. The existence of this word was not generally known before the Sangam classics were published. Therefore, in the text books written in the last century the word 'Deepastambam' was used to denote the light house. But now not only the scholars, but even popular journals in Tamil are using the word 'Kalam Karai Vilakku'. The market was called 'Angadi' in ancient times. *Silappadhikaram*, the Epic of the Anklet, speaks of a day-market and night-market, which flourished in the capital city of the ancient Chola

country. 'Nalangadi' is day-market and 'Allangadi' is night-market. But the word 'Angadi' became obsolete and the Persian word 'bazaar' and English word 'market' have taken its place. Now there is a tendency to revive the classical word 'Angadi' which is current in all the other Dravidian languages.

In Telugu the desi types of poetry are becoming increasingly popular. The distinguishing feature of the desi is that it is based on Matra chandas and, therefore, more suitable for singing. Much of this poetry is centuries old. It was not committed to writing, but handed down by memory from generation to generation. In this connection the songs of the Tallapaka poets of Tirupati deserve special mention. They were a family of devotees of Sri Venkateswara in the 15th and 16th centuries. They composed thousands of verses in desi metres in praise of the Lord, and they were fortunately preserved for posterity in copper plates. They were discovered a few years ago and the Tirupati Devasthanam has undertaken to publish these songs and appointed a competent scholar to edit them with proper musical notation. A dissertation on the 'Desi in South Indian Languages and Literatures' was published by Sri K. Ramakrishnayya in 1949. In this work an attempt has been made to deal with the various desi types of Dravidian prosody.

In the Tamil country an impetus to the revival of ancient music was given by Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, the founder of the Annamalai University. Nearly twelve years ago he started the Tamil Isai Movement with a view to popularising the ancient system of Tamil music and establishing it on a scientific basis. An important feature of this movement is the institution of researches in the devotional hymns known as *Tevaram* and *Tiruppukal*. The custodians of the ancient classical Tamil tunes known as 'Othuvams' are being invited year after year to the annual conference held in Madras to give practical demon-

strations of the Ragas and Talas pertaining to the ancient hymns, so that the identity of tunes between the ancient music and Karnatic music of the present day could be established. "The history of the Tamil Isai Movement", says Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, "has emphasized the uniqueness of the special contribution made by the Tamil language and literature to that composite culture of India whose marvellous and age-long trait is its ability to absorb, to assimilate and to reconcile its several composite elements".

The stupendous task of producing an encyclopaedia has been undertaken in two of the Dravidian languages. The Tamil Academy known as 'Tamil Valarchi Kazhakam' has published so far two volumes of the work under the caption 'Kalaikkalanciam'. The object of this endeavour is to bring within the reach of the average educated Tamilian all modern knowledge in humanities and sciences. Tamil equivalents for nearly thirty thousand words relating to technical and scientific subjects have been settled by expert committees, and these terms have been used in the articles contributed to the encyclopaedia. The Academy hopes to bring out the remaining eight volumes in the course of the next four or five years. The Telugu Bhasha Samiti has produced two volumes, the first dealing with history and politics and the next with physical science.

The question of adopting Tamil as the medium of instruction in the University of Madras, is engaging the attention of the State Government and the University. A Committee of Experts has been recently constituted by the Government of Madras to devise ways and means of producing a suitable terminology in subjects relating to science and the humanities. It is hoped that under the guidance of the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Madras who is its Chairman, and the co-operation of the experts in various subjects, it will be possible to achieve the object of adopting Tamil as the medium of instruction as early as possible.

It is expected that the Annamalai University which is essentially a Tamil University will take the lead in this matter.

It was brought to the notice of the Government of India a few years back by the Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University that some of the ancient capital cities of the Tamil country lie buried in the Coromandal Coast and elsewhere, and that these historic sites should be excavated in the interest of Indian history and culture. The city known as Kaveripumpattinam was, once upon a time, a great emporium of commerce and its splendour is portrayed in the ancient Tamil poems. A good part of this city is now submerged, and hence the excavation will involve underwater exploration. Similarly the ancient sea-port city of the Pandya country known as Korkai which is mentioned by Ptolemy as a great centre of commerce, is now a petty village on the sea-coast in the Tirunelveli District. Excavations at these sites may be expected to tell a story as interesting as that of the Indus Valley.

The French Government at Pondicherry started publishing the Diary of Anandaranga Pillai who was a distinguished Dubash and Courtier at the time of Dupleix. The historical importance of the Diary as a record of contemporary events is fully recognised, and the work has been translated into English and French. But the original Diary maintained in Tamil remained unpublished till recently. The French Government has brought out four out of twelve volumes. But the execution of the work is unsatisfactory. The Diary is important not only to the student of South Indian History, but also to the student of the Tamil language. It is written in the colloquial dialect and the vocabulary of the spoken language is preserved in it. Now that Pondicherry is merged in the Indian Republic, it must be possible for the State Government of Madras or the Government of India to undertake the publication of this useful work in a satisfactory manner.

There is little doubt that before the next session of the Oriental Conference, the formation of linguistic states in South India will become an accomplished fact. I hope and trust that the four principal states in South India will be linguistically united, working for the common cause of Indian Culture.

TAMIL SECTION

T. P. MINAKSHISUNDARAM.

Inspired by your presence, my mind goes back to those ancient days and of Rishis of whom the Puranas sing, when Chidambaram was, according to them, the heart of the Universe wherein dances the Lord. Today, Chidambaram as Annamalainagar is the centre of Tamilnad because of this University founded for the study, development and popularisation of all that is best in the Tamil country. Our merchants of ancient time carried our culture to the distant countries of the world and were responsible for many religious and cultural institutions. True to this tradition, the Merchant Prince, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar of Tamil Nad founded this cultural centre, the Annamalai University whose traditions are kept alive by his son Rajah Sir Muthiah Chettiar and the present Vice-Chancellor Sri T. M. Narayanaswamy Pillai. That unique Tamilian spirit of loving hospitality is the very atmosphere of this University, an atmosphere whose presence you must all have felt and enjoyed.

I am glad that a Tamil section has been organised this year and I must express the gratitude of all the Tamilians, however unworthy I may be, as their mouthpiece. It was your love for Tamil, more than my individual merit that was responsible for choosing me to occupy the privileged position of a President of this section, and this brings to my mind the sad thought that most of the stars of the first

magnitude on the horizon of Tamil studies had set. May we pay our humble homage in loving remembrance to those departed souls ;—Dr. Swaminatha Iyer, Swami Vipulanantha, Vellakkal Subramaniya Mudaliar, K. Subramaniya Pillai, Marai Malai Atikal, Pandithamani, T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar, and Kavimani Desikavinayakam Pillai, with whom all I had the good fortune to come into intimate contact as a lover of Tamil. This thought makes us realise our responsibility, in keeping up their torch of learning ever burning bright, till we hand it over to the next generation in this great race between ever fleeting time and the tardy human achievement.

May I in all humility suggest that this Tamil Section may be a permanent feature of the subsequent sessions of our Oriental Conference. Tamil has two aspects, the one as a Modern Language and the other as a Classical language. Our revered and beloved Minister for Education at the centre, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, inaugurating the Conference of Letters on 15th March, 1951, which met for the establishment of the Academy of Letters or the Sahitya Akademi as it is now called, emphasised this truth which is very often either neglected or forgotten. "The fourteen languages recognised by the Constitution", he then said, "include Sanskrit and Tamil. Sanskrit is of course in a class by itself and is rightly recognised as one of the most developed of classical languages. Tamil also has a rich and ancient literature and its poetry has deservedly to be translated into foreign languages. We must, however, remember that Tamil is really a *classical language* and most of the achievements of Tamil, which entitle it to recognition, belong to a past age." My appeal is only to give effect to this recognition and if this Oriental Conference of Scholars is not going to give this recognition, who else would ?

This is not to minimise the importance of Tamil as a modern language—its present vitality and its future possibi-

lity. A language with journals older than the present century, and with circulation reaching very often a hundred thousand, a language which has produced the modern miracle in the East of an Encyclopaedia of modern knowledge in Tamil, a language which had given birth to Bharathi, the poet of the national awakening, Kavimani, the poet of the child and the common man, Thiru. V.K. the great orator and the father of Modern Prose, T.K.C. the creator of literary appreciation, Kalki, the humourist and the historical novelist, Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar, the great exponent of political and administrative thoughts in Tamil, not to speak of his literary and scientific expositions, Putumai-pittan, the short story writer, and E. T. Rajeswari, the exponent of popular Science can justify its claim as one of the best languages of the East, especially when it is seen that I have restricted my attention to only those who are, unfortunately for us, not with us anymore, and that the race of writers is multiplying in number and power, fame and prestige. These cannot escape the notice of the world.

But in an Oriental Conference, it is the aspect of our classical learning that has to be kept alive. First is therefore the task of rescuing the ancient classics. Damodaram Pillai and Swaminatha Iyer can never be forgotten for their bequethal to prosperity of their valuable editions of Tolkappiyam and Sangam and other works. The three Universities of the South, the Madras, the Annamalai and the Travancore, the two great public libraries, the Madras Oriental and the Tanjore Saraswathi Mahal and the great religious mutts of Tamil land, the Dharmapuram, Tiruppanandal and Thiruvavaduturai are all now issuing editions of old Tamil Works. The old manuscripts used by Dr. Swaminatha Iyer and others are fortunately still available. It is very unfortunate that provision had not been made for taking mechanical copies, which alone will avoid the personal equation in copying and will make copies available to the students of Colleges and other Scholars without

much cost, copies which can be read conveniently in a magnified form, with the help of illuminated readers. The last word is yet to be said about the editions of the old texts. The Scientific method of editing the old manuscripts evolved by the editors of the West and the East has to be followed; and for an understanding of this method and practice, the mechanical copies must become available to all the students. Perhaps, the reading and editing of old texts from manuscripts, along with the study of Paleography for reading and editing the inscriptions, may be made one of the special or optional subjects in a Tamil Honours course. A well framed Syllabus providing for practical work will help the students to bring out scientifically prepared editions of the old texts, commentaries and inscriptions. There are manuscripts in Tamil of probably the 12th century in Tibet. Perhaps there are old manuscripts and books in the libraries of the West. There are various commentaries on Tolkappiyam and other grammatical works in Tamil which unfortunately have not till now been taken for publication by the manuscript libraries in our State that have a scheme of publication. There is also enough of lexicon matter which if published will help the preparation of a historical dictionary.

The Tamil lexicon prepared by the Madras University is an important land mark and it was not and could not have been, drawn on historical principles. It had not even attempted to arrange the meanings listed therein, roughly at least, according to the relative age of the various works, from which it quotes. The Government of India is sponsoring the preparation and publication of a Sanskrit dictionary on historical principles, and this has been made possible by the various dictionaries including the Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-European which have been published from time to time. A historical dictionary of Tamil language is equally necessary. It is learnt that Prof. Burrow of England and Prof. Emeneau of America are going to work on an etymological dictionary of the Dravidian

Languages. The study of the unrecorded Dravidian languages—the so-called uncultured dialects is very important from this point of view. Prof. Burrow's study of the Parji language and Prof. Emeneau's study of the Kota text and the Kolami language are master-pieces in this line. In his work on the Kolami, Prof. Emeneau has given us an idea of the projected etymological dictionary of the Dravidian languages. It is very unfortunate that whilst foreigners are evincing such great interest in these languages and mastering them, the native-born speakers of Dravidian Languages do not make a serious study of its sister languages with the inevitable result, that the study of the Comparative Dravidian remains stagnant where Dr. Caldwell left it nearly a century back, except for a few attempts here and there, inside and outside India. The Southern Universities along with the University of Ceylon and the University of Malaya, can easily co-operate in this project of a comparative study. Speaking from the point of view of a Tamilian, except in the commercial circles, linguists are not very many. The cheap but highly strained emotional controversy about the linguistic problem in the South, seems to cloud the issue and kindle an unwanted and unwarranted prejudice against the study of other languages.

The unwritten languages have also to be studied for an understanding of the various problems of Tamil. In a paper to be read before this session on the Conjugation of the Tamil Verbs, attempting to explain forms like cenraan (சென்றான்), the contributor suggests that the root here must have been originally) cen (சென்) which became cel (செல்) due to the denasalisation of the ending—a process which is amply proved by en (என்) becoming el (எல்) an (ஆன்) becoming al (ஆல்) and in (இன்) becoming il (இல்). But this must have taken place long before the age of Tolkappiyam and the Sangam works which use the forms like Celavu. A study of the Kolami language proves the existence of this nasal ending; for the root there is

even today, cen (சென்). Once again this contributor, explaining the infinitive in Tamil finds some forms like nirka (நிர்கா) and nirpa (நிற்பா) which cannot be explained away as a combination of the root and the suffix "a", if one were to take the root as nil (நில்) according to the established Tamil usage. The contributor refers to the Malayalam usage, where nilkku (நிலக்கு) is taken as the root. The unwritten dialects throw a flood of light. In the Parji language *nilp* is the root and in its northern dialect this takes the form *nilk*, thus completely explaining, the two forms nirka and nirpa as forms existing in two different dialects. Dr. Caldwell traces the original meaning of suffixes like the negative *il*, *al* etc. on the assumption, that the forms in Tamil are the original or primitive forms. Are they the real primeval forms?—that is the question. In the unwritten languages, we find the negative particle *il* (இல்) as *kil* and *cil* in Kolami and *Sid* in Kui. At a particular period in the history of Tamil Language, the initial 'e' was lost, which gives therefore the Tamil form *il* for *kil* and *cil*. This explains the futility of building any theory on the forms found in the cultured languages alone, in the absence of a detailed and comparative study of the unwritten languages and dialects.

The history of Tamil Language can be written only with the help of such studies. An index of words and their various forms must be prepared as found in the classics and inscriptions. A comparative study of the dated documents may throw light on the forms found in undated documents. The Government of India has sanctioned research scholarships for a study of the Tamil Inscriptions upto the beginning of the reign of Kulothunga and for a study of the index of Tolkappiyam. The study of the history of the language from the very beginning, through a series of specialised studies of the different periods has been attempted, in the study of the Tamil Inscriptions of seventh and eighth century and of the early Kanarese and Malayalam Inscriptions by the students of London School of Asian and African studies and the Deccan College of

Poona ; and these may be continued by the Tamil students for the subsequent centuries. The study of the Tolkappiyam fortunately reveals the existence of the grammatical study in Tamil, prior to Tolkappiyar, thanks to his systematic mention of all those rules of grammar and technical terms of the ancient times, specifically as belonging to an age anterior to him. One of the papers submitted to this section gives us a bird's eye view of the pre-Tolkappiyan study of words. It is the detailed study of the words in ancient texts and inscriptions that will throw a flood of light on the development of Tamil. In the absence of these, all attempts at fixing the age of the texts merely on the assumption of certain forms of words may not amount to anything more than a biased-guess. The tendency in Tamil for the final nasal *n* to be denasalised into *l* as pointed above, is older than Tolkappiyam. If that were so, how is one to explain the denasalisation of a final *n* used by Tolkappiyar himself ? Was there once again a period, subsequent to the Sangam age, when this tendency cropped up afresh ? Or it may be that the denasalisation was restricted to certain dialects which later on spread into all the other dialects. Nirpa and Nirka have been shown to be old dialectic variations. If this was so, it is necessary to study the dialects, if possible of the age of the Sangam and other works. Perhaps this line of study alone will explain the coming into use, all of a sudden, of forms having the present tense sign *kir* and *kinru*. In the absence of the reliable explanation of trends and changes, any attempt at fixing the age of the undated documents cannot be considered scientific. In a consideration of these varied forms, the question of the influence of the copyists cannot be altogether neglected. A recent edition of *narrinai*—a Sangam classic, for the purpose of convenient reading has separated the words but in so doing has given us the ending of many words in *l*, where one should have an ending in *n*. If Modern Scholarship can be capable of this wonder, what may not we expect from the copyists of middle ages, who might not have been scholars themselves.

The pronunciation problem of ancient and medieval Tamil remains still unsolved. Modern Tamil differentiates, in its pronunciation, between the voiceless and voiced stops, though this cannot be suspected from its writings. Is this a new innovation in the language ? If so, when did it start ? These are the problems which face us. The writings can never give us any clue. The transliteration of Tamil words in foreign languages, which differentiate in their writings the voiced and voiceless stops, may help us in this line of studies. One of the papers submitted to this section studies these problems with the help of the inscriptions of the Pallava and Chola period, where Tamil words are found transliterated in Sanskrit verses. The contributor points out that in that period of her study, the law of convertibility of surds and sonants, was not in force and the letters were pronounced as they were written.* One has to study in this way, period after period, for arriving at a general conclusion.

The present time seems to be auspicious. The Government of India are planning a linguistic survey and the Tamilians must now prepare themselves for a study, not only of the cultured languages but also of the unrecorded dialects, of which there are many in our own midst and amongst the aboriginal tribes of the Nilgiri and other mountains. The Linguistic School run by the Deccan College, Poona, thanks to Dr. Katre getting the support of the Rockefeller foundation for running the project in its initial stages, runs a summer and a winter school every year and trains during the rest of the period stipendiary fellows in linguistic research. It is unfortunate that the speakers of the Dravidian Languages including Tamil, have not taken as much advantage as a few others. It is likely that the Summer and Winter schools may be held in the Tamil country when a sufficient number of students of Tamil may get themselves trained for the task ahead of

* The general validity of such an approach is discussed in the article 'Voiced and Voiceless stops in Tamil' appearing elsewhere in this issue. (Editor.)

them. The Annamalai University, thanks to whose hospitality, we are assembled here, has a Chair for Dravidian linguistics and it has invited the School of Linguistics for holding its session within its own precincts. There are brighter days thus dawning, for a study of the history of the Tamil language and its dialects.

In this study, the recent developments of what is called Glottochronology in America, may be of great help. This takes up 215 basic ideas denoted by words which do not usually change, except very slowly in any language and studies how much of these common words are found still in current use, after a period of time in the same language or in the various but connected dialects branching off from that language. The percentage of survival seems to offer a clue for our fixing the starting point. This theory may be verified with reference to Sangam works and the works of subsequent periods; and, if correct, may help us to fix the respective ages of the various works, on the basis of the statistical formula worked out in detail. This may also help us to fix roughly the time, when the various Dravidian languages separated from each other or from the proto-Dravidian.

In this preparation of the history of the Tamil language, the Inscriptions whose dates have been fixed will be of great help. It is therefore very unfortunate that even the inscriptions so far copied by the Government department had not been made available in print. The centralisation of the Epigraphical Department gives no scope for the erstwhile healthy rivalry among the States in collecting and printing the epigraphical records. It is for serious consideration whether the linguistic States may not take over the copying and publication of the Inscriptions in their respective languages and within their jurisdiction.

The history of Tamil country is connected with the study of the inscriptions and the literary evidence. This important and interesting study is still in its initial stage.

A recent study of Kulothungan Pillaittamil brings to light, the fact that the reign of Vikramachola was not such a peaceful one as is often represented. The victories of the Chola over the southern and northern kings is often referred to in this work. His blood relation with his successor is another problem. A study of our literature raises problems like this, which require for their solution the help of the inscriptions. Therefore the non-publication of the available inscriptions assumes a form of dis-service to the necessary pursuit of knowledge.

There is also the history of Tamil literature yet to be written. There is no difficulty in our appreciation of our Classics without reference to their age. There is a paper to be read before us on Attichudi—or Avvaiyar's book of alphabets. There is another bringing out the greatness of Kamban. There is a third which studies the religion of the author of Silappadikaram as revealed in the earliest epic of Tamilians. This shows that the Tamil literature is being studied from all points of view and at different levels without any reference to the difficulties of fixing their age. Every work of art has an individuality of its own, but the whole literature as pointed out by T. S. Elliot forms an organic whole, with reference to which every literary work finds in the National Mind its proper place and equilibrium. It is this perspective that gets blurred in the absence of history of Tamil literature. The main difficulty lies in the problem of fixing the age of the various works. Many of the so-called histories of Tamil literature are getting themselves lost in these intricacies. No attempt has been made for tracing the history of literary tendencies, conventions, forms and modes and of the rhythm. If one starts from the beginning, in the mysterious past, this difficulty is unavoidable. May I therefore humbly suggest that we do reverse the process and start writing or studying the history backwards from Modern times, whose contributions are unfortunately very much neglected, in our Modern Studies and College courses. We can then trace every modern

trend to the old poets and scholars, century after century, conveniently making the clock of time run backwards. One's familiarity with modern literature will help one to see the historical development more clearly than otherwise. There may be the danger of seeing things modern in things ancient everywhere; but such pitfalls beset the way of every research. But if one can guard against that, this is always the better method of studying history—proceeding from the known to the unknown. This may help us to fix the relative age of historical trends and works from this point of view. This is nothing new. This is what a great educationist, a great headmaster of a famous English School, Mr. Sanderson had suggested for a study of history itself. In spite of our pre-occupation with the ancient classics, the course suggested will help us to keep a living contact with the literature of the people and its influence on our classics all through its history reminding us forcibly that our country had not been non-existent after the age of the classics, and that our people always continued to sing and recite, to compose and enjoy poetry all through their existence. This seems to be the more democratic course also. The ancient classics, through this slow and steady process, get themselves fixed in the general scheme of Tamil literature in its historical march. When their influence is traced this way, their greatness and significance leap up before our mind's eye as a divine presence always with us. Perhaps, in the future courses of our post-graduate study, we must lay the emphasis, for these reasons, on the specialisation of these later periods of Tamil literature.

The inter-relation of Tamil and other languages and other cultures raises very significant and surprising problems. Malayalam in its northern parts, conducts shadow-plays where the wire-pullers behind the screen recite Kambaramayanam verses. Provision had been made in ancient times, for recitation of Kambaramayanam in Malabar. Tulsidas who is considered to have come on a religious pilgrimage to Rameswaram, in the Tamil country,

writes in his Ramacaritmanas, of Rama and Seetha meeting and falling in love with each other before the Swayamvaram began—a version which is found only in Kamban, true to the Tamilian tradition of love—a version which must have appealed to Tulsidas during his southern pilgrimage. The influence of Ramanuja and the Tamil Bhakti cult on the religious Reformers of the North, though vaguely guessed, has yet to be studied in all its details. The stories of the Saiva Saints of Tamil Nad have travelled to the Telugu and Kannada countries not to speak of their Sanskrit versions. Tamil works have been copied in Malayalam, Telugu and other scripts and a detailed study of such works will explain the spread of Tamilian influence and the reason therefor. Another method of studying this influence is through the Tamil inscriptions outside the Tamil country.

This again raises the philosophical contributions of the Tamil land. Saiva Siddhanta texts and commentaries, the Srivaisnavate commentaries and sutras are in Tamil and without an acquaintance with these, one cannot pretend to have a first-hand knowledge of these schools of thought. The importance of Tevaram in the development of Temple cult is brought out in one of the papers to be read here, whereas another contribution emphasises the significance of the hymns and philosophical works in Tamil of the Chola period. This influence cannot be easily exaggerated. Dingnaga, the Buddhist Philosopher was a resident of Kanci. The founder of Zen Buddhism was a prince of Kanci. Ramanuja also resided there, though born at Sriperumputur near Madras. Sankara was a native of the Cera country then a part of the Tamil land. Ramanuja admittedly traces his thoughts to the Tamil songs of Alvars. Sankara, if Saundaryalahari is his work, knows the Tamil compositions of Gnanasambanda. This line of thought will lead us to seek in the great works of these philosophers a Tamilian influence or at least a Tamilian atmosphere. This opens up a new field for research.

In this connection, it may be advisable, for opening specialised courses in philosophy and religion for the Tamil Vidwan and Tamil Post-graduate students. A systematic training may inspire them to pursue further research therein. As in Sanskrit the Tamil course also may lead to specialisation in Grammar, literature, literary criticism, comparative and historical philology, philosophy, religion and history.

The Tamilian contact with the West—with Greece and Rome was a definite fact, though all the details are not yet worked out. The Arikamedu excavations have been very fruitful and we have to make more excavations of this type. More than these excavations, the surveys of marine archaeology to be made like those carried out by Philippa Diole, may bring to light many ship wrecks and articles of trade which may describe this contact in more eloquent terms. In his book "*4,000 years under the Sea*", Diole says, "The Arretani Pottery found near Pondicherry, the Roman coins dug up on Indian soil, the Temple of Augustas at Mysore, all these things bear witness to the long continuance of that maritime route on which the Arabs had laid their hands. . . . We find proof of this liaison in a people living at the further end of the great route, in the parts of Southern India, where they served as a link between the East and Far East. They were a half-way house people. Perhaps in pre-historic times they had watched ships coming from the West and had loaded them for the return journey with what their own ships had brought from China and Ceylon. These Tamils, who perhaps preserve in their traditions, as a memory, of what life once was like, in the Mediterranean, were Dravidian pre-Aryans. They have a very old literature of no little importance. This Tamil civilisation was quite as old as possible to estimate the extent of the debt owed by each to other; there is little doubt, but that the Tamils would prove to be by far the bigger creditors. One of their kings, King Pandya had sent an embassy to Augustus. They had known at one

and the same time the civilisation of the West and the civilisation of China—thanks to their familiarity with sea. Like the Cretons the Tamils were great divers—the foremost pearl divers in the world." After referring to their breathing technique which also plays an important part in their religious mystical practices, he concludes "The junks which in the 10th, 11th and 12th centuries carrying the trade between China, India and the Persian gulf contained a group of Tamil divers, whose duty it was, to inspect the hulls and carry out repairs by daubing holes and cracks with a composition made of sesame and wax". This outline has to be filled up by a detailed research. The foreign words found in Tamil and the Tamil words found in foreign languages are worthy of study from this point of view.

The contact with the East, which developed into a cultural empire of a Greater India, had been studied with the help of Inscriptions of the Pallava and Cola period. There are Tamil inscriptions in those distant places. The Bengali writers who studied the civilisation of the Eastern Archipelago emphasised the contribution of their own country and they claimed that the National swing festival of Siam was only their own Swing festival connected with the worship of Krishna. I pointed out in the Tamil Festival celebrated at Madras, what had been, till then, overlooked in all these discussions—the name 'Tiruppavai and Tiruvembavai' the name of the festival which beyond all doubts is based on the title of two famous works of Tamil land—Tiruppavai of Andal and Tiruvembavai of Manikka-vachakar. This clearly proves the importance of these two works which are coming back to attain their own importance in the modern world, thanks to the attempts of Sri Sankaracharya of Kumbakonam. Rev. Thaniyanayakam has brought to our notice that the songs "Aatium" and "Paacam" from Tiruvembavai were recited as LEREMBA mantras during Coronation and other festivals in Siam. It is not clear what verses were recited from Tiruppavai. All this opens up another line of research.

There is one other important problem that of the inter-relation of Sanskrit and Tamil which may be compared to the confluence of our sacred rivers, the Ganges and the Jamna ; meeting together they flow to the sea as one great river. In the development of culture, it is a sign of death, if one does not respond to the environment. Response to this stimulus is a sign of life. Life is a process of give and take. But borrowing or adaptation is often looked upon by the Chauvinist as a sign of inferiority. This outlook is an expression of the inferiority complex. Culture is a happy commingle of contributions coming from all sides. In the inter-relations of the Tamil and Sanskrit, it is often assumed that it was always an one-way traffic. When it is realised that Sanskrit was the *lingua franca* of India, and that Tamilians like Sankara and Ramanuja contributed their best to this common heritage, it becomes clear how futile it is to speak of a borrowing from Sanskrit as distinguished from a borrowing from specified author. Borrowing from Sanskrit is as meaningful or meaningless as Tamil borrowing from Tamil. I had already referred to the problem of defining the Tamilian atmosphere in the works of those Sanskrit writers hailing from the South. There is again the riddle of Tolkappiyam. It has pregnant suggestions about Dhavani—iraicci—long before the Dhavani School had its rise. In a paper to be read before the Classic Sanskrit Section discussing the Age of Kulasekara, it is said as printed in the Summaries of papers : "It is impossible to be laid that by 800 A.D. a South Indian Commentator could directly refer to that Dhavani doctrine". But does not Tholkappiyam show that this position is not so clear as to be stated in such a dogmatic way ? The relationship between Kashmir Saivism on the one hand and Saiva Siddhanta and Tirumantram of Tirumular on the other and the relationship between the Tamils' iraicci and the Kashmirian Dhavani—how and why these developed in the distant North and South are as interesting and significant as the Kashmir problem in the modern international world.

The Rasas mentioned in Tolkappiyam do not all agree with those mentioned in Bharatha. In the place of Sringara we have uvakai or joy. Again the lexicon Tivakaram of the Pallava age gives a list of the figures of speech which is more recent than Bharatha's but more ancient than that of Bhamaha or Dandi...marking and revealing a necessary stage in the development of the Alankara Sastra. Dandi was a great force in the Tamil country. He refers in his Avanti Sundara Katha to a Tamil architect who had written Sudraka carita in Tamil. This gives a valuable clue to the nature of Tamil literature of 7th century. He refers to the Sangatha which is often interpreted as a reference to Dravida Sangatha ; probably Sangam anthology and Andhadis were in the mind of Dandi. He speaks of Kriyavidhi and Kriya seems to refer to Kavya. My friend Dr. Raghavan had pointed out in one of his interesting papers that Kriya Kalpa was the old name of Poetics as found in Vatsyayana Kama Sutra and Lalita Vistara. Tolkappiyar and ancient Tamils called their literary composition ceyyul (செய்யுள்) —a word which reminds us of the word Kriya—indeed a rare usage in Sanskrit. There is again the question of the relationship of the Tamil music with the South Indian music and the Tamil dance with Bharata Natya. There are again references to Sanskrit works in the Tamil commentaries to Katantra, Kama Sutra, Kamantaka, Patanjali etc. There are also references to Prakrit works, the Kanarese works like Gunagangeyam unfortunately not available at present. Schools of Philosophy are summarised in a few works in Tamil.

The Sivagnanabhodam in Tamil—the 12 sutras—is often considered to be a translation into Tamil ; but a comparative study convinces many that the Tamil work was the original one. The Tamil sutras are complete in themselves whereas in Sanskrit, the whole idea is expressed in 11½ slokas whilst the last line states "so learn the well defined idea of Saiva Siddhanta in Sivagnanabhoda." Cek-kilar's Periyapurana has been translated as Upamanya

Bhakta Vilasam. This latter is often claimed as an original work and if this is true Cekkilar's creative genius has to shrink into insignificance. But in one of my studies 'Anpu muti'—the study on Eripatta Nayanar, I pointed out how the Sanskrit work makes blunders which can be explained only on the basis that it is a translation, especially where Cekkilar is crystal clear to a student of Tamil and history. Kaivalya Navanitam, the most popular book on Vedanta in Tamil, popular even in Malayalam and Telugu countries, has been recently attempted to be shown as a translation of the work of that name by Sankuka. A detailed study will show that Sankuka was but a translator. Guhesan is the word used in Tamil for referring to the Absolute as an immanent principle. Guhesan connotes, thanks to its yoga Sakti, the lord of the cave of the heart—the immanent principle which is alone germane to the context. Sankuka translates the word as "vallisa" in the impression that the denotation Subramanya is what is important here. Examples could be multiplied. A detailed study on the lines has yet to be made about these books which look so much alike in Sanskrit and Tamil. Apart from these there are admitted translations—translations of Tirukkural and Tiruppavai etc. in Sanskrit and translation of Suta Samhita and Kurmapurana etc. in Tamil; whilst there are other books adopting the ideas without attempting at a translation.

There are various other interesting problems, significant from the point of Indian Culture, as yet to be solved by Tamil Scholars. The great handicap here, is that the student has not any opportunity of knowing, what had already been done in the field. There is often unnecessary duplication. The Universities and research bodies should co-operate in drawing out a common programme of work in which they can pursue the studies in their respective specialised fields.

A Bibliography with a summary of the contributions is absolutely necessary. No individual can undertake this

stupendous task. It requires any amount of travel for collecting materials, a knowledge of Western and Indian languages, the co-operation of Scholars in other lands and in other languages and above all time and money, which can all be expected only from University or at Government level.

So much to do and so little done—that is the piercing cry of our heart. A translation of all the classics may throw them open to the world and they may bring the co-operation of foreign scholars. As the generation of Tamil Scholars strong in English is fast disappearing, this has to be undertaken now or never.

But there is one great consolation for the student. An unexplored part of the intellectual world lies here welcoming him with a tempting offer of success and fame. May this temptation appeal to the rising generation!

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

AN APPEAL

The Tamil Research Department of the Annamalai University has undertaken the preparation of Bibliographies relating to "THIRUKKURAL" and "THIRUMANTHIRAM". This is the first time that a scientific and systematic approach to these works is being made by a band of scholars and through the forum of a University.

Authors, publishers, scholars, societies, libraries and other organisations are requested to send copies of all works (books as well as articles) concerning these classics, for favour of perusal and return. All communications in this connection may please be addressed to the Professor of Tamil Research, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, South India. In the case of cadjan leaves manuscripts and rare first editions, it will be helpful if details thereof are made available by those who may possess or have knowledge of them. The sources of the information will be duly acknowledged in the publications.

Annamalai Nagar, (SM. L. LAKSHMANAN CHETTIAR),
2nd April, 1956. Public Relations Officer.

Old Tamil, Ancient Tamil and Primitive Dravidian*

SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI

1. To reconstruct the sound-system and morphology of Primitive Dravidian would be an extremely difficult task because of the very late date of the material in the various Dravidian languages at our disposal. Primitive Dravidian as a single speech, judging from the lines of development and the rate of progress among the different Dravidian languages of the present day, can perhaps be taken back to about three thousand five hundred years from now: 1500 B.C. may tentatively be put down in round numbers as a date for the hypothetical single speech which is the source of all the current Dravidian languages of India. To arrive at the situation for a language of about 1500 B.C. from specimens of its later phases some 2000 years younger (as in the case of the oldest forms of the present-day Dravidian languages) would indeed be a most difficult, if not an almost impossible task. Considerable progress has, however, been made in this matter by the researches of scholars like Jules Bloch, K. V. Subbayya, L. V. Ramaswami Ayyar, K. Ramakrishnayya, Edwin H. Tuttle, S. Anavarata-vinayakam Pillai, Alfred Master, T. Burrow, M. B. Emeneau, Pierre Meile and others; and

* This article was originally published in the Jules Bloch Memorial Number of *Indian Linguistics*, Calcutta, Vol. 14, January, 1954. Dr. Chatterji has made some corrections and additions to make the article more complete, and we are grateful to this eminent scholar for asking us to republish it in *Tamil Culture*. The argument is based on an assumption that the cave inscriptions of the 3rd century B.C. in Brahmi characters in South Tamil Country represent oldest specimens of the Tamil Language, but other available evidence, linguistic and historical, does not confirm this assumption. Attention is invited in this connection to the articles 'The Brahmi Inscriptions of South India and the Sangam Age' and 'Voiced and Voiceless stops in Tamil' appearing elsewhere in this issue. —Editor.

through their labours we may hope to form some idea of Primitive Dravidian, and set it up, e.g. beside Primitive Indo-European.

2. The oldest specimens of Dravidian are possibly to be found in a series of cave inscriptions in the South Tamil country engraved in Brahmi characters of the 3rd century B.C. (In the opinion of some scholars, these inscriptions might be one or two centuries later, in spite of the archaic character of the script.) These were first discussed in their ensemble by the late H. Krishna Sastri in 1919 (Proceedings and Transactions of the First All-India Oriental Conference, Poona, 1919: Bhandarkar Research Institute, Poona, 1922; "Caverns and Brahmi Inscriptions of Southern India," pp. 327-348), although they were noticed earlier in the Madras Epigraphical Reports for 1912, 1915 and 1918. H. Krishna Sastri was not sure about the nature of the language, but he noted the possible occurrence of Prakrit words, and thought it might be a kind of Prakrit mixed with Dravidian. In 1924, K. V. Subrahmanya Ayyar attempted the first serious readings of these inscriptions, and he read them definitely as a kind of Old Tamil, apparently earlier in structure than the oldest Tamil which we have in literature (Proceedings and Transactions of the Third All-India Oriental Conference, Madras, 1924: "The Earliest Monuments of the Pāṇḍya country and their Inscriptions" pp. 275-300). Younger in date are the Arikamedu Pottery Fragment Inscriptions alleged to be of the first century A.D., but some scholars (e.g. C. Sivaramamurti) think they are of the 3rd or at least of the 2nd century B.C. These also are in Brahmi characters, and K. V. Subrahmanya Ayyar has similarly interpreted them as very old Tamil (*Ancient India*, No. 2, New Delhi, July 1946, pp. 111 ff). Accepting, in the absence of a more satisfactory explanation, that these Brahmi documents represent oldest specimens of the Tamil language that we have, we find that the orthography was halting and defective, suggesting that the Tamil language during the 3rd

century B.C. was being reduced to writing for the first time. The finished and consistent orthography of Cen-tamiḻ or Old Tamil (using this expression to mean the language as found in the oldest literature of Tamil) we find for the first time in Pallava inscriptions of the first half of the 7th century A.D., an orthography with a phonetic system which agrees with that of the language described in the oldest grammar of Tamil, the *Tol-kāppiyam*, and employed in the oldest works of Tamil which are still extant—the earliest Saṅgam (Caṅkam) and allied texts.

In 1904 E. Hultzsich in his *Remarks on a Papyrus from Oxyrrhincus* (JRASGrBrI, 1904, pp. 399 ff) sought to explain some unmeaning sentences found in the fragments of a Greek drama in a north Egyptian MS. of the 2nd century A.D. as Old Kannaḍa. The fragments deal with the adventures of a Greek woman Charition who was shipwrecked in Indian waters with her daughter and then taken to the court of an Indian king, who is made to talk with his noblemen in their own tongue, with occasional Greek translations, and Hultzsich attempted to explain these passages in the language of the Indians to be Old Kannaḍa. If this is true, then these few Old Kannaḍa words and sentences would be our oldest authentic specimens of a Dravidian tongue.¹

We are on surer ground for Kannaḍa from the middle of the 5th century A.D., from which period we have a series of inscriptions in Old Kannaḍa (Paḷa-Kannaḍa, or Pūrvada-Paḷa-Kannaḍa) gradually passing into Middle Kannaḍa (Posa- or Hosa-Kannaḍa) by 1000 A.D. and developing a

¹ Prof. T. N. Srikantaiya tells me that in addition to Hultzsich who first sought to interpret this passage as Kannaḍa, R. Shama Sastry (Mysore Archaeological Report for 1926), and M. Govinda Pai ("Prabuddha Karnaṭaka", Vol II, Nos. 1 and 2) also attempted fresh interpretations; also B. A. Saletore ("Ancient Karnataka", Vol. I, Appendix A). L. D. Barnett's observations, referred to by Saletore, are quite pertinent to the matter. The ancient Kannaḍa character of the passage thus remains undecided.

literature the oldest existing texts in which go back to the 9th century A.D.²

In a similar manner, Telugu has recorded its oldest remains so far available in inscriptions from the 6th century A.D., and the oldest books of Telugu date from after 1000 A.D.

Malayalam was an offshoot from Old Tamil. Already some Malayalam characteristics appear in Malabar inscriptions from the 9th century, but as a literary language Malayalam became established as late as the 14th century, although specimens of what may be definitely called Malayalam seem to go back to the 12th century.

3. Tentatively, we may lay down the 3rd century B.C. as the period when the Dravidian speech of the extreme south was first reduced to writing, and the period of intensive literary cultivation of the advanced Dravidian languages unquestionably started from the first centuries after the Christian era. The specimens that we have of Old Tamil, Old Kannaḍa and Old Telugu already show languages very well differentiated from each other, and yet all of them still sufficiently close to each other to be recognised as sister or cousin speeches even at the first glance. The late Prof. B. M. Srikantiah ("Pūrvada Hala-gannaḍa and Tamil," pp. 652-653, Proceedings and Transactions of the Tenth All-India Oriental Conference, Tirupati, March 1940 : Madras 1941) thought that Tamil and Kannaḍa were one language in the 5th century B.C., but Telugu had already separated from the Southern group. The oldest forms of these languages have naturally enough a closer agreement with each other than their later forms, and on the basis of this agreement an essay might be made

² Prof. T. N. Srikantaiya corrects the above statement about the stages in the development of Kannaḍa as follows: (1) Ancient or Pre-Old Kannaḍa (Pūrvada-Paḷa/Paḷa-Gannaḍa), upto c. 750 A.D.; (2) Old Kannaḍa (Paḷa/Paḷa-Gannaḍa), c. 750-1050 A.D.; (3) Middle Kannaḍa (Naḍu-Gannaḍa), c. 1050-1600 A.D.; and (4) New or Modern Kannaḍa (Hosa-Gannaḍa), after 1600.

by linguistic scholars with adequate knowledge of all these speeches to reconstruct what may be called 'Ur-drawidisch' or 'Primitive Dravidian', and this essay is now seriously being made by specialists in the field of Dravidian.

4. From a study of the phonetics and phonology of the Old Dravidian languages as in the oldest inscriptions and literary works, some very general notions have been formulated about the sound-system and the morphological bases of this Primitive Dravidian. But here most scholars, beginning with Bishop Caldwell, pioneer in Dravidian studies whose *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages* (London 1856) inaugurated the comparative study of Dravidian nearly a century ago, have been impressed by the peculiar character of the phonology of Tamil as reflected in its alphabet and orthography, and the views of many of the workers in the field of Dravidian with regard to the sound-system and phonology of Primitive Dravidian have been coloured by those of Tamil—including Tamil as current at the present-day with its special habits of pronunciation. There seems to be a general and tacit acceptance of the position that the present-day Tamil pronunciation of the inter-vocal voiceless stops as voiced stops (or even as voiced spirants) also characterised the oldest Tamil of inscriptions and of literature. This tacitly accepted view-point about the sound-system of Old Tamil was generally extended to Primitive Dravidian also, and it was taken as a matter of course that in Primitive Dravidian too, as in Modern Tamil, there were only voiceless stops initially, and voiced ones only medially, either after a nasal or in between two vowels. Caldwell accepted this position in his *Comparative Grammar* (3rd edition, edited by J. L. Wyatt and T. Ramakrishna Pillai, 1913, pp. 137-139), and K. V. Subbayya who first made a brilliant attempt to work out a comparative grammar of the Dravidian languages on the basis of a reconstructed Primitive Dravidian (in his "Primer of Dravidian Phonology", *Indian Antiquary*, Bombay, Vol. XXXVIII, 1909,

pp. 159 ff, 188 ff and 201 ff), also thought (p. 195, op. cit.) that in Primitive Dravidian only a voiceless stop consonant or a nasal could commence a word, and it could in no case be a retroflex consonant or cerebral, and that no voiceless stop was admissible in the middle of a word or in a *sandhi* group except when it was doubled (this is the situation in Modern Tamil). Subbayya further was of opinion that Primitive Dravidian had *b* only after the nasal *m* (p. 197), that *d* was a rare sound in Primitive Dravidian and even then it was medial (p. 201), *ḍ* was also a medial sound (p. 206), and *g'* (palatal voiced stop) and *g* (guttural voiced stop) were similarly medial sounds in Primitive Dravidian (p. 216, p. 219). E. H. Tuttle (1930) and L. V. Ramaswami Aiyar (1934) also accepted this position.

5. The above view had been first called into question by Sten Konow (in *The Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IV, 1906, p. 288), and then by Jules Bloch in his article "The Intervocalic Consonants in Tamil" (*Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XLVIII, 1919, pp. 191-195, translated from French article as in the *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique de Paris*, Vol. XIX, 1914, pp. 85 ff, with additions, by J. D. Anderson). In this paper of capital significance in the study of the phonological development of Tamil and other Dravidian, Bloch made these suggestions: (i) The Tamil words quoted by Kumārila Bhaṭṭa in his Sanskrit *Tantravārttika*, viz. *cor*, *atar*, *pāp*, (or *pāmp*), *māl* and *vair* or *vayir*, are older than what we find in ordinary Old Tamil, which gives some of these words with a final -*u* vowel: Kumārila (end of the 7th century) heard the words without the final vowel, and with -*t*-, -*p* as in *atar*, *pāp*; (ii) Consequently, we can assume that single intervocal unvoiced stops in Old Tamil were pronounced as unvoiced, and not as voiced; (iii) Initially, from the evidence of the Greek and Pāli forms in *d-* (*Damir*-, *Damīla*=*Tamiz*), Tamil in the oldest period, in the early centuries after Christ, did have initial voiced stops; (iv) Assimilation of conjunct consonants was a parallel phonological development in

Old Dravidian as well as Middle Indo-Aryan; (v) Like Sanskrit, Primitive Dravidian, before the assimilation started, could have conjuncts like *tr-* *dr-* initially; and (vi) The voicing of interior unvoiced stops began in Tamil at a time after A.D. 1200. In the Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies, London, Vol. IX, 1937-39, "Dravidian Studies I", pp. 710 ff., T. Burrow has gone into the question in detail, and he is in disagreement with Jules Bloch. He is of opinion that the theory that Primitive Dravidian, the source of Tamil, Kannada and Telugu, had initial sonant stops and even sonant aspirates, is incorrect, and that the existence of the initial sonants in Telugu and Kannada is secondary and cannot be attributed to the parent language. Often Telugu and Kannada words with voiced stops initially have no corresponding cognates in Tamil; and a good number of such Telugu and Kannada words when they are found in Tamil (of course with unvoiced initial stops) are but loan-words from Telugu and Kannada into Tamil. Telugu and Kannada often disagree in this matter, and, as said before, the voicing is secondary in these languages. This irregular voicing Burrow thinks may be the result of the influence of a substratum speech (other than Kol or Munda) which has not yet been properly spotted (p. 722), for at least a number of these words, and for the existence of initial sonants at all. But this view has been objected to by F. B. J. Kuiper in an article in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies for the same year ("Zur Chronologie des Stimmtonverlusts in dravidischen Anlaut": pp. 987 ff), in which he lays stress on the forms of Dravidian loans in Sanskrit, and expresses the view that Primitive Dravidian had initial voiced stops, but the 'Tamil-type' developed in even some North Indian Dravidian dialects (with unvoicing of initial voiced stops) during the Upanishad period, which he puts down as 500 B.C. Alfred Master, in his "Intervocalic Plosives in Early Tamil" (pp. 1003-1008 of the same number of the BSOS. in which Kuiper's German paper has been published), however, thought that voiced and even spirantised pronun-

ciation of what are in orthography unvoiced stops occurred in the oldest Tamil (as the modern pronunciation makes it), but he admits the likelihood of **Dramiz-*, with initial *dr-*, being the original Dravidian source of the word *Tamiz*.

6. The position at the present day therefore is that, with the exception of the doubt expressed by Jules Bloch and F. B. J. Kuiper in this connexion, the general view (as reiterated by T. Burrow in the BSOS article as indicated above) is that Primitive Dravidian possessed initially only unvoiced stops, and voiced stops occurred only intervocally and after nasals; and that Telugu and Kannada and other Dravidian instances of initial voiced stops do not reflect the situation in Primitive Dravidian. Further, by implication (as definitely suggested by K. V. Subbaya), the Primitive Dravidian also possessed the characteristic Tamil habit of voicing intervocal unvoiced stops: so the orthography of Tamil, it might be concluded from this, keeps faithful to the speech-habit of Primitive Dravidian in this respect, viz., surds initially, and sonants medially; and thus only surd letters could suffice in writing, following this fixed phonetic character.

7. The orthography of Cen-tamiz we find in more or less a fully developed or established form only as late as the first half of the 7th century A.D., in the Pallava inscriptions at Vallam (near Chingleput: South Indian Inscriptions, Vol. II, Part III, No. 72) and at Dalavanur (South Arcot District: Epigraphia Indica, XII, 1913-1914, No. 27). Here we have only unvoiced stops, and no voiced ones, except in the Dalavanur inscriptions, which gives two names of Sanskrit origin with the voiced *b* and *d*: *Bramma-maṅkalavan* = *Brahma-maṅgala-*, and *Civadāsan* = *S'iva-dāsa*. Here the proximity of Sanskrit in Pallava epigraphy is doubtless the reason; and certainly, as in other words like *Kuṇapara* = *Guṇabhara*, *Mayentira* = *Mahendra-* (Vallam Inscription), the names were pronounced as *Piramma-*

maṅkalavan' and *Civatācan'*. We should also note the retention of the Sanskrit sibilants as in *S'ri* and *Civadāsan* (Dalavanur) and in *Kantasen'a'n' = Skandasēna* (Vallam), although the sibilants in other cases become *c* or *y* (*vayanta = vasanta* in Vallam inscription, *catturu = s'atru* in both the inscriptions).

8. In the problematic Brāhmī inscriptions found in the Tamil land, as discussed in Para 2 above, the general absence of letters for the voiced stops is noticeable, and this would support a phonetic background for the language of this period—pre-Cen-tamiz “Ancient Tamil” it may be called, if the language is really Tamil—to be almost the same as that of Cen-tamiz of the 7th century A.D., viz., in the language (at least in its orthography) possessing only unvoiced stops. But in a few cases, *j* and *ḍ*, occur, although not initially; also the aspirate *ṭh*, and *dh* in an Aryan borrowing (*dhama-*); and *s* in words like *Siri = S'ri*, *Kosipā = ?Kās'yapa*, *siti = ?siddhi*, *s'ātāna = s'āstā*, and *sālākān = s'yālaka*; besides *b* in one of the pottery fragment inscriptions (*Buttā = ?Buddha*). But here we are not on sure ground. K. V. Subrahmanya Ayyar has proposed to read the syllables *i-lā* as Cen-tamiz *ḷam (= ḷam) = Sihala*, a borrowed name: such a change, with loss of the sibilant and of the *h*, would be too early for “Ancient Tamil” of the 3rd or 2nd century B.C., considering also the fact that the sibilant is preserved in these Brahmi inscriptions, and in two Aryan words immediately before this *ḷā-*, in Inscription No. IV as in H. Krishna Sastri's article noted in Para 2, if we can accept the reading and interpretation proposed. (The inscription, as read and interpreted by K. V. Subrahmanya Ayyar, runs thus: *kāniyan' Natā Siri-Yakuan' dhamām itā Naṭ(ṭ)in-Cār'i-yan' sālākān' ḷāñ-Cār'ikan' tāntai Cār'ikān' Cēiyā Pāliy*: ‘This is the charity of the glorious chief S'ri-Yakṣa, Karaṇi (by caste); this stone excavation for a relic chamber was made by Cār'ikan', the father of ḷāñ-Cār'ikan', and the brother-in-law of Neṭuñ-Cār'ian'’.)

9. Pierre Meile has shown how the initial sibilant in both native Dravidian words and Indo-Aryan loans had dropped off initially as well as medially in all the Southern Dravidian languages, including Telugu (“*Sur la Sifflante en Dravidien*”, *Journal Asiatique* for 1943-1945, Paris, 1947, pp. 73-89). This phonetic development of South Dravidian has also been studied in detail by T. Burrow (BSOS, Vol. 12, for 1947-1948, pp. 132 ff, “*Dravidian Studies VI: The Loss of Initial c/s in South Dravidian*”), and, as Burrow has noted, as early as 1919 E. H. Tuttle had postulated the occurrence of *s* in Primitive Dravidian which had disappeared in the Southern languages. Burrow has noted that this loss of initial *s-* in Southern Dravidian was just a widespread tendency in South Dravidian which became a regular law in Tamil, and the occurrence of a few *s-* forms in Telugu and Kannada, and a few forms where we find *c-<s-* even in Tamil, would suggest that there was a certain amount of dialectal preservation of this initial *s-* even in South Dravidian languages. Herein, as P. Meile also has noticed, there is a remarkable point of agreement between Tamil (and other South Dravidian languages) and Sinhalese which is the southern neighbour of Tamil.

Burrow has made this discovery, which is valuable as it helps us to find an approximate date for this remarkable phonetic change in Tamil and South Dravidian, that what was *Satiya-* in 3rd century B.C. in *Satiya-puta-* (as in Asoka inscriptions) as an ‘Ancient Tamil’ name became *Atiya-* (as in *Atiya-mān'*) in Cen-tamiz of the Sangam literature (pp. 136-137 in “*Dravidic Studies VI*”). Asokan *Satiya-puta = *Satiya-putta* would thus appear to be an Aryan reading of what might have been, in ‘Ancient Tamil’ of the 3rd century B.C., **Satiya-magavan'*; this later became in Cen-tamiz *Atiya-mān'*. This phonetic development, involving the line of change *-k->-g->-y->zero*, it may be objected, would not be proper to assume so early

in Tamil: but we can admit the possibility of the Aryan *mahān* > *mān* influencing this second element in the compound as something which had an honorific force. We have also to note the occurrence of *s* in possible Tamil forms in the Brahmi inscriptions of the Tamil country, as noted above. This loss would thus appear to have marked the Southern Dravidian languages, specially Tamil, between 3rd century B.C. and the period of the *Tol-kāppiyam* in which work the later Cen-tamiṣ change of Sanskrit *s'*, *ṣ*, *s* respectively to *c* or *y*, *c* or *ṭ* and *c* or *t* is noted.

This loss of a sibilant would appear to have passed through an intermediate stage of *h*, which again dropped off, and there is no graphic record of this stage in any of the oldest remains of Dravidian. The use of *s* for Tamil *c* in Greek and Latin transcriptions of a few of what may be described as 'Ancient Tamil' names of places (e.g. *Sorna'tos* = **Coṣ-nāṭu*, *Sa'lour* = ?*Cāliur*, *Mou'ziris* = *Mucir'i* or *Mucur'i*, pronounced **Mujir'i*?) is no indication or proof of the occurrence of an *s* pronunciation for *c* in 'Ancient Tamil' of the early centuries of the Christian era, as the Indian unvoiced palatal stop is generally represented by *s* in Greek and rarely by *ti* (e.g. *Sandrakoptos* = **Candra-kupta*, a N.-W. Frontier pronunciation of *Candragupta*, *Prasioi* = *Prācyā*-, *Mousikanoi* = *Mucukaṇṇa* < *Mucukar-ṇa*, and *Caṣṭana* = *Tiastenēs*). The change of Aryan *s* to *c*, as noted in the *Tol-kāppiyam*, is found also in the Brahmi inscriptions, if K. V. Subrahmanya Ayyar's equating of *ūpācā* = *upāsaka* is admissible.

10. It would appear that prior to the establishment of Cen-tamiṣ orthography as in the *Tol-kāppiyam* and the Sangam texts as well as in the earliest Tamil inscriptions as of Pallava times, i.e., prior to c. 600 A.D., when the scholars and grammarians of Tamizakam framed a system of writing Tamil based on the actual pronunciation of the language, the only certain or reliable material to reconstruct the sound-system of 'Ancient Tamil' as a stage

between Primitive Dravidian and Cen-tamiṣ or Old Tamil would be the representation of Tamil (and allied Dravidian) words in their actual spoken sounds as heard and noted down by peoples of other languages; here in this case, by Indo-Aryan speakers, and Greeks. Sanskrit and Prakrit borrowings from Dravidian, i.e. from very early phases of the Dravidian languages and dialects as current in both Northern India (now almost entirely suppressed by Indo-Aryan) and Central and Southern India, and Greek transcriptions of Dravidian ('Ancient Tamil') names and words, should furnish us with indirect evidence; and this evidence should be of very great value for us.

11. Dravidian words in Sanskrit and other early forms of Indo-Aryan have been studied by a number of scholars, and F. Kittel in his *Kannada Dictionary* (Mangalore, 1894) has given some 420 words occurring in Sanskrit which have Dravidian affinities. H. Gundert, the author of a Malayalam grammar (1868) and compiler of a Malayalam-English Dictionary (1872), has studied this question, and K. Amrita Row wrote on the Dravidian element in the Prakrits (Indian Antiquary, February 1917) and on some Hindi words of Dravidian origin (ibid., January 1916). The most recent investigations on the subject are by T. Burrow in a series of articles in the Journal of the Philological Society, London, and in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.

Some of these words show initial voiced stops; and a number of them were quoted by T. Burrow in his "Dravidian Studies I", referred to above, pp. 717-718, like Sanskrit *kāñji*-, *kuṭi*-, *kuṇḍa*-, Pali *cāṭi*-, Sanskrit *palli* 'lizard', *kubja*(?), are examples to the contrary, with initial unvoiced stops. Kuiper has discussed the case of the word *kuṇḍa*, which he derives from a form with initial *g*-, and connects it with *gola*, *guḍa* etc. Kittel in his Dictionary gives over a score of Sanskrit words with initial voiced stops in a list of 420 words which look like loans from Dravidian. Even in the lists of Sanskrit vocables

derived from Dravidian made out by T. Burrow (e.g. BSOS., Vol. 12, 1947-1948, pp. 365-396: "Dravidian Studies VII: Further Dravidian Words in Sanskrit", giving 315 words), quite a good few show initial voiced stops and even voiced aspirates (some 38 words). With these and other words of Sanskrit, it would indeed be a little too hazardous to look upon Primitive Dravidian as being a language of the Tamil type in its phonetics and phonology. The evidence from Sanskrit and Prakrit, and from the Northern Dravidian languages, as well as from Telugu, Kannada and Tulu (so long as the phonetic rules cannot be formulated), cannot be entirely brushed aside; nor the evidence from the few Greek transcriptions. And certain general lines of phonetic development noticeable all over the world have also to be considered.

12. In the welter of dialectal forms which characterise all Indian speech whether Aryan or Dravidian, the situation for Ancient or pre-Sangam Tamil, even with the Brahmi inscriptions of the 3rd—2nd centuries being fully proved to be Tamil, still remains obscure. One swallow does not make summer, but one or two indications in certain cases may very well be made the basis for generalisation.

13. The word *Tamil* itself (*tamiḻ*) is a case in point. From the earliest documents in the language itself, the word shows an initial unvoiced stop, *t*-. But most assuredly, in the early centuries after Christ, when the Greek traders from Egypt and the Eastern Mediterranean used to visit South India, the word was pronounced, as Jules Bloch has suggested, with an initial voiced stop, *d*-; and Greek transcriptions, including those which are palpably corrupt forms, are based on a pronunciation with *d*-. What is found in Cen-tamiḻ as *Tamiḻakam* 'the Tamil land' was certainly **Damiḻakam*, which gave an original Greek transcription **Damiḻikē* which has been corrupted variously as *Dymirikē* (3rd century A.D.), and as *Lymirikē*. The Sinhalese neighbours of the ancient Tamils noted

down the name as *Damiḻa*, as in the Pali *Mahāvamsa* (5th century A.D.), and this form of the name, with initial *d*-, is still current in Sinhalese to mean the Tamils. The identity of the Sanskrit *Dramiḍa*, *Dramiḻa*, *Draviḍa* with this *Damiḻa*-, **Damiḻa*-, **Damiḻa*- and *Tamiḻ* or *Tamil* cannot be denied. In his article "Intervocalic Plosives in Early Tamil" (BSOS., Vol. IX, pp. 1003-1008), Alfred Master adduces certain reasons against the view that at some time or other in the history of Old Tamil there were no voiced plosives. His contention, that the doubling of an initial unvoiced stop in *sandhi* with the preceding word suggests the occurrence of a voiced pronunciation of a single intervocal unvoiced plosive as a voiced sound as in later Tamil, may be met by observing that this doubling might indicate a semantic nuance such as we find in many other languages; and Aryan words borrowed by Tamil like *uruvu* and *pāvam* may very well be MIA forms. Alfred Master's suggestion that Sanskrit *Dramiḍa* might be based on a highly problematic Telugu modification of a likely Tamil form **Tamiḻaḍa*, as made by him in BSOS XII, 1947-48, "Indo-Aryan and Dravidian: III", pp. 340-364, §57, cannot be accepted. The line of development for this name would be like this: **Dramiḻa*- > Sanskrit *Dramiḍa*, *Dramiḻa*, and later Prakritised form *Draviḍa* before 500 B.C.; **Dramiḻa*- > 'Ancient Tamil' **Damiḻ(a)*, whence Greek **Damiḻ*-, Pali (Ceylon) *Damiḻa*; and, by the characteristic Cen-tamiḻ devoicing, *Tamiḻ*, by 600 A.D. We have also to note that the name of the mountain now called *Podigai* in Modern Tamil = *Potikai*, *Potiyam* in Old Tamil, was written by the Greeks as *Bettigo*—they evidently heard *b*- initially. The Greek transcription *Mo'doura* = *Maturai* in Old Tamil, *Madurai* or *Maṣurei* in present-day Tamil, is in all likelihood based on the form *Madhurā*, a variant of the commoner form *Mathurā*.

14. The form with initial *dr*- may have a very high antiquity if certain suggestions made by me in 1924 have any plausibility, after the preliminary Mohen-jo-Daro

excavations were made by Rakhal Das Banerjee, who first discovered the site, and opened up for the first time what was later described by Sir John Marshall as the Troy and Mycenae for ancient Indian civilisation ("Dravidian Origins and the Beginnings of Indian Civilisation", in the *Modern Review*, Calcutta, for December 1924). On the assumption that the Primitive Dravidian-speakers as the founders of the Mohen-jo-Daro civilisation were an East Mediterranean people, it was intriguing to find that the ancient Cretans (who are now looked upon as being related to the Dravidians of India) were known, as Herodotus has noted, as *Termilai*; and the Lycians, who on the same testimony came to Asia Minor from Crete, called themselves in their inscriptions in Lycia *Trmmili*. *Termilai-Trmmili* of the middle of the 1st millennium B.C. as an ethnic name can very well be compared, as Eastern Mediterranean forms of the name, with **Dramiz(a)-Dramila-** *Damiz(a)-Damila-Damir-* and *Tamiz* of India. The difficulty here is the presence of the unvoiced dental stop *t* as the initial sound in *Termilai-Trmmili*; the unvoicing in Crete and Lycia might very well be an independent development in those areas. I further suggested a connexion between a Lycian *prñawate* 'excavated' with Kannada *bare* 'write', originally 'scratch, cut', and between the names *Trqqas*, a deity in Lycian inscriptions, and *Durgā* of India, a common name for the Mother Goddess whose cult came with the Dravidians from the Mediterranean area. (Cf. Asia Minor *Mā* = Indian *Umā*). It would thus appear that Cretan and Lycian preferred to unvoice *dr-* to *tr-pr*.³

15. On the above basis we may be allowed to assume quite reasonably that the phonetic development of Indo-Aryan and Dravidian was, to some extent at least, on parallel lines. There are other indications for that.

³ Prof. T. N. Srikantaiya has informed me that the Kannada form with *b-* cannot be earlier than c. 600 A.D.; the earlier form must have been **vara*, and this initial agrees with that in the Telugu cognate *vrayu*.

Initially and medially, Primitive Dravidian appears to have started with conjunct consonants, particularly conjuncts with *r* and *l* as their second elements, and these were assimilated. In some cases, there was anaptyxis (*svara-bhakti* or *viprakarṣa*), with an intrusive vowel preserving both the consonants and preventing assimilation, such as we find mainly in *semi-tatsama* (modified Sanskrit) borrowings in Middle Indo-Aryan (Pali and the Prakrits) in its development out of Old Indo-Aryan (Vedic, Sanskrit): e.g. OIA *ratna*, *harṣa*, *padma* > MIA inherited words *ratta*, *hassa* or *haṁsa*, *pomma* by assimilation, and MIA borrowed *semi-tatsamas* in the literary language *ratana*, *harisa*, *paduma*, by anaptyxis.

16. A few other likely Sanskrit loan-words from Dravidian may be taken as indicative of the presence of initial voiced stops, in the Dravidian speech of pre-Christian times, and probably also of the centuries immediately after Christ, as they obtained in the Dravidian languages of the South as well. Thus, we have the word *Garuḍa*, the eagle vehicle of Viṣṇu. There is the Vedic word *garutman* which has been used as an epithet of *Suparṇa*, the divine eagle, and *garutman* has been explained in later times as 'possessed of wings (*garut*)'. It is not known whether *garutman* and *Garuḍa* are related words or not, or whether they are words from different sources which have converged, but *Garuḍa* recalls definitely Tamil *kāzu-ku*, Malayalam *kāzu*, Tulu *karu* = 'vulture, eagle, kite': the source might very well be a South Dravidian (including Ancient Tamil) **gāzu*. The Sanskrit *garda-bha* 'ass' is a word of unknown etymology; its second element is the common Old Indo-Aryan affix *-bha* which is found in names of animals (*sala-bha*, *kara-bha*, *vṛṣa-bha* etc.), and *garda* is the basic word, which suggests Telugu *gāḍide*, Tamil *kāzutai*, Malayalam *kāzuta*, Kannada *kāḍte*, Tulu *katte*, all of which appear to go back to an earlier **gāzuda* or **gāḍa-*. Words like *gāḍa*, in four different senses (as in T. Burrow's list mentioned above, from as many different Dravidian

sources), *gadā*, *garta* = 'seat of chariot', *galla*, *galva*, *galvarka* (from *gal- > Tamil *kal* 'stone'), *gulma*, *jaḍa*, *dala* (in two senses, 'leaf, shoot' and 'detachment of troops'), *dukūla*, *dusya* ('cloth, calico'), and aspirated forms like *ghaṭa ghūṭa*, *ghuṇa*, *ghūka*, *dhaṭi* ('loin-cloth'), *bharata* ('actor'), *bhilla*, *bhṛṅga*, etc. as discussed by Kittel and Burrow, for instance, do make a case for the occurrence of initial voiced stops and aspirates, at least in pre-Cen-tamiz Tamil and other Dravidian.

17. Devoicing of consonants is a very widespread phenomenon in the phonological history of languages, and even with a full alphabet it is found to have developed in many languages. Tendency towards turning sonants into surds is found in some kinds of German (e.g. Bavarian); it was a primitive trait in the development of the Germanic and Armenic branches of Indo-European. The tendency is noticeable in Modern Persian. It has developed in Modern Javanese, and it is found in Finnish and Estonian, two sister languages of the Finno-Ugrian family. It characterises many of the modern Sino-Tibetan languages, like Chinese and Tibetan. No wonder that it could affect one of the Dravidian speeches of India.

18. The position for Tamil would appear to have been like this. The unvoiced and voiced stops were quite different phonemes in Primitive Dravidian and in 'Ancient Tamil' of the pre-Sangam or pre-Tol-kāppiyam period, and either sort could begin words. This situation, along with other phonetic characteristics (e.g. the retention of s-), marked 'Ancient Tamil' of the centuries immediately before and after Christ. Then, probably round about the middle of the first millennium A.D., a series of noteworthy phonetic changes manifested themselves in the Southern Dravidian languages, particularly Tamil. Both initial and interior s- -s- were dropped in both native Dravidian and borrowed Aryan words; and after this change was fully achieved, in further borrowings from Sanskrit and Prakrit,

the sibilant sounds whether initially or medially were altered to c, y, ṭ and t. Then the great change came over to Tamil—the wholesale unvoicing of voiced consonants. This change probably started first as a tendency in the early centuries of the Christian era, or even earlier still, but it must have become fully established in Tamil by 600 A.D., for in the early 7th century we find from epigraphic records a state of things which is clearly indicated in the actual Tamil orthography.

19. This great fact is frequently lost sight of: in the oldest Tamil as in the Pallava inscriptions and as in the earliest Tamil of literature, the modern Tamil habit of pronunciation did not obtain. There were no voiced stops at all in the language: otherwise there would have been no need to frame a special alphabet and orthography for Tamil. Intervocal unvoiced stops were pronounced as unvoiced; they pronounced as they wrote—

akara mutala ezutt' ellām; āti
pakavan' mutar'r'e ulaku;

and to read a verse like the above as—

agara mudala-v-ezutt' ellām; ādi
pagavan' mudatt'r'e-y-ulagu; or as—
ayara (ahara) muḍala-v-ezutt' ellām; ādi
b(h)ayavan' (bahavan') muḍat't'e-y-ulaṇu
(-y-ulahu),

(it is to be noted that the final -u in Modern Tamil is pronounced as an unrounded vowel, with spread lips) will be to impose modern habits of pronunciation on the form of the language as it was 1500 years ago. It would be like reading Chaucer's or Cædmon's Middle or Old English verses in a Modern English pronunciation.

The compilers of the Madras University Tamil Lexicon acted wisely in employing a Romanisation which was strictly a transliteration with full reference to the phonetic system or bases of Tamil as it was pronounced when its

current orthography was fixed: fortunately it has not been a compromise transcription between the modern pronunciation and the old as indicated by the orthography.

20. This Cen-tamiz pronunciation, with no voiced stops at all, as envisaged by the spelling of Tamil, certainly obtained in the 7th century A.D., as we find in the treatment of Sanskrit words and names in the Tamil inscriptions. As Jules Bloch has sought to indicate, when in the 7th century, Kumārila Bhaṭṭa (in the *Tantra-vārttika*, Chap. III) wrote down in the contemporary Grantha or Pallava script his Sanskrit work, he indicated the pronunciation of the few Tamil words he had quoted just as he heard it: he wrote *cor*, *atar*, *pāp* (or *pāmp*) and *vayir* (= respectively 'rice, way, snake and belly'): these are pre-Sangam forms of the Tamil words which are pronounced in Modern Tamil as *s'oru* or *coru*, *adar* or *aḍar*, *pāmbu* and *vayiru*. An intervocal -t- and a final -p were just -t- and -p to Kumārila in the 7th century: and the final -u vowel was also wanting in the 7th century pronunciation. The word *pāp* (**pāmp*?) became *pāmpu*, and finally *pāmbu* as in Modern Tamil.

21. This unvoiced stop pronunciation was something which characterised the Tamil language for over seven centuries— from c. 500 or 600 A.D. to probably 1300 or 1350 A.D.—the period which is covered by what we may call Cen-tamiz or Old Tamil. Jules Bloch, dating Pavananti's grammar of Tamil the *Nan'n'ul* at about 1200 A.D., following L. D. Barnett, thinks that as Pavananti prescribes the use of *k c ṭ t p* in Tamil for all the four stops and aspirates in each *varga*, the unvoiced pronunciation still obtained in his day, and the lower limit for the retention of this kind of articulation he suggests accordingly at 1200 A.D. But there is at least some evidence that this Old Cen-tamiz pronunciation obtained up to 1300 A.D. at least and probably for half a century more after that. In the same period, a very noteworthy sound change began to affect the language—the single intervocal (unvoiced)

stops became voiced; also stops after their class nasals. This change ushered in the Middle Tamil Period, with other phonetic and morphological modifications.

We find that the great Venetian traveller and sojourner in China Marco Polo (1253-1323) came to South India, on his way back to the Near East from China by sea about the year 1293. His exact itinerary in South India is not known, but he has left an account of *Maabar* (Book III, Chapter 17), by which the Tamil country was meant, which shows a mixture of true observation and of hearsay and romance. With regard to the people of the country, Tamilians of the end of the 13th century, among other observations he says that "their daily prayer consists of these words, *pacauta*, *pacauta*, *pacauta*, which they repeat one hundred and four times." This of course means the repetition of a sacred name, the *japa*, which is done with the help of a rosary of beads (of *tulasī* wood for Vaishnavas, and *rudrākṣa* beads for Saivas) one hundred and eight (rather than one hundred and four) in number. The word *pacauta* has been rightly explained by Col. Sir Henry Yule (*The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, London 1903, Vol. II, pp. 338, 346) as the Sanskrit *bhagavata*- or *bhagavanta*- in its Tamil form *pakavata*. This is how the observant Marco Polo heard the word—the pronunciation was Romanised with the voiceless stops as written in Tamil characters, with *p*, *c=k*, *t*, and not with *bh* or *b*, *g* and *d* in the Roman as the modern pronunciation would require it. This evidence from a foreigner is quite precious: we may be permitted to assume that at least up to the end of the 13th century the voiceless pronunciation of all stop sounds characterised Tamil. After this period, intervocal unvoiced stops and similar stops after nasals became voiced. This continued throughout the whole of what may be called the Middle Tamil period, from 1300 or 1350 to 1800 A.D.; and after this we have finally the *Koḍun-damiz* of the New or Modern Tamil period, with the form of the language which has deviated widely from the Classical or Old Tamil with further modifications in pronunciation.

22. Thus, in the 'Ancient Tamil' period, to c. 500/600 A.D., we have not only initial and intervocal *s* (which dropped from speech entirely by at least 400 A.D.), but also initial voiced stops *b- d- g- j-* and intervocal unvoiced stops *-p- -t- -ṭ- -k- -c-*. Voiced and unvoiced consonants were distinct phonemes. When the Cen-tamiṣ stage in the history of Tamil started after 500 A.D., all voiced stops, initial or medial, became unvoiced and fell together with original unvoiced ones, so that the language came to have only, in all places, unvoiced stops. It was at this stage that the current orthography as indicative of the sound-system of Cen-tamiṣ was framed by Tamil scholars of the day. The sibilants in newly introduced Sanskrit and Prakrit words became *c, y, ṭ, t*. This state continued to c. 1350 A.D. with increasing influence of Sanskrit. After this, intervocal unvoiced stops became in all cases voiced, and initial ones remained unvoiced: *-k- -ṭ- -t- -p-* became *-g- -ḍ- -d- -b-*, and *-c-* normally tended to change to *s'* in a new pronunciation, but after *ñ*, it became *j*.

Probably as yet there was no spirantization of this stop *-g- -ḍ- -b-*, no reduction to a flapped sound of *-ḍ-* (that is, to the sound of Hindi ढ = ṛ). The spirant pronunciation (*g > γ* or *h, d > ḍ, b > β* or *v*) possibly began to characterise the language after 1800. A number of words, mostly Sanskrit, tabulated below will illustrate the position.

It would appear that in between the Ancient Tamil and the Old Tamil periods, as in contemporary Middle Indo-Aryan (Prakrits of the early centuries after Christ), spirantisation affected intervocal voiced stops in Tamil in unstressed prefix and suffix elements—prefixes of course in Aryan loans. That is how **Satiya-magavan'* could become *Atiya-mān'* in Old Tamil (*-magavan' > mayavan' > *maavan' > mān'*, with likely influence from Sanskrit *mahān > mān*, as suggested before in § 9), and Sanskrit *mahā* could become *mā-*.

It is to be noted that in the New or Modern Tamil pronunciation there is a marked tendency to pronounce initial *p- t- k-* as an aspirated sound, *p^h-, t^h-, k^h-*, usually not so fully aspirated as in the Aryan *kh, th, ph*, but the aspiration is still there; and intervocal double or long *-pp- -ṭṭ- -tt- -kk- -cc-* tend to become single or short, just *-p-, -ṭ-, -t-, -k-* and *-c-*.

It is not unlikely that in the 'ancient' stage of the Dravidian languages, initial unvoiced stops might have been slightly aspirated: witness the Aryanised form of the name of the Kalinga king *Khāravela* (2nd cen. B.C.), from Dravidian ('Ancient Andhra') *kār* (= *khār*) 'black' + *vel* 'lance'—'He of the black or terrible lance', = Skt. *Kṛṣṇarṣṭi* (cf. my article in "*Vyāsa-saṅgrahamu* : A Miscellany of Papers presented to Giḍugu Venkaṭa Rāmamūrti Pantulu," Guṇṭūr 1933 : 'Khāravela', pp. 71-74).

Ancient Tamil before 500 A.D.	Old Tamil 500-1350 A.D.	Middle Tamil 1350-1800 A.D.	New Tamil 1800—
*Satiya- -magavan' [Ganapati]	Atiya-mān'	Adiya-mān'	Aḍiyamān'
*Damizakam [Sita, Sitai]	Kanapati Tamizakam Citai	Kanabadi Tamizagam Cidai, S'idai	K ^h anaḥaḍi T ^h amizaham S'iḥei
[Damayanti]	Tamayanti	Tamayandi	T ^h amayandi
[Siddha-]	Cilappatikarām Cittar	S'ileppadigāram S'ittar	S'ilappaḍiyāram S'ittar
[Trikatukam]	Kalittokai Kampar	Kalittogai Kambar	K ^h alittohei K ^h ambar
[Bhudatta-]	Tirikatukam Patir'r'uppattu	Tirigadugam Paditt'r'uppattu	T ^h iriyaduham P ^h aḍitt'r'uppattu
[Mahā- bhāratam]	Netum-celiyan' Ilam-Kō-vatika! Putattār	Nedunjeliyan' Ilangoṇadiga! Pudattār	Nedunjeliyan Ilangoṇadiha! P ^h uḍattār
[Nal-girār, Nar'girār]	Makāpāratam, Mā- Nar'kkirār, Nakkirār	Magābāradam Mā- Nakkirār	Mahāḥaraḍam Nakkirār

23. A close discussion of the phonetic and morphological character of Cen-tamiḻ by comparing it with 'Ancient Tamil' of the period round about Christ discloses the fact that despite the general ascription of the *Tol-kāppiyam* and the Sangam literature as a mass to about 1800 to 2000 years from now, from the linguistic point of view the texts as we have them are not so ancient. The exaggerated antiquity proposed for the First and the Second Sangams, of course, cannot be taken seriously, and the Third Sangam was certainly historical, and to this Sangam we must ascribe the first serious beginnings of Cen-tamiḻ literature. The period might be the few centuries both before and after the Christian era, and 'Ancient Tamil' was first essayed to be elevated into a written language with Brahmi letters during this period. With the Brahmi alphabet came a great wave of cultural influence from the North, and Tamil received its first stratum of Aryan words, which through phonetic development of a far-reaching character which characterised the language in this age, ultimately worked a sad havoc with Sanskrit and other words, transforming e.g. *sabhā* to *avai*, *srāvaṇa* to *āvaṇi*, *pūrvāṣādhā* to *purāṭam*, *sahasram* to *āyiram*, *sneha* to *ney*, etc. The poets and kings and other personalities connected with Sangam works like the *Pattuppāṭṭu*, the *Eṭṭuttokai*, the *Pati-neṇ-kīḻ-kaṇakku*, the *Maṇimēkalai*, the *Cilappatikāram*, may really belong to the first few centuries A.D., but the works as they are current cannot go back in their *language* to this high antiquity. The literary content and form of these works are certainly ancient—but the language is four to five hundred years younger than the time when they are supposed to have been composed. In other words, it can be very reasonably assumed that the originals of these Sangam works were composed in 'Ancient Tamil' of the first three centuries after Christ, but they have had their language altered, and they are found in Cen-tamiḻ redactions which must date from about 600 A.D. and later.

24. A significant legend or tradition in this connexion may be mentioned. It is said that the very famous Sangam poet Nar'kkirār, whose date has been suggested as the 2nd century A.D., made a commentary on the *Akapporul*, known also as the *Kalaviyal*, "a grammar of love poetry in 60 *sūtras*" composed by Iraiyan'ār, a contemporary of Nar'kkirār. The tradition is that Nar'kkirār's "commentary was handed down orally for ten generations, when it was put into writing." (*Studies in Tamil Literature and History* by V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, London, Luzac & Co., Printed in Madras, 1930, p. 5). Thus there is tradition, accepted as genuine by most scholars—Old Tamil writers and modern historians—that a book could be composed in the middle of the 2nd century A.D., transmitted orally for 10 generations involving at least 250 years (computing a generation, as is commonly done, at 25 years), and written down, obviously in the altered language of two and a half centuries later. Thus according to this tradition, the final redaction of at least one of the Sangam works would easily come to c. 400 A.D.; and it could be brought down to a later period still, if 30 years or more are given to a single generation. Thus we may say that Nar'kkirār, as typical of Sangam poets, wrote in 'Ancient Tamil' of the 2nd century A.D., but his book has been preserved in Cen-tamiḻ of the 5th century at the earliest and probably of the 6th or 7th century.

25. Another point to be noted is that a grammatical description of language or a formulation of the subject matter of its literature (such as we find in the *Tol-kāppiyam*) can only be later than or contemporaneous with that literature as it is flourishing in the language, and this grammatical description and formulation cannot antedate the mass of literature which forms their basis. Hence it cannot be accepted that the *Tol-kāppiyam* belongs to the 4th or even the 3rd century B.C., as V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar has suggested (*op. cit.*, p. 13).

26. Such a state of things is nothing new or remarkable in the history of literature—viz., of literary composition in one form, and an earlier one, and preservation and transmission in another and a later form of the language. The Vedas were probably compiled in the 10th century B.C., when writing—a kind of Proto-Brahmi script derived from the latest phase of the pre-Aryan Panjab and Sindh script—was in all likelihood first employed for the Aryan language in India; but some at least of the Vedic hymns were composed several centuries earlier and were continued from generation to generation by oral tradition, and these were unquestionably first composed in an older form of the speech than what we find in the compiled text, which is our received text. The compositions of a medieval poet are frequently found in a modern form of the language when there was no contemporary writing down of these. In Celtic Ireland, the Old Irish tales about the Irish heroes like King Conchobar and Queen Medb, Cuchulain and Emer, Noisi and Derdriu, Finn Mac Cumhal and Oisín, which in many cases were composed in the early centuries of the Christian era, are found in a much later form of the language in MSS. like the *Leabhar na h-Uidhre* dating from about 1100 A.D. An Irish hero of the 1st century A.D. knew himself as **Kunokobros*, but this name was changed by the 9th century to *Concobar*; and similarly **Vindi* of the same period became, 800 years after, *Find* or *Finn*. So too with the general body of the language. Yet the literary remains in 12th century MSS. hark back to the 1st century A.D. New Persian of c. 1000 A.D. as in Firdausi's *Shāh-nāmā* preserves a good deal of early material paraphrased, from Pahlavi of c. 500 A.D., and in some cases still earlier, and nobody, until linguistic investigation of Iranian on historical lines came to the field, knew that *Rustam* in 1000 A.D. was **Rotstam* in 400 A.D. and **Raudastama* in 600 B.C., or that *Sohrāb* was similarly *Suxrāsp* in Pahlavi and *Suxrāspa* in Old Iranian. The period of time intervening has to be considered: the 'Ancient Tamil' equivalents, or rather,

originals or sources, of the later redactions of Sangam Literature, of the works of *Nar'kkīrār* (or **Nal-gīrār*) and *Rudran' Kaṇṇan'ār*, of *Kapilar* and *Cītalai Cāttan'ār*, and of others, were possibly not very much removed from the Cen-tamiḻ of a later epoch. The morphology was perhaps very similar, only the phonetic atmosphere was different.

27. This will thus be quite in the fitness of things, to consider the progress of Tamil to have been along this line: Primitive Dravidian, c. 1500 B.C. > South Dravidian, c. 600 B.C. > Ancient Tamil, c. 300 B.C.—400 A.D. > Period of Transition, 400-600 A.D. > Old Tamil or Cen-tamiḻ, c. 600 A.D. to 1350 A.D. (writings in 'Ancient Tamil', the original Sangam literature, were gradually changed to the Cen-tamiḻ of literature that we now have) > Middle Tamil, c. 1350-1800 A.D. > New or Modern Tamil, after 1800.

28. The literature in Cen-tamiḻ, moreover, represents two stages or strata—one, earlier, the Sangam literature based on that originally composed in 'Ancient Tamil' times; and two, the new religious literature of Sivaism and Viṣṇuism—of *bhakti*, coming into the field after about 600 A.D., which was the great contribution of Tamizakam to the spiritual heritage of India, the works of the Siddhas or *Cittār* and the Bhaktas or *Aḻvārs*, which were compiled in the *Tēvāram* and the *Nāl-āyirap-pirapantam* respectively by Nampi-aṇṭār-nampi and Śrī Nāthamuni in the 11th century. Of course, both these types of literature have their unique originality; but the world of Sangam literature is something unique for Tamil, and the cultural atmosphere of this world marks it off as something which, for its special value of originality in depicting both man and nature, has to be ranked with the great national literatures of antiquity and medieval age in the different languages of the world, like Old Arabic of the pre-Islamic period, Old Irish, Old Norse, Early Finnish, Old Turki, and the rest.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

Through the courtesy of Prof. T. N. Srikantaiya and Prof. V. I. Subramaniam, I have been enabled to obtain the text of the oldest Tamil inscription hitherto discovered—the Tirunatharkundra Inscription in proto-Tamil characters of c. 400 A.D. from South Arcot district, near Jinji (Travancore Archaeological Series, Vol. I, 1910-1913, p. 231). The inscription runs as follows: *aimpattēz-an'a/can'annōr'r'a/Cantirananti ā/cirīkar nicītikai*. 'The *nisidikā* of Candranandin Ācārya who (died) observing 57 days' fasting'. This inscription demonstrates that already by the end of the 4th century A.D. the Cen-tamiḻ character of the language, in having only unvoiced stops and no sibilants, was established. The commencement of the Cen-Tamiḻ stage may thus go back to c. 350 A.D., rather than to 500 A.D., as suggested above.

Prof. Srikantaiya tells me that in the oldest Kannada inscription that we have, the Halmiḍi Inscription of c. 450 A.D., and thus only younger by about half a century than the oldest Tamil inscription, the Pūrvada-Paḷa/Paḷa-Gannaḍa (or pre-Old Kannada) speech of it shows a good number of words with—intervocal voiced plosives which are original, and which in Old Tamil occur invariably as unvoiced. Similarly in the oldest Telugu inscriptions also. Prof. Srikantaiya thinks that the common South Dravidian word for 'road' was **adar*, which became, from an extended form **adari*, by regular sound-change, *dāri* in Telugu (which was taken over by Kannada from Telugu), and Old Tamil shows the change of -*d*-, the original sound, as -*t*- in *atar*.

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The Brahmi Inscriptions of South India and the Sangam Age

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The Brāhmī inscriptions which were discovered in the Madurai and Tirunelveli districts early in the century¹ have continued to baffle students of Indian history. Meanwhile, in 1945, the excavations at Arikāmēḍu have revealed, amidst other interesting material, twenty pot-shreds bearing graffiti which present short inscriptions. In respect of script and language the graffiti show a marked resemblance to the fifty epigraphs of the Madurai and Tirunelveli districts mentioned above.² Several attempts have been made to determine the script and language as well as the contents and significance of these inscriptions.

It is indisputable that the characters employed in all these epigraphs are Brāhmī, paleographically assigned to about the 3rd century B.C. The script resembles in a large measure those of the Bhaṭṭiprōḷu casket inscriptions, the celebrated Aśōkan epigraphs and the early inscriptions of Ceylon. Nevertheless, there appear certain notable differences, too. For instance, the symbol taken to represent *ḍa* is peculiar to the South Indian Brāhmī inscriptions. The symbol for *ḷa*, which occurs several times here, is totally absent in the Northern Brāhmī epigraphs. The formation of 'ma' in the southern records, as a loop with a cross bar, is markedly different from that found in the Aśōkan and Bhaṭṭiprōḷu inscriptions. The differences have led certain archaeologists to suggest that the script of the Arikāmēḍu

¹ Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy for 1912, Plate facing p. 57; Idem for 1915—Pl. facing p. 88 and idem for 1918, Pl. facing p. 7.

² Ancient India, No. 2. p. 109.

graffiti as well as that of the inscriptions lower down in the south belonged to the Draviḍi pattern, as distinct from the North Indian Brāhmī of the Aśōkan type.³

It has also been suggested that the Draviḍi form of Brāhmī is the immediate ancestor of Vaṭṭeḷuttu, which preceded the modern Tamil script. This view, propounded by Dr. Buhler, was opposed by Dr. Haraprasada Sastri who thought that Vaṭṭeḷuttu developed from Kharōṣṭhi.⁴ But it must be observed that Kharōṣṭhi, unlike Brāhmī, has almost similar symbols for several letters, has fewer loops and is written from right to left. Vaṭṭeḷuttu has decidedly more features in common with Brāhmī than with Kharōṣṭhi and this seems to confirm the view that it was an adaptation of Brāhmī.⁵ Vaṭṭeḷuttu was common in South India till about 1000 A.D. after which, too, for several centuries, it was continued in the Malayalam country.

On the question of the language of the South Indian Brāhmī inscriptions the views of experts vary. Mr. H. Krishna Sastri struggled hard at the identification of the language of these records, and while indicating the numerous derivations from Tamil on the one hand and the several words which were entirely unidentifiable on the

³ Dr. Buhler postulated the view that sometime prior to the 5th century B.C. the Draviḍi script branched itself off from the main stock of Brāhmī which was Semitic in origin, and developed certain peculiarities. (Buhler: *Indian Paleography*, Appendix 8). But Edward Thomas, Cunningham and Dowson held that the Brāhmī script itself was of Draviḍian origin and that the northern type is the offshoot of the original. Cunningham in particular believed that Brāhmī was derived from a lost pictographic source. Prof. Langden detected the influence of the Mohenjodaro and Harappa script on Brāhmī, and this view has been strengthened by the findings of Dr. G. R. Hunter. (See G. R. Hunter: "The Script of Harappa and Mohenjodaro and its connection with the Indus Valley culture, as appears to have been the case, the Dravidian origin of Brāhmī is plausible. See also 'Ancient India' No. 9 (1953) p. 215.

⁴ Bihar Orissa Research Society Journal, Vol. I, p. 58.
⁵ Buhler: *Indian Palaeography*, p. 73. Contra: Burnell, *Elements of South Indian Palaeography*, p. 49. Dr. Burnell imagines on grounds, which are uncertain, that the Tamils adopted Vatteluttu from the Phoenician script. T. A. G. Rao demonstrates the affinity of Vatteluttu to Brāhmī. See TAS. Vol. I, p. 284.

other, suggested the view that the language was Early Tamil with an admixture of Prākṛit words.⁶ Less circum-spect was Mr. K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar who categorically pronounced the language of the inscriptions as Old Tamil. Frequently he was obliged to resort to wild conjectures for the purpose of reading Tamil words into the available material.⁷

The variations in their respective readings too, are striking. For example, what is accepted as 'je' in the Ānamalai inscription by Mr. Sastri is taken as 'ku' by Mr. Aiyar. What Mr. Sastri reads as 'jam' in the Tirup-paramkunṛam epigraph is read by Mr. Aiyar as 'la' and so on. Certain words, too, have been translated differently by these two writers. Some translations are palpably wrong, while certain others do not convey any sense whatever.⁸

Dr. C. Narayanarao, rejecting for the most part the readings of the two above-mentioned epigraphists, provides his own, and concludes that the language of the records is the Paisācī form of Prākṛit.⁹ Arguing that all the contemporary Brāhmī inscriptions are in Prākṛit, he attempts to furnish a Prākṛit derivation to the entire body of epigraphs. For instance, the words 'Koṭupitāvān', 'koṭupitōn', 'kuṭupitā', 'koṭupitān' and 'kuṭupitavan' occurring in the Kongarpulitangulam, Āriṭṭāpaṭṭi, Murugāltalai, Uṇḍāṅkal and Aḷagarmalai inscriptions respectively are all construed by him to have emanated from the Pāli root 'Koṭṭēti', while the other writers derive it from the Tamil word 'Koṭu' or 'kuṭu', meaning 'to cut'. A Tamil inscription of Narasimhavarman Pallavamalla has employed the term in this sense,¹⁰ and it seems that the

⁶ Proceedings of the First All India Oriental Conference, pp. 327-48.

⁷ Proceedings of the Third All India Oriental Conference, pp. 275-300.

⁸ For e.g. 'Potatan' in the Kongarpulitangulam inscriptions is taken to mean 'one belonging to'. Again 'Kavly' in the Muttupatti inscription is conjectured to be either a proper name or a cave.

⁹ The New Indian Antiquary, Vol. I, pp. 362-76.

¹⁰ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. IV, p. 137.

Tamil origin is correct. Nor is Dr. Rao's attempt to trace 'Nāḍu' to a Sanskrit origin from the root 'Naṭ', meaning to 'wander' convincing. Again, such words as 'Uḍaiyu', probably akin to 'uḍaiyān', 'ēri' meaning a tank, 'tantaiy' meaning father, 'Mākan', meaning son, 'ūra', meaning village, are apparently Tamil words. While Mr. Subrahmanya Aiyar's venture to connect 'Veṇ' with Vēṇāḍ is far-fetched, we may well accept that the word 'Veṇ' occurring in some of the inscriptions and derived from 'Vēl', signified a local chief.¹¹ On the whole Dr. Rao's position is as untenable as that taken by Mr. Aiyar. Assuredly, Dr. Rao's approval of the view that the prevailing language in the Pāṇḍya country of the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. was Paisācī is as startling as it is unsound.¹²

The legitimate inference seems to be that these votive inscriptions are in a hybrid language containing Tamil as well as Prākṛit words. If certain words mentioned earlier are Tamil, others like 'pāḷi', 'upāchā', 'chēiya' and 'lēnā' are Prākṛit. The explanation for this strange feature is not far to seek. Buddhist devotees, soaked in Prākṛit, the classical language of Buddhism, attempted to have (Prākṛit) epigraphs inscribed in a manner that could be understood by the people of the region. That accounts for the strange jumble of words belonging to two different languages. The verbal forms, wherever they can be made out, seem to be in archaic Tamil, but it must be remembered that, for the most part, the inscriptions are content with recording the names of those who had the caverns excavated. It is of supreme importance, therefore, to remember that these epigraphs are not of great value to the study of

¹¹ The Uṇḍāṅkal inscriptions clearly suggest this.

¹² An attempt to trace the roots of certain Dravidian words to Paisācī made by K. Amrita Rao seems to be more ingenious than convincing. See "The Dravidian Affinities of the Paisaca Languages of North-Western Asia" in Sir Asutosh Mookherjee Silver Jubilee Volume III, *Orientalia*, Part 2, pp. 427-32. Prof. K. A. N. Sastri's suggestion that the language pattern mentioned in 'Monuments of Sanchi', Vol. I, p. 280, does not explain the presence of Tamil words. See *Madras University Journal*, Vol. XIV, pp. 3-4.

linguistic development. The Arikāmēḍu graffiti have a more pronounced leaning towards Tamil, though they too are not Tamil inscriptions, pure and simple; there are several Prākṛit words there too.

It is an indubitable fact that the South Indian Brāhmī epigraphs are all associated with the Buddhists. The mountain caverns called Panchapāṇḍavarmalai which present the Brāhmī inscriptions are located in almost inaccessible heights of mountain slopes while others are found in out-of-the-way places and still others in the interior of woods. Panchapāṇḍavarmalai probably acquired its name from Pāṇḍavapabbata, associated with the Buddha's name. Again Kaḷugumalai, where some of these caverns are found, is the Tamil equivalent for Gridharkūṭa, or the 'Vulture Peak', intimately connected with the Buddha's career. Circumstantial evidences all show that they were the abodes of Buddhist monks; in particular, the caverns which provide beds with raised elevations for resting the head, resemble the numerous Buddhist monuments of Ceylon, containing similar inscriptions.¹³ Little wonder, therefore, that the inscriptions are dominated by the Prākṛit element, though the authors of these records seem to have struggled hard at making themselves understood by the people of the locality.¹⁴ In these circumstances it is extremely problematic to hold that the languages of these inscriptions are truly representative of the standard of the Tamil language.

¹³ Arikāmēḍu itself appears to have been a Buddhist centre. Not far removed from the Roman warehouse at Arikāmēḍu lies the Kakkayan tope, where a stone image of the Buddha has been discovered.

¹⁴ That the Buddhists tried to have their inscriptions engraved in a manner suited to the locality may be seen from the following examples: (a) an epigraph at Maunggun in Burma, comprising quotations from Pāli Buddhist scriptures written in characters which resemble the class of South Indian alphabets (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. V, pp. 101-2); (b) another on a stupa at Khin-bha-gon in Burma in *Pyu* and *Pali* engraved in the early Telugu-Canarese script of South India (*Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report, 1926-7*, pp. 171 ff) and (c) another at Kyundawzu in old Prome containing the formula of Vinaya and Sutta Pīṭaka engraved in the same early South Indian script (*Idem, 1928-9*, p. 109). Apparently this script was in vogue there among the South Indian colonists.

Obviously the inferences attempted to be drawn by certain scholars regarding the history of the Tamil language on the basis of such doubtful hypothesis is venturesome, to say the least of it. For instance, depending exclusively on the questionable deductions derived from the above-mentioned Brāhmī inscriptions, Dr. N. P. Chakravarti has rushed to the conclusion that the language of the S'āṅgam literature cannot be dated earlier than 500 A.D., for, he contends that several centuries should have intervened before the 'crude Tamil of the Brāhmī inscriptions' attained the pattern of S'āṅgam classics.¹⁵

Such a deduction hardly fits in with the known chronology of the literary development of Tamil. In the first place, it is now incontestably proved that the Tirujñāna-sambandar lived about the middle of the 7th century A.D. and that Tirunāvukkaraśar was contemporaneous with him. A considerable span of time must have doubtless intervened between the S'āṅgam Tamil and Tēvāram Tamil. The syntax and vocabulary of the language of these two epochs appear markedly different. The Tēvāram hymns are nothing, if not simple, direct and popular invocations while the S'āṅgam classics are conspicuously archaic and terse.

Nor do the religious and social conditions revealed by the literature of these two epochs show similarity. The gods mentioned, as well as the rituals and ceremonies adopted, show a pronouncedly different set up. For example, Māyōṇ of the S'āṅgam age became Kṛishṇa or Viṣṇu, and S'ēyōṇ coalesced with Subrahmaṇya, while Varuṇa and Indra practically disappeared from the Pantheon. The acrimonious rivalry between Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism which is a dominant feature of the Tēvāram period has no parallel in the S'āṅgam epoch. Meat and liquor, so popular in the S'āṅgam age, are despised in the era of the hymns.

¹⁵ Presidential address delivered at the All India Historical Congress held at Ahmedabad in December 1954.

Assuredly none can think of assigning the S'āṅgam literature posterior to the Tēvāram hymns.¹⁶ For one thing there is positive reference in Tēvāram to the S'āṅgam.¹⁷ Besides, Tirunāvukkaraśar speaks of Pāri of old as the paragon of generosity who is none other than the celebrated Pāri immortalised in the S'āṅgam literature by Kapilar. The same hymnist refers in a song to Lord S'iva's helping a destitute poet, Tarumi, to gain a purse of gold in the 'S'āṅgam'.¹⁸

Moreover, those who are inclined to assign the S'āṅgam works to a period later than the 2nd or 3rd century A.D. fail to explain the significant absence of reference to the Pallavas in those classics. Frequently the Mūvēndar are specified as the great monarchs of Tamiḻakam and several minor chiefs are mentioned as well; no plausible reason exists for the omission of the Pallavas if they flourished about that time within the traditional limits of Tamiḻakam. The poets and pāṇar of the S'āṅgam age, who were always in quest of royal patrons could be reasonably expected to have made direct or indirect reference to the Pallavas, if they reigned at Kāñchi in the same epoch. On the other hand, the Perumpāṇāṟruppaḍai speaks of Toṇḍaimān ḷantiraiyan who ruled at Kāñchipuram in the pre-Pallava period. (The suggested contemporaneity of Trilōchana Pallava of the Dekkān, Vijayāditya Chāḷūkyā and Karikāla Chōḷa is entirely based upon legends which have been incorporated in the late inscriptions of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D.) Nor could the S'āṅgam poems on the royal patrons have appeared during the period of chaos caused by the Kaḷabhra invasions of the Tamiḻ Nāḍu about the 5th century A.D.

¹⁶ Not even Mr. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, who has ascribed the S'ilappadikāram to the 8th or 9th century A.D. on grounds which are unconvincing, has assigned the other S'āṅgam classics to the post-Tēvāram period.

¹⁷ Tiruttevur Tēvāram, ii, 10.

¹⁸ Tiruputtur Tiruttāṇḍagam, ii, line 2. Tirumangai Ālvār, who lived in the 8th century, if not earlier, has spoken of 'Sangamukattamil' or the high standard of Tamil brought into vogue by the Sangam (Periya Tirumoli iii-4-10).

Above all, the data provided by the early Greek geographers confirm in a remarkable measure the details found in the Tamil classics and thereby help the determination of their date. There are several references to 'Yavanās' in the S'āṅgam works, and doubtless, the term denoted Greeks in the first instance.¹⁹ Later, the Romans, Arabs, and all foreigners were called by the same name.

The Greeks, and following them, the Romans had come to South India as traders, and there arose several commercial settlements of Yavanas in the country.²⁰ A poem describes the prosperous port of Muchiri, whither the fine large ships of the Yavanas came bearing gold, making the water white with foam, and returned laden with pepper, along with the rare products of the sea and mountains given by the Chēra king.²¹ Pepper became the 'Yavana-priya' or the spice dear to the Romans, and it is said that pepper formed more than half the cargo of many a west-bound Roman ship.²² Pepper, as well as ginger, is mentioned in Graeco-Roman medicine even in the early half of the 1st century A.D.

The Yavanas are known to have been employed by South Indian monarchs for rendering certain kinds of service for which they were eminently qualified. There is a reference to Yavana guards at the palace of the Pāṇḍyan king Āryappaḍaikaḍanda Neḍumceḷiyan²³ while Roman soldiers are known to have been enlisted in the fighting forces of several Pāṇḍyan kings. The Padirruppattu mentions a conflict between the Yavanas and the Chēra king, Imayavaramban Neḍunjēralātan²⁴ as a result of which the

¹⁹ In North India, too, they were known as Yavanas. Patanjali refers to the Greeks as Yavanas in his Mahabhashyam.

²⁰ S'ilappadikāram, V. 9-10.

²¹ Ahanānūru, 149; Puranānūru, 343. Compare these data with the accounts of Greek geographers.

²² E. H. Warmington: 'The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India', p. 182.

²³ S'ilappadikāram, XIV. 62-7.

²⁴ Padirruppattu: 2nd Decad.

Yavanas were vanquished and imprisoned, though the cause of the rupture remains a mystery. A song in Mullaippāṭṭu depicts the personal appearance of the Yavanas, their distinctive habits as well as their amazing skill in certain arts and crafts. It adds that their spoken language having been unintelligible to the Tamils, the Yavanas were obliged to employ gestures in order to make themselves understood.²⁵ The astounding skill displayed by the Yavanas in making artistic lamps of brass is adverted to more than once.²⁶ Puranānūru speaks of the importation of delicious wine which was eagerly sought for by kings and courtiers.²⁷

The significance of this literary evidence lies in that it tallies remarkably with the data furnished by the Greek writers of the early centuries of the Christian Era, thereby yielding testimony to the chronology of the S'āṅgam. Pliny describes India of the time of Augustus.²⁸ The author of the Periplus, who wrote in the latter half of the first century A.D. describes the conditions of that period, while Ptolemy, the last of the great geographers, who lived about 150 A.D. speaks of India of the 2nd century A.D. Thus it is not extravagant to suppose that it was the Greek description of the commerce of the 1st two centuries A.D. which was reflected in the S'āṅgam Classics.

Moreover, the hoards of Roman coins unearthed in South India indicate the period when the Roman commerce reached its height.²⁹ By far the largest number of the coins belongs to Augustus and Tiberius.³⁰ The references in

²⁵ Mullaippāṭṭu, 59-66.

²⁶ Perumpāṇarrupāḍai, 316-9; Neḍunalvāḍai, 101-3.

²⁷ Puranānūru, 56.

²⁸ Pliny *Natural History*, VI, 142-62.

²⁹ See map showing the distribution of Roman coins, fig. 48, *Ancient India*, No. 2, p. 117.

³⁰ R. Sewell: 'Roman coins found in India', *JRAS.*, 1904, pp. 200 ff. H. G. Rawlinson: 'Intercourse between India and the Western World', pp. 120-1. E. H. Warmington: 'The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India', pp. 286-95. The author, in his critical review, agrees with Chwostow who explains the scarcity of Roman coins in Tamil Nāḍu

Roman sources to the two embassies received by Augustus from the Pāṇḍyan king³¹ and to a temple of Augustus at Muziris³² tend to confirm the evidence of coins.

In this context the chronological datum furnished by the Arikāṁēḍu inscriptions is illuminating. The excavations have revealed that Arikāṁēḍu was not only an ancient town and port, evidently identifiable with the 'Poduke' of Ptolemy, but also a centre of trade with the Graeco-Roman world. The unique value of the discoveries lies in that they enable us to date the culture of the region almost precisely. On the basis of internal and external evidence, Dr. Mortimer Wheeler concludes that the pottery and the Arretine ware and amphorae, imported from Italy, can be dated to 20—50 A.D. He states: "From a convergence of evidence it is here inferred that the sites were first occupied at the end of the 1st century B.C., or beginning of the 1st century A.D. with an inclination towards the later date."³³ Sometime in the 2nd century A.D. the warehouse in Arikāṁēḍu appears to have been deserted, and therefore, the glorious epoch of Arikāṁēḍu's industrial and commercial activity ranged about the 1st two centuries of the Christian era. Thus the testimony provided by Arikāṁēḍu accords well with the evidence furnished by the Greek writers on the one hand, and by the S'aṅgam classics on the other. Thereby it reinforces the case for ascribing the S'aṅgam works to about the early centuries of the Christian era, postulated on the basis of the Gajabāhu S'eṅguṭṭuvan synchronism.

Consequently the inference is inescapable that the Brāhmī inscriptions of South India of c. 3rd century B.C.

subsequent to the time of Tiberius by the circumstance that, learning of the popularity of the earlier pattern in South India the later emperors reissued coins of Augustus and Tiberius, but adds that after the 2nd century A.D. Romans traded more with the north-west districts of India than with the Tamil States.

³¹ Strabo: Geography XV, 4 and 73.

³² The Peutingerian Tables.

³³ *Ancient India*, op. cit. p. 24.

to 1st century A.D. cannot be taken to represent the contemporary language, and that it is clearly unhistoric to post-date the Classics on the basis of these strange records.

The attempt of the reputed linguist to distinguish three stages in the evolution of Tamil, viz., the Primitive Dravidian, Ancient Tamil and Chentamiḷ and to equate Ancient Tamil with the language of the early Brāhmī inscriptions of South India seems a misdirected one.³⁴ His suggestion that the originals of the S'aṅgam classics were composed in the Ancient Tamil of the early Christian era and that the language changed later into Chentamiḷ in which they were written in the 7th century A.D. is at once interesting and ingenious. But until it is proved that the inscriptions truly represent the then prevalent Tamil language, the line of approach adopted by the learned writer seems unwarranted.

³⁴ See Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji's article on 'Old Tamil, Ancient Tamil and Primitive Dravidian' reproduced in the current issue of the *Tamil Culture*.

Voiced and Voiceless Stops in Tamil

A. SUBBIAH.

A century ago, Caldwell, the well known Dravidian philologist, enunciated a law which he designated as the 'Dravidian Law of the Convertibility of surds and sonants', in the following terms :

k, t: t, p, the first unaspirated consonants of the first, third, fourth and fifth vargas are always pronounced as tenues or surds at the beginning of words and whenever they are doubled. The same consonants are always pronounced as medials or sonants (i.e. as g, d:, d, b) when single in the middle of words. A sonant cannot commence a word, neither is a surd admissible in the middle, except when doubled; and so imperative is this law, and so strictly is it adhered to, that when words are borrowed from languages in which a different principle prevails, as Sanskrit or English, the consonant of those words change from sonants to surds or *vice versa*, according to their position—e.g., *ḍanta*, Sanskrit, a tooth, becomes in Tamil, *tandam*; *bhāga*, Sanskrit, happiness, becomes *pākkiyam*.

The Tamilian rule which requires the same consonant to be pronounced as k in one position and as g in another—as t:, t, p, in one position, and as d:, d, b, in another—is not a mere dialectic peculiarity, the gradual result of circumstances, or a modern refinement invented by grammarians, but is essentially inherent in the language and has been a characteristic principle of it from the beginning.¹ (Italics mine).

In framing this law, Caldwell was perhaps the first² modern Scholar to draw attention to a linguistic pheno-

¹ Dr. Robert Caldwell, 'Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Languages', Third Edition, London, 1913, pp. 138-139.

² In the Preface to his work *The Phoneme: its Nature and Use* (Cambridge, 1950), Dr. Daniel Jones says that the Phoneme idea is implicit in Henry Sweet's work, *Handbook of Phonetics* (Oxford, 1877), but Caldwell published the first edition of his work as early as 1856.

menon, which later was elaborated into the theory of Phonemes. The credit, however, for identifying this Tamil phenomenon with the theory of Phonemes goes to Daniel Jones, the eminent phonetician, who wrote :

'Tamil is a language which illustrates particularly well the grouping of several quite distinct sounds into single phonemes. The grouping has been worked out by J. R. Firth, and details will be found in his *Short Outline of Tamil Pronunciation*'³.....

'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.'⁴

Although the theory had not been formulated, it is implicit⁵ in the description of the phonetic structure of Tamil given in the oldest extant Tamil Grammar, *Tholkappiyam*, written long before the Third Sangam (Academy) period,⁶ which is now generally assigned to the centuries immediately preceding and following the commencement of the Christian era. C. R. Sankaran, himself a Sanskrit Scholar and a research worker in experimental phonetics, writes :

'Phonemes are significant classes of speech-sounds, in terms of which alone an organisation of the descriptive study of speech sounds of any language is possible. We meet with the accurate description of phonemes of the Old Tamil language, built apparently on the results of

³ Published as an appendix to the 1934 edition of *Arden's Grammar of Common Tamil*.

⁴ Dr. Daniel Jones, *Ibid*, pp. 22-23.

⁵ A Senthamilan, *Tamil Culture*, Vol. IV, January 1955, p. 61.

⁶ As a grammar presupposes the prior existence of a substantial body of literature and a literary tradition and as the earliest extant Tamil works relate to the historical (Third) Sangam period, an inference has sometimes been erroneously drawn by scholars who have no intimate acquaintance with Tamil classical literature that *Tholkappiyam* must necessarily be either contemporaneous with or later than the Sangam literature. No one, however, who makes an unbiased study of the grammatical features of the language as described in *Tholkappiyam* and compares them with the Sangam works, can fail to come to the conclusion that *Tholkappiyam* must have preceded the latter by a period of centuries to allow

phonetic study, in Tholkappiyam, 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 Ashtadyayi of Panini.....

We also learn from this great work a good deal about the allophones or positional variants (viz. members of a phoneme which is itself a class of speech-sounds) whose *variant character is determined by the neighbouring phonemes*.....

The author of Tholkappiyam by the rare insight he has displayed in his work, in regard to his treatment of the Old Tamil spoken in his time, has made the work of the modern analyst operating on the Old Tamil considerably easy'.⁷

Those portions of Tholkappiyam which deal with the phonetic structure of Tamil are indeed well worth study by linguistic scholars. The logical purposiveness underlying the rules, which weaves the phonetic structure of Tamil into a variegated but well knit pattern of sound harmony, will come as a great surprise to modern phoneticians, who have yet to explore this field. One recalls to mind, what W. W. Hunter said towards the close of the last century :

'Philology has hitherto concerned herself almost exclusively with Indo-Germanic and Semitic speech ; with

material grammatical changes such as are evident in the Sangam works to evolve. One example will suffice ; in *Tholkappiyam*, verse No. 62, it is laid down that the vocalic consonant ஈ (ea) cannot occur initially in a word but, already in the Sangam works, the number of words with this initial vocalic consonant is large. Like most Indian traditions, the traditional accounts relating to the First and Second Tamil Sangams are perhaps a jumble of fact and fiction but there are no valid reasons for rejecting out of hand the existence of the earlier Sangams, particularly as later works contain references to, and quotations from this earlier literature. The first and second Sangam works are now completely lost ; it is well to remember in this connection that even the third Sangam works—at least most of them—were unearthed, edited and published only during the last few decades.

⁷ Professor C. R. Sankaran, *Phonemics of Old Tamil*, Poona 1951, pp. 9-10.

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, eight years ago, afforded the foundation upon which the present system of philology has been reared'.⁸

More recently, Dr. Gilbert Slater wrote :

We have here a language-system structurally entirely alien from the Indo-Germanic languages, one which belongs to a more ancient type of language ; for the study of inflections in the Indo-Germanic languages shows that these are the degenerate remains of separable additions to roots or stems, and in Tamil such linguistic decay has not taken place. The fact that *present day spoken and literary Tamil perpetuates a much more ancient stage in the evolution of language than that represented by even the most ancient Sanskrit*, seems to suggest that the Tamil language became fixed in its literary character at an extraordinarily ancient date, and points to an extraordinarily ancient Dravidic Civilization. Then again the wonderfully logical and subtle character of the language is such as to arouse the admiration of any student'.⁹

In this article, we are concerned with verse No. 22 of Tholkappiyam, which anticipates in substance the modern theory of Phonemes. This verse reads :

அம்முவாரும் வழங்கியல் மருங்கின்
மெய்ம்மயங்குடனிலை தெரியுங்காலை

when those thrice six consonants occur in speech,
the consonant in contact undergoes (sound) modification
if carefully observed.

This cryptic verse does not say however what actual modifications occur ; for this we have to rely, firstly on what might be considered the most natural modification which a consonant needs to undergo to harmonise with its neighbouring consonant and, secondly, on the actual modi-

⁸ Sir W. W. Hunter, Preface to *A Comparative Dictionary of the Languages of India and High Asia*.

⁹ Dr. Gilbert Slater, *Sir Austosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes*, Calcutta, 1925, Vol. III, Part 2, p. 92.

fications which can be observed in present day dialects, particularly as the phonetic structure of the Tamil language as described in Tholkappiyam remains practically unchanged today.

The consonant phonemes of Tamil are divided into three classes :

Hard : க (k), ச (c), ட (t), த (th), ப (p), த் (t)

Soft : ங (ng), ஞ (nj), ண (n), ன் (nh), ம (m), ன் (n)

Medium : ய (y), ர (r), ல (l), வ (v), ழ (l-), ள (l:) ¹⁰

To use modern terminology, the hard consonants may be equated with plosives or stops, the soft with nasals and the medium with non-nasal and non-fricative continuants such as semi-vowels, liquids etc. The principal members of the hard consonants or stops are unvoiced and unaspirated, while those of the other two classes are voiced and unaspirated.

Taking the hard consonants or stops with which alone we are concerned in this article, they may occur in one or other of the following combinations :

(a) a hard consonant preceded by the same or another hard consonant

(b) a hard consonant preceded by a soft consonant

(c) a hard consonant preceded by a medium consonant.

The phonetic pattern of Tamil does not permit a combination where a hard consonant may be followed by a soft or medium consonant. What are the sound modifications which one might expect to occur in the above cases which would on the one hand avoid hiatus and on the other ensure acoustic and euphonic harmony? The articulatory features which distinguish these three classes of consonants are : (a) full obstruction in the mouth resulting in plosion

¹⁰ The system of transliteration described in the concluding pages of Tamil Culture has been adopted here.

for Hard consonants ; (b) nasal articulation resulting in voicing for Soft ; and (c) partial obstruction facilitating a continuant sound for Medium. When a hard consonant follows any of these consonants, it achieves assimilation best through intensified plosion in the case of (a), voicing in the case of (b) and reduced plosion in the case of (c). In other words, the normally unaspirated and unvoiced stop becomes aspirated in (a), voiced in (b) and spirant or fricative in (c). For example,

பக்கம் pak kam is pronounced as pak kh am

பங்கம் pang kam is pronounced as pang g am

பல்கலை palkalai is pronounced as pal halai

Similar examples can be given for the other five stops, except that there are no Tamil words in which the hard consonants ட் (t), த் (t) are preceded by a medium consonant, as these combinations are banned in Tamil. That the same rule would have applied, if these combinations were permissible, can however be inferred from the fact that, in the case of ட் (t), when Sanskrit words containing the relative fricative sound are adapted into Tamil, the hard consonant is used in lieu of the fricative, which is not a separate phoneme in Tamil,

e.g., visham, Sanskrit — poison — (vit:am)

pushpam, Sanskrit — flower — (put:pam)

The fricative modification of the phoneme த் (t) is already in vogue in post-vocalic positions in present day dialects.

As these three types of modifications are to be found in practically all Tamil dialects and as the relative aspirated, voiced and fricative forms have never been separate phonemes in Tamil at least since the time of Tholkappiyam, it is a safe inference to hold that each of the Tamil phonemes

of the plosive class had at all times an unaspirated, unvoiced sound as its principal member and the corresponding aspirated, voiced and fricative sounds as its subsidiary members.

The existence of the latter members as separate phonemes in Sanskrit suggests that the phonetic pattern of the Tamil language, its phonemic features and its orthography had become fixed before the impact of Sanskrit influence and adds weight to Dr. Slater's statement, quoted earlier, that the present day Tamil represents a much more ancient stage than that represented by Sanskrit, in the evolution of which South Indian Scholars doubtless played a significant part. Dr. Siddheswar Varma writes :

'The Sikshas of the Tait. School are by far the most important contribution to Indian phonetics. As their Mss. are available only in South India, they were presumably composed in that part of the country.'¹¹

This is not to say that Sanskrit influence did in no way affect the phonetic behaviour of Tamil, when it spread in South India, during the post-Sangam period. The predilection of Sanskrit speaking groups (perhaps this is also true of the English speaking people of later days) for voiced and, to a lesser extent, fricative sounds in certain contexts was perhaps responsible for an extension of the principle involved in post-consonantal sound modifications, as laid down in Tholkappiyam, to post-vocalic positions also, as seen in present day Tamil speech. In this post-vocalic modification, people speaking a Sanskritised dialect appear to prefer the voiced allophone, while the fricative allophone is in vogue among the rest, although this demarcation cannot be said to be clear cut. In either case no new allophone is introduced ; it is only a change from one to another of the already existing allophones.

¹¹ Dr. Siddheswar Varma, *Critical Studies in the Phonetic observations of Indian Grammarians*, London, 1929, p. 37.

Dr. Daniel Jones says :

'People often take speech sounds to be other than what they are. There are two chief circumstances in which sounds are thus misheard. The first is the common case where a person fails to estimate correctly the quality of a sound of a foreign language or of a dialect, and identifies it with a sound of his own mother tongue.....

The second case is where the various members of a phoneme are not recognised as being different from each other.....

It is possible too that a particular speech-sound may sometimes give the impression of being two different sounds in different phonetic contexts, in the same way as a given colour may appear to vary on account of the proximity of other colours. Optical illusions in regard to colour doubtless have their counterpart in aural illusions as to qualities of sound.'¹² (Italics mine).

Edward Sapir says :

Phonetic patterning helps also to explain why people find it difficult to pronounce certain foreign sounds which they possess in their own language. Thus, a Nootka Indian in pronouncing English words with ng or l invariably substitutes n for each of these sounds. Yet he is able to pronounce both ng and l.¹³ (Italics mine).

This phonetic patterning is perhaps responsible for the modification of many Tamil words by Sanskrit speakers.

e.g., பாகம், pa:kam, share or division — bha:ga, Sanskrit
பூசை, pu:cai, worship with flower — pu:ja, Sanskrit

The Sanskritised version was in turn imitated or adopted by Tamil speakers who now pronounce the above words in one or other of the following forms :

பாகம், pa:gam or pa:ham
பூசை, pu:jai or pu:sai

¹² Dr. Daniel Jones, *Ibid*, p. 36.

¹³ Dr. Edward Sapir, *Selected Writings of, Berkeley and Los Angeles*, 1951, p. 44.

The use of the voiced or the fricative allophone of the Tamil stops in the post-vocalic position is now almost universal, although, at the time of Tholkappiyam, the subsidiary members or allophones were used only in post-consonantal positions. This development was due either to Sanskrit influence during the post-Tholkappiyam period or to the general tendency amongst many languages for the plosion of intervocalic consonants to be gradually reduced.

Caldwell's law of the convertibility of surds and sonants is thus an incomplete and inaccurate description¹⁴ of the phonemic nature of the Tamil plosive, which has, in addition to the voiced and voiceless values to which Caldwell refers, an aspirated and a fricative value, which the plosive acquires when preceded by a plosive or non-fricative continuant respectively. The function of the Tamil Auxiliary consonant, ∴, which is seldom now used in spoken Tamil, has for the sake of simplicity been excluded from discussion in this article.

To a foreigner, this phonemic phenomenon in Tamil would have always been a source of difficulty and confusion, particularly if he happened to be a speaker of an Indo-European language like Sanskrit, where each of the four allophones of the Tamil plosive is a separate and distinct phoneme. The position is further complicated by the fact that speakers of Sanskrit as well as English show a predilection for voiced plosives in certain contexts and are often apt to render Tamil plosives into the corresponding voiced phonemes in their own languages, even where in the actual context of the Tamil word it is not voiced. In transliteration a similar confusion takes place. The native Tamil speaker, on the one hand, when rendering into a foreign language, transliterates perhaps in most cases the principal member of the phoneme as spoken and written, as native speakers are, as a rule, unconscious of the exist-

¹⁴ Caldwell had apparently no opportunity of studying *Tholkappiyam*, as he nowhere refers to it in his work. Had he studied it, his linguistic flair would have doubtless led him into discovering the Theory of Phonemes, which is implicit in the phonetic rules of *Tholkappiyam*.

ence of other subsidiary members of the phoneme. On the other hand, the foreign speaker rendering the Tamil phoneme into his own language transliterates either the principal member if known to him through the written language or the sound which he thinks he has heard, in accordance with his own linguistic predilections; this need not necessarily be, as we have already seen, the actual objective sound spoken in fact by the native speaker. Two examples பாகம் —pa:kam and பூசை —pu:cai were given above; a few more typical examples are added below:

- திண்டுக்கல் — Thin:t:ukkal, a town famous for its cigars,
= Dindigul, anglicised version.
கப்பையா — cuppaiya, a proper name
= Subbiah, anglicised version in Madras
= Suppiah, anglicised version in Ceylon.
தரங்கம்பாடி — Tharangkampa:t:i, a coastal town
= Tranquebar, anglicised version.

Needless to say, any one who relies on these Sanskritized or anglicised versions for ascertaining the correct Tamil sound will be grossly misled. To a proper understanding of Tamil speech therefore, an appreciation of the phonemic character of the Tamil plosives and of the actual phonetic contexts in which the different allophones or subsidiary members of the phonemes are used is most essential.¹⁵

¹⁵ It is interesting to note that Scholars, who had studied the Tamil stops from a phonemic angle explicitly or by implication (e.g., Robert Caldwell, Alfred Master, T. Burrow, Daniel Jones and C. R. Sankaran), were of the opinion that the Tamil stops must have had the voiced, unvoiced and even fricative pronunciations at all times. On the other hand, scholars like F. B. J. Kuiper, Jules Bloch and Suniti Kumar Chatterji, who approached the problem from the narrow phonetic point of view, on the basis of Sanskritized or Prakritized versions of Tamil sounds—in any case an unreliable guide—arrived at the view that Tamil had voiced and unvoiced stops in its primitive stages, lost its voiced pronunciation some centuries after Christ (Kuiper dated it back to about 500 B.C., the Upanishad period) and finally regained its voiced as well as voiceless pronunciation in the 13th or 14th century A.D.

It is true that Chatterji states (vide his article appearing elsewhere in this issue) that the initial voiced and unvoiced stops were different phonemes in the pre-Sangam or pre-Tholkappiyam period but, as he has not quoted even a single pair of words in Tamil which were semantically distinguished only by the voiced and unvoiced initial stop, his argument fails to carry conviction.

Cilappadikaram, The Earliest Tamil Epic

DR. A. CHIDAMBARANATHA CHETTIAR.

An epic has been defined as a narrative of length dealing with events of importance and grandeur. Its events and persons stimulate us because they enhance our faith in the worth of man's achievement and his nobility and dignity. Though Cilappadikaram consists of not more than five thousand lines of poetry, only half in length of Virgil's Aeneid, it is nevertheless a long poem and celebrates the great achievements of Kannaki (the heroine of the poem) and of a Pandya and a Chera king, who are to be regarded as the other heroes of the poem. Kannaki stands pre-eminent because she is represented as having emerged successful in the conflict with the Pandyan king, who admitted his guilt in ordering the death of her innocent husband wrongly convicted of theft. To her the gods render allegiance: the fire-god obeys her commands and swallows the city of Madurai, leaving unhurt such of those as she exempted; the sun-god speaks to her in response to her pointing to the innocence of her husband; the guardian angel of Madurai city (called Madura dēvi) treads before her with faltering steps, waits long to gain access to her and cajoles her into giving a hearing (Canto XXIII); the celestials under the lead of Indra descend from heaven, appear before her, show her her dead husband in flesh and blood and then escort her to heaven. She re-appears, after reaching heaven, to bless the Chera king, Senkuttuvan, who had consecrated a temple in her honour. She also forgives and blesses the Royal dynasty of the Pandya who had wronged her. In these achievements of hers, the poet Ilankō expresses the significance of human

achievements. Her essential nobility shines throughout the book. She could have quarrelled with her husband for having practically deserted her; she could have cursed her rival Mathavi, who came in the way of her marital happiness; she could have denied her husband access to her, when he often turned up for financial help. On the other hand, she gave him her anklets, the last of her jewels with a smile on her face, when she found he was in distress and in need of money, if only to please her rival, Mathavi. This gentle nature and nobility of her character have earned her everlasting fame. If Kannaki is not a heroine of the other type, winning wars and laurels, it is because at the time of composition of the epic, that is, the second century A.D. the Tamils had become a well-settled race, intent more on the arts of peace than of war. Moral courage, presence of mind, endurance under trying circumstances and desire to vindicate the honour of her husband are the distinguishing characteristics of this remarkable character.

The Pandya king, whose ideals of kingly honour and justice are so high that he actually collapses and dies on finding that he has been the instrument of a miscarriage of justice, deserves also to be regarded as a hero of the epic, even though his personal courage and prowess do not figure in the story. The circumstances in which he was placed misled him into a deviation from the normal course of justice, and in his anxiety to placate his queen he rashly ordered the execution of Kovalan (the husband of the heroine, Kannaki) on the basis of a false charge made by the real culprit but he does not think of the extenuating circumstances. Instead he is overwhelmed by his act of injustice and wills himself to death in order to save his honour. By thus sacrificing his life, he has won immortal glory. Here, again, we find man in his magnificence and nobility.

If a hero should surpass others in strength and courage, we find such a hero in Senkuttuvan, the Chera king. He

has the valour of Achilles; several are the battles he has already won. He has conquered many chieftains and won the battles with the other two great kings of the Tamil country, the Chola and the Pandya, whose seals he is using in token thereof. He has established friendly relations with "Nuttuvar Kannar" (the Sathakarnis) of the Central Provinces. He has also gone, as far as the Ganges and defied the might of the Northerners. Now, he again goes north and conquers the Aryan kings Visittira, Rudra, Bairava, Chitra, Singha, Sveta etc., and subjugates them. He captures Kanaka and Vijaya, sons of Balakumara (Canto XXVI), and after reaching his own capital, Vanchi, orders that the prisoners be taken to the other two Tamil kingdoms and exhibited before their sovereigns. A vain-glorious deed perhaps! The etiquette of war required that one should not pursue those that were fleeing, one should not capture those that were trying to escape. The Chola and Pandya kings, to whom the captives were shown, remarked that it was rather strange that Senkuttuvan should have made captives of persons fleeing for their lives after putting on the garb of ascetics. The fact was of course that most of those who fled had been spared and only a few who braved and gave battle were captured. The Pandya and the Chola, while apparently insinuating against the Chera king, were only indirectly praising his prowess which enabled him to bring mighty warriors as captives.

To the question whether Cilappadikaram is an oral or written epic, the answer is that it is largely written and only partially oral. A large number of verses in "Kānal vari", for instance, were probably a part of oral composition already existing, which, sung to the accompaniment of the musical instrument "Yāl", was familiar to many. (Cf. Canto VII 1.20 et seq.). The verses, however, in "Aychiyar kuravai" (XVII) and "Kunra Kuravai" (XXIV) etc. were obviously the poet's own compositions and not collections of separate lays already existing.

Ilanko had a rich supply of stories, an important source of material for an epic poet. Witness for instance, the stories of Nala and Damayanti (XIV 1.50 et seq.), Rama and Sita (XIV 11.46-49), Devasura war, Mahabharata war etc. (XXVI 11.236 et seq.), of the Brahman who hid the treasure trove (XXI), of the Pandya who chopped off his right hand (XXIII), of the thieves who bolted away (XVI), of the monkey that was grateful (XV), of the Brahman lady who killed a mongoose (XV), of the seven chaste women of Puhar who wrought miracles (XXI) etc. These stories and episodes can be detached and enjoyed by themselves.

Ilanko was mainly a literary epic poet. He wrote for readers rather than hearers. He avoided stock phrases and embellished his poem by fashioning his words with care and artistry. It was customary to compare the gait of a woman to that of a swan and her speech to the voice of a parrot but Ilanko re-created these dead metaphors and introduced new life into his descriptions. (vide Canto II-11.38-80). Addressing Kannaki, his bride, Kovalan said, for instance, that the swans defeated by her gait tracked off in shame to hide themselves amidst the flower-beds in the fields and the parrots, though they found they were not her peers in the matter of speech, which had the sweetness of a lute and a flute and nectar all commingled, would not leave her hands in the hope that they would learn from her the secret of her speech charm.

Many are the ways in which Ilanko describes such familiar things as the approach of an evening or a dawn. Canto IV portrays the fall of an evening in Puhar, the Chola capital. There the poet shows how it caused pleasure to persons like Mathavi who were in the company of their lovers and how equally it was distressing to persons like Kannaki who had been separated from their husbands. The shepherds sing sweet notes on their flutes; the beetles do so through the Mullai (November) buds; the tender breeze spreads fine fragrance all round; women with

sparkling ornaments light the lamps; the crescent moon, though young, dispels darkness even as the Pandya kings, though young, would annihilate their enemies. Thus the evening came, spreading sweetness among the lovers. To the lonely wives on the other hand who had been separated from their husbands, it brought only anguish; they discarded their pearls and sandal-paste and chose not to decorate their bed-chamber with flowers.

This is only one description of the onset of an evening. Other descriptions in the book show a pleasing variety in language. They occur in Cantos XIV (1.83 et. seq.), XXII, XXVII, and XXVIII; each has a distinctive splendour. The descriptions of dawn in Cantos XIII, XIV and XXVII are also remarkable for their grandeur.

Cilappadikaram appeals by its fine poetical texture, by its choice of apt and significant words, phrases and lines. The pauses and the stops, the play and counter-play of words found in Canto XVIII (Tunba malai 1. 8, 11, 24 etc., and 11. 9-10 and 11. 25-28) have a subtle effect of their own, which does not perhaps become evident until the second or subsequent reading. The wavering rhythms in which the poet couches the passages breaking the news of Kovalan's murder are also remarkable. Mention must also be made of the austere sublimities to which the poet rises in describing the omens and super-natural occurrences portending evil on the eve of the appearance of Kannaki at the Pandyan king's court. (Canto XX 11. 1-27).

Cilappadikaram is a Tamil epic composed in the second century A.D. and partakes of the characteristics of the Homeric epic in some respects and of the Virgilian epic in some others. The straight and simple way in which Kovalan confesses his faults, short-comings and misdeeds in the presence of his wife is comparable to Homer. Canto XVI (lines 57-70) is charged with the single emotion of Kovalan's repentance. Poetry cannot rise to nobler levels than in these vivid, expressive lines (especially 11. 63-70).

"How many vain days did I spend with worthless women, indulging in useless gossip and cavil! How have I belied the hopes and expectations of my parents! Alas! I heeded not their behests! Again, how much have I wronged you! What grief have I caused you!! I did not even pause to think it was unworthy of me to ask you to accompany me. 'Follow me', I said, and you came, my beloved one! What a noble act have you done!" There are probably few passages to equal this in any literature.

Just as Homer's characters keep to regular forms of address, Ilanko's courtiers, ministers, ambassadors and commanders adhere to the regular forms appropriate in the presence of a king. This is seen in the trial scene in Madurai Kandan, where the herald ushers in Kannaki and also in the scenes in Vanchi Kandan (the third part of the book).

In another respect also, Cilappadikaram resembles the Homeric epic. Kannaki dies not for the honour of society but for her own honour. True, she lives for others, as she lives for herself but when her husband is killed, she wants to join him in death and only postpones it till she vindicates his honour.

Light fun is provided in Canto XIV (Ur Kāṇ Kathai) in the accounts of men and women spending their time in sport and pastime. The descriptions of how they spend their morning, noon and evening remind us of Homer. In the accounts of gods such as those we find in Canto XI (Kādu Kāṇ Kathai) where a jungle deity tempts Kovalan, we have comic interludes. The whole of this canto is replete with an air of the supernatural.

This Tamil epic partakes also of the characteristics of the Virgilian epic. One of the heroes, Senkuttuvan is prepared to die not for his personal glory but for the honour of his land. When he was informed by a wandering minstrel that certain kings of the North had spoken in disparaging terms of the valour of Tamil kings, he gave

orders forthwith for a military expedition to the North, without waiting to verify, whether the insinuation pertained to him or to the other two Tamil kings, the Chola and the Pandya. An insult to any Tamil king was an insult to the entire Tamil nation and must be avenged by him. He led the expedition, prepared to fight for the glory of his country. In this sense, he was a national hero.

Ilanko's characters speak with variety. There are three dreams, one of Kannaki, another of Kovalan and a third of the Pandyan queen and each has a variety of its own, both in conception and import. There are again two epistles, both sent by Mathavi to Kovalan (Canto VIII and Canto XIII) but each has an individuality of its own. One is couched in a tone of remonstrance, while the other is written in a spirit of repentance, even though the purpose of both the epistles was to re-gain the love of Kovalan. Ilanko's art lay in skilful variation of even repetitive themes. The incident relating to the death of the Pandyan king and queen has to be repeatedly told in different settings but the artful way in which the poet mentions this in Cantos XX (77-81), XXV (11. 95-99), XV (11. 78-86), XXVIII (212-213), XXIX (1. 20) avoids monotony.

The artifice of employing synonyms to take away the tedium is also found in Ilanko. Take, for instance, the use of five different words in five lines to indicate the same object, viz., temple (Canto XIV—11. 7-11: the words are *koyil*, *niyamam*, *nakaram*, *kottam*, and *palli*). So also, in Canto X—11. 119-140, the words, *othai*, *oli*, *pani*, *mankalam*, *pattu* are used to denote a single meaning. Side by side with this, one meets with the employment of the same word, *Koyil*, five times in five successive lines in Canto V (11. 169-175) but one does not experience any monotony here, because of the otherwise sweet setting in which the word occurs.

Ilanko's style is ornate in places. A uniform clarity is not always aimed at by the poet and some passages are

intelligible only after repeated readings. We come across such passages, which nevertheless appeal to us by their poetical texture, in Canto XIII (11. 48 to 51) containing a pun on the word *Mathavi*, Canto XIII (11. 87-92) containing two epistles in one, Canto XIII (11. 184-188) containing a pun (*cilēḍai*) bearing on the words "*Kannir*" (meaning tears and water from the plant) and "*Kāl*" (leg and wind), and Canto XIII (11. 151-170) describing the majestic flow of the river *Vaiyai*.

Cilappadikaram is Virgilian in character in another respect also. It contains a wide sweep of history, philosophy, religion and ethics. It contains accounts of the relationship between the Chola, the Pandya and the Chera kings of the Tamil country. It narrates how one king succeeded another in the Chola region and in the Pandya kingdom. (vide Canto XXVII *Nirpadai*—11. 118-123; *ibid.* 11. 159-171; *ibid.* 127-138). It points out that the Chola king was reckoned as the first and foremost citizen of the Chola state (Canto I—11. 31-32). It states how the Chera king *Chenkuttuvan* viewed kingship, how he wished to be loved by his subjects, how his sole desire was to bring happiness to them, how he scorned the idea of ever being cruel to them, how he regarded kingship as an office full of thorns but nevertheless a great opportunity given to him to serve the people. (vide Canto XXVI (*Kāl Kōl*) 11. 16-18; Canto XXV (*Kāṭchi*) 11. 100-104).

Philosophy is conveyed through the characters, *Kaunthi Adigal* and *Madalan*. *Kaunthi Adigal* says to *Mankattu Brahman* that it is not impossible for man to achieve anything under the sun, if he is true unto himself and to the world, and if he loves his neighbours as he loves himself (Canto XI). *Madalan* exhorts King *Chenkuttuvan* to do acts of charity. "Youth is evanescent, wealth rotates, the body is mortal. The world is a stage, where we are actors; we pass from one birth to another just as actors change from one make-up to another. We will be judged only by our actions; we will receive

rewards or punishments according as we have done good things or evil. Do therefore good things, here and now" —. In these words he spoke to King Chenkuttuvan (Canto XXVIII—Nāḍu Kal—11. 133-186).

Religious references to Sivan, Murugan, Vishnu, Kottavai (or Durga) and Argha abound in the work. Ethical passages occur frequently, especially towards the end of the work: "Do no harm to others; Realise the existence of God; Honour those who are devoted to God; Hate falsehood; Avoid backbiting; Neither kill nor eat flesh; give alms, do penance; Never be ungrateful; Despise friendship with the wicked; Never resort to perjury; follow the wise path" etc., etc. (Canto XXX (Varan taru) 11. 186-202). That the wise and the learned should forgive the unwise actions of misguided or ignorant people is brought out by the poet in his own inimitable style in Canto X (Nāḍu Kāṇ)—11. 237-238.

Yet another point of agreement between Ilanko and Virgil is in the avoidance of two extremes of being either too puritan or too frivolous in describing sexual pleasures. Ilanko is totally unlike Tiruttakadevar of the 9th century, who runs riot in describing the amorous adventures of Jeevaka, the hero of his work *Jeevaka Chintamani*. Nor does he think that love-making in literary works should be left to the Gods, who were free to transgress the limitations and obligations laid on man, as found in *Kandapurāṇam* and other *Purāṇams* of a later age. Like Spenser, he sang of ideal love. The love of Kannaki for Kovalan is highly idealised. Only, Mathavi comes in the way and Kovalan is captivated by her qualities of grace and attainments in dance and music. Mathavi, although born of a family of courtezans, is determined to lead a chaste life and shows an unwavering loyalty to Kovalan, even after he finally leaves her, to rejoin his wife. There is a sublimity in the love between Mathavi and Kovalan as described by the poet.

Just as Virgil bears the stamp of the Caesarean and the Augustan ages, Ilanko exemplifies a transitional stage in the development of the Tamil country; he stands between what is called the Sangam age when the pure, undefiled Tamil civilisation existed and the post-Sangam period which came to be engrossed more and more with matters religious, consequent on sectarian religious conflicts. Also like Virgil, Ilanko on the one hand glorifies the conquering spirit of the Tamils as pictured in the conquests of Chenkuttuvan, while on the other hand, through the words of Madalan addressed to Chenkuttuvan, he indicates the futility of mere military successes, when more important duties await the king.

Ilanko's heroes again are partly Homeric and partly Virgilian. Kannaki's revenge on the citizens of Madurai for an unjust act committed by their king is not an example to be followed. But her ideals of true love, fortitude and courage stand out prominently, as worthy of admiration and emulation. As Dryden says, the design of an epic is to form the mind to heroic virtue by example. Under circumstances similar to those which happened to Kannaki, some women would have paid unkindness with unkindness, some would have retaliated against their husbands and some would have deserted the home of their husbands when forsaken. But Kannaki was of a different mettle and chose a more difficult course of action; hence she is remembered by posterity.

Romance and supernatural elements also find a place in the epic. There are fabulous and incredible elements of wonderland in Canto XI (Kadu Kan). The underground passages and corridors alluded to by Varottamai read like a romance. Ilanko makes this account both fantastic and lively. The episode of Vana dēvathai, trying to seduce Kovalan, is delightful, though at the supernatural level. We are reminded of Homer's elements of the Fairyland and Virgil's transformation of Aeneas's ships into nymphs, when we read the account of a mischievous,

misguided couple being turned into jackals by the curse of Kaunti Adigal, who could not bear the insult offered to her companions Kovalan and Kannaki.

It is interesting to note that Ilanko, like Milton, never applies sardonic humour to his main characters. He has nothing but praise for Kannaki, the chief heroine of the epic. Kaunthi Adigal, the ascetic and Mathari, the shepherdess praise her as an example to be followed by other women. The Pandyan Queen praises her, the Chera Queen deems her fit to be worshipped, the sun-god and fire-god do her errands, the Chola king Karikalan, King Gajabahu of Ceylon and other kings assemble and do homage to her image and all through the epic the poet has avoided the ludicrous in depicting her. (See also Canto XXII (Alar padu) 11. 134-136, where even her action in burning the city is justified by certain women of Madurai). Friends of Kannaki and of her foster-mother all praise her and the ideal for which she lived (vide Canto XXIX).

Ilanko draws several morals from the events of his epic: that an unjust ruler is inevitably punished, that a chaste woman receives the homage of all, human beings and celestials; that no man can escape his fate. Besides, many a lesson he has left the reader to draw indirectly, e.g., one should not indulge in gossip, one should take great care of trust property; one should be brave and never despondent; one should have faith in God. Ilanko apparently thought that poetry was intended not merely to beguile one's leisure but it should inspire and instruct. All in all, Ilanko has achieved unqualified success as a poet and takes a high rank among the epic poets of the world.

In later periods, poets like Tiruttakadevar, Sekkilar and Kambar attempted to copy it and even rival it, but throughout the centuries it has maintained a central place in Tamil literature. It has an unparalleled variety of appeal and deserves to hold a high place not only in Tamil literature but also in world literature.

Reviews

THE SANSKRIT LANGUAGE

By

T. BURROW

[Publishers: Faber and Faber, London.]

Pages 426. Price: fifty-five (55) shillings net.]

This book is the latest of a series on the "Great Languages" of which Prof. L. R. Palmer of Oxford is the General Editor. Those who have seen other books of the series will welcome this latest addition to the series by the Boden Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford, Prof. T. Burrow. In Prof. Burrow's work, the Sanskrit language lives as the great connecting link of the Indo-European family of languages. Professor Burrow writes clearly and lucidly in a language which even the layman can understand. Prof. Burrow shows Central Europe to be the home of the Indo-European family of languages, and the book ought to be of special interest to students of comparative Philology in India in that it shows how important are Latin and Greek for the comparative language study of Sanskrit. Comparative Philology in India has tended to neglect Latin and Greek in its studies.

The author traces the history of Sanskrit from its earliest times and devotes the main portion of his work to the two-thousand year period during which Sanskrit was a powerful factor in religion, philosophy and culture. To readers of this review, chapter the eighth on the "Non-Aryan influence on Sanskrit" will be of especial interest. In this chapter, the author traces the loan words which

entered Sanskrit from the different languages with which Sanskrit came into contact, and enumerates a list of words which are certainly of Austro-Asiatic and Dravidian origin.

"More work has been done on the influence of Dravidian on Sanskrit and more abundant results have been achieved. It has become clear that quite a considerable portion of the Sanskrit vocabulary is of Dravidian origin, and that this influence has operated over a long period in the history of the language". Professor Burrow gives a list of about 150 words which are "the most important and certain of the Dravidian loans" (p. 380). In this list are words which many Sanskritists in India believe to be of Indo-Aryan origin but which Prof. Burrow shows are definitely of Dravidian origin—e.g.,

aguru, anala, eda, katu, kākā, kunda, kundala,
khala, candana, tuvara, danda, nira, bala (strength),
mayūra, mallika, mālā, mina.

Prof. Burrow concludes "It is evident from this survey that the main influence of Dravidian on Indo-Aryan was concentrated at a particular historical period, namely between the late Vedic period and the formation of the classical language. This is significant from the point of view of the locality where the influence took place. It is not possible that at this period such influence could have been exercised by the Dravidian languages of the South. There were no intensive contacts with South India before the Maurya period by which time the majority of these words had already been adopted by Indo-Aryan".

Professor Burrow has through his book brought Sanskrit India closer to the West, and we await his works which will make Dravidian and Tamil India better known in England and the English-speaking world.

THE EVOLUTION OF A MAN

By

FR. M. HERMANNIS

[Publishers: Society of St. Paul, Allahabad.

Pages 139. Price Rs. 3/8.]

The shortcomings of the Darwinian theory of Evolution have already been exposed by several writers. In this handsomely published book the author challenges the validity of the theory on the basis of Human Biogenetics, Anthropology, Pre-history and Palaeontology. Fr. Hermannis is concerned in particular with attacking Atheistic Evolution which is the backbone of the Communist world view. However, it is one thing to question the validity of the hypothesis that inorganic matter could evolve into organic cells, and quite a different thing to assert that the first man was created by a Supreme Being. More convincing is the author's thesis that man is not descended from the ape since man alone develops the powers of speech and thought as well as spirituality. While the author admirably marshals the weakness of Darwinism, his own positive explanation of the evolution of man transcends the limit of science and touches the realm of Faith. It is doubtful whether such an approach would satisfy the scientist. The inescapable truth remains that Darwinism is retained despite its weakness, because scientists have found nothing more satisfactory to put in its place.

News and Notes

ALL-INDIA ORIENTAL CONFERENCE

The 18th session of the All-India Oriental Conference was held at Annamalainagar on the 26th, 27th and 28th December, 1955. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, Vice-President of India, presided over the conference.

In his welcome address, Mr. T. M. Narayanaswamy Pillai, Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, *inter alia* said :

'This University desires to do for Tamil what the Deccan College and the Bhandarkar Institute are doing at Poona for Sanskrit. You may be glad to know that with the help of the Union Government to which we are grateful, this University, in commemoration of its Silver Jubilee, has created a Chair for Dravidian Philology, and the compilation of a new Etymological Dictionary. As Sir William Hunter has observed, "The perfect understanding of the structure of the Dravidian languages will revolutionise our knowledge in regard to linguistics in general." With the help of the Union and State Governments it is proposed to develop this into an Institute of research in and the study of comparative Dravidian Philology.....

Our National Government has rightly addressed itself to the task of developing all the national languages mentioned in the Constitution. I do believe that one of the results of our independence and freedom must be to develop all our national languages. The creation of regimented unity by improving one language throughout this sub-continent is likely to do more harm than good.'

Referring to Archaeology in South India he said :

'I may, however, say that this conference should urge upon the Government the duty of paying more atten-

tion to the excavations and to the study and publication of inscriptions. There are many places in South India, where excavations are likely to yield good results. I should like to mention in particular Kaverippoompattinam, now submerged in the sea, but once the flourishing capital of a great kingdom, a place associated with two of the great Tamil Classics, Silappathikaram and Manimekhalai. Marine Archeology has proved very valuable in the Mediterranean Region. The publication of inscriptions, so far made, is not enough and indicates possibly a want of proper appreciation of its importance.'

The Presidential addresses of Professors R. P. Sethu Pillai and T.P. Meenakshisundaram Pillai, as Presidents of the Dravidian and Tamil Sections respectively of the conference, appear elsewhere in this number.

RETENTION OF ENGLISH

APPEAL BY MADRAS LEADERS

A Press Note issued by the Correspondent, Union Language Convention, Tamilakam, refers to the resolution passed at a meeting of prominent leaders of Madras State held on January 28, urging the continuation of English as the official language of the Government of India, and the language for communication between the Union and State Governments. The note says :

"On the issue of what the Union and Inter-State official language should be, leaders belonging to various schools of thought met together on January 28, upon the initiative of the Academy of Tamil Culture, a non-political organisation, and decided after a full and frank discussion that the following resolution should be communicated to the Chairman of the Official Language Commission, the Prime Minister of India and the Government of Madras. The resolution represents the unanimous opinion of all those who met as above stated. The resolution does not cover the issue of what the State official language should be nor does it cover the important issue of the medium of instruction. These matters

were kept distinct inasmuch as they have to be governed by totally other considerations and should not be mixed up with this issue.

The resolution said: "In view of the unquestioned fact that all the educated citizens of India who are qualified to enter public services to-day in all the States and territories comprised in the Indian Union have an adequate knowledge of English, and in view of the fact that no other single language enjoys this position, no question of pride or prejudice should prevail against the obviously necessary and just solution of the problem, viz., that English should continue to be the official language of the Union and the language for communication between the Union and the State Governments and between one State Government and another.

UTILITY OF ENGLISH

"This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that English must and will continue as a part of the educational curriculum of the country on account of its utility in international intercourse and for the purpose of utilising the growing modern knowledge of the world.

"We are of the view that it will be grossly unjust to make any other language take the place of English, when to a population of about a hundred million, living in a contiguous territory in the South, it would be a language with which for all practical purposes they are totally unacquainted.

"We do not wish to be misunderstood as standing in the way of the natural progress of any language for the purposes of social and business intercourse throughout India."

Mr. A. Subbiah was also authorised to communicate the resolution to all the Madras Members in the Union Parliament, to the Chief Ministers of Bengal, Andhra, Mysore and T.-C. States and to such other important persons and institutions as he may think fit.

SIGNATORIES TO RESOLUTION

The following are signatories to the resolution: Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, Mr. E. V. Ramaswami Periyar, Leader, Dravida Kazhagam, Mr. P. T. Rajan, M.L.A., Leader, Justice Party, Rajah Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar, Pro-Chancellor, Annamalai University, Mr. C. N. Annadurai, Leader, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Mr. R. Nedunchezhiyan, General Secretary, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Mr. S. Swayamprakasam, Leader, Dravidian Parliamentary Party, Mr. S. G. Manavalaramanujam, former Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University, Mr. T. M. Krishnaswami Aiyar, former Chief Justice, T.-C. State; Mr. M. P. Sivagnanam, Leader, Tamilarasu Kazhagam, Mr. A. Ratnam, M.L.A., President, Tamil Nad Scheduled Castes Federation, Mr. S. R. Venkataraman, Secretary, Servants of India Society, Mr. K. A. P. Viswanathan, Secretary, Tamil Peravai, Mr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, Professor of Tamil, University of Madras, Dr. M. Varadarajan, Professor of Tamil, Pachappa's College, Mr. V. S. Tyagaraja Mudaliar, prominent landowner and industrialist, Mr. M. P. Somasundaram, Editor, *Kalki*, Mr. C. Amritaganesa Mudaliar, Hon. Secretary, Red Cross Society, Dr. A. Srinivasan, M.L.C., and Mr. A. Subbiah (Convenor and Correspondent).

—*Hindu*, Jan. 31, 1956.

APPEAL BY CHIEF MINISTER, MYSORE.

"To cry, hoarse against English is a kind of fanaticism," declared Mysore's Chief Minister, Mr. K. Hanumanthaiya in the State Assembly, while replying to the debate on the Appropriation Bill.

He said English had not only "taught us science and technological knowledge, but also tenets of democracy."

Mr. Hanumanthaiya stated that Hindi should not be forced on Mysore and other South Indian States. If Hindi

was forced on non-Hindi States it was the "surest way of endangering Indian unity."

He was certain that while taking a decision, the Government of India would do all necessary things to maintain the unity of the country and not allow "Hindi enthusiasts" to break the unity, he added.

—Mail, March 30, 1956.

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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)
ஒ	—	o	(„ opinion)
ஔ	—	o:	(„ opium)
ஔ	—	au	(„ now)

CONSONANTS

Hints re: articulation

Hard ¹ (Plosive)	க	—	k	(as in king, angle, alhambra)
	ச	—	c	(„ church, angel, calcium)
	ட	—	t:	(„ card ?)....Retroflex - articulate with blade of tongue.
Soft (Nasal)	த	—	th	(„ threat, this, thick)....dental.
	ப	—	p	(„ pipe, amber)
	த	—	t	(„ atlas, sunday, arrears)....Retroflex- articulate with tip of tongue.
	ங	—	ng	(„ sing)....velar n
	ஞ	—	nj	(„ angel)....palatal n
	ன	—	n:	(„ urn ?)....Retroflex n - articulate with blade of tongue.
Medium (non-nasal continuant)	ந	—	nh	(„ anthem)....dental n
	ம	—	m	(„ mate)
	ன	—	n	(„ enter)....Retroflex n - articulate with tip of tongue.
	ய	—	y	(„ yard)
	ர	—	r	(„ red)
	ல	—	l	(„ leave)....Alveolar l - articulate with tip of tongue.
Auxiliary ² (ஆய்தம்)	வ	—	v	(„ very)
	ழ	—	l-	(„ ?)....Retroflex l - articulate with blade of tongue.
	ள	—	l:	(„ hurl)....Alveolar l - articulate with blade of tongue.
Auxiliary ² (ஆய்தம்)	ஃ	—	x	(„ ahead)

* The Tamil phonemes may for practical purposes be treated as having single allophones only, except in the case of the hard consonants which have four allophones each, as shown in note 1 on the reverse.

Language Rights in Ceylon

XAVIER S. THANI NAYAGAM

I

On the language issue, fairness and justice demand that Ceylon studies the nature of language rights and their application in international law before hurrying with any legislation which may mean a threat to the peace and unity of the country.

Public opinion on the language policy in Ceylon, even among prominent political leaders, is not founded as yet on a sufficient or full and accurate knowledge of language rights for any government to consider as decisive and final the demand of any section of the people, howsoever large. For even a majority demand to be considered, that demand must be just, right, lawful and reasonable.

A popular slogan in recent months has been the one that the language of the majority should be the language of the entire State. This demand would be valid only if the end and purpose of political life in Ceylon were the creation of a homogeneous sovereign Sinhalese nation and a Sinhalese State in the predominantly Sinhalese-speaking areas, but not if the end and purpose were the formation of a Ceylonese nation and a Ceylonese State co-extensive with All Ceylon. The concept of a uninational unilingual State in a multi-national, multi-lingual country is fraught with the greatest dangers for the unity and peace of the country. The multi-lingual, multi-national State is the ideal state in political theory today, particularly in the light of the experience of the last two world wars and the peace-

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., பஹலை becomes palhalai not palkalai
எஹு „ ehhu not exku

NOTE.—In most present day dialects, the plosive assumes a fricative —sometimes a voiced—value after a vowel also, except in the case of *t*: which retains its normal unaspirated, unvoiced value even after a vowel

2. The value of this *auxiliary* phoneme, which must *always* be followed by a hard consonant, was variable during the time of Tholkappiam; it acquired a phonetic value identical with that of the following hard consonant, vide 1 (c) above,

e.g., எஹு became ehhu

Later its value became fixed as *h*, irrespective of the following consonant.

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=Thamil), or where it is unnecessary to indicate the exact pronunciation, accurate 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., வேங்கடம் = 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.

THE TAMIL SCRIPT

(This table is given for the guidance of those who wish to read Tamil texts which often appear in TAMIL CULTURE)

Vowels	Vowel symbols attached to preceding consonant.	Hard consonants						Soft consonants						Medium consonants					
		k	c	t:	th	p	t	ng	nj	n:	nh	m	n	y	r	l	v	l-	l:
அ a	nil	க	ச	ட	த	ப	த	ங	ஞ	ன	ன	ம	ந	ய	ர	ல	வ	ழ	ள
ஆ a:	ஈ to the right of the consonant	கா					ரா			னா			னா						
இ i	ஊ to be joined at the top —right of consonant	கி																	
ஈ i:	ஊ to be joined at the top —right of consonant	கி																	
உ u	a semi-circle  , a vertical stroke or a loop  to be joined to the bottom	கு	சு	டு	து	பு	து	ங்	ஞ்	ன்	ன்	மு	ந்	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழு	ள
ஊ u:	Same as for u, but with an additional stroke or loop	கூ	சூ	டூ	தூ	பூ	தூ	ங்	ஞ்	ன்	ன்	மு	ந்	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழு	ள
ஏ e	ஊ to the left of the consonant	கே																	
ஈ e:	ஊ to the left of the consonant	கே																	
ஐ ai	ஊ to the left of the consonant	கை																	
ஓ o	ஊ to the left & ஈ to the right of the consonant	கொ					ரொ			னொ			னொ						
ஔ o:	ஊ to the left & ஈ to the right	கொ					ரொ			னொ			னொ						
ஔ au	ஊ to the left & ஈ to the right	கொ																	
஑ pure consonants	A dot on the top of the consonant	஑																	

Note.—(1) The vowels are written as shown in the first vertical column.

(2) The consonants are written as shown in the horizontal columns, with a symbol or symbols indicating the vowel immediately following. A consonant followed by the vowel அ (a) has no symbol, while the pure consonant not followed by a vowel has a dot on top.

(3) All the eighteen vowel consonants under க (k) are shown as a guide; in other cases only the irregular forms are shown, the rest being exactly similar to those shown under க (k), excepting for trivial differences in a few cases which might safely be ignored.

treaties which followed. There is a return in political thought to the principles outlined by Lord Acton :

"If we take the establishment of liberty for the realization of duties to be the end of civil liberty, we must conclude that those states are substantially the most perfect which . . . include various distinct nationalities without oppressing them. Those in which no mixture of races has occurred are imperfect, and those in which its effects have disappeared are decrepit. A state which is incompetent to satisfy different races condemns itself ; a state which labours to neutralize, to absorb or to expel them destroys its own vitality ; a state which does not include them is destitute of the chief basis of self-government."¹

Very much earlier King Stephen of Hungary had said :

"A state with but one language and one way of life is both weak and decrepit."

RULE BY MAJORITY

The rule by majority is misunderstood even by very educated people. Appeals have been made to the Jeffersonian principle of *lex maior fortis* with no regard to the different federal conditions in which that principle was defined and worked. Democratic method is rule by majority indeed, but not a rule for the exclusive good of an ethnic-religious-language majority. Democracy is rule by majority for the good of all the groups which have membership within the state. Jefferson himself explained his principle in words very familiar to those who value laws and liberties :

"All, too, will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is to prevail in all cases, that will to be rightful must be reasonable ; that the minority possess their equal rights which equal law must protect, and to violate would be oppression."²

We are liable to give a twist to majority rule in the traditions of our autocratic, monarchic, and feudalistic past.

¹ *Essays on Freedom.*

² *First Inaugural Address.*

The rule by majority is but a working substitute for rule by unanimity which is the ideal. To impose one language only all over Ceylon as the language of the State would be to deny liberty and freedom to a major nationality and to oppress it by what Tocqueville called the "tyranny of majority." Such an imposition would justify the separatist tendencies and movements for decentralisation implied in the American Declaration of Independence :

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted amongst men, receiving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new Government."

Such primary human rights as language rights intrinsically connected with freedom of speech are not to be decided by the mere arbitrary demand of any single group, or by an anachronistic and antiquarian appeal to the pre-Vijayan period of Ceylon's proto-history, but according to the principles of the common law of nations and their practice in this mid-twentieth century. Neither are the language rights of a people to be sacrificed for a naive Machiavellianism. The language problem is wider than political expediency. It is basically a problem of philosophy, of political and constitutional theory and practice, of ethics, and of sociology and human dynamics. Hence it is a field of enquiry not only for politicians but also for statesmen, for philosophers, for jurists and for sociologists.

The present trends in political, sociological and educational thought are towards self-determination and cultural autonomy within the framework of a decentralised State which combines political unity with cultural freedom, or which exercises "separation in union." The emphasis is not on national uniformity but on national unity, not on coercion but on liberty. Political unity is not to be achieved

at the expense of cultural liberty and freedom. One language is the basis for a culture and a nationality, but not for the making of a State.

The Prime Minister of Ceylon has summarised his ideal as an "Asian Switzerland." Switzerland has made a clear distinction between the "nation" and the "state," and its success is due to its democracy, its cultural freedom and its decentralised government. People who have lived long enough in the Cantons of Geneva, of Berne, of Zurich and of Ticino and travelled sufficiently through the unilingual and bilingual Cantons of the three major language groups will see in Switzerland more than passive neutralism and a remunerative rendezvous of tourists and international conferences. It is the home of liberty, of religious and language freedom, and the best example of a multi-national State. Switzerland has not thought it wisdom to prescribe one national religion or enjoin one national language though there is a language majority preponderantly large (72%). Loyalty to the State is high in Switzerland because of the freedom and cultural and language autonomy given to each of its component nationalities. Every citizen is first and foremost a Swiss, and then the member of his own nationality.

History does not offer one example of language speakers, in short a nationality, possessing a rich culture, literature and traditions, being assimilated by political methods by a neighbouring people numerically stronger. The associations of the Tamil language with Ceylon are so ancient, so widespread, so productive of creative energy and inspiration to both cultures, and so well established, that to seek to exterminate these associations by legislation is futile.

Neither coercion, nor assimilation, will achieve these purposes. Where language rights have been suppressed by force, they have always after a period assumed an irresistible and invincible strength. The Empire of the Hapsburgs,

Central Europe, Finland during the period of "Swedish only," Belgium during the period of "French only," Wales today, and Catalonia today offer us memorable warnings not to tamper with the language rights of a nationality. Prof. Vincent Harlow, Beit Professor of the History of the British Empire in the University of Oxford, after a recent visit to Ceylon wrote thus :

"My wife and I landed at Jaffna and moved about the arid plain of the North which is the home of the ancient Ceylon Tamils. Unhappily one could not fail to sense the anger and distress of this hardy and intelligent community concerning the policy which is being strongly pressed among the Sinhalese majority, to establish Sinhalese as the sole official language and to create a 'Buddhist State,'

"The determination of the Sinhalese to rebuild their ancient glories is perfectly understandable and their national tradition is a precious asset ; but unless Ceylon develops a satisfying Sinhalese-Tamil partnership, its future as an independent nation-state will be weakened and distracted by animosity and frustration.

"I was talking the other day to a very intelligent Sinhalese student who stated the argument that if there was one official language it would exert a unifying influence. I told him that Britain herself in the course of her history had on more than one occasion fallen into that costly error."³

THE NATION-STATE

This repeated emphasis on "majority" and "minority" as if the majority possessed greater rights and were entitled to greater privileges creates in members of smaller groups a sense of frustration and disappointment with the result that the strength and vitality of a State is constantly weakened. Macartney after a voluminous study of the minority problem in Europe concludes :

"In its pursuit of the chimera of the national state Europe has entered upon a path beset with dangers to

³ *United Empire*. Jan.—Feb., 1956.

itself. It has set itself a false ideal, and one which, right or wrong, it can never achieve. Minorities will continue to exist, and will continue to present problems which statecraft will find insoluble until it tries the method—so rarely adopted hitherto—of applying the principles of justice, equality and good government. Then minorities will cease to be a torment to the State possessing them, and will become instead a blessing. May that day come soon!"⁴

Alfred Cobban makes the same reflection on the future of the problem in Ceylon :

"We must conclude that in Asia, as in Europe where there are inextricably mixed communities, containing two or more distinct, unassimilable and communally conscious people, the idea of the nation-state is out of place. In so far as the problem may be reduced to its simplest elements by taking out separable regions, this should be done. Where this is not possible, as for example in Ceylon or Singapore, the only hope lies in the establishment of cultural autonomy and the development of a sense of common citizenship by the operation of common political institutions . . . If federalism has a future in the Western world, where the tradition of the sovereign state has been so strong, it is not less likely to find appropriate conditions for its developments in the East, in which the conception of national sovereignty is a new and as yet a far from deeply rooted growth."⁵

What is significant in the practice of language rights in bilingual and multi-lingual countries is that the language of the smaller group may be restricted in function to an area as Swedish (9%) in Finland, and Italian (6%) in Switzerland, and English (15%) in Quebec, and French (45%) in Belgium, but the language of the smaller group always enjoys an equal official and national status with the majority language and official publications of national status are issued in both languages. The minority language is also recognized as a national language in the Constitutions.

⁴ Macartney, *National Minorities*, p. 501.

⁵ *National Self-determination*, p. 138.

FINLAND

Area : 130,827 sq. miles.

Population : 4,000,000.

National Languages : Finnish and Swedish.

(Swedish is spoken by 9% of the population).

Adopted, July 17, 1919.

Art. 14 : Finnish and Swedish shall be the National Languages of Finland.

The rights of Finnish citizens to use their mother-tongue, before the Courts and Administrative authorities, and to obtain from them documents in such language, shall be guaranteed by law, so as to safeguard the rights of the Finnish population and the rights of the Swedish population of the country in accordance with identical principles.

The State shall provide for the intellectual and economic needs of the Finnish and Swedish populations in accordance with identical principles.

Diet Act, JAN. 13, 1928 :

Art. 88 : In the transaction of business in the Diet, the Finnish or Swedish language shall be used.

The opinions and reports of committees as well as the written proposals of the Speaker's Conference and of the Committee for the Secretariat, should be drawn up in these two languages.

Written communications addressed by the Government to the Diet should likewise be drawn up in Finnish and Swedish.

SWITZERLAND

Area : 15,737 sq. miles.

Population : 4½ millions.

Federal Constitution of the Swiss Confederation.
Sept. 12, 1848.

Art. 116 : German, French, Italian and Romansch are the national languages of Switzerland.

The official languages of the Confederation shall be—German, French and Italian.⁶

The Tamils are not a minority in Ceylon. They are a self-determining nationality, and the rights of Tamil to official and national recognition by the Ceylon State are far greater for legal, historical and cultural reasons than the rights of Swedish in Finland or English in Canada or English in the Union of South Africa or French and Italian in Switzerland. If Tamil has no national rights in Ceylon, no other language has a right in any country of the world.

If we are to form a Ceylonese nation, one may hope to do so not with the help of factors which divide us and which we need never surrender, not on one religion or one language or one culture, but on the common well-defined sea-gift territory which Nature and Nature's God have given us, on our common traditions of the past, and on a common form of government, federal or unitary. The essential constitutive element of the nation is sociological and psychological. There has been no single definition of a nation applicable to all times and to all countries. If I were to define a nation in the special context of Asian countries which are just beginning to form into nations, I would define it as "a group of people who belong to different ethnic stocks who speak different languages and pro-

⁶ Peaslee, *Constitutions of the World*.

fess different religions, but who occupy a well-defined territory and have willed to live together under a common-government." The essential element of a nation consists in group sentiments and in the will to live together. It does not consist only in one language or one only religion or race, taken singly or the three even taken together. The Tamils form the Ceylonese nation together with the Sinhalese because the two groups while not surrendering their separate identity and cultural autonomy have willed to live together under common political institutions.

It is strange that the movement to deprive Tamil of a national status should synchronize with the Jayanthi Celebrations. One of the earliest charters of language rights was issued by the Buddha himself when, on being petitioned by two Brahmin monks that the doctrines be written in Sanskrit so as to prevent their being corrupted by monks probably speaking non-Aryan languages, the Enlightened One replied : "I allow you O Bhikkhus, to teach the word of the Buddhas each in his own language." What was wisdom for the religious teacher is also wisdom in statesmanship, for the language of religion has often been esoteric in the past, but never the language of affairs of government and of the state.

APPEAL TO NOBLENES

A period of about two thousand five hundred years separate the Buddha and the present Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. St. Laurent, but the inalienable language rights have grown in definition and understanding since then. In answer to a question on purely constitutional federal practices in Canada, Mr. St. Laurent, then Minister of Justice, replied in words which any Tamil Parliamentarian may use today in Ceylon's House of Representatives :

"It is not the manner of those who have themselves had the formation that comes from that long history which has brought us to this point in the civilization of

mankind, to do things which the conscience of humanity at large would regard as dishonourable; and the conscience of humanity at large would frown upon an assemblage in this house that attempted to take from me and from those of my race the right to speak the language I learned from my infancy as one of the official languages in which the deliberations of this house may be carried on. So it is of everything else that is not with Section 92. If it is fair, if it is just, if it is proper according to the standards of human decency, it will be done; if it is unfair, if it is unjust, if it is improper, all members of this house will say, "It is not our manner to do such things."⁷

Is an appeal to such noble sentiments too elevated for Ceylon?

One who has studied sufficiently the theory of language rights and seen their working in governments and education in bilingual and multi-lingual countries will realise that the language problem in Ceylon can be solved with fairness and justice to both groups without prejudicing the cultural autonomy and the national status of either. He would be aware that both Sinhalese and Tamil require protection from the bilingualism which the present policy would tend to favour indiscriminately all over the country. He may propose no definite solution because he would feel a great deal of further discussion with persons of different views has to precede any definite solution. What is now required after the elections is more light and less heat in this controversy, more truthfulness and honesty and less exaggeration and rhetoric in this discussion. The method of dialectics, be it Buddhist, Hindu or Socratic is to confront ideas with opposing ideas in order that the dispute may lead to true ideas.

II

WHOSE REASON?

What is the reasonable use of Tamil? And whose "reason" is to decide what shall be its use? Is the reason

⁷R. M. Dawson, *Government of Canada*, p. 146.

to be the decision of a Sinhalese-speaking majority formulating its law upon the basis of its own demand, or is the reason which decides the use of Tamil to be the body of constitutional law and language rights as developed during these centuries of the evolution of human rights?

The problem of language nationalities is no new problem in the world. It has existed from the period of the origin of languages. Today there are over thirty bilingual and multi-lingual states and their number is ever on the increase. These states have solved their language problems according to the principles of inalienable essential rights and the rational universal concepts of political liberty and the Rights of Man. These rights which were more and more clearly defined since the American declaration of Independence and the French Revolution were enunciated in uncompromising terms, for instance in the resolution of the House of Representatives in Massachusetts in 1765:

"Resolved that inhabitants of this province are unalienably entitled to those essential rights in common with all men; and that no law of society can, consistent with the law of God and nature, divest them of those rights."

The solution to the language problem is primarily to be sought in the principles of liberty and equality, and cultural autonomy of which language rights are the logical derivatives. Thus Oscar Ianowsky concluded his study on *Nationalities and National Minorities*:

"We are left no alternative but to incorporate nationalities and national minorities in the structure of the state, with respect for, recognition of and legal protection extended to the pattern of life of every group."

Consonant with the principles of liberty and equality and cultural autonomy the following principles are deduced from the actual working of language rights in bilingual and multilingual countries:

If there be within a country two or more languages spoken by large groups at the time new constitutional laws are being framed, or a new Government alters language policies, these two or more languages are recognised as languages of the State, and have equal national and official status. This principle may be verified in the unitary states of Finland and Belgium and in the Constitutions of Switzerland, Canada, South Africa, Pakistan, India and the U.S.S.R.

The modern tendency in language rights is to give more and more concessions to the languages of groups within a nation. Ceylon is the only country in which an attempt is being made to withdraw and suppress the existing rights of a language. Alfred Cobban points out in his study on *National Self-determination* :

"Switzerland gets on very well with three—for some purposes four languages; South Africa and Canada with two. The principle to be followed seems so obvious that one wonders why so much fuss has been made on this matter. If in a State two languages are each used by large sections of the population, then for all common purposes the State must be bilingual and all official business be conducted and recorded in both languages."

A second principle of language rights is the need for one inter-provincial language in a multilingual and multinational state which counts several nationalities and several languages. India has fourteen national and official languages operating in different states and several minor languages—hence the need in India for Hindi or English as an inter-provincial language.

The U.S.S.R. is as large and varied a linguistic mosaic as India with its many constituent states. Hence Russian is a common language for the whole of the U.S.S.R. Similar reasons and the extensiveness of the numerous Islands which form the Republic of Indonesia compelled Indonesia to adopt a common language, the Bhasa Indonesia.

Language has assumed in this twentieth century an importance in the identification and circumscription of culture and nationality which it never had before in the history of States. In earlier times languages were never imposed by coercion upon minorities or upon aliens and it was even fashionable to have a foreign tongue as the language of the courts mainly because of royal marriage and cultural prestige. Thus Italian and Spanish were once fashionable in the French Courts and French was fashionable at the German Courts, as Tamil was during certain periods fashionable at the Courts of the Sinhalese Kings.

But now each nation and each nationality or minority idolises its language and regards it as a symbol of its autonomy and honour, and as the supreme expression of its own personality. The social sciences and psychological research have fully endorsed the importance of language, and hence ours is an age of the use of the mother-tongue in the teaching and practice of religion, of the mother-tongue in education, and of the mother-tongue as the language of the state and of Government.

Such ruthless and cruel imposition of a foreign language by law as happened in Wales, Scotland and Ireland is not possible today, because, with the growth in the definition and understanding of language rights, language tolerance has also been growing. It is even acknowledged that language tolerance is a further advance in human relations and social virtue than religious tolerance, and that conversely language persecution is even more odious and reprehensible than religious persecution.

Says Karl Vossler in *Language and Civilisation* :

"Tolerance of national languages is a still later tenderer flower of human culture. Once that insight has been gained, thereafter intolerance on this point is an even greater idiocy. If I grudge my neighbour his religious beliefs, and hammer my own into his skull, I shall at any rate be able to excuse myself on the ground that

I believe my own to be the only one that leads to salvation, that his leads to damnation, and that I want to save his soul.

"But if I throttled my brother's mother-tongue in order to impose mine on him, what excuse can I have except that of conceit? For my neighbour's language is his inner eye, his form of thought with all its potentialities of expression, his spiritual childhood and future.

To everyone who has understood this, all repressive measures directed against a language must seem like crimes against the budding life of their spirit."⁸

A full, integrated and equal partnership and citizenship and intelligent Tamil participation in Government demands a recognition of Tamil language rights. No State has ever found it of advantage to have a permanently discontented minority within the body politic. The reasonable use of Tamil demands that Tamil also be made a national and official language, and if justice demands that a concession be made to the sentiments of the majority, let Sinhalese be made the first language of the State and Tamil the second language of the State. But let both languages have a national and official status though in function the official use of each language may be restricted to, those to whom it is the mother-tongue.

⁸ Ibid. p. 156.

The Passionless Passion

(An Interpretation of Certain Decads of the Tiruvacagam)

G. VANMIKANTHAN¹

"The Perennial Philosophy", says Aldous Huxley, "is primarily concerned with the one divine Reality substantial to the manifold world of things and lives and minds. But the nature of this one Reality is such that it cannot be directly and immediately apprehended except by those who have chosen to fulfil certain conditions, making themselves loving, pure in heart, and poor in spirit. In every age there have been some men and women who chose to fulfil the conditions upon which alone, as a matter of brute empirical fact, such immediate knowledge can be had; and of these a few have left accounts of the Reality they were thus enabled to apprehend and have tried to relate, in one comprehensive system of thought, the given facts of this experience with the given facts of their other experiences. To such exponents of the Perennial Philosophy those who know them have generally given them the name of 'saint' or 'prophet', 'sage' or 'enlightened one'."

One of those few is Manikkavacagar. His first hand accounts of the Reality he was 'enabled to apprehend' and of the given facts of this experience are contained as a comprehensive system of thought in the *Tiruvacagam*.

FOUR KANDAMS OF THE TIRUVACAGAM

The *Tiruvacagam* has not been divided into *Kandams* or Books. If one were however to try to do so, it would lend itself to four divisions. The First Book would be

¹ This is the third article on the *Tiruvacagam* by this writer. The first two,—*Verities of Tiruvacagam* and *Manikkavacakopanishad* appeared in *Tamil Culture*, September 1953 and October 1954 respectively.

called 'HIS GLORY GREAT' and would comprise the four *agavals*. "Thy glory great I, man of 'evil deeds', know not how to praise!", bewailed Manikkavacagar; but because He, Civan, within his heart abided, by His grace bowing at His feet, to his heart's delight he sang Civan's *Perenniality without Beginning; Civan's Fame; His Universal Manifestation; and The Song of Praise*.

The next book would be THE TEN STEPS,—a manual of instructions for the conquest of the self and the apprehension of the one Reality. The ten steps are:—1. Discrimination of the Real, 2. Initiation in the Divine Ground, 3. Dying to sense and self, 4. The soul's purification, 5. Rendering a fit return, 6. Cleansing the heart for receiving the Spirit, 7. Overwhelming sense of the Divine Compassion, 8. Mystic Union, 9. Ecstatic Bliss, 10. Overflow of Bliss. These are the ten steps of the *Gnana-marga* shown in the *Tirucchadagam*. They lead to a great victory, but, like all victories, it leaves a gnawing dread of loss in the heart of the victor. An overwhelming sense of unworthiness and a sinking fear of being forsaken are intermingled with the overflow of bliss and evoke a heart-rending entreaty whose burden is 'Forsake-Me-Not'. The decad with this title will also be included in the second book.

The Third Book is the most important of the four books. It shows the way to have and to hold that which had been so laboriously gained by the Ten Steps.

The Lord never forsakes. "This lowly cur by even a whit to forsake is not the Lord's will", declares Manikkavacagar. Whether it is forsaking or being forsaken, the infallible strategy against such a peril is Love. Love unswerving, unflagging, shameless, unremitting and boundless. And selfless.

The Third Book comprising the sixteen decads (padigams) from the *Tiruvempavai* to the *Koil-tiru-p-padigam* is the book of this love,—the PASSIONLESS PASSION,

The Fourth Book comprises the last twenty-nine decads of the *Tiruvacagam*, and is the Book of RAPTUROUS BLISS,—no longer insecure. Love has made it everlasting.

THE PASSIONLESS PASSION

The Third Book is the object of our present study.

Life has been divided in Tamil Literature into two spheres,—the Inner Life and the Outer Life, the subjective and the objective, the female and the male, the life of love and the life of strife.

The literature of the Life of Love has its special grammar and rules. The Life of Love is broadly divided into two sections,—the Secret Courtship, and the Public Declaration and Union. Only two characters hold the stage,—a maiden pining away with a secret passion for an youth and the young man, the object of her love. True to the scarcely admitted but very real characteristic of courtship, it is the maiden who sets her heart on a man and woos him till he is irrevocably hers. Manikkavacagar's Book of Passionless Passion conforms to this tradition but with an unique difference. The seeker after the one Reality is a very love-sick maiden indeed, but with one great difference from her earthy sisters. Her passion, it is true, sears her like a flame, but in the process burns away all the dross of carnal and earthy love. When the chase is over and victory is hers, it is she who, as a suppliant, assures her Beloved thus:—

'What service Thou demandest, that we shall pay.'

True love always humbles itself in victory, for love is service. When love humbles itself all desire dies. When desire dies passion becomes passionless. Kothai Nacchiar in a similar context sings,

For ever, for seven and seven births with YOU
United shall we be; to YOU alone shall we be
servitors;

All our other passions do Thou banish!

THE POWER OF LOVE

Many are the ways by which men seek to gain the one Reality, but in vain. Thus sings Manikkavacagar :—

Brahma went up to seek ; Thou didst hide
thyself !
From those who toiled with mystic scrolls
didst hide Thyself !
From those who, to the grief of their Kin,
sought Thee with single-minded devotion,
Thou didst hide Thyself !
From those who, staking their faith in the
power of the Vedic Mantras, laboriously
sought Thee Thou didst hide Thyself !
From those who boasted to see Thee by some
rare device,
By the same device, there,—didst Thou hide
thyself !

..... Far off
Bidding the senses five depart,—seeking refuge
in trackless hill,
With frames devoid of all but bare breath,
spurning all delights,—
Ascetic saints in contemplation dwell ; in (from)
their vision Thou didst securely hide Thyself !
Seeming one thing, then not, eluding knowledge,
Thou didst hide Thyself !
When e'en of old I strove to find Thee, e'en when
today I strive,
Thou didst hide Thyself, Deceiver !

BUT WE HAVE FOUND THEE NOW !²

² The author of this article begs to acknowledge that he has freely used copious extracts from Rev. G. U. Pope's translation of the *Tiruvacagam* and that he has himself rendered more portions into English. He has taken the liberty of mixing up both. He craves the pardon of all devotees of Pope's version. The only aim has been to give a clear interpretation of Manikkavacagar's thoughts and words. No attempt has been made at versification.

HOW ?

THUS,—(answers Manikkavacagar)

*Then, while undying love dissolves my frame,
..... I cried ;
..... 'twas then through all my limbs
A honied sweetness He infused, and made me blest.*

There is one device He cannot escape, whose lure He cannot resist. He falls into the net of devout love.

Therefore His devotees,

'saints who, abandoning all activities, their bonds cast off,—in freedom dwell and everlastingly perceive Him in themselves, they all have come as maidens with beauteous dark eyes to worship Him in the manner of human beings, Him, the Bridegroom of the awe-inspiring Goddess.'

For the same reason

Said sacred Vishnu and flower-born Brahma as
they gazed
on Civan's form, 'our days in vain we spend
(here)
Without going to earth and being born (as
human beings); 'Tis earth
'tis earth alone where Civan's grace is wont
to save!'

For human beings; then, the way of worship is love, the consecration of oneself as the Lord's Bride,—the *Nayaka-Nayaki bhāvam*.

Manikkavacagar in his own behalf and in behalf of all of us becomes the Lord's Bride and in this third book of his great work dances step by step into the Lord's heart till both hearts beat as one, and in fact there is none but ONE.

SECTION I

LOVE CHERISHED IN SECRET

We shall take one poem from each of the sixteen decads of this Book and trace the birth, growth and consummation of this Passionless Passion of the Lord's Bride.

She has hardly entered her teens. But she has already fallen in love with Madevan. She has not confided in anyone. But her companions always agog for a toothy bit of gossip have divined her secret. They come to her doors loudly singing the praises of Madevan. She is in that state of ecstatic love when even the mention of her lover's name sends a thrill through every fibre of her body. As soon as the strains of the song of Madevan reaches her ears she falls into a swoon.

She had, however, through sheer exuberance of love, on occasions given away her secret. Her words are now used by her companions to torment her. She pretends absolute unconcern and would not accompany her friends to Madevan's shrine. She is pestered to join in singing His praises. She cannot trust herself to do so without altogether betraying her secret. But her friends are importunate. "You alone are fit to do so, do therefore in rapture melt and sing for us and all the world,—sing a song of thy Lord", beseeches one companion, while another entreats her to sing of Him "Who from time everlasting is the First of Beings and the Only-One."

(i)

HOW INDEED COULD ONE PRAISE HIM ?

Willing yet unwilling, eager yet hesitant, she finds an excuse in His immeasurable greatness and turns on her companions with the impatient question,—'How indeed could one praise Him ?' For,

FAR BENEATH THE SEVEN NETHER REGIONS
AND INEFFABLE ARE HIS BLOSSOM FEET !
HIS FLOWER-LADEN CROWN IS ALL KNOWLEDGE'S
END !

A LADY BY HIM IS HIS FORM, BUT NOT THE ONLY
ONE !

THOUGH THE VEDAS, THE HEAVEN DWELLERS AND
ALL THE WORLD SING HIS PRAISES,
PRAISES FALL SHORT OF HIM, OUR UNIQUE COM-
PANION, DWELLER IN HIS DEVOTEES.

THEREFORE, O YE OF BLAMELESS LINEAGE,
HANDMAIDENS OF HARAN'S SHRINE,
WHAT IS HIS CITY ? HIS NAME ? WHO HIS KIN ?
WHO ARE NOT ?

HOW SING WE HIS PRAISE ?

—Tiruvempavai, 10.

(ii)

NEVERTHELESS HIS FORM WILL I SING

Her companions would not be put off. 'O beauteous gazelle, sing His Feet, the source of grace', they beseeched her. And she sang. Over feature after feature of His face and form she dwelt with loving reminiscence and sang to her heart's rejoicing.

The fragmentary moon adorning her Lord's head is the first feature which comes to her mind. Its cool brilliance is ever present before her eyes. It is one insignia which none else has a right to wear. It is His sole prerogative. How many times without number has she seen it on hill tops and in the valleys as He went about His domain. When He sped to her in the gloaming darkness to keep the tryst, as He wended His way down the hill through winding paths and even pathless ways, the crescent moon flashed in and out of the latticed foliage, now far, now near, but ever assuring her of His presence and speedy coming. If for a brief moment for what seemed like eternity—this

beacon of joy was hid from her eyes while perhaps He pushed way through aisled courses of mountain streams, she could still always hear Him. He delighted in singing the enthralling sonorous chants of the Sama-Veda. Even while she went about the day's chores under the stern eyes of her mother her ears would keep eternal commune with Him.

Lost in the reverie of these delights of the eye and the ear she forgot her fears, she forgot her companions, she forgot everything except her Beloved. With a secret joy suffusing her young face, with shining eyes searching the expanse of the hills before her for the flash of the crescent moon in the misty morning, with ears deaf to all sounds but the strains of His music, she lifted her voice and sang. Her companions and the world itself were silenced into amazed wonderment.

HE WITH THE CRESCENT MOON, THE BARD OF THE
VEDAS, LORD OF THIS VAST DOMAIN,
DONNING THE TWISTED THREAD, ON STATELY STEED
HE RIDES.
DUSKY IS HIS THROAT, RED-GOLDEN HIS FORM,
ASHES WHITE THEREON.
FIRST IN ALL WORLDS IS HE : BLISS UNCEASING,—
THE TRADITIONAL BOON—TO HIS VETERAN DEVOTEES
HE GIVES.
THAT ALL THE WORLD AMAZED BE, LET ME
BEHOLDING HIM SING !
—Tiru-Ammanai, 9.

(iii)

TWO AND TWO MAKE ONE

She has irrevocably lost her heart to him. "My love is to Paranjoti" she blurts out. She unceasingly thinks, dreams, speaks of Him alone. She loves to lisp His names, all of her own secret christening. *Atthan, Anandan, Amudan*, she would roll these names round her tongue,

tasting them like sweets till their honied sweetness melted and filled her mouth. But He was still a riddle to her. He seemed now this, now that, always paradoxical pairs of opposites. Her heart was sore puzzled as He eluded her understanding. Now singing of Him, feature by loved feature, her puzzlement increases till she can bear it no longer and must confide in her companions. Even as the words issue haltingly out of her sweet lips the riddle is solved and her heavy clouded heart is illumined by divine understanding. Realisation of His catalytic quality comes to her in one inspired illumined flash. For when He enters (the heart) as the Lord of Love, He

*Melts the very bones, renders the two-fold
deeds (karma) powerless ;
Weeds out the rooted griefs, purifies
(her sense of) dualities,
So that all that has gone before perish entire.*

So she exultingly sings,

FOR HIM WHO IS THE VEDAS AND SACRIFICES TOO ;
FOR HIM WHO IS THE REAL AND UNREAL AS WELL ;
FOR HIM WHO IS THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND
IGNORANCE DARK BESIDES ;
FOR HIM WHO IS SORROW AND BLISS TOO ;
FOR HIM WHO IS THE HALF, WHO IS THE
WHOLE AS WELL ;
FOR HIM WHO IS BONDAGE AND THE LIBERATION ;
FOR HIM WHO IS THE FIRST AND THE LAST ;
FOR HIS ANOINTMENT POUND WE THE
GOLDEN PASTE.

—Tiru-p-porchunnam, 20.

(iv)

HIS INFINITE CONDESCENDING GRACE

Immediately a sense of her utter unworthiness assails her. Simultaneously, wonder at her good fortune and gratitude to Him for His infinite grace overwhelms her.

She realises only too well that her love cannot stand comparison with Kannappan's immeasurable love. But with a wry humour she sees that she is also beyond comparison, if only for her mite of a love. No one could have less. Forthwith her heart swells with joy and she sings,

LOVE LIKE KANNAPPAN'S HE DID NOT FIND IN ME,
YET MY SIRE, BY MY OWN MEASURE, ME TOO
GRACIOUSLY ACCEPTED,
AND CEREMONIOUSLY COMMANDED ME, 'COME
HITHER': TO THAT FLOOD OF GRACE,
HIM WITH THE GOLDEN FORM ASH COVERED,
GO HUM YOUR SONG, O KING OF BEES (MY
HEART).

—Tiru-k-kotthumbi, 4.

(v)

THE MEETING

She had so long worshipped Him from afar. Just a glimpse of the flashing crescent moon; His sweet voice wafted in the wind; a blue patch on His throat, black against the golden and white skin; glimpses of these are her only acquaintance with Him. Even so, she had lost her heart to Him and had never thereafter even a fleeting glance for anyone else. All she has seen so far of Him were as good as not having seen Him. Now she is to meet Him. She meets Him face to face. Just as Sita, the while she feigned to trim her bangles, stole a glance at Rama and shed her doubts, assured that he who stood before her was the same one whom she had seen from her balcony and had lost her heart to, similarly our Lord's bride receives confirmation and sings,

THE LORD OF THIS BEAUTIFUL VAST DOMAIN,³

AFTER HE SEVERED
THE ROOT OF MY BIRTH'S SEEDLING, ON NONE ELSE
HAVE I SET EYES :

³, ⁴ The references to the Vast Domain and the City are to God without and God within; the vast domain being the worlds upon worlds and the city being the city of the heart. This will be clear from the succeeding two sections.

FORMLESS (THEN), NOW A FORM HE WEARS.

SINGING

THE BEAUTIFUL CITY⁴ HE GRACES, LET US ACCLAIM
THIS CLEAR CONFIRMATION.⁵

—Tiru-t-tellenam, 2.

(vi)

GOD WITHOUT

Aldous Huxley in his *Perennial Philosophy* says,

"THAT ART THOU": 'Behold but One in all things'—God within and God without. There is a way to Reality in and through the soul, and there is a way to Reality in and through the world. Whether the ultimate goal can be reached by following either of the ways to the exclusion of the other is to be doubted. The third, best and hardest way is that which leads to the divine Ground simultaneously in the perceiver and in that which is perceived."

Our Lord's bride can but choose the 'best and hardest' way and therefore she beholds God without and God within. With awe she looks at His vast domain and beholds God without,—Him whom Manikkavacagar elsewhere hails thus:—

*Permeating all things, each one He cherishes,
behold Him!*

Our Lord's bride proclaims this in song thus:—

WHAT HE SMEARS IS WHITE ASH; WHAT HE WEARS
IS AN ANGRY SNAKE;

WHAT HE SPEAKS WITH HIS LIPS DIVINE IS THE
MYSTIC WORD, IT SEEMS, MY DEAR!

WHAT MATTERS WHAT HE SMEARS, WHAT HE SAYS,
WHAT HE WEARS?

THE LORD, OF ALL THAT HATH LIFE THE ESSENCE
IS HE!

—Tirucchalal, 1.

⁵ *garb* = certainty, confirmation.

Qṣṣ = clear, devoid of doubt.

(vii)

GOD WITHIN

"Though God is everywhere present," says William Law (quoted by Aldous Huxley in his *'Perennial Philosophy'*), "yet He is only present to thee in the deepest and most central part of thy soul. The natural senses cannot possess God or unite thee to Him; nay, thy inward faculties of understanding, will and memory can only reach after God, but cannot be the place of His habitation in thee. But there is a root or depth of thee from where all these faculties come forth, as lines from a centre,⁶ or as branches from the body of a tree. This depth is called the centre, the fund or the bottom of the soul. This depth is the unity, the eternity—I had almost said the infinity—of thy soul; for it is so infinite that nothing can satisfy it or give it rest but the infinity of God."

"God within and God without," goes on Aldous Huxley to explain,—“these are two abstract notions which can be entertained by the understanding and expressed in words. But the facts to which these notions refer cannot be realised and experienced except in ‘the deepest and most central part of the soul.’ And this is true no less of God without than of God within.”

Accordingly the Lord's bride proceeds to realise no less God without than God within in the deepest and most central part of her soul. Hence her song:—

(AFTER) MANY A DAY PRAISING HIM AND SERVING
HIM, HIS BLOSSOM FEET,
IN MY HEART HE PLANTED, THE GREAT ONE;
AND AS BEAUTEOUS FLAME,
TEARING THE FIBRES OF MY HEART, HE TOOK ME
UNDER HIS SWAY. HIS TWIN FEET
GOLDEN BECAME. THIS LET US SING AND
PLUCK FLOWERS (FOR HIM)!

—Tiru-p-poovalli, 9.

⁶ The Mundaka Upanishad says, "Where the arteries of the body are brought together like the spokes in the centre of the wheel, within it (this self moves about) becoming manifold."

(viii)

HIS PROWESS

Realising God within and God without in the deepest and most central part of her soul, she sings His great prowess.

TWO ARROWS WE SAW NOT—IN EKAMBAR'S HAND!
ONE ARROW—THREE CITIES!—JUMP FOR JOY!
AND ONE WAS TOO MANY!—JUMP FOR JOY!

(ix)

OPEN AVOWAL

Thus her passion progresses, grows, fills her being and can no longer be contained in secrecy. 'Posing as one moved by compassion, He has entered her heart and enslaved her, and has made her the target of public slander.' The point of no return has been crossed. Her plight overpowers her reticence and modesty and impels her to rush into the presence of her Beloved to shamelessly declare her passion, unmindful of the assemblage round Him. She rushes in, dancing in ecstatic joy and longingly sinks her glance on His shoulders. So unbecoming of a modest demure maiden. Utterly shameless, senseless baring of her heart-locked secret. But she could not help it. Her love would not be contained any longer. She need not speak. Her immodest stare speaks volumes. Elsewhere Manikka-vacagar sings,

Enter shall I,—mine alone are Thy sacred feet:
standing amidst saints that adore Thee I
Shall laugh, staring at Thy familiar⁷ shoulder,⁸
me an immodest cur!

⁷ familiar: the shoulders in which she has, in their secret trysts, often nestled her head.

⁸ Kambar's readers will recall to memory these lines of his:

"The pair of lances called her (Sita's) glance
Sank deep in shoulders broad of handsome Ram."

—Balakandam, Padalam 10, verse 37.

Here the Lord's bride sings with utter abandon.

PRIDE WE HAVE LOST, WISDOM WE HAVE FORGOT,
YE MAÏDENS FAIR !
WE THINK BUT OF THE CINTURED FEET OF HIM,
LORD OF THE SOUTH,
WHOM HEAVEN ADORES ! THE RAPTUROUS DANCER'S
GRACE IF WE OBTAIN,
HIS SLAVES,—FORTHWITH IN RAPTURE LOST,
SHALL WE DANCE GAZING ON HIS SHOULDERS !
—Tiru-t-toḷnokkam, 8.

Thus every true lover of God has to publicly proclaim his love so that his passion may be purified and transformed into Passionless Passion. Manikkavacagar relates the experience of this transformation in the last poem of this decad thus :—

*Let us sing
Of the ineffable Inner Light,—the Most Mighty
 entering my heart ;
Of the crossing of the shoreless vast Sea of Lust ;
Of the headlong flight of the craving senses'
 vultures, robbed of their prey ;
Of the destruction of their eyrie too !*

(x)

SWING YE LOW, SWING YE HIGH

The point of no return has been crossed. A new fear assails her now. She sinks into despair. Will He accept her or spurn her and her love? Her heart reassures her. 'Fear not, He will assuredly accept you', says the heart. What will be the sign? He will sever the cycle of Death and Birth. Reassured, she and her heart swing in delirious joy and sing :—

HIS THROAT THE POISON HOLDS ; LORD OF THE
HEAVENLY ONES ;
FROM UTTARA-KOCA-MANGAI'S GEM-LIKE CLOUD
CAPPED MANSION

HE WILL COME WITH HER WHOSE WORDS ARE
MUSIC ; AND IN HIS SLAVES'
HEARTS TAKE ABODE : ELIXIR OF DEATHLESSNESS
WILL WELL UP (IN OUR HEARTS) AS HE IN
HIS GRACE
SUNDERS (THE BONDS OF) DEATH AND BIRTH. LET
US HIS HOLY PRAISES SING,
O YE WHO WEAR ROWS OF BRACELETS WHITE ! AND
SWING IN THE GOLDEN SWING !
—Tiru-p-ponnoosal, 4.

Here ends the Secret Courtship.

Section II

PUBLIC DECLARATION AND UNION

(xi)

DECLARATION

Their love has become the talk of the whole town. It cannot be very long before the mother of the Lord's bride comes to hear of it. Before this happens she must be told, she must be confided in, her blessings, her invaluable wisdom, understanding and help should be secured. The Lord's bride therefore seeks her mother when she is alone. Tongue-tied, guilty, shame and shyness two shakles on her feet, she is driven forward by love and sheer necessity. As she nears her mother, she rushes forward and in a sudden close embrace buries her face in her mother's ample bosom, and between muffled sobs cries 'MOTHER !'

ETERNAL BRIDEGROOM, THE UTTERLY BEAUTIFUL ;
SINCE HE FILLS HER HEART SHE COULD ONLY CRY
'MOTHER !'

HE WHO DWELLS IN HER HEART,—THE SOUTHERNER,
THE VAST DOMAIN'S
LORD—SINCE HE IS BLISS, SHE COULD ONLY CRY
'MOTHER !'

—*Annai-p-patthu*, 3.

(xii)

INVITATION

Though she only cried 'Mother' and would say nothing else, her mother, a person of perfect understanding, divined her daughter's secret and bade her send for Him. The Lord's bride rushes out in great joy to entreat the *Kuyil*, lovers' winged messenger, to call Him hither. She begs the *Kuyil*,

THOU KUYIL SMALL, THAT DOST FREQUENT THE
GROVE WITH HONEY-SWEET FRUIT RICH, PAY
HEED TO THIS !

THE BOUNTEOUS LORD, WHO SPURNING THE
HEAVENS, ENTERED THIS EARTH, AND MADE MEN
HIS OWN ;

THE ONLY-ONE WHO DISREGARDING THE FLESH
ENTERED MY HEART AND MY SENTIENT LIFE
BECAME ;—

THE BRIDEGROOM OF HER WHO WON HIM WITH
GENTLE EYES THAT EXCEL THE FAWN'S,—GO
THOU AND BID HIM COME HITHER !

—*Kuyil-patthu*, 4.

(xiii)

STATE ARRIVAL

He comes. He comes in state and she would proclaim His heraldry ; but in His presence she becomes tongue-tied. But her mother and her people should know His Name and fame ; His kingdom, capital, river and range ; His steed and arms ; His war-drum and favourite flower, and His banner. She therefore turns to her loquacious

⁹ "For my part," says St. Bernard (quoted by Aldous Huxley in his '*Perennial Philosophy*') "I think the chief reason which prompted the invisible God to become visible in the flesh and to hold concourse with men was to lead carnal men who are able to love only carnally, to the healthful love of His flesh, and afterwards, little by little, to spiritual love."

parrot to whom on many a lonesome wistful night she had repeated item by loved item His sweet Name and proud fame, and begs the bird to announce Him.

She would not, however, have her mother and kinsmen think that she had taught the parrot His Name. "Speak His Name," she commands the bird, "recollecting what you have heard Brahma and Vishnu address Him."

PARROT FAIR AND YOUNG ! RECOLLECT AND TELL
THE RENOWNED SACRED NAME
OF OUR LORD OF VAST DOMAIN,—' AROORAN ',
' SEMPERUMAN ',
OR AS YOU HAVE HEARD BRAHMA AND VISHNU
SAY,—
' MILORD ', ' OVERLORD OF THE GODS ' !

—*Tiru-t-tasangam*, 1.

(xiv)

HE IS ARISEN IN ME

Aldous Huxley quotes the following extracts in his '*Perennial Philosophy*' ;

" Goodness¹⁰ needeth not to enter into the soul, for it is there already, only it is unperceived."

—*The Theologica Germanica*.

" When the Ten Thousand things are viewed in their oneness, we return to the Origin and remain where we have always been."

—*Sen T'sen*.

and proceeds to explain as follows :—

" It is because we don't know Who we are, because we are unaware that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us, that we behave in the ways that are so characteristically human. We are saved, we are liberated and enlightened, by perceiving the hitherto unperceived good

¹⁰ same as Godness.

that is already within us, by returning to our eternal Ground and remaining where, without knowing it, we have always been."

Immediately on the advent of the Beloved, the Lord's bride experiences this same revelation (which Aldous Huxley speaks of) and communicates it to her people. Him whom she could describe so far in vague phrases only—such as 'the flavour of the fruit', or 'nectar', or 'lo, it is difficult to apprehend', or 'O, it is so simple', or 'even the immortals know it not',—she could now with assurance affirm, "THIS IS HE, THIS HIS BEAUTIFUL FORM". She has realised in herself the Truth in the doctrine, 'Tat twam asi'—'That art Thou'. She has gained the unitive knowledge of the divine Ground. Therefore she sings,

'THE FLAVOUR OF THE FRUIT IS THAT';
'AMBROSIA THAT';
'THAT CAN RARELY BE KNOWN'; 'SO ACCESSIBLE
(STILL)'! THUS IMMORTALS TOO KNOW NOT!
O DWELLER IN UTTARA-KOCA-MANGAI'S SWEET
PERFUMED GROVES!
WHO HAST ASSUMED SWAY OVER US AND HAST
IN THY GRACE COME HITHER
THAT WE MAY DECLARE, 'THIS IS HIS SACRED FORM,
THIS IS HE';
WHAT IS THY WILL FOR OUR SERVICE?
THAT WE SHALL HEED.
OUR MIGHTY LORD, ARISE IN US.

(xv)

SHOW ME A SIGN

All saints, prophets, sages, enlightened ones have all down the ages received a sign,—a proof of the apprehension of the one Reality. Rev. Pope translates the sub-title of this decad as 'Eternal Reality'. For the sign is the seal of a covenant, it is the dispeller of the dread of being

forsaken, it is the conferment of the Eternal Reality. The Lord's Bride also asks for a sign.

THE MISTRESS¹¹ DWELLS IN MIDMOST OF THYSELF;
WITHIN THE MISTRESS CENTRED DWELLEST THOU;
O OUR PRIMAL LORD WHOSE BEING KNOWS NO END;
WHO DWELLEST IN THE SACRED GOLDEN HALL (OF
MY HEART)!

MIDST OF THY SERVANT IF BOTH YE DWELL,
EVER GIVE ME THY SERVANT THE GRACE
AMIDST THY LOWLIEST SERVANTS TO ABIDE;—
THAT MY HEART'S PURPOSE BE FULFILLED.

—Koil-mootha-tiru-p-padigam, 1.

(xvi)

DYING TO SELF

The consummation of the Passionless Passion is the consummation of the self. This is the law to which saints all over the world and all down the ages have borne testimony, as the following extracts (quoted by Aldous Auxley in his 'Perennial Philosophy') will show.

*The Beloved is all in all; the lover merely veils
Him;
The Beloved is all that lives, the lover a dead thing.*
—Jalal-uddin-Rumi.

*My Me is God, nor do I recognise any other
Me except my God Himself.*

—St. Catherine of Genoa.

Our Lord's Bride 'dies to her self' singing thus:—

THIS DAY IN GRACE TO ME, THOU RISEST IN MY
HEART—

A SUN BIDDING THE DARKNESS FLEE!
ON THIS THY NATURE MANIFEST I THOUGHT TILL
ALL THOUGHT CEASED TO BE.¹²

¹¹ Divine Grace.

¹² Thinking is a sign of separateness, of duality.

THINE 'NONE-BUT-THYNESS'
GOES FORTH, GOES FORTH (INTO ALL THINGS) AS
ATOM BY INFINITESIMAL ATOM TILL THOU
ALONE ART :

O, CIVAN WHO DWELLEST IN THE VAST DOMAIN,
THOU ART NOT ONE, THOU APART NONE ART !
WHO CAN INDEED KNOW THEE ?¹³

—Koil-tiru-p-padigam, 7.

Manikkavacagar thus loved and gained the Lord, and he has bequeathed to us his first-hand accounts of the one Reality which he was able to apprehend. Let us be worthy of this priceless heritage and through his blessings become loving, pure in heart and poor in spirit so that we too may be possessed by this Passionless Passion and die to our self to become alive to the Kingdom of God within us, where, without knowing it, we have always been.¹⁴

¹³The answer is not 'none', but 'I know Thee'. For the *Kena Upanishad* says, "To whomsoever It (the Brahman) is not known, to him It is known; to whomsoever It is known, he does not know. It is not understood by those who understand It; It is understood by those who do not understand It."

Please also refer to the quotations from William Law and Aldous Huxley under the section 'God within' regarding the futility of understanding etc. as aids for possessing God.

¹⁴This article is humbly dedicated to Shri V. Subbarayar of Matunga, Bombay, a nectarine ocean of intuitive knowledge of the *Tiruvacagam*, of the waters of which it was given to this writer to take but a sip-much less indeed.

The Development of Tamilian Religious Thought

SWAMI VIPULANANDA*

I

INTRODUCTORY

The beginnings of Tamilian civilisation may be traced far back to the ancient days, when the waters of the Pahruli river brought fertility to the regions that extended southwards beyond Kumari (the present Cape Comorin). The Pandya king, Ma Kirti, at whose court the Tholkappiyam was published flourished before the time of the great deluge¹ which submerged several ranges of hills, the river Pahruli and the forty-nine countries adjoining it. The waters of the Indian Ocean roll over the spot where the proud city of Kavadapuram² stood. This city of great wealth, 'rich in gold, celestial and adorned with pearls and gems', was the second capital city of the Pandyan kingdom; the original seat of government, Thenmadura, was situated further south and was swallowed up by the sea at the end of the first Oozhi. The commentator Nacchinarkiniyar ascribed to King Ma Kirti³ a long reign of twenty-four thousand years and proceeds to say that the scholars at this old king's court were, therefore, men of matchless wisdom. If years mean anything, Ma Kirti and his courtiers should certainly be the possessors of very ripe wisdom. Never-

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¹ *Chilappadikaram* XI, 17-22; *Kali-thokai* CIV 1-4; *Tholkappiyam*; *Payiram Comm.*; *Karpiyal* 4 Comm., and *Marapiyal* 94 Comm., *Purananuru* VI, 2 and IX, 11.

² *Valmiki Ramayanam*, *Kishkindakandam*, XLI, 19.

³ *Tholkappiyam*: *Payiram Comm.*

the-less we, who belong to a short-lived race of mortals, whose average span of life does not exceed the proverbial three score years and ten, refuse to see eye to eye with Nacchinarkiniyar, when he makes this pre-diluvian monarch go through the dull routine of a king's life for such a long number of years. Although the tradition may be unacceptable for purposes of historical investigation, it may not be uninteresting to seek for and discover its origin. The existence of parallel traditions in Sumerian history suggests the possibility of a common source. The king lists⁴ of Larsa give the names of eight kings before the deluge who reigned for periods ranging between 18,600 and 43,200 years. The civilisation of the Mesopotamian valley has a special interest to students of Tamil culture, for the ancient Sumerians are said to bear most resemblance to the Dravidian ethnic type of India.⁵ The discovery of monuments⁶ belonging to the First Dynasty of Ur (3100-2930 B.C.), the third after the Flood, has proved to a certain extent that the records left by the scribes of ancient Sumer are not altogether legendary. The archaeological finds at Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro may throw fuller light on the racial and cultural connexions of the Sumerians and the ancient Dravidians, and the antiquity of the Sumero-Dravidian civilisation. The account given by Berosus⁷ in the third or fourth century before Christ appears to suggest that the early settlers of Sumer arrived by sea, bringing with them a fully developed civilisation. This civilisation may possibly have arisen in the submerged Tamil lands that extended to the south of Kumari.

Coming back to the court of King Ma Kirti, we see Tholkappiyar seated in the midst of an assembly of learned pandits, expounding his immortal treatise. Opposite to him sits Athankottasan, a relentless critic, who, at the instigation of the sage Agattiyar (Sanskrit-Agastya), points out many flaws in the book. Tholkappiyar successfully

⁴, ⁵, ⁶, ⁷ C. L. Wolley: *The Sumerians* (Oxford) pages 21, 30, 187 and 189; H. R. Hall: *The Ancient History of the Near East* (Methuen) pages 173, 174 and 177.

meets the points raised by Athankottasan and the book receives the approbation of the wise men of Ma Kirti's court. From thenceforward the *Tholkappiyam* becomes the most authoritative treatise on Tamil language and Tamil culture. From internal evidence, one is led to believe that the book was written at a time when the Aryan culture was just beginning to influence the social and religious life of the ancient Tamilians. Nacchinarkiniyar says that the *Tholkappiyam* existed before the time of Vyasa,⁸ the compiler of the Vedas and the author of the *Mahabharata*. The high standard of excellence reached by the book shows that the Tamils at this time were a highly civilized people. The sage Agattiyar came into a land which was civilized and wealthy. There are a good many legends centering round the name of this sage. He is said to have started from the Meru; passing through Dwarapathi (Dwarasamudram), he proceeded southwards with a band of followers until he reached Tamilakam. After his arrival, the Pothiya⁹ hill, where he fixes up his abode becomes as famous as the Himalayas, the Kaviri¹⁰ river (Cauvery) which is said to have originated from his water-pot becomes the sacred Ganges of the South; Kanta-man,¹¹ the Chola king, who sought his protection is saved from the murderous battleaxe of Parasurama, the protagonist of priestly power; the mighty Ravana¹² crosses the sage's path and becomes subdued (literally bound) not by force of arms, but by the subtler persuasive power of music. The sage is said to have spent years in the island of Ceylon, practising severe austerities. Later he becomes deified and we see temples erected to him in far-off Java. This half-mythical figure stands in the hoary past as the synthesis of two great cultures, the Aryan and the Dravidian, which like the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna was to progress ever afterwards as an undivided single life-giving current.

⁸ *Tholkappiyam*: Payiram Comm.

⁹ *Chilappadikaram* I, 14; III, 1; VIII, 8; XV, 14; XXVII, 67.

¹⁰ *Manimekhalai*, Padikam 12.

¹¹ *Manimekhalai*, XXII, 35.

¹² *Tholkappiyam*: Payiram Comm.

The earliest existing literary records of Tamilakam are to be found among the anthologies known as the Sangam classics. Rescued from palm-leaf manuscripts and brought to light during the last three or four decades, these anthologies open up an entirely new world, entering into which one meets with a god-like race of men and women, strong in physique, possessed of a keen intellect, proud, valiant, active and energetic. They appear to have given little or no thought to metaphysical speculations. Life in those remote times was strenuous and the hero, who won renown by steady perseverance and indomitable courage, either in the battle-field or in the more peaceful avocations of life, was held up as the ideal to be followed. He, whose valour was sung by bards here on earth, was sure of mounting the celestial car, which carried the soul in its ascent to the abode of the Immortals.¹³ This earliest epoch in the civilisation of the Tamils is the age in which Heroism was exalted to the position of a religion. The acquisition of fame was held up as the motive for virtuous action and the performance of strenuous deeds of valour.

The War-God Muruga, ruddy-complexioned, resembling the sun at dawn, was worshipped from the earliest times as the ideal of unfailing Achievement.¹⁴ His mother, the great Goddess, whom the Tamilian soldiers invoked in the field of battle was known as Korravai,¹⁵ the Victorious One. Even in those early days, there were philosophers, Arivar, who by years of mental discipline had attained intuitive insight into the past, the present and the future; and there were also anchorites, Thapathar who performed severe austerities; the Arivar and the Thapathar having the attainment of Truth as the sole aim of life worshipped Shiva, the unborn, the embodiment of Truth.¹⁶ To those who shrank from the path of Truth, the God of Truth appeared as the God of Wrath and Destruction. Mayon,

¹³ *Purananuru*, XXVII, 7-9.

¹⁴ *Purananuru*, LVI, 14.

¹⁵ See *Tholkappiyam* Purattinai Iyal and *Purapporul-venba-malai*.

¹⁶ *Paripadal*, V, 33.

the blue-complexioned, was the embodiment of Fame.¹⁷ His brother, Valiyon, whose complexion was as white as a conch-shell, was the personification of undisputed Strength.¹⁸ Indra and Varuna ranked only as demi-gods. It is said that the Chola King, Thodi-thol-chempian,¹⁹ went as an ally of the king of the celestials and broke down the three hanging fortresses of the Asuras. In sealing a bond of friendship, the king of the celestials agreed to visit the Chola capital once a year and participate in the great festival which was held in his honour for eight and twenty days. This was the origin of the Indravila. Mention is made of a Pandya king Vadimp-alamba-minra-pandyan who instituted a festival in honour of the Sea-god.²⁰ One of his descendants not only discarded this festival but also hurled a lance of defiance at the Sea-god, whereupon the enraged sea²¹ swept away the Pahruli river, several ranges of hills and a goodly portion of the Pandya dominions. The undaunted Pandya marched northwards and conquered new lands to make up for the loss he had sustained. Old King Ma Kirti²² defied the very gods and looked upon them as mere quarrelsome children. Once when he heard that hostilities were about to break out between the Devas and the Asuras, he interposed and asked them to lay down their arms and added the threat that if either party were to resort to acts of violence, his strong right arm would smite down the miscreants. The threat went home and both parties slunk away in terror from the presence of the mighty monarch. These legends help us to gain some insight into the ideals and aspirations that stirred the heart of the old Tamil warrior.

Paripadal, one of the Sangam anthologies, makes mention of the Vedic pantheon²³ of gods, such as the twelve

¹⁷ *Puram*, LVI, 13.

¹⁸ *Puram*, LVI, 12.

¹⁹ *Manimekhalai* I, 4-10.

²⁰ *Puram*, IX, 10.

²¹ *Chilappadikaram* XI, 17-22.

²² *Irailanar Akapporul Sutra*, 35 Comm.

²³ *Paripadal* III, 6-8; VIII, 4-8.

Adityas, the eight Vasus, the eleven Rudras and the twin Asvini-devas; but the worship of these deities had not yet taken root among the mass of the people. Some of the kings were persuaded to perform Vedic sacrifices, which they did more for the purpose of winning earthly renown than for the achieving of heavenly rewards. One of the Pandya kings, Muthu-kudumi Peru Vazhuthi, who lived before the time of the submergence of the Pahruli river, had the distinguishing epithet of Pal-yaga-salai, which means the possessor of many sacrificial halls and another Chola king is known as Peru-nar-killi who performed the Rajasuya sacrifice. Early Aryan thought appears to have been introduced into Tamilakam with Vedic ritualism.

The *Tholkappiyam* and the *Paripadal* make incidental mention of the early speculations concerning the Universe, man's place in it and the ultimate destiny of humanity. The Sankhya system of philosophy was in vogue from very early times; attention, however, does not appear to have been centred round the study of philosophy, until the coming of the Jains and Buddhists. Within a century or two after the time of their illustrious founders, these great religions appear to have been introduced into Tamilakam. Somewhere about this time, there appeared on the firmament of Tamilakam a star of the first magnitude which continues to shed its lustre even to this day. Tiruvalluvar, whose name is known to all parts of the civilized world, and whose teachings have lent a unique grandeur to the language in which they were uttered, lived in an age of great intellectual activity. The ferment, introduced by the great heresies of Jainism and Buddhism, made the exponents of Vaidika Dharma to revalue the traditional teachings and to formulate a course of conduct which, while remaining within the established tenets of the ancient Dharma, would also appeal to those who would not accept the authority of the Vedas. The Universal gospel of Tiruvalluvar met this demand and has ever since been acclaimed as the Uttara Veda.

When Buddhism and Jainism were first introduced, they were considered merely as systems of thought and were received with open arms. The disciplined life of the monk and the self-sacrifice shown by him may have appealed to the hardy Tamil warrior. The old soldier, who might have grown world-weary of the endless number of battles he was called upon to fight, may have found a calm refuge in the seclusion of monasteries. Those who suffered great bereavements, such as the fathers of Kovalan and Kannaki, entered the monasteries to pass the last days of their lives. Princes of the royal blood, such as Ilanko-adikal, embraced a life of poverty to follow the example of the noble ascetic, the scion of the Sakya clan. Along with Buddhism and Jainism, the Nyaya and Vaisesika philosophies were introduced into Tamilakam. In those remote times, the Mimamsa system does not appear to have been divided into the Purva and the Uttara Mimamsas. Lokayata (materialism), Buddhism, the Sankhya, the Nyaya, the Vaisesika and the Mimamsa systems are known as the six systems of philosophy in the time of the *Manimekhalai*.²⁴ A great impetus was given to the cultivation of learning and some of the Tamilian Buddhist scholars went to China, Tibet and the island of Java carrying with them the torch of knowledge. Mention is made in the *Manimekhalai* of the famous Buddhist teacher, Ara-vana-adikal. The name may be translated into Sanskrit as Dharma-swarupa. He is the hero of the epic, as much as his disciple, the Bhikshuni Manimekhalai, is the heroine. The fact that he was extremely aged is mentioned in several places in the poem. The force of his personality appears to have gained many adherents to the path of Buddhism. Later on Buddhism and Jainism gained ground to such an extent that they gave up the spirit of toleration which characterized them at the beginning and became aggressive religions. They aimed at the conversion of the whole of Tamilakam and attempted to do this by winning over the exclusive patronage of princes and scholars. After the destruction

²⁴ *Manimekhalai* XXVII.

of Pukar (Kavirippumpattinam), which event took place somewhere about the end of the second century, the Chola capital is transferred to Uraiur. Madura suffers from a severe drought and famine for twelve years. The poets of the Sangam disperse and the glories of the good old days become a mere memory of the past. Several Northern dynasties, that cast covetous eyes upon the wealth of Tamilakam, find an opportune moment to gain a foothold in the South; an Aryan expeditionary force from the North appears to have invaded Tamilakam as early as the time of the Pandya king mentioned in the *Chilappadikaram*. This invasion was successfully resisted and the king is, therefore, known to history as Arya-padai-kadantha Nedunchelian. Subsequently, the Aryan hordes make a clean sweep of the country and in the next century we see Pallava kings well-established in Kanchi. The Chola and the Pandya dynasties suffer a temporary eclipse and the whole country passes through a period of transition, at the end of which, we find that the North had achieved a cultural conquest even more pronounced than the political conquest. The very names of the Pandya and Chola kings become Sanskritized.

It was during this time, perhaps by the end of the third century or a little earlier, that the Yoga system of philosophy began to appear in Tamilakam. Tradition says that Patanjali lived at Chidambaram and wrote his commentary on Panini's grammar, a treatise on medicine, his immortal treatise on Yoga and the Tantric rules for the worship of Nataraja. The sage is represented as a Naga and is considered as an incarnation of Sesha Naga. This seems to suggest that the theory and practice of Yoga were developed among the ancient Nagas. Patanjali's name is coupled with that of Vyagrapada, another sage, who is said to have arrived at Chidambaram earlier. This sage is represented with eyes in his toes. Is he to be identified with Akshapada, the father of Nyaya Sastra? These two sages are said to be the first to witness the cosmic dance of

Nataraja. The account may be symbolic of the fact that the supreme truth of the Shaiva religion can only be discerned by the combined eyes of Yoga and Nyaya. By saying so, we do not in the least deny, the historicity of the two sages mentioned above. The Agamic cult of worship, which probably existed as a secret cult from early times, was elaborated during this period. It was certainly enriched by the influx of Tantric thought from the North. The worship of Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, whose form is that of the Pranava mantra is recognised in the Yoga system.

Yoga and Tantra engaged the attention of Siddhars and recluses. Before they could filter down to the mass of the people, it was necessary that the doctrines taught by them should be actualized in the lives of one or more saintly personages. Karaikkal Ammaiyar or Karaikkal Pei (the demoness of Karaikkal), as she called herself, was blessed with a vision of the mystic dance at Tiruvalangadu, and having the gift of song, she has sung in immortal verse the glory of the vision that was vouchsafed unto her; the first Alwars of Vaishnavism were probably contemporaries of Karaikkal Ammaiyar. Cholan Chenganan, the builder of many temples, also probably lived about this time. In the middle of the seventh century came Tirugnana Sambandhar, the child-saint of Shiyali, who in his third year was blessed with the Divine vision and from thence-forward looked upon Shiva and Parvati as his parents. The saintly old Appar, who in his young days entered a Jain monastery and later on embraced Shaivism, is a contemporary of Sambandhar. Many sects²⁵ of Shaivism, which are at present known only by name, were in active existence at the time of Appar. Kapalis who made use of human skulls as begging bowls, Mavratils with long matted hair and garlands of bones, Pasupathars and others were seen in the streets of Kanchi and Tiruvarur. There was a whole galaxy of saints at this epoch. Andal, the mystic poetess, the

²⁵ Appar, *Devaram*—Tiruvarur, Tiruvattirai-Tirupadikam.

beloved bride of Sri Ranganatha, and her saintly father, Periyalwar, lived about this time. Sundaramurti-Nayanar, the last of the Devara hymnists, came about two centuries later. Tirumangaimannan, the Vaishnava saint, is probably a contemporary of Sundarar. Sambandhar, Appar and Sundarar have left behind beautiful songs in praise of Shiva, which to this day form the holy book of the Shaivites. Alwars have left behind the *Tiruvaimoli*, the Tamil Veda of the Vaishnavites. Manickavasagar, the prince of mystics, completed the work of Shaiva revival started by the Devara hymnists.²⁶ Buddhism disappeared from South India; but the unseen gentle influence of the Buddha, the ideal of compassion to all living creatures and the ethical principles expounded by Him, persisted and became permanently incorporated in the religious life of Tamilakam. Jainism, although it received a set-back, continued to exist in the monasteries, which, besides being centres of religious life, were also functioning as a sort of grammar schools. The elementary treatises on Grammar, Prosody and Poetics and the metrical lexicons (*Nighantus*), placed in the hands of young students of Tamil even to this day, have come from mediaeval Jain monasteries.

The Alwars and the Nayanmars breathed new life into the people and roused them from their lethargy. The pessimistic attitude of mind fostered in the Jain and Buddhist monasteries gave place to a living faith. The glorious example of the Shaivite and Vaishnavite saints helped the votaries of these religions to lead a life of service and selfless devotion. Princes lavished their wealth in building temples and in patronising poets. The old dynasties of Tamilakam felt their own strength and refused to pay tribute to alien monarchs.²⁷ By successful encounters they not only freed themselves from the foreign yoke but also subdued their erstwhile rulers. Perhaps, it

²⁶ The date of Manickavasakar is yet an open question; there are strong reasons in support of the claim put forward by some scholars fixing his date to the end of the third century.

²⁷ Sundarar *Devaram*: Koil-padikam.

was during this time that the religion and culture of South India spread to far-off Champa and Cambodia. As a result of the awakening of the spirit, subsequent centuries witness an unprecedented literary revival. Jayamkondan's *Kalingattuparani* and Kambar's immortal epic reach such heights as were never before reached. Kamba-Ramayanam truly reflects the religious thought of the age in which it was written. The old cult of heroism, which regarded valour as the supreme virtue and immortal fame here on earth as the equivalent of immortality hereafter, forms the basis of the lives so beautifully depicted by Kambar. The great God, who forgot His divinity on hearing the wails of a suffering world, walks in the midst of kings, outcastes and recluses as a man among men sharing their joys and sorrows. In Him, the Kshatriya ideal of life finds its fullest manifestation. Kambar has pictured this ideal to its utmost perfection. We find contemporary kings and princes of the royal blood vying with one another in honouring this great poet, who stands unparalleled as the poet of manliness and Kshatriya prowess. The Devara hymns, the works of Manickavasagar and Saint Tirumular and of various other Shaiva poets were collected and arranged into the eleven *Tirumurais* or holy books of Shaivism and Sekkilar wrote his story of the Shaiva saints which formed the twelfth *Tirumurai*. Ramanuja, the great exponent of Visishtadwaita, lived about this time. The sacred utterances of the Alwars were collected and arranged and formed the authoritative scriptures of the Vaishnavas.

We pass on and come to an age, in which men's minds turn once more to philosophical speculations. Meikandan appears on the scene. The same Divine power, which made the child of Shiyali (St. Tirugnana-Sambandhar) utter words of wisdom couched in the language of poesy, speaks once more through the tongue of the child of Tiruvennainallur. The inspired message is now given in the language of philosophy, the language of dialectics and abstract thought. The message is, however, the same. It

is not mere scholastic philosophy that Meikandan expounded. The first half of Siva-gnana-bodham discusses the nature of bondage and freedom and the second half points out the path to the attainment of freedom. Herein we find a synthesis of pure reason and Yogic mysticism which transcends the bounds of reason. Sakala-agama-panditha, the Brahman philosopher, surrenders at the feet of this Vellalah boy and becomes his first disciple, taking the name of Arulnandi-Sivacharya. He composes the *Siva-gnana-Siddhiyar* and *Irupa-irupathu* and hands over the torch of knowledge to Marai-gnana-Sambandhar, who hands it over to Umapathi-Sivacharya. Umapathi is the author of no less than eight works on Saiva Siddhanta of which one, the *Sankalpa-Nirakarana*, probably the last, was written in the Saka year 1235 (that is 620 years ago).

About the same time, Malik Kafur occupied the city of Madura and the subsequent centuries witness the decline and fall of the Pandyas and the Cholas. Foreign invasions, civil wars and internecine intrigues well-nigh exhaust the energy of the hardy Tamil race. With the fall of Vijayanagar, Hindu independence becomes a memory of the past and a sort of mental stupor sets down upon the people; they begin to dream of past glories. The world, in which they lived and moved and had their being, had no attraction for them; they directed their thoughts to regions situated far beyond the mortal ken. Despair seizes the heart of the people, they feel tired of life and shrink in horror from the tortures that might await them on the other side of the grave. The old Tamil warrior, who laughed at death, never thought of inventing a hell; the Buddhists introduced a few, but the priests who came into prominence in this age of degradation ushered into existence twenty-eight crores of hells. The heroic legends of the Sangam age were almost forgotten; the *Jataka* Tales imported by the Buddhists were metamorphosed into new shapes; stories centering round the sage Agastya, episodes from the great epics and tales, fabricated by priestly storytellers, to illustrate the inexorable working of Karma

supplied the material for unusually long poetical compositions called *Sthala-puranams*. The vast majority of these compositions are but the echoes of the only consolation which priest-craft had to offer to a fallen and degraded people. They exhort the readers not to mind their present trials and tribulations but to make regular offerings to the deities, bathe in the sacred waters, observe fasts and prepare themselves to gain safe entrance to the portals of heaven, ordering out their present life in strict conformity to the dictates of their rightful spiritual guardians, the priests. Monasteries sprung up all over the country. Founded upon Buddhist and Jain models, these institutions fostered to a certain extent religious and secular learning. But their main function was the offering of elaborate worship to the deities and the departed saints who founded the Order. The presiding abbot was paid divine honours even during his lifetime. Slowly and steadily these houses of religion began to accumulate large funds. Flatterers appeared in the guise of poets and received sumptuous meals and costly presents from the presiding abbots. The abbot, secure in his exalted eminence, often led a life of irresponsible ease and knew little or nothing of the miseries of the poor and the downtrodden. The poor people were daily growing poorer, and genuine scholarship was languishing for want of patronage, while a motley crowd of idle parasites consisting of priests, flatterers and the like, were fattening themselves on the food produced by the labour of the poor untouchables. The courts of the chieftains, who ruled over Tamilakam in these troubled times, were also infested with the same kind of parasitic vermin. *Sthala-puranams* were made to order and wherever incidents or ideas were wanting, they were freely drawn from the inexhaustible source of Sanskrit literature.

The monasteries were not all of one persuasion. All the various sects of Hinduism had their own Maths. In spite of the laxity that was spreading over these institutions, they served the very useful purpose of preserving

the old manuscripts and keeping inextinguished the lamp of learning that was handed down to them through the centuries. Tiruvavaduthurai Athinam, which claims an unbroken line of succession from Meikandan, has preserved the Saiva Siddhanta philosophy and has also produced a school of grammarians well-versed both in Sanskrit and Tamil. The chronicles of this Math state that, during the reign of Virupaksha Raja²⁸ (probably Virupaksha I of Vijayanagar), one Sivaprakasa Desikar of the Thiruvavaduthurai Math preached the doctrines of Virashaivism in the presence of Linganna, one of the ministers of the king. The preaching was so good that the minister requested the monk to be the head of the Virashaiva Math at Tiruvannamalai. With the permission of his monastic superior, Siva-prakasar took charge of the Tiruvannamalai Athinam. This Sivaprakasar should not be confused with Thuraimangalam Sivaprakasa Swamigal, the author of many standard works on Virashaiva philosophy. From the Dharmapura Athinam came Kumara-guru-para Swamigal, the gifted poet and founder of the Tiru-panandal Athinam. Sivagra Yogigal, of Suriyanarkoil Athinam, is another great exponent of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy. By the beginning of the fourteenth century, Vedanta philosophy, which had its votaries from very early times, had extended its influence to such an extent as to be considered a serious rival to Saiva Siddhanta. This is evident from the fact that Arul-nandi-Sivacharya as well as Umapathi-Sivacharya attempt to refute at length the doctrine of Vedantic idealism. There were Vedanta Maths in various parts of the country, where instruction was imparted through the medium of Tamil. Veerai Alawandar, Sri Pattar, Tatwa Rayar and Kannudaiya Vallalar are among those who have enriched Tamil literature with Vedantic thought. The Vaishnava Maths were instrumental in bringing out commentaries on the Divya Prabandhams.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, Father Beschi was preaching the doctrines of Roman Catholic

²⁸ Tiruvavaduthurai Athinam—Guru-param parai Vilakkam, page 57.

Christianity and was creating a Christian Tamil literature. Omar, the Tamil poet and others of the Muhammadan faith, were enriching Tamil with Islamic thought; Pillai-perumal-aiyengar was adding to Vaishnava Tamil literature. Thayumanavar, the mystic saint, sets at ease the warring schools of Vedanta and Siddhanta by pointing out the harmony that underlies the two schools of thought. About a century later, comes Ramalinga Swamigal whose devotional hymns are such as would melt the stoniest of hearts. Arumuga Navalar appears in Jaffna and with a reformer's zeal stems the tide of Christian proselytization and extensively makes use of the printing press to popularise the teachings of Shaivism. The general awakening in Bharat-Varsha rouses the South from its slumber and the message of harmony propounded by Swami Vivekananda, Hinduism's representative to the world's parliament of religions, broadens the outlook of the Hindus and makes them feel that their religion is wide enough to receive light from all quarters and strong enough to withstand all opposition.

We come to modern times. The venerable figure of Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Swaminatha Iyer dominates the realm of Tamil literature for fully half a century. Ceaselessly labouring with untiring patience and industry, he carefully edits and brings out book after book of the ancient Tamil classics, thereby silently ushering in a renaissance in Tamil land. It may perhaps take another half century for Tamilakam to realise the extent of the services rendered to it by the venerable pandit. Only a small fraction of the material, that lay hidden in these ancient books, has so far been brought to light. But that little was sufficient to infuse new life into the Tamilians. The gloom, that overshadowed the country during the past four centuries, is slowly passing away and a new dawn is in sight. The harbinger of the approaching dawn is our latest poet Subrahmanya Bharathi. He is essentially a religious poet. With religious mysticism, he combines an

unbounded love for the poor and the downtrodden. The poems that he addresses to Kannan (Sri Krishna) are as sweet and soul-stirring as any that we meet with in ancient literature; the hymns to Shakti are grander than the old hymns addressed to Korravai. The charm of his lyrics, and the dignified tone of his patriotic songs have endeared him to his people. The healthy outlook on life underlying his poems has a universal appeal. He views humanity as a whole and stands ready to embrace the North and the South, the East and the West, the Brahman and the outcaste as well as the educated and the illiterate. May the Tamil people, the inheritors of a glorious civilisation, view the world with the eyes of Bharathi, their latest poet and rising above narrow sectarianism and petty social conventions march on the path that will lead them to the Divine Spirit, which is the source of all goodness, beauty and truth.

Translating Old Tamil Poetry—Some Suggestions

KAMIL ZVELEBIL.

It might seem at the first glance that the translator of Old Tamil poetry into Czech has hardly anything to say to the English reading world. This opinion, however, might be held only by those who see, somewhat superficially, in the art of translation an instantaneous emanation of inspiration or, on the contrary, a mechanical process of transposition of one text into another. The problem of translation is far from being so simple; let the translator, who is responsible for quite a number¹ of translations from Tamil into Czech, be allowed to say a few words about some theoretic principles and problems of his work.

He will not speak about the translation of modern Tamil prose into his own language; though there is a lot also in this sphere which is problematic and difficult, the matters are not at all so complicated as when facing the task of the translation of Old Tamil poetry into Czech verse.

Whenever one reads carefully the oldest Tamil poems in their original language, one must agree with the words of the French Indologist P. Meile, who says: "La valeur

¹ The author has published a number of translations from Old and New Tamil, both prosaic and poetic, in various magazines. Also, three books have been translated so far by the present author. They are: Fahir C. J. Beschi's *புறநாடு நிகழ்ச்சி* under the title "Zertovne pribehy Mistra Paramarty" (The Jocular Accidents of Master Paramarta), Prague, 1954 (edition de luxe); an anthology of amorous poems translated from different old Tamil collections under the title "செய்யுள் Cerný květ" (Black Flower), Prague, 1955 (edition de luxe); a greater anthology of old Tamil lyrical poetry (200 stanzas), compiled mostly from the *Nattinai*, *Akam*, *Putam*, *Kaliththokai* and *Kutunthokai* collections, under the title "Květy jasmínu" (Blossoms of jessamine) is under print.

littéraire de ces poèmes est de premier ordre. Concis, élégants, sans bravure, presque toujours d'un mouvement vif et animés de sentiments très humains, parfois d'une émotion poignante, ils sont, dans la plénitude du terme, classique: plus sobres et moins rhétoriques que Pindare, qui est le meilleur terme de comparaison, ce sont presque les seules productions de l'Inde qui, exemptes de préciosité, et n'abusant pas de la virtuosité intellectuelle, aient la grâce, l'équilibre et la sobriété de l'art attique."²

Thus it has become the task of the author of this article to translate the old Tamil verses for the Czechoslovak reader in such a way, that they would impress him in the same manner in which the original had impressed the reader having the knowledge of Old Tamil or—which is surely the ideal of all translation—that they would evoke, in the modern reader, analogical emotions, feelings and ideas to those which had been evoked in that reader—or better listener—or whom the verses had been, originally, destined. This is—once more it has to be stressed—the ideal of all artistic translatorship; only very few exceptionally gifted translators can achieve it and it is a question whether it is at all possible to attain this aim when translating from ancient oriental literatures into modern European idioms. It is, nevertheless, the task of every serious translator to try hard to reach it.

There are especially two main kinds of problems which arise when solving this task, i.e. the questions as far as the contents of the texts is concerned, and the problems concerning their form.

As far as the first complex of problems is concerned, it is possible to express briefly the chief difficulty arising from those problems in the very natural premise that, to the Czech and any foreign reader of the 20th century, many of the concepts, ideas and happenings described in

² In *L'Inde classique*, II, Paris—Hanoi, 1953, p. 302.

the old texts are not at all so current and natural or at least so easily understandable as they had been to the Tamil listener nearly two thousands of years ago. This obvious fact is met with at every step in practical work and it finds a detailed expression in a number of concrete minute difficulties: how to translate some concepts, characteristic only for the nature and society of ancient Tamilnad, into modern Czech verse? Let us give only a very brief outline of some of these difficulties.

As far as the local or personal names and mythologic conceptions have occurred in the original texts, the translator took the liberty to leave them out sometimes or to paraphrase them or, which is most recommendable, to explain them directly in the text.³

It is necessary to stress that an excessive appearance of such original proper names would be a menace to the aesthetic quality of the translation; and the main purpose of the translator has been to give to the Czech reader a translation as much perfect and polished as possible, which would read well, smoothly, without difficulties and with pleasure.

There are, further, some conceptions and ideas and happenings described in the original texts which are

³ Thus, not each place-name, appearing in the text, has been included in the Czech translation. (e.g. *Uraṭ Akam*, 377, *Uraṭṭuṭṭu Putam*, 34 etc.). Naturally, also many personal names have been left out or paraphrased in the Czech translation, e.g. *Uraṭ* (Kut. 80), *Uraṭṭuṭṭu* (Ak. 346); on the other hand, it would not be right to exclude all original proper names, local or personal, from the text of the translation. These proper names, used conveniently and at the right place, evoke a strange foreign atmosphere, they furnish the text with a strange colouring and, if they are also phonetically pleasing to the ear of the readers of the translation, they should certainly be used after careful consideration.

Regarding the technique of explanation in the text itself: in the original (*Put. 105*), e.g. *Pa:ri* (*பா:ரி*) is mentioned; in the translation this name has been kept with a direct explanation: *Pa:ri, the chieftain*; or, there may be some original name of a peculiar flower mentioned; it is included in the translation and its colour or any other attributes is mentioned together, e.g. *fragrant* or *white mullai*. Thus the reader has at least an approximate idea of the thing or person mentioned and no explanatory foot-notes are necessary, which, needless to say, would be aesthetically impossible in an artistic translation of verses.

utterly foreign and void of any meaning to the Czech modern reader; it was necessary to substitute analogical concepts, current and full of meaning, for those of the original Tamil texts, if it was possible. This does not concern only some specific names of many species of plants and animals, which are typical for South India,⁴ but also some conceptions which are, for the modern European reader, hardly imaginable or even aesthetically or ethically unbearable.⁵

It has to be emphasized, however, that this does not mean that the translator might treat the text with immodest and unrestrained arbitrariness, that he might "remodel" and paraphrase and "repaint" the original. Such treatment would not lead to a translation, but to a free repro-

⁴ Thus, e.g., in old Tamil verses, we find a series of terms for different species of lotus or jasmine; we may leave the term untranslated only if we have no equivalent or analogy, at least approximate, in our language; the Czech reader imagines nothing under the different terms மல்லிகை, மல்லிகம் etc.; if, however, we substitute for these names the common Czech word "jasmin" (jasmine), the reader imagines at once fragrant white blossoms, which is quite suitable and sufficient for our purpose. If, on the other hand, there is absolutely no Czech term for a herb or an animal found in the text, it is necessary to leave the original Tamil name and naturally not to introduce a Latin botanical or zoological term (thus we leave e.g. புன்னை as punnai and we do not use Calophyllum inophyllum).

⁵ These are the most delicate cases; it concerns some expressions like அல்குல் (alkul) or திதலை (thithalai), sometimes even in the connection thithalai alkul (as in Natt. 84); in an artistic translation one cannot naturally translate literary *mons veneris* or *pudendum muliebre*; it has to be translated as "lap" or "waist"; thithalai: these spots and spreadings on the skin have been regarded as beautiful in the time of ancient Tamil poets; it is however doubtful if the Czech modern reader would appreciate its aesthetic function if the term would be translated literally by "spots on the skin"; thus it has been necessary to say something like "beauty-marks". Another instance concerns the idea of சிலிர்ப்பு (cilirppu), "horripilation, erection of hair from emotion"; this, again, has been necessary to paraphrase with "she was trembling from delight". Also some concepts of கைக்கிழை kaikkil:ai or மடலேறுதல் mat:ale:tuthal are strange and difficult to comprehend for the modern European reader and they must be treated, in the translation, with caution. What has been said about these cases, concerns also the sphere of புறம் (putam), of war; many concepts and descriptions of the fighting and especially of the carousals of demons etc. are very strange and may even have a repulsive effect on the modern foreign reader. It would not be right, of course, just not to translate such stanzas; the picture of classical Tamilnad, evoked by the translations, ought to be complete and organic. But such cases must be treated carefully.

duction, to a paraphrase. On the other hand, it is fairly impossible to produce a good artistic translation of such ancient oriental texts which would be at the same time entirely true and strictly accurate. Such accurate translation—not artistic—is necessary when dealing with the texts from the points of scientific investigation, philological, literary or historic; it would be absurd to prepare such a translation for a wide circle of readers, for the masses of common foreign "consumers" who often do not know anything about the literature and its background in question. The translator must never forget his "social order", i.e. the kind of people for whom his work has been destined, he must not forget his readers.

What holds good for the problems of contents and subject-matter, is equally valid when speaking about the form.

Each and every language has created naturally its own, special and characteristic poetical diction and forms, which are hardly imitable; often, they are entirely inimitable.⁶

Thus it is impossible to transfer the quantitative features of the old Tamil verse into Czech form, the nature of Czech verse being entirely different from the quantitative rhythmical forms of Tamil. In Czech, stressed and unstressed syllables alternate, thus producing rhythm; it is the opposition of quality; in Old Tamil, the essence of rhythmical structure may be seen in the alternation of short and long syllables, in the quantitative opposition. The difference between the two systems is so essential, that any effort to imitate the Tamil form in Czech must end in failure.

⁶ Everything is, of course, possible. And there were some efforts made in the literature of translation (also in Czech) to substitute one form for another exactly and precisely, e.g. for the Sanskrit verse of 17 syllables a wholly artificial Czech metre of 17 syllables was used; needless to say that such translations did not have any artistic effect and that their aesthetic value was disputable.

Then there is the problem of the *தொடை* (Thot:ai). The true means of aesthetic effect is, in Czech, besides the rhythm, the final rhyme; in Tamil, different forms of alliteration and consonance. The task of the translator is to find such form which would do justice to the nature of old Tamil versification by means of a system, peculiar and natural to Czech. Thus, the true final rhyme of Czech poetry has been used where, in Tamil verse, some forms of "initial rhyme" *எதுகைத்தொடை* (ethukaiththot:ai) were in operation; where, in the Tamil original, different arts of *மொனைத்தொடை* (mo:naiththot:ai) occurred, the translator attempted to produce some kind of consonance and alliteration also in the Czech translation. It is hardly necessary to stress that all cases have not been translated in the same way according to a single "recipe"; it was necessary to treat every single case individually; translation is, after all, an art; thus the author tried, e.g., even some innovations in Czech verse for instance to introduce the "initial rhyme" in some of his translations etc.

The fundamental feature of an artistic translation must remain, however, the effort to substitute real poetry for poetry and not some kind of hybrid half-poetry half-prose; the means cannot mostly be identical where oriental languages are concerned analogy has to be used; there must be nothing forced and rigid in the translation, its language and form must be artful but not artificial.

Let us conclude with some theoretic principles which are, according to our view, necessary to follow when translating from ancient oriental languages into modern European idioms, if the aim of our efforts has to be the artistic translation, determined for the common reader, a translation, which would mean, for him, an incitement to read more and deeper in the literature in question.

1. It is unnecessary to cling too anxiously to every line of the contents, or to adhere to an accurate, stiff imitation of form.

2. This does not mean, however, an arbitrary treatment of the subject-matter and form of the original. The gist of the poetic quality of the text, the essential features of the original, viz. the metaphor in the broad sense of this term, the peculiar way which shows how the poet perceives and transforms the world, the specific way of how he depicts this outer world and describes his reflexions—this must be truly, nay, even devotedly kept in the translation. The details are not so important; it is better to keep truly and devotedly the essence and nature of the poet's metaphors than to cling to trifles and details in a servile way and, at the same time, to lose the spirit and nature of the whole.

Such translation, which is, according to our view, an ideal one, we do not call a literal, an accurate translation; but it is neither a paraphrase, a free transposition; it is an artistic, aesthetically effective poetic translation in between the two extremes, a translation which keeps the specific features of the original text, which evokes the picture of Tamil India in the first centuries of the Christian era, but, at the same time, is read by the masses of readers without any misunderstandings and difficulties, with interest, eagerly and with pleasure.

Let it be permitted to the translator to remark with all due modesty that these principles have proved to be successful in praxis, and that his translations have been widely and favourably accepted.

Bow Song: A Folk Art from South Travancore

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The southernmost part of Travancore called 'Nanjilnad', meaning 'the land of the plough', is essentially an agricultural country supplying rice almost to the whole of Travancore-Cochin. The people who inhabit this area are simple peasant folk, leading a happy and contented life. They are Tamils, proud of their 'southern' Tamil with its 'southern' air. They are proud too of their own scholars who won laurels and brought glory to their native land. One of them was Mahamathi, Sathavathani, K. P. Seiku Tampi Pavalar, perhaps the last of the great classicists, a great grammarian, scholar and critic, whose prodigious scholarship was the envy of even scholars in Tamilnad; another was Isai Chelvar T. S. Lakshmana Pillai, the most outstanding musical composer in Tamil of recent times. The late Kavimani S. Desikavinayagam Pillai, the famous poet was another distinguished son of Nanjilnad. The agitation led by the Tamils of Nanjilnad for the merger of the Tamil districts of Travancore with the Madras State is well known. Their love for Tamil has given them a political and social solidarity.

The folk songs of Nanjilnad are as charming and as alluring as the country to which they belong. Sweet and mellifluous, their folk songs flow like a clear and sparkling woodland brook winding its zigzag way, producing soft and novel melodies. Sung by the young and old alike in the many beautiful villages in Nanjilnad, the lilting tunes and the enchanting music of these folk are a feast to those who hear them. Naturally enough, the songs reflect the

many strange customs and habits in the life of the Tamil community here. The singularly striking nuances in the local dialect reveal the many distinct characteristics, long associated with those who were once supposed to have occupied the now submerged main land, south of Cape Comorin. Words which are no longer current in Tamil Nad could still be found in the texts of these songs. It will be a matter of interest to philologists to note how a vast majority of these words is retained by the Malayalam language and have acquired down the century different shades of meanings.

One of the quaint types of folk music, which still stands as a symbol of the cultural wealth of the Tamils, is what is popularly known as 'Villu Pattu' in Tamil, literally translated as 'bow song'. The materials that go to make up the orchestra producing the background music for the rendering of the bow song are interesting. It consists of a very big bow made either of a sturdy branch of a tree or of metal. The two ends of the bow are tied by a strong high tension string. The centre of the convex side of the bow is made to rest on the neck of a large sized earthen pitcher. The pitcher itself rests on a soft cushion or a circular disc-like thing with a concave cavity made of coconut fibre. Thus the bow when placed on the neck of the pitcher and held in delicate balance by the performers looks like a magnified crescent with its two ends looking upwards. There are numerous bronze bells hanging from the bow in a row from top to bottom.

The chief vocalist of the party will be seated in the centre of the bow with two slender wooden rods called the 'Veesukol', one in each hand. At one end of each rod, just near where the artist grips it, are found two cymbals the concave face of each facing and touching the other; it makes a sort of cavity, containing beads or small-sized metal balls or stones inside. The artist, while singing, will so artfully raise and move his hands holding the rods as to express the mood and the 'bhava' portrayed in the

song, and deftly strike against the bow string producing the 'tala' or the time beat, synchronising with the stresses and the time beats in the song. This in turn will produce notes from the bells hanging from the bow. At the same time, the artist in charge of the big earthen pitcher will raise simultaneous notes, by beating against the mouth of the pitcher with a cardboard-like plate, made for the purpose from a stiff and sturdy plantain sheath. The sweet sound emanating from the pitcher will seem to come from within the pitcher, owing to the pressure exerted on it both by the weight of the bow resting on its neck and the beats brought to bear on its mouth by the pitcher player, and is perhaps more charming and melodious than that produced by any other percussion instrument like the 'Mridangam', 'Dholak', 'Khole' and 'Kanchira'. The pitcher player while he strikes against the mouth of the pitcher with his right hand, strikes at the same time on the body of the pitcher with a piece of coin held in his left hand. There is another percussion instrument called the 'Udukku' which the player holds in a horizontal position while playing. A second member in the party will keep 'tala', with the aid of two small wooden pieces called the 'Kashta'. A third member will play the cymbals. When the bow song programme is in full swing there is a perfect coordination of music in which the bow, bell and percussion instruments operate together, each producing by itself and in combination vigorous and fast-moving music in keeping with the moods of the ballad. When the chief vocalist sings, the others play on their instruments and when the others sing, the chief vocalist plays with his 'Veesukol' on the string of the bow. The spirited gestures and movements of the members of the bow song party during the performance often stimulate a sympathetic response in the audience who make similar gestures and movements almost unconsciously. The bow song artists put into their programmes so much life and enthusiasm that the simple village folk who constitute the audience abandon themselves in their enjoyment. Arrangements

for the performance of the programme are usually made on the open ground in front of the village temple. The performance itself is got up as a rule in connection with the temple festival, lasting for about a week's time, during the months September to January every year. The dais for the performers will be set up in front of the temple on one side and the audience will be seated on grounds facing the Deity.

The bow song troupe usually consists of eight members but sometimes ten or twelve. The duration of the programme will depend largely on the length of the story chosen for rendering. If the episode portrayed is a small one it will be finished in one session itself. On the other hand, if the theme is mythological or is taken from the 'puranas' or the 'ithihasas', it will take a much longer duration. Stories from the Ramayana or the Mahabharatha once begun will require a number of sessions lasting for three or four days, with two or three sessions each day; the first session is usually the longest, beginning at 9 p.m. and lasting for about five hours; and the second sessions is from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the third one from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. The leader of the troupe is generally a shrewd judge of mass psychology and he knows well how, where and when, in the course of a folk ballad, he should allow an interval.

The texts of the songs are simple and flowing and are invariably in ballad style. Almost every line is couched in the rural dialect. The idioms and phrases in use among the villagers have acquired in these songs a new form and have become pregnant with meaning. One can find in the running metres of these songs a sort of counterpoint rhythm and an internal rhyme based on stresses which serve to enhance the value of the music in them. The texts also abound in proverbs. Many proverbs in Tamil which would have otherwise become extinct have been saved and handed down to us through these ballads. Another important aspect of the text is that almost every couplet

or stanza ends with a refrain. As soon as the chief vocalist in the party finishes singing a couplet or a stanza, the other members of the party take up the refrain and sing it in chorus. The repetition of the refrain enables the listening audience to follow the trend of the story with ease.

The stories are composed almost entirely in verse. However there are a few stories, usually the longer ones, where the songs are interspersed with prose. This prose is bombastic and stilted. The chief vocalist is also the story-teller.

The stories are woven round a variety of themes, supernatural, mythological, devotional, historical and social. But the most popular stories are the supernatural. The very instrument and the music produced by it are especially suited for stories set against a supernatural background. Except for some passing references and scenes in 'Silappadikaram', 'Manimekhalai' and certain works of a later age like the 'Thakkayaga Parani' group of works, one does not find anything bordering on the supernatural, in Tamil literature. In the bow songs however, the supernatural is freely resorted to. Physical and psychic manifestations, culminating in partial or complete materialization of devils and evil spirits, are not wanting in these ballads. Appeasement of wicked spirits and the gods of their worlds, human sacrifices, gruesome and horror-striking situations—these and many other weird things figure in these stories. Yet the idea behind the supernatural in these stories is to illustrate the triumph of good over evil. The most popular of these stories is 'Pazhavor Nili', also known as 'Pazhayanoor Nili' in the adjoining Tirunelveli District. The story deals with frustrated love and continues from one birth to the next. In fact not only this story but all the other stories coming under this category consider time as one long continuous stretch without any past, present or future. In Pazhavor Nili, a certain young man, belonging to a trading commu-

nity, becomes enamoured, a few months after his marriage with Nili, of another woman of irresistible charm and deserts his young and loving wife. One day his mistress comes to Nili's house to see her lover. Nili, shuts the door against the mistress and sends her away. The enraged mistress decides to wreak vengeance on Nili. She refuses admittance to her lover when he calls later at her chambers. When asked for the reason, she tells him in detail the treatment meted out to her by Nili. He promises to make amends and begs to be admitted. She again refuses telling him that the only way to make amends to her satisfaction is to go back to Nili and return with the bejewelled 'tali', the marital tie of Nili. Thereupon he goes to Nili and lives with her for some months. He then tells Nili one day of his desire to leave his own native town with her and settle in some far-off town so that they could for ever live away from the sight of his wicked mistress. Nili welcomes the idea and both leave the house one night and reach a forlorn well in the middle of a forest. It is a moonlit night and young Nili who is now in the family way entreats her husband to spend that night by the side of the well. Accordingly they break the journey and spread their bed right under the wall of the fathomless well. The night, the moon, the sweet scent of the forest flowers and everything around above and about Nili exercise a strange spell on her. With fond words of love and affection she wraps up her husband under her arms. Nili's husband, who has been patiently waiting for this opportunity snatches her costly 'tali' and, deaf to her heart-rending screams, treacherously pushes her down into the well and hastens back to his fond mistress. With this ends the story in the first birth. In the next birth, the murderer husband, reborn again as a merchant, is on his way to the town where he lived in his previous birth and happens to halt near the same well on a moonlit night. Nili's ghost comes out of the well, and appears before her husband as a woman of surpassing beauty and claims the lonely traveller as her husband. Taken aback he looks steadily at

her for a moment, comes to the conclusion that she is a 'mohini', an enchantress of the ghost world, and instantaneously rejects her. The claim and its rejection are referred to the Wise men of the neighbouring village, who after hearing both sides give their verdict in favour of Nili, duly declaring the traveller as Nili's husband. Further the Wise men allot a house in the village and order the couple to live there. They enter their new abode. There is joy written all over her face. All the unfulfilled passions, which were cut short at a most crucial stage of her former life, come up again in full fury that night, and she hugs him to her bosom, only to sap the life out of him. The following day the Wise men of the village come to the house only to find the dead body of the traveller with the woman missing. The degree of dramatic tension produced by this story can be understood only when one actually listens to its performance by the bow song troupe.

Another famous ballad is named 'Maruthanayakam Pillai'. It deals with the life of a wicked man, who by foul means tries to seduce the wife of his elder brother. The folk ballad entitled 'Chinna Thambi', much appreciated in Tirunelveli District, portrays how, in order to win a rich treasure from an evil spirit, a wealthy landlord made a human sacrifice of the only son of a poor peasant in his service.

Apart from the variety of themes and stories, another very interesting feature in this folk art is the extempore debate in verse. The party divides itself into two groups. The main singer with the 'Veesukol', those who sing with him and the two men who keep 'Tala' by playing on the 'Kashta' and the cymbals form into one group while the 'Pitcher player', 'Udukku player' and those who sing with them form into another group. The first group of persons singing from the right hand side will be called the 'Rightists' (Valathe Padupavar) and those who sing from the left hand side will be called the 'Leftists' (Idathe Padupavar). The 'rightists' will compose verses on the

spot in a particular tune. The subject matter of the verses may be anything under the sun. Usually the verses will be on 'Vedanta' or 'Siddhanta', mysticism, philosophy or theology. Usually the verses of the 'rightists' will contain a series of questions and the 'leftists' will have to answer them in verses of the same metre and tune as those employed by the 'rightists'.

This is similar to the practice that obtained among the poets and scholars of Tamilnad till very recently,—the practice of singing 'Asu Kavi'. To test a poet's accomplishments and erudition, the other poets and pundits assembled often subjected him to a tough and exacting examination; for instance they would ask him to compose on the spot a verse of a particular pattern with a specified idea. To test one's prowess in the art of versification, the examiners sometimes asked the examinee to compose a stanza of four or eight lines, which should end with one or two lines supplied by the examiners. Any one who failed to complete the verse according to the specifications faced the ignominy of defeat.

In a similar manner, if in the course of a spirited debate in verse between the leaders of the two groups in the bow song troupe, one leader fails to answer in appropriate verse and in the appropriate tune the question put to him by his opponent, then he will be declared as 'Thallu Kavi', i.e., a rejected poet and asked to leave the dais.

The following song from Shenbakaramanputhur, a village in Nanjilnad, illustrates the type of questions put by the leader of the 'rightists' to his opponent :

Tell me straight
The position of the five letters
Tell me straight
And clearly the meaning of 'Hari' *

Tell me straight
The story of the birth of the bow
Tell me straight
How this rod came to play on the bow

Tell me straight
The tone of these bells on this good bow
Tell me straight
The secret of their trembling heart-beats

Tell now straight
To your pupils or else leave the bow
Away straight
And run away, you run away now!

The word of five letters referred to is of course சிவாயநாம (Ci va : ya na ma), which contains five Tamil letters (syllabic) which every Shaivaite devotee knows.

The next song, from Aralvaimozhi, another village in South Travancore, is about the famous hero, Iravi Kutti Pillai, who died fighting to save the honour of the people of Nanjilnad, and describes in detail how the Chieftain's army marched towards the battle field. The theme of competition in this song between the contending parties is the comparative merits of bronze and silver, one party's descriptions all centering on bronze and the other party's on silver. The rivalry between the 'bronze' and 'silver' parties and the attempt of each to outwit the other reflect an imagination, balanced by keen observation.

The timpano on the elephant's back
Is made of bronze
The resounding drums small and big are
All made of bronze
The bugle, kettle and base drums are
All made of bronze
The headwear of the Pathan's Arab steed
Is made of bronze!

And pat comes the answering description of the 'silver' party in equally good liquid loveliness of sound and rhythmic beat of verse:

Ravi Pillai's pearl white umbrella
Is made of silver
The fans used by his minister's servants

Are made of silver
And the swords, betel and snuff boxes
Are made of silver
His Chinese flautist's vertical flute
Is made of silver!

The reference to the Arab steed and the Chinaman's flute incidentally recall the brisk seaborne trade which Tamilnad had with Arabia and China in the distant past. The Arabs used to come with the starting of the South-west monsoon with their ship-loads of horses and land at the ports of Kumari, Eyirpattinam, Tondi and Korkkai to obtain in exchange sandal, ivory, pearl, pepper and spices. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Sundarapandiyan, the Pandiya king and his brothers, are reported to have imported annually about 2000 horses each from Arabia. The north-east monsoon enabled the Chinese to reach the shores of the Tamil country with silk, copper, tortoise shells, perfumes and cosmetics and many other dainty articles which were popular with the Tamils of those days.

A debate in verse, similar to the one practised by the bow song party, still obtains in some villages of Tiruchirappalli and Tanjavoor districts, in the course of the performance of another folk art, called 'Lavani'. Here, however, the scope of the debate and subject matter are limited. In this debate, one person asserts that 'Kaman', the god of love, was burnt to death by Lord Shiva, while his opponent refutes this and maintains that 'Kaman' though burnt by the wrath of Shiva never died.

These practices show that poetry was the language both of the princes and of the poor, with perhaps this difference that the language of the former was like a well-cut diamond, whereas that of the latter resembled an unhewn stone.

In recent years, this folk art has undergone many changes. The form, structure and technique, both as

regards the themes and ways of rendering, have been greatly modified. Songs and music occupy only a secondary place, the story being narrated principally in prose. The songs introduced in between are rendered in the more sophisticated Carnatic style. Musical discourses of the type of 'Kathakalakshepam' are also now being performed with the aid of this instrument, as also musical burlesques and social satires. But whatever the nature of the change and the manner of presentation, the potentialities of this folk art as a powerful instrument of mass appeal remain unimpaired.

The Song of Madurai¹

மதுரைக் காஞ்சி

V. KANDASWAMI MUDALIAR

Studded with bee-hives golden, wind-swept hills
 Rise from the bosom of the earth washed
 By boisterous breakers of the roaring seas.
 Stars of day swerve not from their courses appointed ;
 The flaming sun that lights the day, the silver moon 5
 That illumines night shine in radiance spotless ;
 Rains fail not, and fields fertile bear fruit
 To a thousand fold, carpeting the land
 With the splendour of their harvests golden ;
 And branches of trees hang low, laden with fruit ; 10
 Man and wife are bright with flush of happiness
 Full-fed ; and the cardinal tuskers four,
 Stately and caparisoned bright, bear aloft
 The burden goodly of the earth far-flung
 On their rounded shoulders ample and large. 15
 The wealth of plenty ceaseless dwindles not a mite
 Through consumption, nor the landscape fair fades
 Through evil looks cast at their abundance.
 The people of the city large, and of streets wide
 And well-ordered, in full happiness live, 20
 Under the sheltering wings of their king
 Cherished deep ; and who, guided by ministers
 True but never false, holds his regal sway,
 True to the glory of his ancestors great.
 In the crimson field of carnage, corpses 25
 Headless, time with dance-steps of the ghoul

¹ Today the second largest city in the South ; it was the capital of Pandian-land, one of the three Tamilian Kingdoms of ancient India ; even during Asoka's time these three were independent.

That had gorged on the gory carcasses
 Of tuskers that lie with their severed trunks.
 On severed heads of the fallen enemies,
 Arranged like a frightful oven, the demon cook 30
 Well-versed in cunning culinary art,
 In a pot of crimson blood of fallen Kings,
 Bubbling on the fire of his flaming wrath,
 Prepares sacrificial rice by stirring
 With ladles of the severed and wristleted arms, 35
 As a blood offering to steel the arms
 Of warriors, who to the quake of their enemies
 Would not turn their backs on the field of war.
 Of such a force large and ever victorious
 Art thou, Sovereign Liege, the King. 40
 Thou art equal to divine Agastya¹,
 Templed on the Pothia-hills² flashing silvern
 With water-falls, who crushed Ravana³
 The lord of the surging, southern, blue seas.
 Gaily-visored war tuskers wallow deep 45
 In the mire of their fragrant ichor,
 And sweep the battlefield, spreading carnage
 Among enemies in frightful order arranged.
 Harnessed to chariots strong as steel, leaping
 War-horses fleeter of foot than racing wind 50
 Raise a cloud of dust sanguine and darken
 The flaming orb of day in welkin blue.
 With arms toughened through use of flashing steel,
 You have with chieftain-kings vanquished
 The Chera⁴ and the Chola⁵ Kings; with it 55
 Not content, you have other chiefs vanquished,
 In their homes flanked by towering hills gleaming
 With mountain-streams; and other smaller chiefs

¹ Agastya was the divine founder of the Tamil tongue; he was in Pothia-hills in Tirunelveli district, where Tamiraparani river takes its rise.

² Pothia-hills in Tirunelveli district.

³ The ten-headed and twenty-shouldered mythical monster with whom Rama, the hero of Ramayana, warred for the abduction of Sita, his consort.

^{4 5} Two of the three kings of Tamilian Kingdoms of the South.

Of dark forest-lands serried with tall trees.
 Thus had added to your world-wide renown. 60
 Thou art a scion of great Umbal-Pandian¹
 Of gleaming golden garland, and art likened
 To bellowing thunder which scorches trees
 Of the hillside, and scatters to the winds four
 The rocks powdered by the fierce thunder-bolt. 65
 Kings, whose lands are belted by forests dark
 Against enemies, and whose circling ramparts
 Are girdled by deep moats, and from whose fort-walls
 Battlemented, and of towering gateways,
 A cloud of sharp arrows is rained thick, 70
 Are now divorced from victory of wars;
 And, subject unto you as vassals,
 Carry out your behests now as old friends.
 And thou art the King of Kings of domains
 Between the towering Meru²-mountains 75
 In the north, the Virgin³-Cape in the south,
 The calm deep waters of the eastern blue seas,
 And of the sounding western oceans deep.
 Ships, stately with mast-heads of flapping flags,
 Laden with goods of sovereign worth, cleave 80
 Through the rolling waves of the dark blue sea,
 Canopied with clouds, and reach your broad shores
 To the welcome peal of kettle-drums⁴ large.
 Urged by the furious wild wind across the seas
 The fleet of vessels of swollen dusky sails, 85
 Lying at anchor on the heaving seas,
 Is like cloud-capped hills rising in the distance.
 And you are the doughty victor of Saliyoor⁵,
 Named after salinel⁶ the rarest of grains.
 Its ports on clear deep waters are lined long 90

¹ The far remote ancestor and the most famous of Pandian Kings.

² The Olympus of Hindus, probably the Himalayas.

³ Modern Cape Comorin of S. India where there is a temple dedicated to the Virgin (*Kanya*) Goddess.

⁴ It is a large kettle-drum of nearly three feet in diameter; it is a war-drum, and was beaten at fort-gates and now at temple-gates.

^{5 6} A small kingdom of a chieftain, near Madurai, named after red-paddy (*salinel*) for which it was probably famous.

With yawning ware-houses and swarms with ships.
 Your shores and far hills echo with the tumult
 Of home-coming traffickers from far seas ;
 Echo with the cry of those who goad bulls
 At the thrashing ground ; with the silver peal 95
 Of bells round the necks of bulls ; with the beat
 Of the flails, which scatter the golden grains
 Like the broken rays of the radiant dawn ;
 With the cry of those who scare away birds
 From harvest fields ; with the song of those, 100
 Who, drawn up in a line, flood the green fields
 With the water of baling-buckets dragged
 From the brimming freshes of tanks ; with the strain
 Amoebaeon of men who tread the *picotta*¹,
 And with the dance steps of Baratha² maids 105
 On sand-dunes set with sparkling sapphires
 Of Mundaga³ flowers ; and those mingle sweet
 With the drum-measure of war-minstrels
 In villages surging with festive noises.
 Thou, the vanquisher of Kutwas⁴, loadest 110
 The War-minstrels of shoulders broad and round
 With gifts of herds of cattle, with stately elephants
 Of gleaming tusks, their calves and jewels priceless,
 And decorate them with golden stars lotus-shaped.

(To be continued)

¹ A baling bucket attached to a pole for lifting water from wells.
² People of shore land, their chief occupation was fishing and salt-growing ; they were traders.
³ Indian night shade.
⁴ People of a chieftain state (Kutta-nadu).

News and Notes

CEYLON OFFICIAL LANGUAGE BILL PASSED

CLAIM OF TAMIL TURNED DOWN

Colombo, June 15.

Ceylon's House of Representatives today passed the Government Bill to declare Sinhalese the sole State language, turning down, in effect, the claim of Tamil for official recognition.

The voting at the end of a Marathan 14-hour session, which ended at 6 a.m. was 66 in favour, and 29 against.

The voting showed that the Government got two votes short of two-thirds majority in the 101-member House.

The Government Party was supported by its predecessor in office, the United National Party and nominated members. Ranged against it were members representing the Tamil-speaking areas and the Leftist parties, who pleaded for parity of status for Tamil and Sinhalese as official languages of the country.

KEEN INTEREST

The Bill, the most controversial piece of legislation ever introduced in independent Ceylon's Parliament, evoked greater popular interest than any single political event in the island's recent history.

—“The Mail”, Friday, June 15, 1956.

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN STUDIES

Singapore, July 6.

The University of Malaya would open a Department of Indian Studies when the new academic session begins in October, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Sir Sydney Caine, announced today.

The new Department would be developed to cover a wider range of studies in Indian culture and languages but emphasis in the beginning would be on Tamil language and literature, Sir Sydney said.

Mr. M. Rajakannu, Lecturer in Tamil in the Government Arts College, Madras, has been appointed by arrangement with the Government of Madras to head the department.

Dr. C. S. Pichamuthu, the well known Indian Geologist, will head the Geology Department to be added to the University from October.

Dr. Pichamuthu is at present Director of Geology, Government of Mysore, and is also Professor of Geology in the Mysore University.

—“Hindu”, July 7, 1956.

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Mr. R. Radhakrishnan, who was attached to the School of Oriental and African Studies and worked directly under Professor J. R. Forth in the Department of Phonetics and Linguistics, is reported to have joined the new Department of Philological Research in Tamil in the Annamalai University.

A TAMIL POET

Here is another project undertaken by the archaeologists.

I learn that experts of the Archaeological Survey of India, Southern Circle, will begin on Saturday excavation at a selected site in Kunrathur. The purpose: they hope to get more information about the Tamil Poet, Sekkizhar and his times.

Sekkizhar, was born in Kunrathur, 20 miles from the city (Madras). He lived about 800 years ago, was Chief Minister of Kulotunga Chola. But he is more well-known as the author of Periya Puranam, a monumental poetical work on the lives of 63 Saivaite saints of South India.

—“Mail”, 5th March, 1956.

The Government of Madras in their Order No. Ms. 2207, dated 22nd June, 1956, have approved the Committee constituted by the Madras Presidency Tamil Sangham, Tirunelveli, consisting of the persons mentioned below for the purpose of finalising the glossary of Tamil equivalents for the English Administrative terms prepared by it.

1. Sri S. Venkateswaran, I.C.S.,
Member, Board of Revenue, Chepauk, Madras-5.
(Chairman)
2. Sri M. Ananthanarayanan, I.C.S.,
Director of Legal Studies, Madras.
3. Sri T. K. Sankaravadivelu, I.A.S.,
Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
Fort St. George, Madras-9.
4. Sri N. D. Sundaravadivelu, M.A., L.T.,
Director of Public Instruction, Madras.
5. Sri M. R. Perumal,
Principal, Teachers' College, Saidapet, Madras.
6. Sri N. Vinayakam, Senior Translator to Government.
7. Sri P. Kothandaraman of the Swadesamitran.
8. Sri C. Amritaganesa Mudaliar,
Secretary, Indian Red Cross Society.
9. Sri R. P. Sethu Pillai,
Professor of Tamil, University of Madras.

10. Sri K. Kothandapani Pillai,
Member, Railway Service Commission,
Madras-17.
11. Sri M. A. Kuttalalingam Pillai, B.A.,
Retired Collector, Palayamkottai.
12. Dr. D. R. Annamalai Pillai,
L.C.P.S., L.M.S.S.S.A., M.R.A.S. (London),
Retired Assistant Surgeon, Palayamkottai.
13. Sri A. Arulappan, B.A.,
Professor of Tamil, St. Xavier's College,
Palayamkottai.
14. Sri S. Ramaswami Konar, B.A., B.L.,
President, Madras Presidency Tamil Sangham.
15. Professor A. Muthiah Pillai,
Professor of Economics, Pachaiyappa's College,
Madras-10.
16. Sri R. V. Krishna Ayyar,
Secretary to the Madras Legislature (Retd.).
17. Dr. Manavala Ramanujam.
18. Sri E. M. Subramania Pillai,
Secretary, Madras Presidency Tamil Sangam.

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

Hints re: articulation

<i>Hard¹</i> (Plosive)	க	—	k	(as in king, angle, alhambra)
	ச	—	c	(„ church, angel, calcium)
	த	—	t:	(„ card ?).... Retroflex - articulate with blade of tongue.
<i>Soft</i> (Nasal)	த	—	th	(„ threat, this, thick).... dental.
	ப	—	p	(„ pipe, amber)
	ப	—	t	(„ atlas, sunday, arrears).... Retroflex - articulate with tip of tongue.
	ங	—	ng	(„ sing).... velar n
	ஞ	—	nj	(„ angel).... palatal n
	ண	—	n:	(„ urn ?).... Retroflex n - articulate with blade of tongue.
<i>Medium</i> (non-nasal continuant)	ந	—	nh	(„ anthem).... dental n
	ம	—	m	(„ mate)
	ன	—	n	(„ enter).... Retroflex n - articulate with tip of tongue.
	ய	—	y	(„ yard)
	ர	—	r	(„ red)
	ல	—	l	(„ leave).... Alveolar l - articulate with tip of tongue.
	வ	—	v	(„ very)
	ழ	—	l-	(„ ?).... Retroflex l - articulate with blade of tongue.
	ள	—	l:	(„ hurl).... Alveolar l - articulate with blade of tongue.
	ஃ	—	x	(„ ahead)
<i>Auxiliary^a</i> (ஃ)				

* The Tamil phonemes may for practical purposes be treated as having single allophones only, except in the case of the hard consonants which have four allophones each, as shown in note 1 on the reverse.

MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL FOR 1955-56.

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	„ N. K. Vinayakam

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
ஏஹு ehhu not exku

NOTE.—In most present day dialects, the plosive assumes a fricative —sometimes a voiced—value after a vowel also, except in the case of *t*: which retains its normal unaspirated, unvoiced value even after a vowel.

2. The value of this *auxiliary* phoneme, which must *always* be followed by a hard consonant, was variable during the time of Tholkappiam; it acquired a phonetic value identical with that of the following hard consonant, vide 1 (c) above,

e.g., ஏஹு became ehhu

Later its value became fixed as *h*, irrespective of the following consonant.

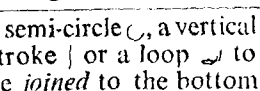
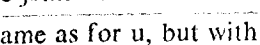
Note. (i) With a view to keep down transliteration to the minimum it is suggested that, in the case of Tamil words which are already in free use in English (e.g., Tamil, Thamil), or where it is unnecessary to indicate the *exact* pronunciation, accurate transliteration need not be resorted to. In the 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,

THE TAMIL SCRIPT

(This table is given for the guidance of those who wish to read Tamil texts which often appear in TAMIL CULTURE)

Vowels	Vowel symbols attached to preceding consonant.	Hard consonants						Soft consonants						Medium consonants					
		k	c	t:	th	p	t	ng	nj	n:	nh	m	n	y	r	l	v	l-	l:
அ a	nil	க	ச	ட	த	ப	த	ங	ஞ	ண	ந	ம	ன	ய	ர	ல	வ	ழ	ள
ஆ a:	ஈ to the right of the consonant	கா					று			ணை			னு						
இ i	ஈ to be joined at the top — right of consonant	கி								ணை									
ஈ i:	ஈ to be joined at the top — right of consonant	கி																	
உ u	a semi-circle  , a vertical stroke or a loop  to be joined to the bottom	கு	சு	டு	து	பு	து	ங்	ஞ்	ண்	ந்	மு	னு	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழ்	ள்
ஊ u:	Same as for u, but with an additional stroke or loop	கூ	சூ	டூ	தூ	பூ	து	ங்	ஞ்	ண்	ந்	மு	னு	யு	ரு	லு	வு	ழ்	ள்
எ e	ஊ to the left of the consonant	கெ																	
ஏ e:	ஊ to the left of the consonant	கே																	
ஐ ai	ஊ to the left of the consonant	கை								களை			னை			லை		ளை	
ஓ o	ஊ to the left & ஈ to the right of the consonant	கொ					றொ			ணொ			னொ						
ஔ o:	ஊ to the left & ஈ to the right	கொ					றொ			ணொ			னொ						
ஔ au	ஊ to the left & ஈ to the right	கௌ																	
மெய் pure consonants	A dot on the top of the consonant	க்																	

Note.—(1) The vowels are written as shown in the first vertical column.

(2) The consonants are written as shown in the horizontal columns, with a symbol or symbols indicating the vowel immediately following. A consonant followed by the vowel அ (a) has no symbol, while the pure consonant not followed by a vowel has a dot on top.

(3) All the eighteen vowel consonants under க் (k) are shown as a guide; in other cases only the irregular forms are shown, the rest being exactly similar to those shown under க் (k), excepting for trivial differences in a few cases which might safely be ignored.

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